

# NBC DISCIPLESHIP PATHWAY



## The River-Discipleship at New Beginnings Church

### What it is

The River Discipleship Pathway is both a spiritual map and a program strategy. It helps people know where they are, where they're going, and how our church will walk with them along the way.

### How this helps us grow together:

**Shared Language:** Every leader and member can explain "the River" in 1–2 sentences.

**Shared Vision:** Every ministry sees itself as part of one unified discipleship flow.

**Shared Care:** Members help each other move forward in grace.

**Shared Movement:** The church body becomes an ecosystem where growth is natural and continual.

### How to Navigate

**Stages** Each part of the river represents a phase in spiritual growth and church connection.

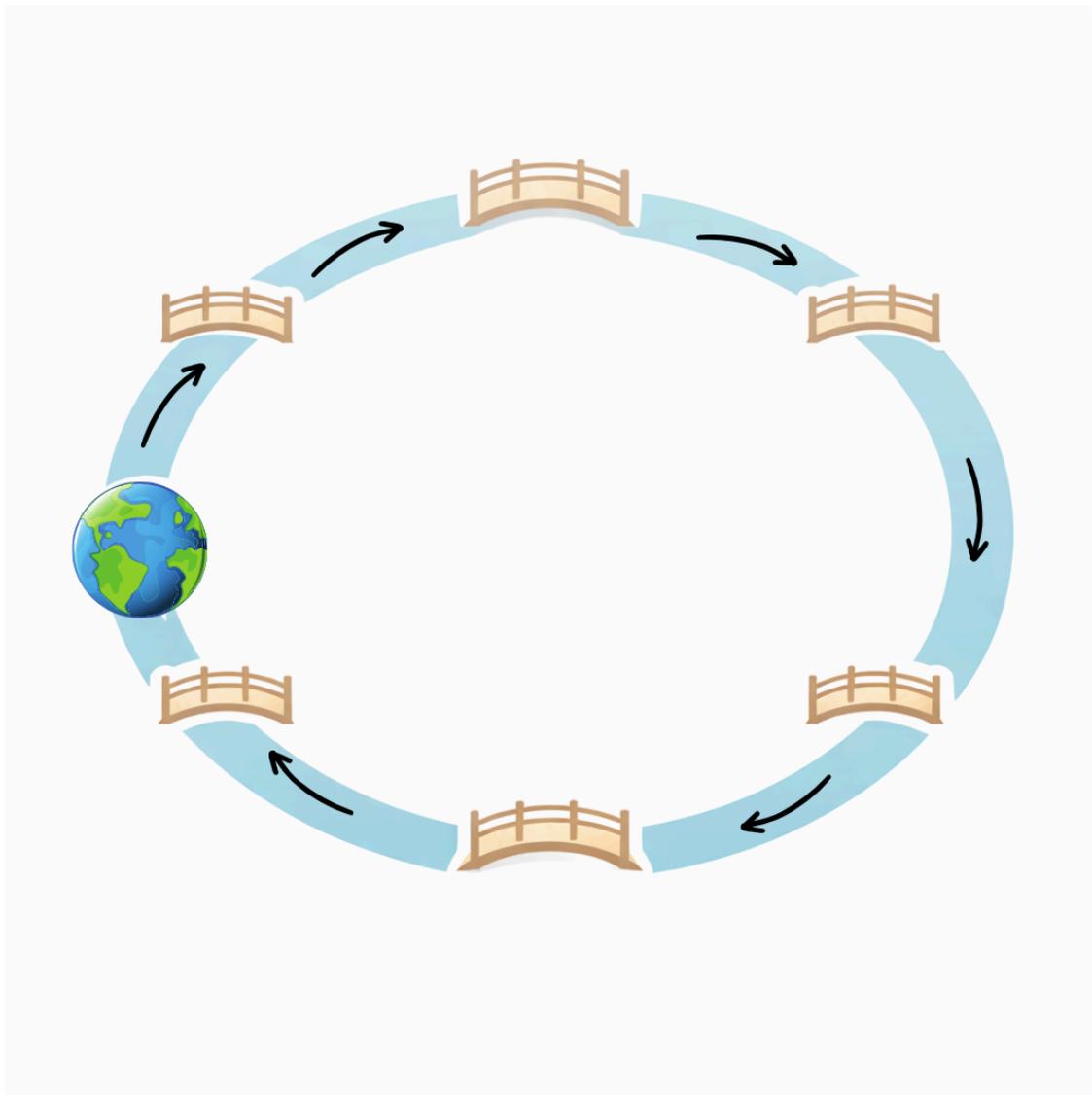
**Bridges** The intentional connections or transitions that move someone forward to the next stage. They may be classes, relationships, or commitments.

