Movement

Does every step lead somewhere?

> "*Movement is the sequential steps in the process that cause people to move to greater areas of commitment.*"
>
> Thom S. Rainer and Eric Geiger, *Simple Church*

What Rainer and Geiger mean

A clear path still has to lead somewhere. Movement means each ministry sits at a particular place along the path and points people toward the next one, so that over time a person goes from the edges of church life toward deeper commitment to Christ and His people. The authors stress deliberate **move points**: easy, intentional handoffs from one step to the next, such as a short-term group that feeds an ongoing one, or a sermon that closes with a specific next step.

In a complicated church, people stay busy without going anywhere. Programs sit side by side, each asking for the same people's time, and nobody is sure what's supposed to come after what.

Where Pathway stands

For a church of around a hundred people, our week is full: Sunday worship, the Into the World Adult Life Group, Monday and Thursday night Bible studies, Band of Brothers, Wesleyan Women, the Midweek Prayer Group, Navigators and a dozen or so serving teams. Most of these are good, and some are thriving. But they sit side by side. A guest who loves Sunday morning isn't shown which one comes next, and the main way in is a sign-up sheet at the Welcome Center or "see Pastor Bart." We're only now building a new members class.

A first try at the map

For discussion only. This uses the four words as the website orders them. Your table may sort things differently, and the disagreements are worth talking about.

LEARN	LOVE	LIVE	LEAD
Sunday worship and the sermon; study guides; RightNow Media; Hikers	Life Groups and Bible studies; Band of Brothers; Wesleyan Women; Midweek Prayer; Navigators	Serving teams; missions; Operation Christmas Child; neighbors in our five towns	Leading a group or team; teaching; mentoring an apprentice; the LBA
Move point: a next-step card and a short-term group	*Move point:* serve together as a group	*Move point:* an invitation to apprentice	*Move point:* reproduce, raising up the next leader

What movement could look like here

1. **Place every ministry on the path.** Each ministry leader names the step their ministry serves and the step it points to. The leader's guide has a one-page template for this, due September 30, 2027.
2. **Build a move point from Sunday into a group.** After each sermon series, offer a four-to-six-week group built on that series' study guide, on a Sunday or a weeknight, with the goal of handing people on to an ongoing group. Put a next-step card in the bulletin and at the Welcome Center.
3. **Build a move point from a group into serving.** Ask each Life Group to serve together once a quarter: a missions project, a funeral luncheon, the Feast of Thankfulness. People who try serving alongside friends are more likely to keep at it.
4. **Build a move point from serving into leading.** Ask every team and group leader to name an apprentice by the end of 2027. Leaders who never hand anything off become a ceiling.
5. **Give guests a clear first 90 days.** First Impressions follows up after a first visit, a short-term group invitation follows within a month, and the new members class (planned for learn.pathwaywes.com) explains the path.
6. **Count movement as well as attendance.** Gather already tracks who is in a group and who serves. Each quarter the LBA can watch two numbers: the share of Sunday adults in a group and the share who serve.

WATCH FOR

- **People aren't on a conveyor belt.** Spiritual growth rarely runs in a straight line. God meets people out of sequence, and a longtime saint in a season of grief or illness may need rest, not a next step. The path describes the usual way people grow here. It isn't a test anyone has to pass.
- **More commitment can mean fewer nights at church.** Movement aims at deeper love for Christ and neighbor. For some people the faithful next step is to serve a neighbor or lead their family, which never shows up on our calendar.
- **Hidden steps.** Sometimes the real move point is a person: the friend who sat with someone on their first Sunday. Programs help, but relationships do most of the moving.

TALK IT THROUGH

1. Think of someone who has grown a lot at Pathway in the last few years. What moved them?
2. Where do people get stuck between Sunday morning and a group? Why?
3. Which of our ministries clearly points to a next step? Which one doesn't point anywhere yet?

Source: Thom S. Rainer and Eric Geiger, *Simple Church: Returning to God's Process for Making Disciples* (Nashville: B&H, 2006).