

theway

# Handbook

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## Introduction

Kiaora, welcome to The Way handbook, a guide for those interested in learning about this disciple-making movement.

You may be a church leader, considering a new way of doing church or wondering how to plant new churches.

You may be someone looking for a disciple-making church.

You may be a Jesus follower wanting to reach your community.

You may just be curious about The Way!

Whatever your interest, we hope that this handbook is a useful guide. Of course, nothing beats a one-to-one conversation! Please get in touch so that we can catch up with you in person.

Before you go any further though, a bit of an explanation of the name we have chosen for this movement: The Way. Why did we choose it?

1. Jesus Christ is The Way (John 14:6)  
*He alone is the way to God The Father and there is no other way.*
2. We follow The Way
3. The Church, in its infancy, was known as "The Way" (Acts 9:2; 19:9, 23; Acts 24:14)

We desire to point people to Jesus Christ, live in the way that Jesus has set out for us and help others follow Him. We think that this name captures the essence of Christianity - that it truly is about a Person, not a religious system.

May the Lord encourage your heart as you read this handbook!

*Nick and Sarah Field*

Servants of The Lord Jesus Christ

## The “why” of The Way

### *Why are we doing this?*

*“Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. For whoever wants to save their life will lose it, but whoever loses their life for me and for the gospel will save it. What good is it for someone to gain the whole world, yet forfeit their soul? Or what can anyone give in exchange for their soul? If anyone is ashamed of me and my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, the Son of Man will be ashamed of them when he comes in his Father’s glory with the holy angels.”*

*Mark 8:34-38*

It's easy to imagine a future which continually perpetuates the past. Where what we do is what we have known. A comfortable, easy fit of church and people, evangelism and discipleship. The church we are familiar with is the church we imagine we will pass on to future generations.

Nehemiah, called by the Lord to rebuild the broken city of Jerusalem in 444 BC, was right to carefully examine the city walls before beginning restoration work. What he discovered was both heartbreaking and invigorating. Like Nehemiah, we have sensed the Lord guiding us to examine the walls. The walls of the church of New Zealand, the walls of the current western model of church. Our hearts have broken and we have been filled with vision and excitement for the future. The cultural forces of individualism, consumerism, materialism, spectatorism, volunteerism and “celebrity Christians” have long shaped the western church. The walls are broken, the Church is vulnerable, the gospel is compromised and the love of many has grown cold. Furthermore, our society is changing. Growing antagonism towards the gospel message coupled with intolerance towards much of what the Bible teaches is threatening the future of the form of church which we are accustomed to. Could it be that such changes will dictate that churches rethink the way they do what they do?

We believe the Lord is urging His people to pursue a first love relationship with Jesus Christ. Disciples are being called for, worshippers sought out. Such people are “deny, die, follow people”, resilient and patient in suffering. They are not defeated by troubles or deceived by wealth. They live their everyday lives as everyday missionaries in an everyday world. They are self-feeding, missional disciple-makers. We believe the Lord is urging His people to reimagine church. To study the bible and start afresh with a version of church that is deeply reflective of the teachings of Jesus. A way of church that meets the demands of our day and actualises the Great Commission throughout our land, which can thrive in any cultural context and where each culture subordinates itself to the higher way of love and unity. A way which produces the kind of disciples who will live with the eternal in view.

The Way is our best effort at answering this call. We pray that it will spur many to action. Numerous men and women have gone before us, seeking The Lord and searching out ways to reach more people for Jesus. God has built His Church and He will continue to do so, in all of its various expressions. We praise God for this! And we commit ourselves to continue in this great endeavour.

*“To the angel of the church in Ephesus write:*

*These are the words of him who holds the seven stars in his right hand and walks among the seven golden lampstands. I know your deeds, your hard work and your perseverance. I know that you cannot tolerate wicked people, that you have tested those who claim to be apostles but are not, and have found them false. You have persevered and have endured hardships for my name, and have not grown weary.*

*Yet I hold this against you: You have forsaken the love you had at first. Consider how far you have fallen! Repent and do the things you did at first. If you do not repent, I will come to you and remove your lampstand from its place.”*

Jesus, Revelation 2:1- 5

*“To the angel of the church in Laodicea write:*

*These are the words of the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the ruler of God’s creation. I know your deeds, that you are neither cold nor hot. I wish you were either one or the other! So, because you are lukewarm—neither hot nor cold—I am about to spit you out of my mouth. You say, ‘I am rich; I have acquired wealth and do not need a thing.’ But you do not realise that you are wretched, pitiful, poor, blind and naked. I counsel you to buy from me gold refined in the fire, so you can become rich; and white clothes to wear, so you can cover your shameful nakedness; and salve to put on your eyes, so you can see.*

