

# New Roots Review

September 2023



## NEW ROOTS MINISTRY

### *Roll With It.*

by Fred Wilgenburg

I am using the motto, “Roll With It,” as the focus of this newsletter. I did not get that from the best-selling book, *Let’s Roll*, authored by the widow of Todd Beamer, who died on September 11, 2001—“9/11”—in a field in Pennsylvania, but reading about it inspired me. Facing terrible circumstances—on a plane being flown by terrorists bent on a suicide mission—Todd Beamer and other passengers, having heard that the plan of the terrorists was to fly the plane into the White House or US Capitol building, overpowered them enough to fly the plane into the ground. Their last rallying cry was “let’s roll!”

So much of ministry, and business, and life, can continue and succeed as we **roll with it**. New Roots Ministry has provided chaplaincy services to Smithfield Foods for nearly fifteen years. That company has rolled with it, now for over 150 years as John Morrell & Company, when its founders came from England to the US in 1871. It has had a major presence in Sioux Falls since 1909, consistently being one of the biggest employers; it has 3500 employees in Sioux Falls. Imagine the ups and downs in markets, in labor- and union-challenges, and in facing corporate and political headwinds, yet it continues to be a mainstay. Somehow the many leaders of John Morrell & Company/Smithfield Foods have figured out how to roll with it over the years.

I would give myself an average grade when it comes to rolling with it, though I’ve matured with age. There have been plenty of times in my non-profit ministry career—16 years at Center of Hope and 7 years at New Roots Ministry—when I have been weary, and anxious, and desiring change, but the opportunities were not there. So, here I am, and here is New Roots Ministry, and we’re getting along well. Much thanks to God for His grace and counsel, and to my wife for her patience and love.

Like for Sioux Falls’ streets in late winter, with deep pot holes due to weather changes, or the numerous construction detours at other times, so a ministry also faces pot holes and detours, though admittedly ours have been navigable. Timothy Leadership Training (TLT) used to be a busy program for me, at least as a teacher. Well, I haven’t had any students for about a year, but it’s exciting to be a part of seeing it flourish in other areas. We introduced Kamaleshan, a pastor-friend in India, to TLT teachers in his Andhra Pradesh region. Presently, Kamaleshan, twenty pastor colleagues, and twenty people of his three growing churches are taking TLT in their Telegu language. I am a friend of brother and sister, Waqas and Maria, who lead a church in a deeply-Islamic part of Pakistan. As TLT is not presently in their Urdu language, and they want more leadership help from their people, Maria was recently hired by TLT to translate the materials into Urdu. Similarly, a former TLT student of ours will soon translate the materials into Ethiopian Oromo. —>



*This group from Faith Church in Sioux Center, IA served well with us at a strip mall that includes Mercato’s Liquor & Legit Barber—growing businesses owned by men originally from Africa. They cleaned and interacted with people, after a meal at Lalibela Ethiopian Restaurant..*

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*These folks had good interactions, including about their faith, with people they don't know, as part of the last hour of our Everyday Ambassadors Practicum. Though most participants are nervous, after practicing, and being equipped with helpful openers, water, and snacks, it goes well, and they will more readily share in their normal settings.*



Continued...

Doing Strategic Planning for Meeting Goals has been like driving through pot holes. Mostly on the mentoree side, people have not held up their end in relationships, especially in their lack of communication. I may have contributed some to these challenges by not setting clear enough expectations. Like the vital, but difficult, ministry of discipleship, we need to keep rolling with it, while improving. Plenty of the trail is steady and easy, but with big Kingdom-needs, it's key to figure out how those trails can get more traffic. Our new Everyday-Ambassadors Practicum offers a good experience, and it gets good reviews from the relatively few people who have participated. We'll finish its first season as well as possible, then change up it's launch next year.

### What is New Roots Ministry?

**It's "a springboard for new Americans & their churches."** This is done through workplace chaplaincy (we provide chaplaincy at Smithfield Foods & we train & place bi-lingual chaplains on commercial farms), through Timothy Leadership Training, through hosting special educational events, through empowering new American pastors, leaders, and their churches, through offering unique Service Opportunities—serve in, or visit, stores owned by new Americans, then hear their stories, through helping people navigate the American system and achieve their goals, like education, through driver training for new Americans, and through Everyday-Ambassador Practicum.

Without much effort, both driver training and workplace chaplaincy have experienced busy sailing. So, we keep rolling and seek to expand those "low hanging fruit"-types of ministries.

Like rapidly growing Sioux Falls seeks to provide bigger roads and intersections to keep up with growth, so we see more lanes of opportunity ahead. We recently began a scholarship and grant program for new Americans seeking to go to college or whose ministries are seeking a bigger impact. The interest is strong! As well, we are planning to hire a part-time liaison to reach out to new American families who are struggling much.

In rolling with it, we contemporary Gospel-bearers can be inspired by the originators of Gospel ministry. Jesus, through un-

believable ups and downs in offering salvation to humankind, stayed the course. He ultimately finished strong—"exalted to the right hand of God..." (Acts 2:33). As people were leaving him, Jesus asked the Twelve, "you do not want to leave too, do you?" Peter responded in staying on the dangerous course, "Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. We....know that you are the Holy One of God" (John 6:67-69). Other people of God with very challenging life-journeys, like Ruth and Esther, received courage and strength from God to roll through hardship, and they finished well—foreigner Ruth became part of the lineage of Jesus and Esther became a queen who liberated God's people.

**May God bless you as you roll on, through valleys and canyons, through meadows and deserts, and up to snow-covered mountaintops!**