



GO.

25 GROUNDBREAKING STORIES OF THOSE WHO GO





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GO.

25 GROUNDBREAKING STORIES

Even from its earliest days, the heart of the Assemblies of God (AG) has been winning the lost and fulfilling the Great Commission. Over the last 20 years, the AG has been the largest international church planting movement, now with more than 346,000 churches worldwide.

In 2007, newly elected General Superintendent George O. Wood clearly defined church planting as a core value that must be held onto if we are to make a true impact for Christ. According to Dr. Wood, “The most effective way to evangelize and disciple young converts is to plant new churches.” It was this passion for reaching the lost that led to the creation of the Church Multiplication Network (CMN) plan, which was officially adopted by the Executive Presbytery in June of 2008.

CMN is driven by a missional focus to equip church multipliers through assessing, training and coaching, and providing strategic funding and resources. Working with networks of multipliers and planting movements at the local, district and national levels, CMN leads the way in supporting the efforts of local churches and district offices. Since 2008, CMN has helped over 750 churches to open and begin reaching their communities for Christ.

OF THOSE WHO GO

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TO THE HIGHWAYS AND BIWAYS



GO.

25 STORIES OF THOSE WHO GO.

The Church Multiplication Network (CMN) was created to effectively equip, strategically fund, and innovatively network church planters. Since 2008, CMN has helped over 500 new churches open, 165 of which are Matching Fund Churches. To date, those churches have reported new relationships with more than 345,000 unchurched individuals in their communities.

These relationships and changed lives are possible because ordinary men and women responded to God's call to go and do the extraordinary. Go plant a church. Go makes disciples. Go reach the world.

In the pages that follow you will find stories of 25 church multipliers and their planting journeys. These stories reflect what God is doing in the lives of individuals and families in communities where someone like you has obeyed God's call to start a church.

I hope that you will be challenged and inspired by these groundbreaking leaders as you discover how God is using various methods, models, and styles of church plants to reach lives across the nation. As you read these stories, it is my prayer that you will ask God where He is calling you to go.

Whether it's through partnering with a church plant, starting a site from your church or stepping out to start a new church, the Assemblies of God is here to help. The Church Multiplication Network will help guide you through the church multiplying process.

George O. Wood
General Superintendent
Assemblies of God



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GO. ATTRACT.



**“Snoop Dogg will be at Element Church on Saturday night!”
A tweet like that is enough to make anyone do a double take.**

But you read that right...technically. Meeting at Mr. Smalls Theater, the premier concert venue in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, Element Church frequently shares their auditorium with some of the top acts in the music business. For the young adults in Millvale, Pennsylvania, Mr. Smalls Theater is a location that they are familiar with, which ultimately translates into them being willing to attend Element Church. While some are drawn to the church by the intrigue of the venue, others are drawn in by the relationships that have been built as Rich and Jodi Jones and their team have served and loved their neighbors in the Millvale community.

In the summer of 2008, a group called Millvale Matters went into the area with one purpose – bring positive change to a devastated community. Previously the gateway to the North Hills of Pittsburgh, Millvale had been a thriving community. But when Hurricane Ivan blew up the East Coast with heavy rains, it brought floodwaters that destroyed Millvale. After getting their homes and lives back together, more heavy rain came to the area, causing many residents to give up on the location and move away. “They became a pocket of hurting people,” says Rich. “We started looking for ways to serve the town – clean up projects with residents, landscaping and block parties.”

Their volunteer efforts paved the way for Element Church to move

into town in August of 2009. “The work we did with Millvale Matters showed them that we weren’t interested in doing something to them, but doing something for them,” Rich says. “People are so suspect of churches, sometimes understandably, sometimes not. They’re often painted as organizations that want their money or want to control them. We don’t want to control you or care if you ever give to us. We want to represent Christ by serving you. As we started to turn into a church, there was a lot of trust already established. They saw those at the front of Millvale Matters were also at the front of Element Church, which helped.”

Rich attributes part of Element Church’s success to the connections and support they received from various church planting networks. “It’s great to be a part of the MultiChurch Movements (MCM) Network and a fellowship that believes in reaching out missionally,” he says. “There’s such an emphasis in church planting and doing church in new ways. I love connections to both of those because it gives us strength to be able to draw from and to be able to pour back into others. We’re able to encourage one another and help one another with things we’ve learned in our process. Guys who planted before me did that and now I have the opportunity to do that.”