**On-Ramps** Events or programs that invite new people into the river for the first time—our entry points from the community.

**The Current** The shared life of the church—our unified flow of worship, service, and discipleship.

**The Embankment** The stable, mature leadership that keeps the river's direction strong and healthy.

**Logjams** Any place where people or ministries get stuck—due to unclear communication, missing steps, or relational



### **Why Everyone Needs to Understand Our Discipleship Pathway:**

It helps us move forward together by helping us see discipleship as a shared journey, not a siloed task.

We can locate and encourage one another (“You’re between Wade In and Find Your Flow”).

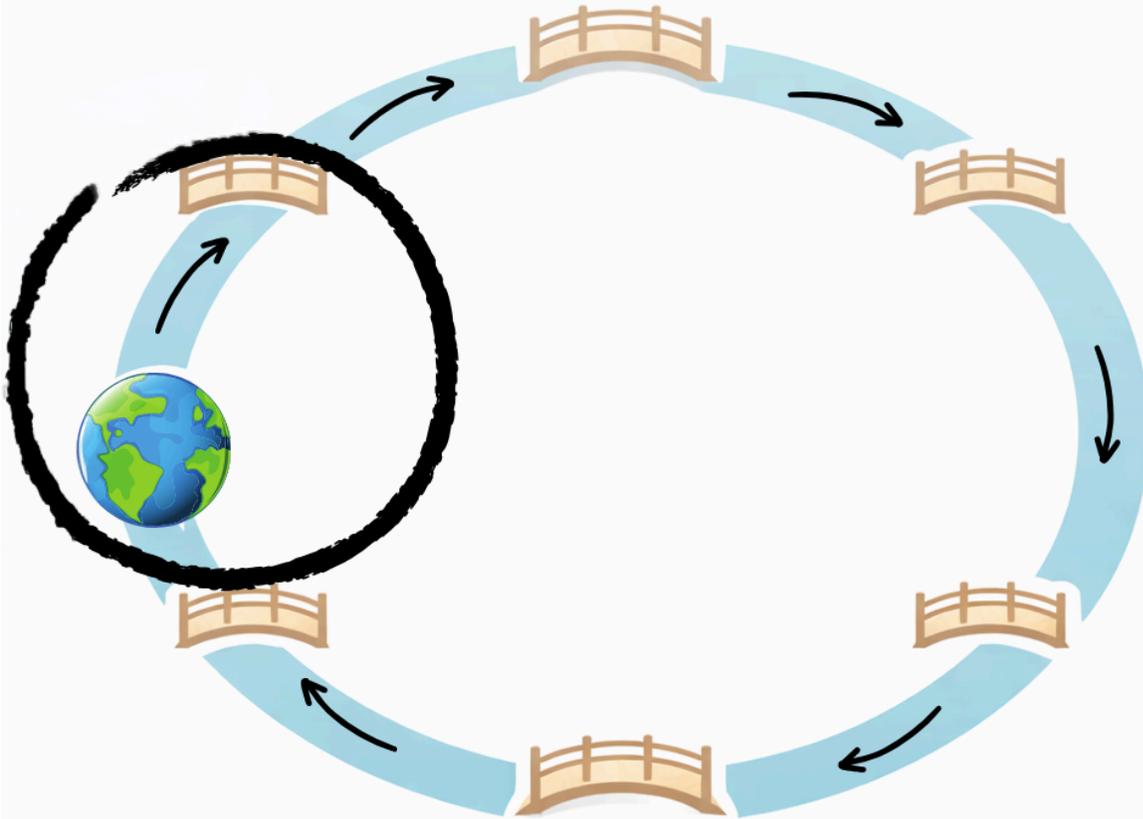
Ministries are able to naturally grow towards working together and isolation is prevented

The entire church can grow with clarity, health, and direction.

The Discipleship Pathway isn’t just a chart—it’s our shared language for growth.

