

Impact Story

RHONDA BAKER - M.Div. Alumna, 2003

Travelers flying into Las Vegas see an oasis of light long before reaching the airport. But a true Oasis of Light resides to the southeast in Henderson, where Northern alumna Rhonda Baker serves as pastor of Women's Ministry at the 16,000 member-strong Central Christian Church. The light from Central reaches into spiritually dark "Sin City," personally touching and ministering to its people.

"Here, people are often at the bottom, and I believe in reaching beyond safe," Rhonda says. The church is also partnering with 2 women's outreach ministries and Rhonda is one of five pastors on a team leading Small Groups. Rhonda teaches First Step, a 6-week growth program for those new to or still exploring faith. She shares, "It is exciting when 300 to 500 new people arrive each time we offer First Step."



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WALLACE SMITH - M.Div. Alumnus, 1999

Wallace Smith's nagging questions from early on have been, "Who's NOT here, and why?" and "What's really 'relevant,' and what's not?" Church and faith have been at the heart of his life since youth. But, seeing them compartmentalized in others' lives, stirred Wallace's heart; he wanted to make a difference. He comments, "You have to venture out into the stormy water where the unredeemed are and not have a 'retreat mentality.' Church should be for community worship and 'gathering supplies' for your next voyage out to seek the lost."

Wallace has served at Lawndale Community Church in Chicago, as an Associate Pastor at a large church in Indianapolis, and as a pastoral care counselor in a multi-cultural setting. Two years ago he planted Journey Community Church in Shawnee, KS, which works diligently to engage the un-churched, embrace refugees, and serve the changing community. His motivation is to love authentically while striving to leave no life untouched.