*Those whom I love I rebuke and discipline. So be earnest and repent. Here I am! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with that person, and they with me.”*

Jesus, Revelation 3:14-20

## The “what” of The Way

### ***What it's all about***

*Then Jesus came to them and said, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. **Therefore go and make disciples of all nations**, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.”*

*Matthew 28:18-20*

### What We See

As followers of Jesus Christ, we are everyday missionaries with everyday mission fields. In other words, we are ‘on mission’ wherever we are! We may not be the traditional kind of missionary, who leaves their country and goes overseas, but we are missionaries nonetheless. Right where we live, work and play.

As we look to the future, we see a movement of God throughout this fair land of Aotearoa where Kiwis meet Jesus and become His disciples, compelled to make other disciples. We see churches born in every town and suburb, homes filled with worship and discovery.

## What We Commit To

### White Hot Faith

*We are first and foremost lovers of Jesus*

When an object is heated to a temperature which is so hot that it glows with a bright, white heat then it is said to be, “white hot”. Jesus was dismayed by the lukewarm nature of the church of Laodicea - so much so that He wanted to be sick! Followers of Jesus have every reason to be passionately in love with Him and wholly obedient to Him. As people of The Faith, we are primarily lovers of Jesus Christ.

*“If you love me, keep my commands”*  
Jesus, John 14:15

### Innovative Methods

*We are light on our feet and we do what it takes to get it done*

It’s so easy to get complicated! We are committed to keeping things as simple as possible so that we are free to follow Jesus and walk in His way, keeping in step with the Holy Spirit. For this reason we embrace adaptive methods and low overheads. We intentionally stay agile and able to pivot as we pursue the mission of God.

*“Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit.”*  
Galatians 5:25

### Rapid Mobilisation

*We have a pioneering spirit and we multiply*

As we share the gospel of Jesus Christ and demonstrate the way of love to a watching world, we expect that God will save people! This is why we intentionally position ourselves to plant new churches and break new ground. Disciple-making leaders are continually raised up within home churches so that we can disciple new believers and plant new home churches.

*“The things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to reliable people who will also be qualified to teach others.”*  
2 Timothy 2:2

*“Pray that God may open a door for our message, so that we might proclaim the mystery of Christ.”*  
Colossians 4:3

## Deep Devotion

*We are deeply devoted to evangelism, discipleship, serving the poor & needy*

Sharing our faith, discipling other believers and serving those in need - these are priorities for disciples of Christ. We actually rearrange our lives in order to reflect these priorities and we raise our future generations with this as the normal way of life for followers of Jesus Christ. In other words, we do the Great Commission.

*“For Christ’s love compels us, because we are convinced that one died for all, and therefore all died. And he died for all, that those who live should no longer live for themselves but for him who died for them and was raised again.”*

2 Corinthians 5:14-15

## Servanthood

*We ‘go low’ to serve each other in love*

At the heart of our community is the word, “Love”. To love each other, is to serve each other. The way of the Master is to take a towel and wash each other’s feet. We look for opportunities to bless each other and build each other up. Together we learn what it is to live the “one anothers” of Scripture, knowing that the power to serve comes from the Spirit of Jesus Christ.

*“Therefore if you have any encouragement from being united with Christ, if any comfort from his love, if any common sharing in the Spirit, if any tenderness and compassion, then make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and of one mind. Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves, not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others. In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus.”*

Philippians 2:1-5

## What We Believe

We agree with the statement of faith outlined in [the Lausanne Covenant](#).

*The Lausanne Covenant is widely regarded as one of the most significant documents in modern church history. Emerging from the First Lausanne Congress in 1974, with John Stott as its Chief Architect, it served as a great rallying call to the evangelical Church around the world. It defined what it means to be evangelical, and challenged Christians to work together to make Jesus Christ known throughout the world. It is a covenant with one another, and a covenant with God himself.*



## The “architecture” of The Way

### *This is the artful design structure of The Way*

The Bible describes the people of God as a body, where Christ Himself is the Head. Every member of the body is important and gifted with spiritual gifts to be used to grow the body up into maturity. In addition, God gave the body what we are going to call, “Five Spiritual Body Systems”. These are the apostolic, prophetic, evangelistic, pastoral and teaching functions, or ‘systems’. Each body system is for the overall benefit of the body itself. Every body member benefits from and needs each system. Within the movement of The Way, and within each church of The Way, these body systems operate. We depend on these systems in order to be healthy, as each person is built up and serves with their spiritual gift(s).

