

Starboard Nets

Encouraging,
empowering,
and
equipping
God's people
to activate
their God-given dreams
in order to establish
culturally relevant ministries
and churches.

Director Terry Sanders
P.O. Box 450833
Garland, TX 75045-0833
www.starboardnets.org
terry@starboardnets.org

[Jesus] said, "Throw your net on the right side of the boat and you will find some." When they did, they were unable to haul the net in because of the large number of fish."

John 21:6 NIV



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Called to the Journey

By Terry Sanders

On January 13, 2003 I climbed into my pickup and drove away on one of the most challenging journeys of my life.

As a minister and pastor of more than 30 years, God was calling me to step out of my comfort zone into unfamiliar ground. At age 53, I found myself moving toward a dream God had placed within me.

My heart was in my throat as I watched my wife, Beth, waving from the sidewalk. For the first time in 30 years of marriage we would be apart for more than a few days at a time. She was going to continue teaching until May and get our house ready to sell while I worked at a new job 400 miles away.

As I drove, the story replayed in my mind. My experience in professional ministry had been mainly positive. In my current pastorate, I had a good compensation package along with all the perks plus a good ministry budget. I had the freedom to lead. By all external appearances I had it pretty good.

But Christ was calling me to follow in a new direction. An enthusiasm for church planting and starting simple, organic churches was increasing.

I was disturbed by the inability to impact the current culture through the system in which I worked. At first I criticized the emerging culture. It was becoming more difficult to reach people with the Gospel with my current methods. Retreating behind the walls of the church was another option.

God began to show me another way of sharing His Good News. I was not to curse the culture or retreat from it. I was to use it.

I found myself hungrily reading anyone who was offering fresh ideas for ministry. I began to see the possibility of God's people connected in simple, relational gatherings supporting and encouraging one another. I was moving toward a way to missionally reach those who would not attend our traditional churches.

I was facing a crisis of belief. Was I going to yield to the invitation or suppress it? I could wait until the picture became more clear or I could cross the threshold and take a step of faith. I could not escape. I threw my net on the other side of the boat.

My seven hour drive ended but the journey was just beginning.

In His time, Christ brought together a group who would establish The Church of Residing Hope, a simple, organic church in the north Dallas area.

On this journey the church, as Christ's body, has become so precious to me. I understand more fully how the priesthood of believers works in practical and missional ways. I see believers daily living as Christ followers rather than merely having head knowledge. Entangling people relationally in the net of God's love is a dynamic form of spiritual transformation. People with little or no church background are responding to the Good News of Jesus.

In October of 2007 and I was faced with another decision. The hospice where I was a chaplain closed. Where would I work? Since I take no salary from the church I lead, how would I earn a living?

God had worked through me to start a simple, organic church. I was coaching two pastors and God was bringing more like them into my life.

Christ called me the next stage of the journey. I was to encourage His followers to release the dreams for ministry He was putting in their hearts and equip them for the journey.

Starboard Nets Ministries became a reality on January 1, 2008. I now work full time as a church planting catalyst and coach.

I partner with others who make it possible for me to encourage, empower, and equip church planters and pastors.

If God is calling you on a journey towards simple, organic church, let's start a conversation. Contact Starboard Nets to learn more about releasing the dream God has placed in your heart.

Pray for me as I continue as a practitioner of simple, organic church and give direction to Starboard Nets.

Step across the threshold and let's journey together.

Terry Sanders

Intentional Ministries for the Emerging Culture

North America is one of the largest and most difficult mission fields in the world. Cultural and ethnic diversity abound. Since many segments of the non-Christian population do not have churches designed for their unique life habits, it is difficult for them to hear the gospel in terms meaningful to them. The biblical mandate to reconcile and disciple all people is a call to design intentional ministry efforts to reach them for Christ.

God's people must be open to the risk of thinking "outside the box" of traditional ministry. Called out leaders and churches must accept the challenge to take the gospel to all people by addressing the ever-emerging culture with the Good News of Christ.

Starboard Nets exists to encourage, empower and equip God's people to activate their God-given dreams for the purpose of establishing culturally relevant ministries and churches.

Among other ministries, Starboard Nets provides coaching and mentoring for churches and believers who work in or desire to plant simple, organic churches.

As a faith-based, 501(c)3 charity, Starboard Nets is 100% dependent on partner donations. Consider becoming a partner with us in this incredible quest as we coach church planters and others seeking to engage the current culture in ministry.