# Moving Through the Pathway: Stage 1

## Stage 1: "First Drink"



## Evangelism and Conversion

### The First Drink — Evangelism & Conversion

*Theme Verse: John 4:13-14 — “Whoever drinks the water I give them will never thirst.”*

**Goal:** Introduce people to Jesus and invite them to experience new life.

**Who's Here:** Seekers, visitors, or new believers encountering the Gospel for the first time.

**Focus:** Evangelism, testimony, Gospel invitations, one-on-one conversations.

**Ministry Focus:**

- Evangelism, testimony, and outreach
- Clear Gospel invitations at events and services
- One-on-one evangelistic conversations

**Pathway Notes**

At this stage, our goal is introduction. People do not yet belong to our church community—they are being invited to taste the water of life. We will also have people

move into Stage 2 (in our lobby) that have not necessarily completed this stage, and we

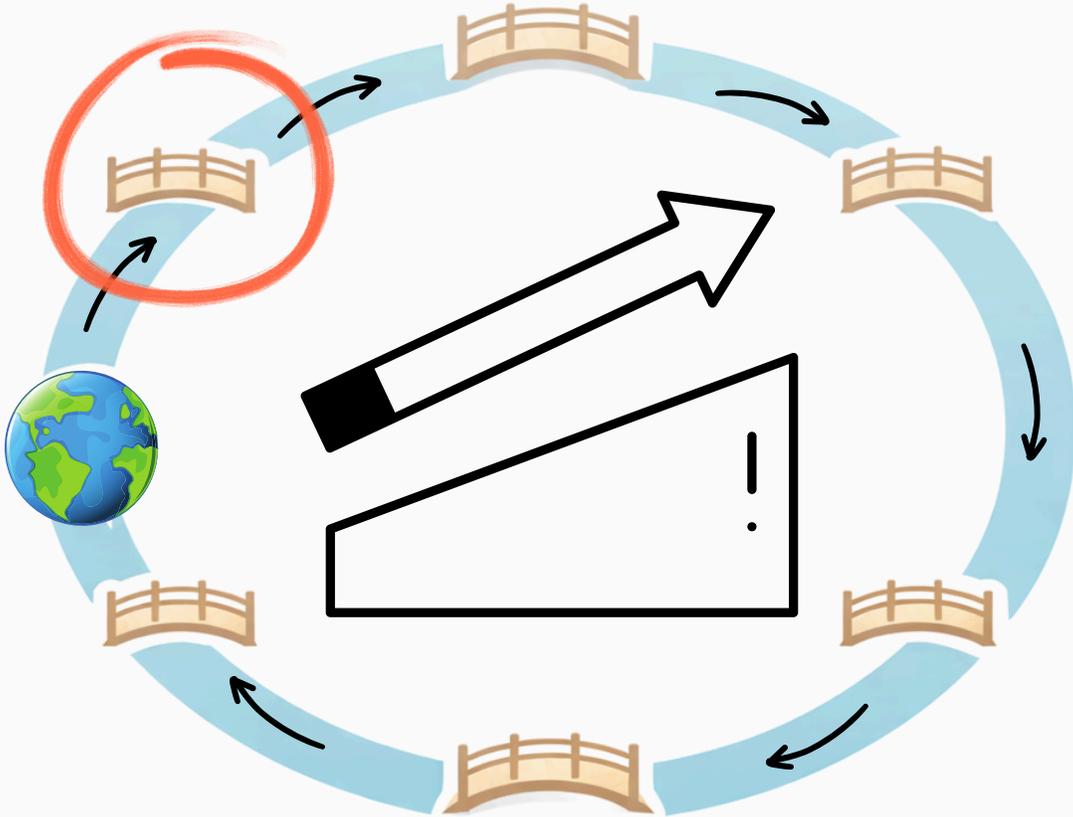
should be aware of that.

*Isaiah 55:1 – “Come, everyone who thirsts, come to the waters.” Revelation 22:17 – “Let the one who desires take the water of life without price.”*