Since launching in August of 2009, Rich and his team have watched as lives change in their church. “One girl has been a part of our church since the beginning. She’s journeyed some difficult roads, but we’re watching spiritual growth happen,” he explains. “She continually invites more guests to Element Church than anyone in the church, excluding staff members. She’s been crazy about it, inviting neighbors and family members,” says Rich. “Lots of people are coming to Christ because she’s inviting them to church.”

Rich & Jodi Jones
Element Church - Millvale, Pennsylvania
theelementchurch.com
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@prsrant



25 GROUNDBREAKING STORIES OF THOSE WHO GO.

Tell us about the moment that made you ask, “What was I thinking?”

About four weeks before we started our church in Pennsylvania, we had six people show up for our core group meeting. I thought we were doomed – no core people and we were expecting over 200 people in four weeks. The 200 came, and lots of new people volunteered, but at that moment I thought we were sunk.

- Ed Stetzer, church planter, author and current Director of Lifeway Research



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GO.JOURNEY.

“What if children’s ministry wasn’t the direction I’m asking you to continue in? Would you step away?”

As soon as Brian Henley answered, “Of course I would, Lord,” he felt God begin to speak to him about church planting. “I had a Willis moment. You know, ‘What are you talking about, Lord?’ I knew something new was coming up, but to plant a church? What did I know about planting a church? I think that moment is right where God wanted me.”

Brian called his wife Kasha while on his way to a Michigan District Council meeting to tell her what God was putting on his heart. Her response wasn’t what he expected, though. “I said ‘no,’” explains Kasha. “When you think of a pastor’s wife, you think of the expectations. Being a mom with young kids, that’s why I initially said ‘no’. The expectations I put on myself were unrealistic. But doing a church plant, you get to set the standard on your

availability and what God’s calling you to do. With Brian setting the goals, you don’t have people set in their ways, saying ‘this is what the last pastor’s wife did.’” Eventually her answer became, “Brian, I’ll do whatever you feel God’s calling you to do, just be sure it’s Him.”

Listening to the meeting’s guest speaker, Leith Anderson, there was no doubt in Brian’s mind what he was supposed to do. “The whole service was on church planting,” he says. “Every word that he spoke was digging deep into my heart, and I knew that God was calling me to plant a church.”

Looking back, Brian admits he was out of his comfort zone. “It really caused me to rely on God during that time,” he says. Like most church planters, he was excited, but felt inadequate, so he devoured everything available on church planting – books, conferences, Web sites. “I did everything,” he explains. “But one of the things that worries me the most is that we see how everyone else who has been successful did it, and we might be missing the voice of God. We might miss the specifics of how He wants us to do it.”

With his calling confirmed, Brian approached Dave Williams, his senior pastor at Mount Hope Church in Lansing. “I was nervous,” he says. “Mount Hope had already planted a large amount of churches around the state. I knew it was his heart, but we’d never planted from within the church. All I could think was, ‘What if he looks at me and says no?’” There was no need to worry, though. Brian shared the vision God had given him, and Pastor Dave expressed his excitement at the possibilities.

In October 2006, Journey Life Church launched in Holt, Michigan, with seven families from Mount Hope. It didn’t start out perfectly, though. The group initially met in a funeral home, but quickly lost two families from their core team. They eventually moved on to meet in the Henley’s home, rented space at a Holiday Inn for a year, moved in to another building, then began their own building campaign. Throughout all of this, Brian and Kasha watched as God provided miracle after miracle. “A local church closed down, but they gave us their entire church – chairs, nursery furniture, everything. Then we got financial support from our district, and Mount Hope helped financially

with our building campaign. They told us that if we raised \$50,000 they would match it. With a group of only 20 people, we raised \$56,000.”

With a building to meet in, Brian and Kasha turned their focus to discipleship and developing leaders in their church. “These have been our two greatest challenges,” he says. “One thing we’ve intentionally done from the beginning is place people where they feel called and where their skill sets are, not just where we have a need. If we find out what they’re passionate about, then they’ll serve longer.”

Journey Life Church makes it a point not only to serve within the church, but in the surrounding community. The church holds yearly Easter egg hunts, helps out with a nearby school, and volunteers at local festivals where they hand out candy and set up inflatables free of charge. “It’s cool to see the church be the body of Christ,” he says. “We’re showing God’s love in a practical way.”

Members of the church get into the serving spirit outside of events, as well. “We’ll have people buy the guy’s lunch behind them in the drive-thru or purchase groceries for people throughout the community,” says Brian. “One time we gave everyone in the church \$20 and told them to go out and make an impact on the community however they felt led. The goal was to get them to recognize needs around them.”

