



Focus Church is a gateway through which people can know Jesus and encounter God's presence, protection and provision.

Open When did you first become part of Gateway Church?

Read Jacob encountered God for the first time while running from Esau. He named the place of the meeting "Bethel," which literally means "House of God." This story in Genesis 28:10–22 is an Old Testament picture of the birth of the church and demonstrates that church is a place of God's presence, protection and provision.

In Genesis 28:17, the church is referred to as the "gateway to heaven" because it is meant to be a place where you can encounter God for the first time or the one millionth time, and it will always be an awesome experience!

- Talk**
1. How have you viewed the local church in the past? Has your understanding of church or your experience with it changed? In what way?
 2. How does a person's view of church affect their experience with it?
 3. Describe a time when you encountered God's presence, protection and/or provision through the local church. What was most meaningful about your experience?
 4. Why does God choose to use the local church in the lives of His people? Why doesn't He allow us to encounter Him exclusively on a one-on-one basis?

Live

1. How would you describe to a friend or neighbor how the local church has affected your life and/or your relationship with God?
2. Do you think your description would change their view of church? Are you willing to invite them to church so their lives might be similarly affected?

Pray

Thank the Lord for the local church, and ask Him to make His presence more and more obvious to its people. Ask Him to open your eyes to His presence. Ask Him to show you how to help others experience Him as well. Pray for the church body and for God to bless it and multiply its effectiveness in the local community and abroad.