## **Bridge 1: On Ramps**

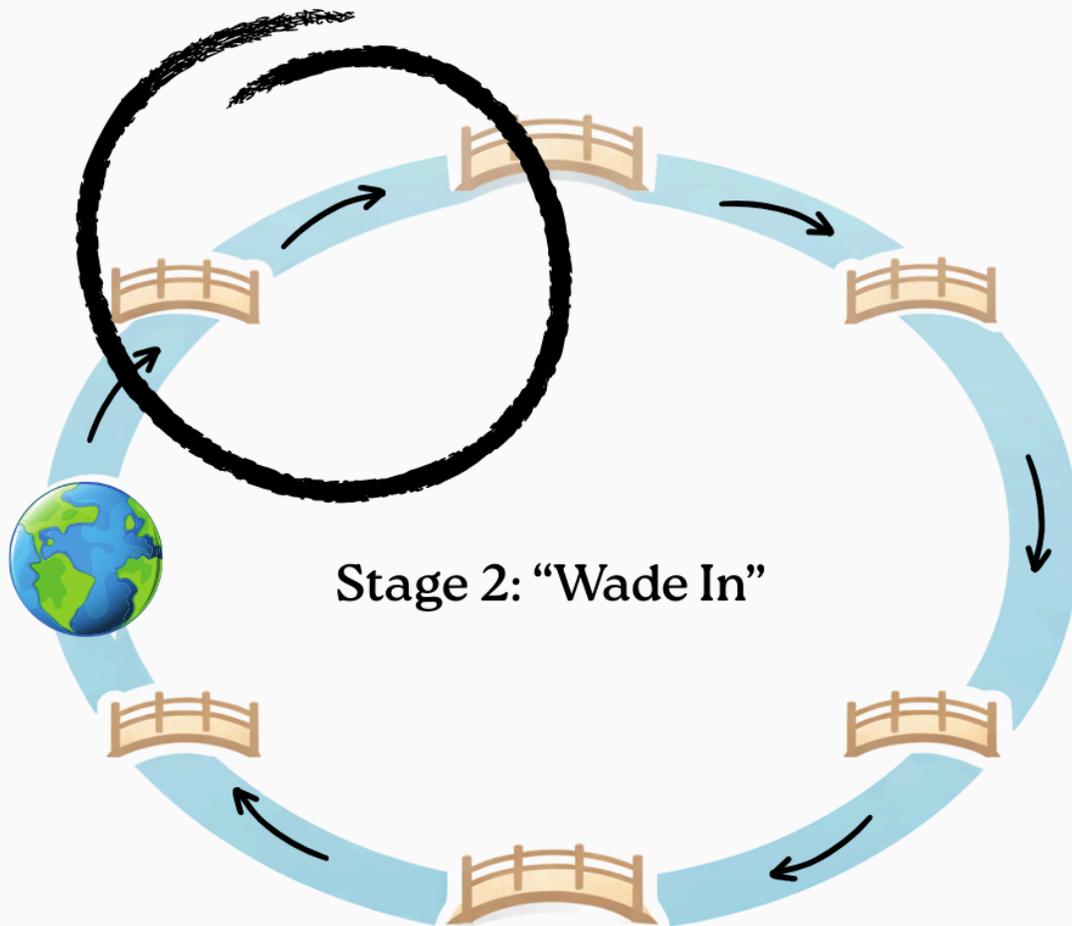
<b>Intentional Movement towards Stage 2</b>
After conversion, people need an on ramp: A clear invitation to faith and connection with the church community.
On Ramps are events or programs that invite new people into the river for the first time—our entry points from the community.

Bridge: from Stage 1-2



On Ramps

**Moving Through the Pathway: Stage 2**



Stage 2: "Wade In"

## First Connections and On-Ramps

### Wade In — First Connections & On-Ramps

**Theme Verse:** Psalm 34:8 — "Taste and see that the Lord is good."

**Goal:** Create clear, intentional on-ramps between the community and the church.

**Who's Here:** Visitors, friends, and community members stepping in for the first time.

**Success:** A community member meets someone from New Beginnings Church, or a first time guest attends worship, shares their contact info, and receives follow-up and connection to the church.

## **Intentional focus: Keep the water warm!**

To “wade in” is to test the water—to step into community life for the first time. People in this stage are visitors, friends of members, or community participants. We want folks to experience our church in an authentic, genuine way that truly represents us as a body of believers. We don’t want to mislead anyone into believing something that isn’t true: good or bad!

