

“SMALL AND RURAL CHURCHES-
THE HOPE FOR THE FUTURE”

Pastor Brad Hales

bhales@thenalc.org

A MAJORITY OF NALC CHURCHES ARE SMALL, AND ARE LOCATED IN RURAL, SMALL TOWN AREAS.....

I. Struggles of the Small Congregation-

- Aging
- Less people worshipping
- Declining towns/closing schools
- Farms struggling/low commodity prices
- Lack of money
- Negativity/Power Issues/Control
- Lack of community engagement
- Many churches in town
- Maintaining property
- Lack of children/youth
- Not wanting to change
- Short pastorates
- Lack of participation, burnout
- Trying to be everything to all
- Always comparing to the past
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II. Importance of Relationships-

- Relationship with Jesus-
- Relationship with each other-

- Relationship with Community-

III. Opportunities for Small Congregations-

- Discipleship Growth
- Using Assets for Ministry
- Connecting with Community (visitation)
- Addressing needs of the Area
- Working with other Faith Communities
- Allow people to use their gifts for ministry
- Optimistic Attitude
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IV. Possible Resources

- How to Thrive as a Small Church Pastor”-Steve Bierly
- “Small, Strong Congregations”-Kennon Callahan
- “Effective Small Churches in the 21st Century”- Carl Dudley
- The Forgotten Church-Why Rural Ministry Matters for Every Church in America”- Glen Daman and Brian Wechsler
- “The Lord’s harvest And the Rural Church” Kent Hunter
- “Rural congregations”- Kevin Ruffcorn
- “Small Congregations, BIG Potential”- Lyle Schaller
- “Small Church Essentials”-Karl Vaters