Journey Life Church has continued to grow throughout the years and Brian and Kasha have watched as God has done miracles in the lives and marriages of those in the church. “We have a strong focus on marriages and families because I feel that’s an area that’s being destroyed,” Brian says. “We’re seeing people who are on the verge of divorce have their marriages miraculously restored by God. Many of them say if it weren’t for JLC, they wouldn’t be married today. They believe so strongly in what God’s done in their lives and it just spreads. They start talking to a coworker who’s struggling and then invite them to church. And that same story just continues.”

Brian & Kasha Henley
Journey Life Church
Holt, Michigan
journeylifecyclechurch.com



25 GROUNDBREAKING STORIES OF THOSE WHO GO.



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GO.FAMILY.

“We’ve got the worst launch story ever,” jokes Anthony Scoma, pastor of Southwest Family Fellowship (SWFF) in Austin, Texas.

“We arrived in Austin in July of 2003 and launched in September of that same year. Back then, you didn’t have the strategies you do now.” With no place to meet and no worship leader, SWFF launched with 45 people. Despite the fact that their launch wasn’t ideal, Anthony and his wife Deanna reached who they intended to reach – the unchurched in Austin. “In fact, the three people from the community who came that first Sunday, all three are still with us eight years later,” Anthony says. “Two of the three became believers in the church.”

A year prior to planting SWFF, Anthony was inspired by a book he read called *The Celtic Way*

of Evangelism, which told the story of St. Patrick. “Typically they’d go in and plant a mission, which would be not only the spiritual center of town, but where you went for healthcare, job training and protection. In order to get the goodies, you had to confess and believe,” explains Anthony. “St. Patrick turned it on its head saying you can belong before you believe. The idea being that when people felt the Holy Spirit in their midst, they’d be compelled to believe. After reading that I realized that’s what would work for Austin.”

Anthony quickly found this approach to be successful when Vida showed up one Sunday with a friend who was part of SWFF’s launch team. Vida had been raised in a Wiccan home but was exploring Buddhism, Kabbala and other faith options. After service that day, Vida’s friend asked her what she thought, to which she replied, “I really liked it. Do you think it would be rude if I came back? I don’t believe that stuff, but I really liked what I felt there.” Her friend explained the church’s slogan of ‘you don’t have to believe, just belong’. For two years Vida faithfully came and served. Anthony and Deanna invited her to their home for dinner where Vida would ask them questions. “This happened three or four times over a two year period,” says Anthony. “Then, after service one day, she says, ‘Hey, I need to talk to you. I want to know how to become a Christian.’ It was her time, so I explained it again and she prayed the most incredible salvation prayer I’ve ever heard.”

Another strategy that SWFF has employed is reaching people through their children. “We help parents instill values in their children, because even unchurched people want that for their kids,” says Anthony. “Our kids’ program is based on a monthly value, such as respect, obedience or courage. What Atheist doesn’t want their kids to learn respect? Kids are more open to the Spirit anyway. They show up with a friend and then come back again. Mom notices a difference in her child and wants to check it out. She ends up coming back again, followed by dad.” Anthony believes the

main focus is authenticity. “Their radar is up and they’re watching for things that smell of manipulation. We’re honest and it works.”

Since most of the people who attend Southwest Family Fellowship were previously unchurched, Anthony and his team utilize an eight-week Starting Point class to teach the basics of Christianity. “The whole church is based around discipleship,” he says. “Our sermons are designed to take people on a faith growth journey. We have very highly educated people who want to go deep into theology, but I’ve found that I can’t make assumptions. Not everybody knows who David is.”

Aside from making a difference in the lives of those in the church, SWFF reaches out to the community in practical ways. “We’ve done Habitat for Humanity and back to school drives, but what we’re really big on is partnership,” he explains. “We find organizations who are already doing things and help or provide funding and manpower.”

Currently, Southwest Family Fellowship sees over 300 people walk through their doors on Sunday mornings, but are looking to expand in the future. “We’re about to build on and max out our current property, but after that we’re not sure yet if it will be a satellite or another plant,” he says. “We’re also getting a lot of people from the community south of us who have few church options in their area. There’s going to be a plant in the next two to five years. We’re just waiting on God to bring a leader.”

Looking back on his experience, Anthony offers this advice to planters, “Planting has a lot of challenges to it. Early on the unchurched didn’t know what it was all about and for a long time we struggled with that logistically. In those first five years, sometimes I’d pray for Christians who understand how church is supposed to work. But I wouldn’t trade the challenges of pastoring the unchurched for all the tithes and volunteers in the world. So be patient because it’s a process.”

Anthony & Deanna Scoma
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25 GROUNDBREAKING STORIES OF THOSE WHO GO.

What is the one thing you wish you had known when you started planting?

