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Title: Nudge: Calls Requires Community

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Scripture: [Nehemiah 2:1-18, Acts 2:1-4](#)

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[Watch the service.](#)



This is the second week of a worship series that we are calling Nudge: Finding and Following God's call. We will be looking at those nudges in our lives that get us moving in life towards God's call upon our lives. The Bible is full of stories of how God has called people and we will be looking at the Old Testament book of Nehemiah as our

guide.

Today is also the day of Pentecost, a day that marks the giving of the Holy Spirit to the church, a day that marks the beginning of the church universal.

"When the day of Pentecost came, they were all together in one place. Suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting. They saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them. All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues^[a] as the Spirit enabled them." Acts 2:1-4

A movement truly began on that day. We are gathered here today as God's church, as a Christian community, because of what happened on that day.

That day of Pentecost was the day when the followers of Jesus began to understand that to follow Jesus in this world, we cannot do it alone. It was a day when they truly understand that they were part of something much bigger than just themselves, bigger than what they could see or experience at that moment.

Last week, we met the royal cupbearer Nehemiah, who lived long before the time of Jesus. He had felt a nudge and heard a call from God to lead the effort in Jerusalem to help them in a time of great difficulty. After the Babylonian exile and the destruction of the city, they need to rebuild their walls and their gate. Nehemiah's heart was broken at the condition of the city.

He found himself in the tension of how the world currently is and the way the world should be.

Many of the calls on our lives emerge out of a deep area of concern.

There is a pattern at play in these moments.
This shouldn't be happening.
Maybe someone should do something.
Maybe I should do something.

Nehemiah has sensed the call of God, felt the nudge that God has placed an opportunity before him. He has prayed and he has waited, and he senses that now is the time to act.

"When I reached Jerusalem and had been there for three days, I sat out at night taking only a few people with me. I didn't tell anyone what God was prompting me to do and the only animal I took was the one I rode. The officials didn't know where I had gone or what I was doing. I hadn't yet told the people, the priests, or the rest who were to do the work. So I said to them, "you see the trouble we are in: Jerusalem is in ruins and its gates are destroyed by fire. Come, let us rebuild the wall of Jerusalem so we won't continue to be in disgrace. I told them that my God has taken care of me, and also told them what the king said to me. "Let's start rebuilding," they said, and they eagerly began the work." Nehemiah 2:11, 16-18 (CEB)

Nehemiah feels the nudge, hears the call and realizes he cannot do it on his own.

Here are just a few of the things that Nehemiah needs:

- Permission and Permits from the King
- An armed escort
- Timber and Building Supplies
- Co-laborers to help with the construction
- Wisdom from Trusted Advisors

The truth is that calls require community.

We don't always do community well. One of the things that we have discovered during the last 14 months of the COVID-19 pandemic is that we truly are connected, and we are truly dependent on one another. When we fail to recognize our interdependency, there are consequences.

When it comes to the calls God places upon our lives, they *always require a community*.

We cannot do it alone.

When God calls us, it is almost always bigger than one person can do alone.

It's why on that day of Pentecost, the Holy Spirit fell on *everyone* because it would take all followers of Jesus to continue God's mission on earth.

It's why Nehemiah needed the help of others to fulfill his call to rebuild Jerusalem.

It's why when we dedicate children, we commit as a congregation to help caregivers raise that child and teach them the ways of faithful living.

There has been research done on why new things often fail. 80% of new churches, restaurants and businesses fail within the first three years. The common theme running through the majority of these failures is that there was a single leader who tried to do it alone.

We don't like to admit this, but we don't like to do it alone. But Calls require community. Read through the Bible and you will be hard-pressed to find anyone who on their own was able to sense the nudge, hear the call of God and live out that calling.

The story of Nehemiah is a story of a nudge, of finding and following God's call, but it is also a story of dependence.

Thanks to Nehemiah's leadership, in verse 18, we hear the community together, "Let's start rebuilding."

And with that, the cupbearer and his community are off on the calling to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem.

As we emerge from this period of time, we are beginning to turn towards what is next. We are saying let's start rebuilding or building something new. We are experiencing an interdependent reopening. We are doing this together.

How many calls from God have gone unfulfilled because we refused to ask for or to accept help?

How many of us have felt that nudge, have heard that call from God, yet are actively refusing help in living out that call?

Maybe even it is as simple as having a cup of coffee or a meal with someone and sharing your call... seeking the wisdom of those in our lives.

I believe that often we receive the voice of God through the voice of others.

We will not find ourselves until we are ready to give ourselves away to God's calling.

As a church, we don't truly discover who we are until we ready to give ourselves away to God's calling.

Mitch Albom wrote a book called *Tuesdays with Morrie*. It's about Mitch's relationship with his college professor and mentor Morrie Schwartz. When Morrie tells Mitch that he has been diagnosed with ALS, Mitch Albom and Morrie decide at that point to spend time together every Tuesday. He describes it as the last class of my professor's life that took place once a week in his house, by a window in the study. The class met on Tuesdays and began after breakfast. The subject was the meaning of life. One Tuesday, as Morrie grows closer to death, he tells Mitch:

"In the beginning of life, when we are infants, we need others to survive, right? At the end of life, when you get like me, you need others to survive, right?"

His voice dipped to a whisper.

"But's here's in the secret: in between, we need others as well."

We need others not only to survive but to thrive.

Calls Require Community.

We need people in our lives that help us to be the best version of ourselves. We need others to that help us sense the nudge of God, hear the call of God, and accomplish what God is calling us to do.

Who are those people in your life? Who are those people that God works through to provide that nudge?

God calls. We each respond. Our community enables our call to become reality.

Let Us Pray