

# FIRST IMPRESSIONS CAN STARTLE

First impressions can be lasting impressions. Tom a full-time development officer, dressed in a bright yellow duck suit for an event in Dayton, Ohio one day. During his presentation, Tom looked out the window and saw Central Christian Church. Thoughts of this church began to race in his mind, as Central Christian Church was his home church, where he accepted his call to ministry and where he was ordained. Feeling a need to meet the pastor of this church, Tom proceeded to go to the church after his presentation, adorned in the duck suit.

How could the pastor, David Turner, not meet with a man dressed like a duck? As Tom described it, they had an incredible conversation. David's reaction was that Tom needed to check out New Church Ministry. David shared, "If you can be a duck, be creative, resilient, dream and be faithful, then you need to check out New Church Ministry." Tom considered the conversation he had with the pastor and then talked to his wife Kelley about NCM. This is where the Parkers' journey started.

The Parkers attended NCM training held in Philadelphia, Pa. and, according to Tom, "Since then, it has been an incredible experience."

When the couple returned from the training they told a few friends about their plans to plant a new church and asked if they would like to join them. The initial meetings were in their home on Sunday nights.

Today, the Parkers have a church name -- Living Faith Community Church. "We want to be about living faith," said Tom. Discovering what it means to have a living faith has become a theological anchor for them.

Living Faith Community Church has grown and they are leasing a space at a Seventh Day Adventist church in Dayton, Ohio. Depending on the Sunday, they have as many as 40 people attend service. "Our core group of 15 individuals is still with us," said Tom. While they haven't officially had a public launch, they are getting the pieces in place.

"We are learning about our fragileness and we are blessed," said Tom. "As leaders of the church, it is important for us to understand transparency and understand our need for a Savior. It is a journey."

Just like Tom and other New Church planters, Disciples will continue to expand our reach – planting churches and extending the witness to new mission fields. Join the efforts of New Church Ministry Disciples in ***Expanding the Table*** in the United States, Canada and right here in your region by supporting the Pentecost Special Offering. This offering helps to fund recruitment, coaching and training of new church ministers, like Tom Parker. By ***Expanding the Table***, you and New Church Ministry are reaching out to serve multitudes and to share God's message in new ways.

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