I wish I would have truly understood the benefits of building a team. I tried to do too much by myself.

- Steve Pike, veteran planter and National Director for the Church Multiplication Network



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GO.
TO THE
WATER.



**Over the course of five years,
six churches attempting to start
in the suburb community of Sartell,
Minnesota were shut down.**

Doug & Peggy Vagle
The Waters Church
Sartell, Minnesota
thewaterschurch.net



**25 GROUNDBREAKING STORIES
OF THOSE WHO GO.**

In the midst of this spiritual warfare, God called Doug Vagle, a former youth pastor, and his wife Peggy in the winter of 2006 to plant the first evangelistic Pentecostal church in the area.

Doug and Peggy had never had it in their plans to plant a church. "We were in a church for eight and a half years and felt stirred. God birthed a dream in us." Drawn to the young, vibrant feel of the town of Sartell, Minnesota, they devoted themselves to tapping into the identity of the surrounding community.

In 2008, the grand opening of The Waters Church was held with over 500 people in attendance and tremendous support from the community, as well as Doug and Peggy's parent church, Heritage Assembly of God. Doug compares the feelings he experienced that day to the joy and expectation of having a child. "It was like everything we dreamed about falling into place."

For the first three and a half years, they met in a wedding and banquet facility, and finally, on January 16, 2011, they moved into their new permanent church building. However, Doug and Peggy's inspiration to plant did not end here. On the first Sunday in their new building, they commissioned the lead planters of another church plant, and have committed to planting four more churches in the next four years.

Because the primary demographic of the area consists mostly of young families and children, The Waters Church has managed to create its niche in the community by being the first contemporary church in the area that Doug describes as "youth group for adults." "There are so many great things that youth groups do that for some reason we think won't fly with adults." Outside of the church, they regularly host events for families and children in the community such as a free ice-skating day, family night, date night and other events for kids. More recently, they hosted an event during the community's spring break called "The Great Staycation," where they held different exciting activities every night for those who could not afford to travel for spring break. Through their involvement in the community, they have managed to win the hearts of the people in the area and have been instrumental in the reconciliation of broken marriages as well. "Families are our passion," Doug says.

As a church planter, Doug says that he has been continuously amazed at God's ability to show up whenever he steps out in faith into that miracle zone. He advises future church planters to not be afraid to dream. "Our job is to do the natural, and God's is to do the super. Together we become supernatural."

GO.
TAKE AIM.



Born and raised in a Pentecostal home in El Salvador, Edwin Marroquin received his elementary and high school education through Latin America Child Care.

Edwin Marroquin
Centro Cristiano Maranata
Overland, Missouri



Sensing a call to learn more of God's Word, Edwin attended Central Bible College in Springfield, Missouri. Shortly after graduating, he moved to St. Louis to explore the possibility of planting a Spanish church.

In 1995, Edwin planted Centro Cristiano Vida Abundante where approximately 70 people now attend.

His second church — Centro Cristiano Vida Nueva in St. Charles, Missouri — is now a ministry affiliated with the Northern Missouri District. From St. Charles, Edwin went to

Overland, Missouri, where he planted Centro Cristiano Maranata.

"Pastor Marroquin has sown much work and sacrificed to get Centro Cristiano Maranata to the place that it is now," says superintendent Clemente Maldonado of the Midwest Latin District. "Through his efforts the church is growing and is now multiplying into other communities. He is reaping the fruits of his labor after many years of hard work."

Clearly, the thriving congregation of Overland, which sees a regular attendance of 140, is just a small portion of the whole. In conversation with Edwin, he shared that there are two additional sites in the works: a "preaching point" presently meeting in Valley Park and a team preparing to launch a church plant in Ofala, Mo., by spring 2011.

Sixteen years and three church plants later, Edwin continues to passionately follow his vision from the Lord. "Church planting is a vision to witness the multiplication of disciples and churches for the cause of Christ," he says.

GO.
DELIVER.



**As a seminary student,
Dwight Miranda first felt God
working in his heart
about planting a church.**

Dwight & Lizania Miranda
Vida Community Church
vidacommunitychurch.org
Lute, Florida



**25 GROUNDBREAKING STORIES
OF THOSE WHO GO.**

“At first, my wife, Lizania, was not convinced about it, but soon she was excited about the opportunity to experience the birth of a church,” he says. “Finally God spoke to me as I read Matthew 9:17, ‘Nor do they put new wine into old wineskins... they put new wine into new wineskins, and both are preserved.’ I felt the Holy Spirit telling me, ‘This vision I have given you for a church is like new wine that needs to be poured into the new wineskins.’”