## **On Ramp Ministries at NBC:**

AWANA

Antioch Pulse

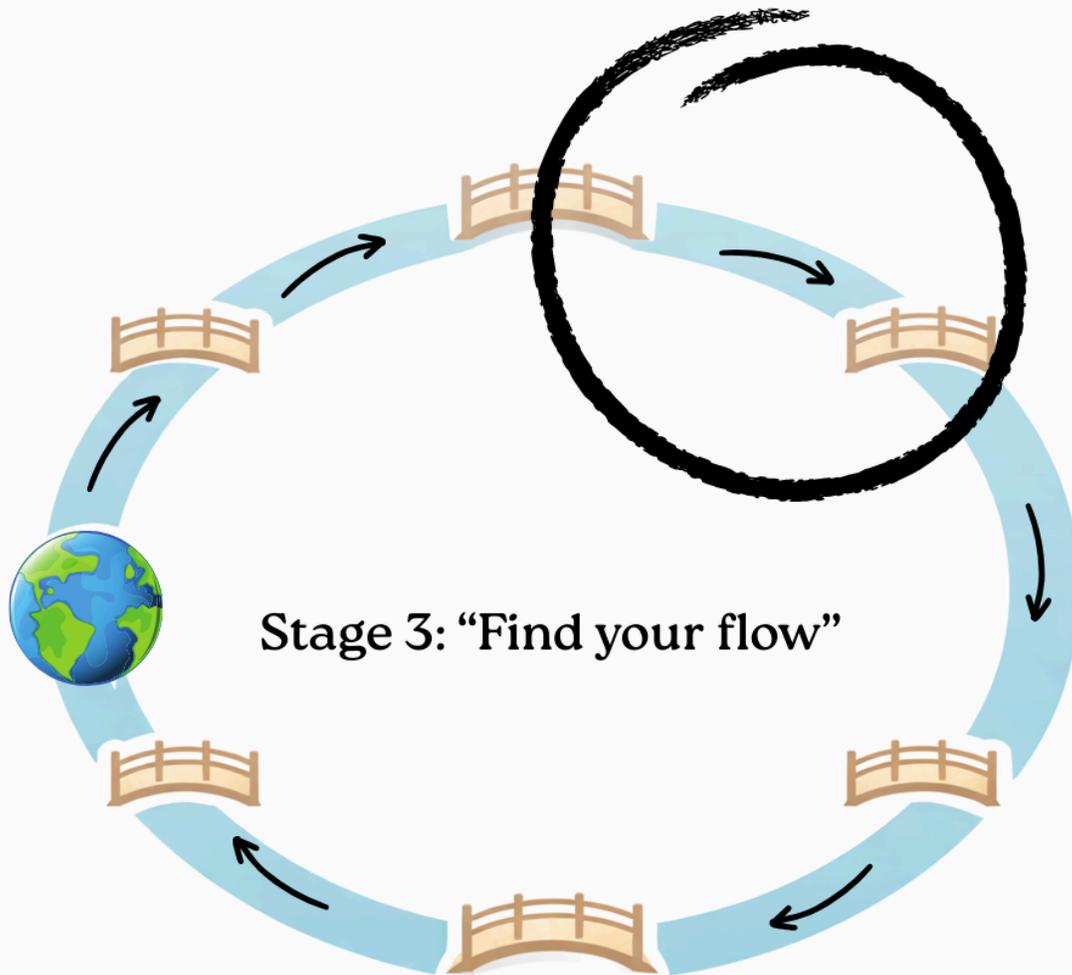
Reach Out Initiatives from 242 groups, Mens and Women’s Ministries.

Past Events: The Block Party, National Night Out

## **Crossing the bridge to Stage 3 is accomplished by:**

- attend 5 weekly services
- email is on the weekly newsletter list
- they have made a personal connection with someone in the church

## **Moving Through the Pathway: Stage 3**



## Belonging & Rhythms

### Find Your Flow — Belonging & Rhythms

*Theme Verse: Psalm 1:3 — "He is like a tree planted by streams of water."*

**Goal:** Help people develop consistent rhythms of belonging, worship, and service at New Beginnings Church

**Who's Here:** Regular attenders beginning to connect deeper into the church.

**Ministry Focus:** Education about NBC, in the church directory, growing

fellowship, prayer, 242 Life groups, Men's & Women's Ministries, Choir, VBS.

### **Pathway Notes**

This stage is for people desiring to grow into healthy church life at New Beginnings. They should learn the heartbeat of the church, from knowing who leaders are, what the core beliefs are, and start exploring ministry and relational opportunities. At this point they should be able to try out several different options to see what is a good fit for them in this season, whether that is a Sunday morning or weeknight small group bible study.

Stage 3 includes a "New Beginner's Class" hosted by Pastor Joe. This class will provide an overview of essential practices and beliefs at NBC, including our Mission Statement, Vision Statement, Statement of Faith, Ministry Culture, and History.

**Time Frame:** time spent in this stage will vary based on personality, attendance and schedules, but it should be expected to spend 4-6 months in Stage before being ready to move into stage 4.

