

## Compendium of Local Church Exercises to Help us Grow in the Lord

### 66 Bible Book Summaries

**What:** This 66-week exercise involved people from our church body who volunteered to each prepare a 3-minute audio recording. Their recording presented a summary of one book of the Bible. To create such a summary, each person did so by: reading through their entire book, praying about it, delving into resource material related to their book. To aid their research and to guide the formation of their robust yet succinct summary, a basic template was supplied to the participants. This template led them not only to glean factual aspects of their book but it included the encouragement to create a statement about how this book of the Bible impacted them personally. When their book was scheduled and ready to be presented to the rest of the congregation, we uploaded their audio recording to our pre-recorded online message. We also played their summary during our regular Sunday morning worship service. After the audio summary was played over the sanctuary speakers, the congregation tried to guess whose voice it was. Then, the one who created the summary stood and took a wooden sign of his/her book and hung it on the wall alongside previous signs in respect to its location in the Bible.

#### **Pictures:**



**Why:** The rationale behind creating and implementing this discipleship exercise is manifold: 1) For our church, the primary motive was to catalyze our congregants towards diving into the Word in a deeper way. The exercise also attempted to help participants and listeners to come away with a better understanding of how each Bible book is connected to other Bible books and how the books contribute to the overarching story of God. 2) Some listeners are galvanized to read through, on their own, the Bible book that had just been presented. 3) By creating the wooden signs to hang on our sanctuary wall, we can now utilize them in other messages, in other teachings with regard to the biblical storyline, in exercises to help people navigate the Word better etc. 4) This exercise signals to all who enter the sanctuary that the books that make up the Word are important to us. 5) An audio recording is not as daunting as a video recording; participants can do as many 'takes' of their audio summary as they want. Recordings were done almost entirely on each person's own cell phone, then 'shared' to me as an attachment.

**How:** Our congregation willingly embraced this exercise after the rationale was presented. People were encouraged to claim a book from the Bible that, if possible, had previously impacted them in some way. All 39 OT books were claimed by different people. Some went on to claim a NT book as well. If people couldn't decide on which of the as yet un-claimed books to choose, but they still wanted to participate, we had a jar on hand with the names of the available books inside the jar on slips of paper....and we drew a book and assigned it to them. Three different templates were created: OT, Gospels, and the rest of the NT. Our wall signs were made from 1"x4" spruce with the book names routed into the wood using a lettering template. The boards were conditioned, stained and then lettered using black paint. We created our own 'signature music' to play as intro and outro for the OT audio summaries; when the congregation heard the intro music, they knew a Bible book summary was about to be played. We are creating a different musical riff for the intro and outro for our current NT summaries.

**Testimonial:** Karen Norton [Book of Esther]: "God's timing in the story of Esther was brilliant! I am understanding that God's timing in my life events has been brilliant! I can recount the times when I was there "for just a time as this".

**Resources available:** 'OT', 'Gospel' and 'The Rest of the NT' templates / To hear an example of one of our audio summaries & intro/outro music - <http://www.carolinechurch.ca/sermon-archives.html> [search for and play the archived service for July 18, 2021 ....at the 19:52 point you will be able to hear the 'Zechariah' audio summary].

**Contact:** Pastor John Watton / Caroline Church of the Nazarene / [john@carolinechurch.ca](mailto:john@carolinechurch.ca) / (587) 982 2305