After seminary, Dwight and Lizania became AGUSM missionaries with Intercultural Ministries. Two years later they changed their status to Missionary Church Planters and Developers. “We already knew the Lord was leading us to the state of Florida where the Hispanic population continues to grow exponentially,” explains Dwight. “Four months later we launched Vida Community Church.”

During their church’s first year of ministry, Dwight credits their growth to early involvement in missions. “Our church vision statement is to reach people with the love and Word of God, helping them to become devoted followers of Christ,” he says. “Since we launched in 2007, we have supported missionaries serving in different continents of the world. We partnered with Global Initiative to plant a church in Nigeria, Africa, Project Rescue to sponsor three girls being placed in a House of Hope in Delhi, India, and this year we have partnered with the Southeastern Spanish District Church Planting Project.”

In addition to missions support and church planting, Vida Community Church finds practical ways to reach out to their community. “We have organized different types of evangelistic community outreaches including giving away free water during the summer time, giving away free hot chocolate on Black Friday at a nearby mall at 3AM, and a summer Mega Sports Camp event for the children in the community. We also started community groups that meet in different homes targeting couples, youth and the unchurched.”

GO.
TOGETHER.



Pastor Danny de Leon became the senior pastor of Templo Calvario in Santa Ana, California, in 1976. Since then, the church’s mission has been to come alongside ministries and help start churches in the area.

Danny de Leon Templo Calvario
Santa Ana, California
tcsocal.com



After 13 years of assisting other groups, Templo Calvario began its first plant in 1989 in Riverside, California. “We concluded that if there were areas in our city or other cities that had no church, then we would start one there. That was the rule of thumb as we started planting at that time,” explains Pastor Danny.

Unlike some mother churches that initially help out by renting a venue, paying for advertising or paying salaries for the staff of the new plant, Pastor Danny has taken a different approach. “With us, we don’t talk about money up front. The typical mother church

makes a big commitment financially, but if something doesn’t work out right, the campus pastor can resent it,” he explains. Instead, Pastor Danny sits down with potential planters and walks them through the procedure. Each new church will start out under the wing of Templo Calvario and Pastor Danny. A church will start out as small cell groups and eventually grow to include weekly services and finally become an independent church. Along the way, Pastor Danny and his team provide guidance and manpower to allow for the strongest possible foundation.

Many of the churches that have been planted by or out of Templo Calvario have chosen to be recognized as Parent Affiliated Churches. “I told many of the pastors to become part of the district, but in recent years they have said that they don’t want to be part of anybody else and have chosen to stay under Templo Calvario and use the PAC status,” Pastor Danny says. This approach has worked well for them already and Pastor Danny plans to continue to use it from now on.

Over the past 35 years, Pastor Danny and Templo Calvario have been involved in planting or helping to plant 77 churches and intend to establish 20 more in the next ten years.

GO. WHERE THE PEOPLE ARE.

“Our church was birthed in a hot tub,” says Glenn Leingang, pastor of Northwood Church in New Orleans, Louisiana.

Glenn & Sanet Leingang
Northwood, New Orleans
northwoodnola.com
[@Glenn_Leingang](https://twitter.com/Glenn_Leingang)



25 GROUNDBREAKING STORIES OF THOSE WHO GO.



Originally from New Orleans, Glenn and his wife, Sanet, relocated to Houston, Texas, after Hurricane Katrina and began attending Northwood Church.

After a visit to New Orleans, Glenn's pastor felt a burden to reach the city and began talking to Glenn about starting a church there. During a conversation in a hot tub, Glenn was first presented with the idea of being a church planter. "The first time we talked about it I told him I'll do anything I can to help the church," Glenn explains. But that's not what his pastor had in mind. "No," he said. "You're going to be the pastor."

Glenn shared the idea with Sanet, and they felt the Lord confirm the calling in their spirits. They immediately began taking the necessary steps to start their planting journey. But this journey didn't come without its share of doubt. "After God confirmed it, we asked ourselves 'Are we qualified?'" Glenn says. "That was based on my insecurity. In the Bible I see nothing but unqualified people. He just wants someone to say 'You can use me'. We said, 'OK, you called us, you'll qualify us.'"

Glenn and Sanet asked themselves what the ramifications would be of throwing up their hands and saying they're comfortable in Houston. "We quickly realized after three sleepless nights," says Glenn. "We saw visions of New Orleans and addictions being broken. If we can affect one person with the love of Christ it's worth it. We came here for the one and God's done even more."