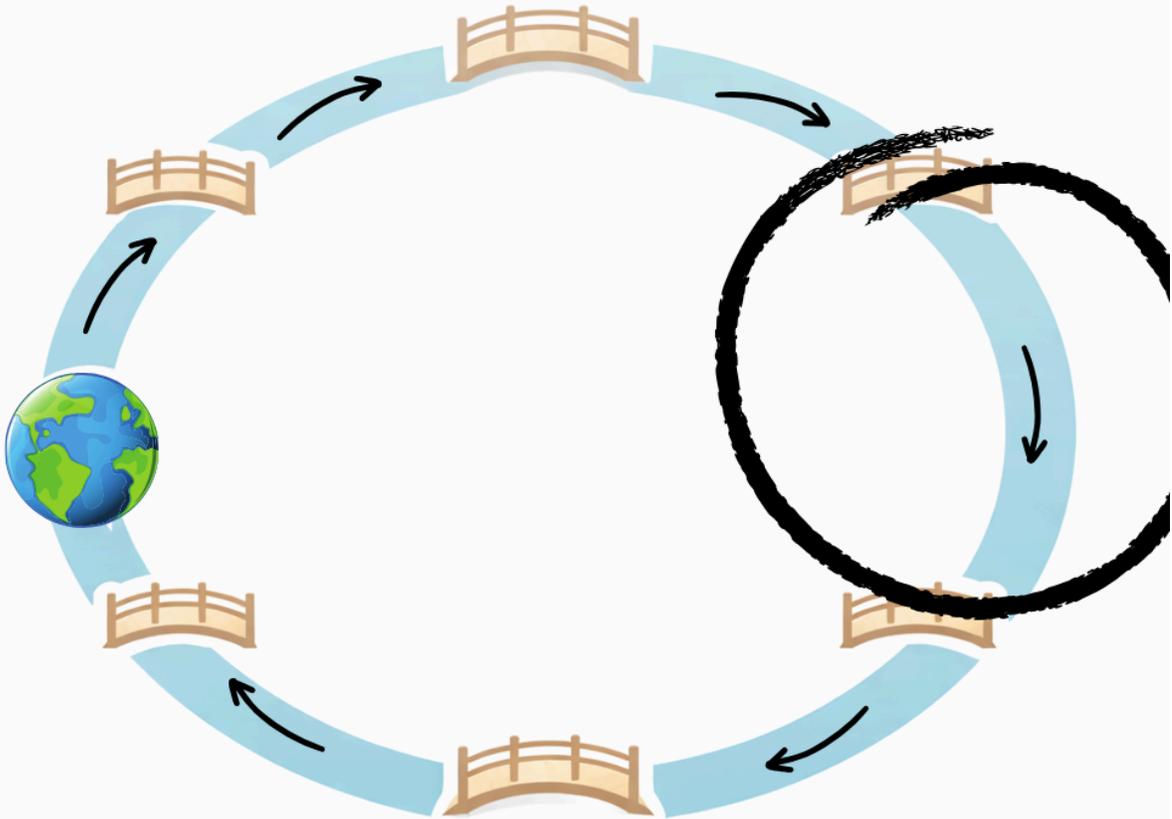
## **Crossing the bridge to Stage 4 is accomplished by:**

Movement happens when attendance becomes commitment—a person will be ready for Stage 4 when they:

- have completed a New Beginner's Class with Pastor Joe
- have participated in a communion service
- have tried one or more different community group settings.

## **Moving Through the Pathway: Stage 4**

## Stage 4: “Join the Current”



## Commitment & Community

### Join the Current — Commitment & Community

*Theme Verse: Philippians 1:5 — “Because of your partnership in the gospel.”*

**Goal:** Develop covenant participation and shared responsibility in the body.

**Who’s Here:** Disciples who serve regularly, give faithfully, and engage deeply. At this point, people don’t just attend—they flow with the body.

**Focus:** Finding where your gifts and ministry fit within this local body.

## **Ministry Focus:**

- faithful attendance
- regular giving in some format
- frequent participation in events outside of just 10am worship service
- serving in non-leadership roles regularly.

## **Pathway Notes**

At this point, someone should feel like they are church family, and are looking to use their spiritual gifts to help minister as part of NBC. Ministries with non-leadership roles should be explored, such as:

- Charis Kids
- Greeters
- Finance Team
- Conviviality
- Music
- Building and Grounds
- AWANA/Youth
- Media

**Time Considerations:** While each person is different, it would be reasonable to expect someone to have spent 9 months to a year at NBC before being ready to move into Stage 5.