“So Christ himself gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and teachers, to equip his people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ.

Then we will no longer be infants, tossed back and forth by the waves, and blown here and there by every wind of teaching and by the cunning and craftiness of people in their deceitful scheming. Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will grow to become in every respect the mature body of him who is the head, that is, Christ. From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work.”

Ephesians 4:11-16

## The “who” of The Way

*Who are the people of The Way?*

### Home church members

“An everyday missionary marches to an uncommon beat. For these normal (but tragically rare) disciples, the Great Commission is deeply understood and daily prioritised. They expect to be used by God on a daily basis to draw someone nearer to Christ.”

Larry Walkemeyer & Todd Wilson, *Mobilization Flywheel*, page 46

Most of us have always lived in a world where being a follower of Jesus is a benefit rather than a cost. It has enriched us, not cost us. That’s not normal. It wasn’t normal back when Jesus established The Church, it wasn’t normal throughout much of history, and it sure isn’t normal today in the majority world, where the majority of Jesus followers live and die.

The Way is a missional disciple making movement. Being a disciple looks like this: going where Jesus tells you to go, doing what Jesus tells you to do; daily surrendering your plans and decisions to God; learning what it means to be led by the Holy Spirit; serving the body, using your God-given spiritual gifts; seeing your money and your stuff as belonging to Jesus Christ; spending time each day reading your bible; becoming a persistent prayer; devoting yourself to discipling others; sharing the gospel where you live, work and play; truly prioritising the gathering of the church. And it means taking seriously and living under the authority of the Word of God even when you can’t make sense of it or culture says the opposite. Being a Jesus follower means getting your hands dirty and letting your heart break.

When Jesus called people to follow him, he was clear on the cost and the call. People of The Way know the cost and what they are being called to. Jesus has called you to be with Him, to follow Him, and to go into all the world with His gospel. **Are you in?**

## Leaders

Home church leaders gently and humbly care for God's people and take seriously the mandate for every disciple to be an active disciple-maker. Some leaders serve as elders, overseeing the movement.

(1 Peter 5:1-4; 1 Timothy 3:1-13; Titus 1:5-9; Acts 20:27-31)

## Home Church Leaders

Each home church is led by home church leaders. They encourage the people in their home church to be discipled, reach out to the world, disciple and care for one another. They pray regularly for the home church members, provide leadership for the gatherings and raise up leaders to plant new home churches. It is desirable that each home church is 'planted pregnant'. This means that a future home church leader goes with the new leader in order to learn how to plant. They then become the leader of the next plant as churches multiply.

## Elders

Over time, elders will be appointed in each region of home churches.

Translated from the Greek words presbyteros, episkopos and poimen, elder means, "mature one". You could say that these are, "the old and wise ones"! Known for their maturity and their shepherding of others, their key role is to disciple and care for the home church leaders under their care. In addition, they will seek the Lord for His will for the movement in situations when wisdom is required or a decision needs to be made, eg: a doctrinal issue; a biblical lifestyle issue; a significant leadership issue. In these ways, elders promote healthy growth of the movement.

Each elder is also a home church leader.

## Equipping Team

This team carries out an apostolic function, establishing works of ministry and equipping the body. They do this by training, coaching, visiting, strengthening and encouraging the home churches. In the first instance, Nick and Sarah are the only members of this team, but the idea is that this team will grow!

***NB: Nick and Sarah Field have been commissioned to establish the work of The Way by [The Street Church, Wellington](#).***

## The “how” of The Way

*This is how we operate day to day*

### Our Ecclesiology

Before moving on to details of how we operate, first let’s look at our ecclesiology. Ecclesiology is the study of church and involves defining the essential elements of church. “God’s called out people” (ecclesia) are the church.

The term, “church,” describes everyone, everywhere who is in relationship with the head of the body, Jesus. This is the universal Church. Jesus alone is the leader of the universal Church. The term also describes certain people in specific places who are in relationship with Jesus while also in relationship with particular brothers and sisters. This is the local church. The local church has recognised leadership who work as “under-shepherds” for the Chief Shepherd, Jesus.