In January 2009, Northwood New Orleans (NOLA) launched in Covington, Louisiana, 25 miles north of New Orleans. Attracting mostly 28-45-year-olds with families, NOLA reaches primarily unchurched people. "One thing we quickly realized is that we have to do a lot of explaining and teaching," says Glenn. "I put myself in the audience's mind and ask myself questions I think they'd ask. For instance, it's not enough to say we're going to allow you to give an offering. They need to know the why, so I explain the benefit of why God allows us to play a role in giving."

With so many who attend Northwood falling into the previously unchurched category, Glenn and his team work to not only disciple them but get them involved in the church. "I believe everything starts with a relationship," he says. Glenn and Sanet will invite a handful of new couples to their home once a month for a dessert social. "It's a very laid back time," he says. "We share the vision of our church and allow questions." In addition to this, once a quarter the church offers a four-week course called Northwood 101 that ends with a serve expo to help new attendees connect with ministries in the church. "We want to see them go from attending, to connecting, to serving," Glenn says. "Every person has gifts and talents. We want to allow them to lead, so we give them proper leadership training and apprentice them and eventually allow them to lead the group. I always tell my leaders, 'I want to see you replace yourself.'"

As they work to reach out to those in the church and the community, Glenn has found that Northwood's location has played a key role in getting people to the church. "We're strategically located in downtown Covington," he says. "The last Friday of each month is a block party downtown, so our church is open for it. We have a karaoke and dance party in the church and anybody can come in." Glenn believes a big part of people wanting to attend church is feeling welcome. "We want people to feel comfortable," says Glenn. "Nobody cares about the God you're

serving if they don't think you care about them."

Northwood has big plans for future outreaches, including The Hunt – a large scale Easter egg hunt with over 30,000 eggs as well as being involved in next year's Mardi Gras parade in New Orleans. "Our church is located along the parade route and next year we'll have three floats in the parade," explains Glenn. "We'll throw beads, but also cups with our logo that advertises service times, location and sermon series. If Jesus were on earth today, I believe he wouldn't be sitting in our building at Northwood. He'd be out on the streets trying to reach people."

And reaching people is exactly what they're doing. Glenn and Sanet love watching God work in the lives of those attending Northwood. Shortly after having an affair, Brenda was invited to Northwood by a friend. On her first visit she gave her heart to the Lord and began attending church regularly without her husband, Joe. During a marriage series at Northwood, God spoke to Brenda and told her to tell her husband about the affair. Prepared for the end of her marriage, Brenda told Joe. Expecting an argument, something commonplace in their marriage, Brenda repeatedly prayed, "God grant us peace". Joe didn't leave, but definitely didn't sleep that night. The next morning, a Sunday, Joe told Brenda he wasn't angry, but hurt, and that he wasn't comfortable being left alone while she went to church. Just as she had done every Sunday morning, Brenda invited him to church, but this time he said 'yes'. After service that morning, Joe and Brenda went to Pastor Glenn and Sanet's home for counseling and that day Joe gave his heart to the Lord. Today they both attend church regularly, participate in connect groups, and serve in ministries in the church.

Currently running about 230 attendees on a Sunday morning, Glenn is hoping to have 300 people by Easter as they move to two services on Sundays. Expanding to two services is only the first step, though. Northwood has plans to start churches in Hammond, Louisiana, and Slidell, Louisiana, in 2013 and 2015, respectively.

Looking back on his experience, Glenn sees this as the hardest thing he's ever done, but by far the most satisfying. He offers this advice to other church planters: "If the Lord has stirred a vision in your heart, then quitting should not be an option. You have to persevere."



CHURCHMULTIPLICATION.NET

GO.
BEYOND.

New Life Covenant Church in Chicago, Illinois, might be one Assemblies of God mega church that's not on your radar – yet.

Wilfredo “Choco” De Jesus
New Life Covenant Church
Chicago, Illinois
mynewlife.org



25 GROUNDBREAKING STORIES OF THOSE WHO GO.

With over 12,000 people regularly attending, New Life Covenant Church (NLC), has become known as a church that is community focused and reaches hurting people.

Lead pastor since July of 2000, Wilfredo De Jesus, commonly referred to as Pastor Choco, believes his childhood prepared him for his current ministry role. As the youngest of six children growing up in a single parent home, Pastor Wilfredo believes this shaped him to have a heart for the poor and for single mothers. “Single mothers are dear to my heart because of their struggles,” he says. “That helps shape my compassion toward the poor. I know what it is to live off bread, waiting for clothes and living off food stamps.”