**Time Warning:** this stage can tend towards stagnancy and unhelpful contentment if not approached intentionally. Questions without answers become festering wounds and “Synthesizing” church life without actual commitment is a very real danger. If this stage takes longer than 2 years, there is a log jam somewhere.

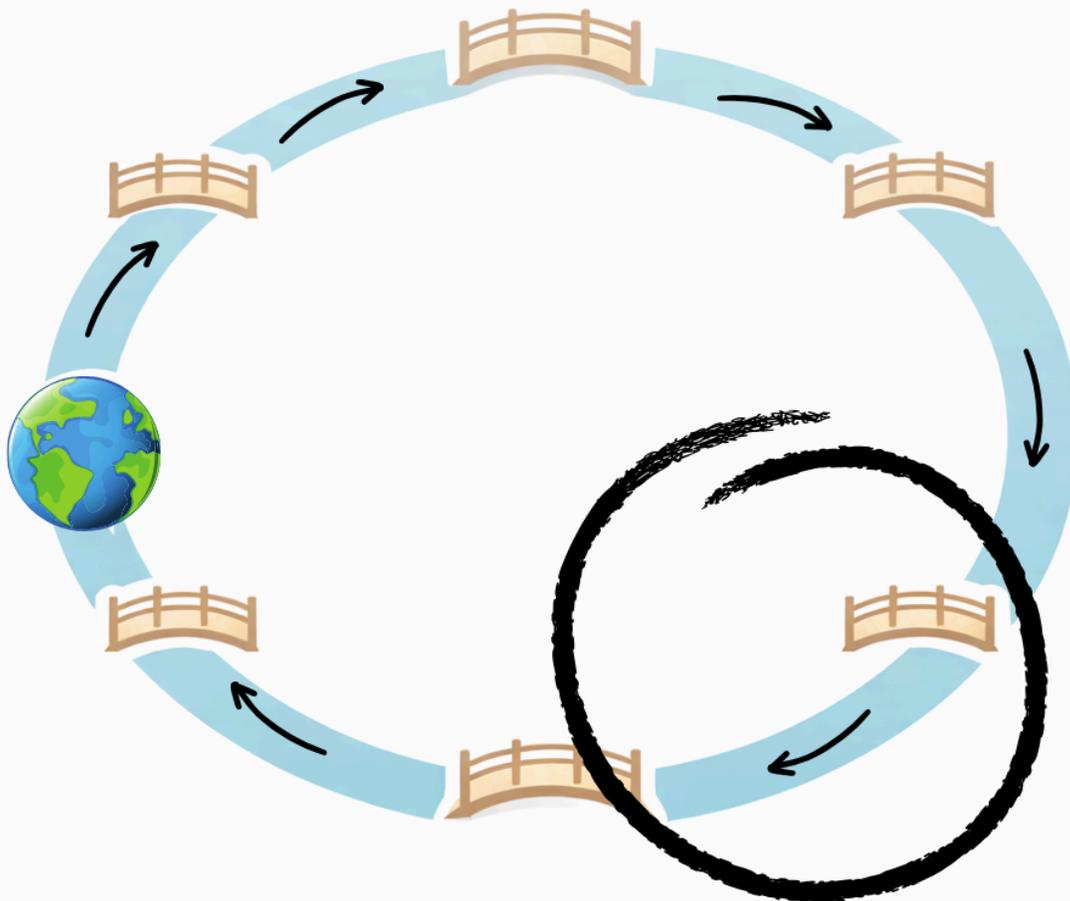
## **Crossing the bridge to Stage 5 is accomplished by:**

Formal membership, faithfulness in attendance, giving, service, and ordinances, maturity in personal spiritual disciplines, fruitful personal ministry and healthy

relationships in the church family. These things as they are confirmed by the local church mark readiness to take on more responsibility and leadership as the Spirit leads.

## Moving Through the Pathway: Stage 5

### Stage 5: “Embankment Structure”



Stability and Leadership

The Embankment Structure—Stability and Leadership

*Theme Verse: Ephesians 4:11-13 — “To equip the saints for the work of ministry.”*

**Goal:** Build spiritual stability and leadership that builds, shapes and protects the flow.

**Who’s Here:** Members who teach, lead, serve, or shepherd others. Teachers • Ministry Heads • Deacons • Stewards • Elders.

**Focus:** Build the leadership and stability that give shape to the river’s flow by raising up and developing new leaders.