Although there are many versions and iterations of church we believe the Bible tells us that the following elements need to be true in order for a body of people to be referred to as a church:

- Jesus is worshipped as The Lord
  - Colossians 1:15-20; Philippians 2:9-11
- Scripture is taught and obeyed
  - 2 Timothy 3:14-17
- Believers gather regularly
  - Hebrews 10:24-25; Acts 2:42
- Baptism and communion are practised
  - Acts 2:38,41; 1 Corinthians 11:23-26
- Spiritual authority is present, credible and active
  - Hebrews 13:17; Acts 20:27-31
- God’s mission of disciple making and servanthood are core priorities
  - Ephesians 2:10; Colossians 4:3
- The activity of The Spirit is obvious
  - Galatians 5:22-23; 1 Corinthians 12:7

*Adapted from [The Mobilization Flywheel](#), pg 122-134: Irreducible Traits of a Biblical Church*

## The Weekly Gatherings

We love the weekly gathering! Home churches meet together, usually on a Sunday and mostly in homes. The home church leader may or may not use their own home as the meeting place for the home church. It could be that someone else in the group hosts the weekly gathering. Weekly gatherings are awesome! Everyone is involved, from the youngest to the oldest. Together we share in Communion, worship, prayer, the bible and a meal, each of us using our spiritual gifts to serve one another.

**Two Sundays a month** are devoted to learning and discussing the Bible, using one of our bible study series. Transformation happens as we apply God's Word to our lives.

**One Sunday a month** is devoted to training in evangelism. The gospel is our focus and time is spent praying for those we live, work and play with. Every month the home churches are dedicated to being trained and spurred on in evangelism through the [Organic Outreach](#) program.

**One Sunday a month** the home churches gather together in their regions. Stories are told and the mission is celebrated and the body is built up.

## The Collective

The Way is not a denomination or 'brand' of church. The Way is a movement of everyday missionaries, a collective of home churches. We advance as a collective of churches working together, with the Lord, to develop healthy disciple makers.

**Each home church within the collective enjoys the following:**

- Model: The Way's model of ministry
- Training: The Way's home church leader training
- Coaching: The Way's ongoing home church leader coaching
- Network: The Way's relational network

## Everyday Life

### **Evangelism**

Every day, disciples pray for the Lord to use them as they learn to obey the prompting of the Holy Spirit in the work of the gospel. They persistently pray for the people in their lives and take opportunities to ask questions, answer questions, tell their story and share the gospel wherever they live, work and play.

### **Daily Bible Reading**

Everyone is encouraged to read the bible every day, and to discuss it with each other. Various daily bible reading plans are provided which people can follow, including a plan for kids and families.

### **Discipleship Clusters**

We encourage each other to be part of a cluster group, meeting together regularly to read the bible, pray for each other and build deeper friendships. We use the Discovery Bible Study method to help one another learn and apply God's Word.

### **Community Engagement**

Each home church prayerfully seeks the Lord for opportunities to love their community, especially the poor and needy. All ages are involved and much prayer goes into seeking the Lord for His guidance and for Him to work in the lives of the people being reached.

### **International Missions**

Some are called to leave their home and country in order to take the gospel to people who have not yet heard or received it. We have a missional mindset, responding to Jesus's commandment to go to the ends of the earth with the gospel. Home churches are encouraged to prayerfully and practically support those who go.

## What we celebrate

### ***These are the things we tell stories about***

We expect that the Holy Spirit will be at work in people's lives! As a disciple making movement, we choose to tell stories of God at work in and through everyday people. Here's what we talk about:

- People discipling others
- Personal transformation and discipleship growth steps
- People getting baptised
- People praying for non Christians where they live, work and play
- People sharing their faith with others
- Evangelism initiatives and community service
- Planting new home churches
- People being sent out on mission

## Our Finances

### ***This is the question of money for the mission***

The Way operates without the overheads of staffing, facilities or a "head office". This means that all money goes directly to the mission. Each person is encouraged to put aside a portion of their income each week (or month) into a personal savings account so that they are prepared to be generous, contributing to the mission work of their home church and beyond. Each person decides, in their own heart, what they will give. (2 Corinthians 9:7)  
This enables home churches to fund community initiatives, pastoral care, celebration gatherings and people on the international mission field.

*Nick and Sarah Field raise their own support and cover their own costs.  
If individuals would like to contribute, this would be appreciated.*

## In Conclusion

And so, therein lies the Why, What, Architecture, Who and How of The Way.

May the Lord Jesus build His Church, for His glory, just as His Word promises! May there always be pioneers who are ready and willing to reimagine church and innovate for the sake of the gospel of Jesus Christ. And may the Lord bless this version of His church which we humbly refer to as, The Way.

*“But what about you?” he asked. “Who do you say I am?”*

*Simon Peter answered, “You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God.”*

*Jesus replied, “Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah, for this was not revealed to you by flesh and blood, but by my Father in heaven. And I tell you that you are Peter, and on this rock **I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it.** I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven; whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.”*

*Matthew 16:15-19*