In 1977, when Wilfredo was just a teenager, he took a job at a small Pentecostal church in Chicago. On July 9, 2000, he was elected to become the senior pastor of that same 68-member congregation. Immediately following his election, Pastor Wilfredo determined that NLC would be an externally focused church. Over the past eleven years, it has developed a reputation for community involvement. “It’s important for churches to be involved in their communities because you have to engage the powers and stakeholders in your city,” says Pastor Wilfredo. New Life Covenant has proven themselves to the community and is now a staple at events in the Chicago area. “We’ve become transformative. If a school needs to be painted, the church steps in and society says ‘let the church lead, they know what they’re doing’.” As a part of these efforts to be externally focused, NLC has opted to use the buildings and properties they own as shelters, teen centers, dream centers and to meet the needs of the poor.

Recently, Pastor Wilfredo used his influence in a different arena when he ran for the office of mayor of the city of Chicago. “I never wanted to become the mayor,” he explains. “I ran for mayor to awaken a sleeping giant. God created government and when the righteous govern, the people rejoice.” For 90 days, Pastor Wilfredo campaigned for the office of mayor. During that time he met the people of the city and prayed for them in the street. “There was no voice for the poor. I was trying to galvanize that body,” he says. “As a result, we’ve been seeing black, brown, and white evangelicals coming together and creating a movement that will represent the interest of the poor, not self-interest.”

This unexpected candidate caught the attention of elected officials and, as a result, Pastor Wilfredo had the opportunity to host a private dinner with them in his home. “God has placed me in a position of authority with these people who have a significant following in Chicago. I’m now at the head of the table when decisions are being made in the school system and police department,” he explains. “I felt it needed to be done to awaken the body. Hopefully I paved the way for another generation and inspired them to become and influence in society.”

In the church world, Pastor Wilfredo and New Life Covenant Church are expanding to reach more people with God’s love. For the past seven years, New Life Covenant has met in a high school auditorium, hosting 5-6,000 people weekly at its main campus. As the congregation grew, it was clear that they needed to make more room for the unsaved. Drawing from mature members of his congregation, Pastor Wilfredo approached a couple and explained that he saw a calling on their lives. This couple, along with a group of 20 others, was sent to another part of Chicago to start a satellite campus. Initially this helped to make room at NLC’s main location, but soon they grew again and another couple was sent out to begin NLC’s second satellite campus in Chicago.

In addition to the three locations in Chicago, New Life Covenant currently has church plants in Texas and California, as well as affiliate churches in Haiti and the Dominican Republic, each imprinted with the DNA of New Life Covenant. Pastor Wilfredo and his team continue to look for areas to start more churches, both in Chicago and across the country.

What is the one thing you wish you had known when you started planting?

I wish I had known that it would take longer than I thought to grow. I wanted the church to grow as big and as fast as possible, but that didn’t happen for us. I wish I could go back and enjoy the journey, but I was so focused on growth that I didn’t really enjoy every season and stage like I could have or should have.

- Mark Batterson, author and lead pastor of National Community Church in Washington, D.C.



CHURCHMULTIPLICATION.NET

GO. UNCHARTED.

When Myra Thomason received the call of God, she was serving in a part-time staff position at First Assembly of God in Winston-Salem, NC.

Myra Thomason
New Beginnings Assembly
Kernersville, North Carolina
godauthentic.com



**25 GROUNDBREAKING STORIES
OF THOSE WHO GO.**

God had given her a strong gift of teaching, but Myra struggled to discard the stigma placed upon her as a woman by her upbringing and background. Where she was from, the idea of women preachers was unacceptable.

A woman's ministry was in the church nursery or children's ministry. It was during this time that a missionary friend reminded her of the parable of the talents saying, "If you have been called by God to teach His Word and you don't, what are you going to say when you get to Heaven?" Myra replied, "Men won't let me." It was in that moment that she realized the lie behind those words.

Myra prayed about it but still struggled to come to terms with her calling as a female church planter. "In my core of core, I knew God didn't have a problem with it." Myra began to dig into the Scriptures to further understand God's plans for women in the ministry, and it was then that she came to the confident conclusion that God does indeed call women to serve as leaders within the church.

New Beginnings Assembly launched on Super Bowl Sunday in 2007 with about 65 people in attendance. For three and a half years they met in a public high school, until they moved into their new building in November 2010.

Although Myra is now a successful church planter and pastor, she still faces struggles every now and then. "Being a female planter adds to the mix of challenges." The area that Myra planted in is extremely conservative, and many are still not accepting of her role as a woman preacher. On numerous occasions, people have refused to attend her church simply because of that. While Myra understands that she cannot force them to change their minds, her goal is to influence their opinions through her life's example.

As a church, New Beginnings Assembly is setting an example in their community as well. Besides volunteering within the community, the church is also currently fully funding Impact Triad, a youth center that offers a free after-school program for at-risk youth. "We are here for the world. The world is not here for us," says Myra.