**Ministry Focus:**

- Teachers, Bible studies and small group leaders
- Ministry heads and coordinators
- Deacons, Stewards, and Elders

**Pathway Notes**

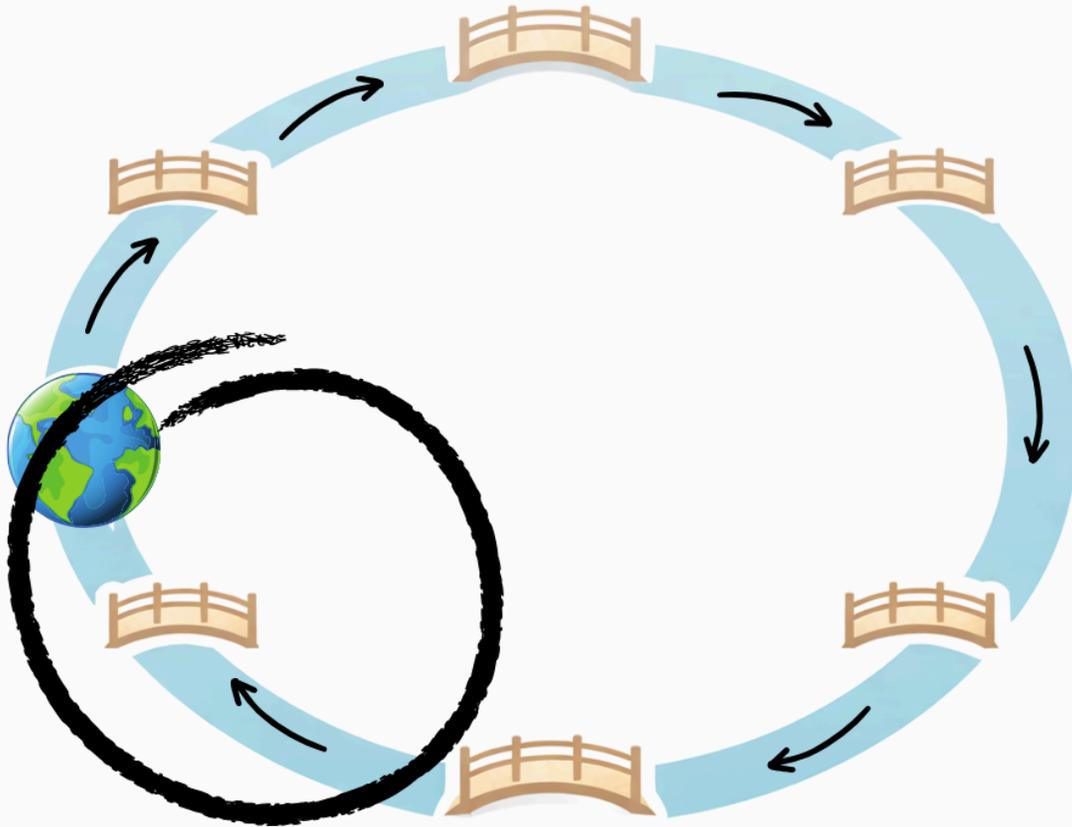
This is often where many mature Christians will spend many years of time in fruitful ministry. This season might come to an end out of a need to let younger leaders grow, or a calling to move to Stage 6.

**Crossing the bridge to Stage 6 is accomplished by:**

- 1) feeling called by the Lord to Missions, Church Planting, or some kind of travel ministry.
- 2) having the affirmation of the congregation and church Elders of this calling after observation of faithful life and witness, spiritual gifting, and fruit of ministry at NBC.

**Moving Through the Pathway: Stage 6**

## Stage 6: “Flowing Outward”



## Mission and Multiplication

### Flowing Outward – Mission & Multiplication

*Theme: The Great Commission-Matthew 28:19-20*

**Goal:** Empower mature disciples to go, send, and reproduce the mission of God.

**Who's Here:** Missionaries, church planters, ministry founders, mentors.

**Focus:** In this stage, disciples become disciple-makers. They serve as missionaries, church planters, ministry founders, or mentors who extend the life of

New Beginnings beyond its walls.

**Ministries in this stage:**

- Global or local mission work
- Church planting partnerships
- Community ministries and outreach
- Mentoring and training new leaders
- Initiating or helping lead local evangelism efforts.

**The Bridge to Stage 1:**

Flowing outward circles back to “The First Drink.” Every outreach creates opportunities

for new people to hear and respond to the Gospel—starting the river again.