Myra's valuable advice to future church planters is that they should know their call and follow God. "Be willing to be broken past where you've been broken. Don't be afraid to trust God in the unknown."



Over the course of five years, Landon Holder had a series of dreams and visions from God.

Landon Holder My Church
Georgetown, Kentucky
mygeorgetown.com
[@MyChurchGtown](https://twitter.com/MyChurchGtown)



At first he was unsure about their meanings and thought that God was speaking to him to start a Bible study. However, in May of 2010, God finally revealed to Landon that He was calling him to plant a church. "I felt like it was what God told me to do." Landon returned to the little town of Georgetown, Kentucky where he grew up, and as a result, My Church was born.

When Landon first returned to Georgetown to plant, he faced a huge roadblock. He was unable to find the right location to start a church. In most places, rent was too expensive, and nothing seemed right. Finally, God opened the door for them to meet in a hotel that was completely out of their budget. Though the actual cost of the venue was \$1,500 for four hours, the hotel management has graciously allowed them to meet weekly in their facilities for only \$200 for twice the time. "I knew that it was what we wanted, and it was right in the location that we needed. It's been an awesome blessing."

On October 17, 2010, My Church officially launched with around 100 people in attendance. After the service, the church held a celebration Fall Carnival featuring free food, live music and bounce houses to minister to the surrounding community and gain exposure.

Since then, My Church has continued to reach out to the community through various ministries. "Our church is very outreach-oriented," says Landon. Every month, people within the church are given the opportunity to participate in a ministry group called "Compel." This group focuses on evangelizing and reaching out to people in the community through acts of kindness. The church has also recently started a ministry for the homeless and needy.

According to Landon, My Church seeks to always maintain an accepting and open environment. "I like the transparency of people knowing that I'm a real person," says Landon. Though their style is primarily contemporary, the church is unique in that it equally attracts people from all age groups. "We like to be different, but not in the sense of changing the gospel. We present it differently," says Landon. The warm, friendly atmosphere of the church encourages people to come as they are. "There's no persona that you have to fit."

Since the beginning, the church has experienced exponential growth. Within nine months, the church has grown from just being Landon and his wife to having a current weekly attendance of 125-130 people. More than 80 percent of these people were previously unchurched. In addition, approximately 30-35 people have been saved since the establishment of My Church. "The benefits are so beyond the sacrifices we have made."

GO. WEST YOUNG MAN.



With a background as a cattle auctioneer, chances are you might not have the first clue as to how to start a church.

Gene & Katie Johnson
Champion Cowboy Church
Hockley, Texas
championcowboychurch.com



**25 GROUNDBREAKING STORIES
OF THOSE WHO GO.**

This was the case for Gene and Katie Johnson, lead planters of Champion Cowboy Church in Hockley, Texas. “The Lord began to deal with us years ago,” says Gene. “I didn’t know anything about starting a church, but it was something in my heart and I knew I was supposed to do it.” In October 2007, Champion Cowboy Church opened as the only Assemblies of God church in the entire county.

Welcomed by the community, Champion Cowboy Church was soon known as a friend to the people of Hockley, Texas. “When people know someone that has problems, they send them to us,” says Gene. “Without even knowing us initially, they trusted us and sent people to us.”

Labeled a cowboy church, Pastor Gene admits that very few who attend are actually cowboys. Bikers, professionals and families, the people who make up Champion Cowboy Church are a direct reflection of the community. However, staying true to the cowboy theme, services are held in an arena, and guests are greeted in the parking lot by a hospitality team on horseback. In fact, roping was the connection Gene needed to reach Rick, a husband and father who was very far from God. A former bull rider, Rick spent time with Pastor Gene and eventually came to know Christ. At his water baptism, held in the church’s outdoor arena, Rick stood in front of the bucking chutes and noted that even though bull riding arenas used to represent a wilder life for him, that day God was going to restore his life in front of those chutes.

Pastor Gene and Katie recognize the importance of not only connecting with the area, but also connecting church members to ministry opportunities. Holding everything from health fairs and youth rodeos, to Easter Egg Hunts and Vacation Bible School, the church draws people from around the community as well as offers ways for church members to participate in ministry. “We constantly try to find outreaches to get our people involved and help them find their niche.”

Having recently moved into a new 20,000 square foot building that houses their gym and sanctuary, Pastor Gene sees big things happening for Champion Cowboy Church. “Part of the vision is to plant new churches out of this church,” he says. “I’d love to have the right people to do one per year and send them to different towns in this region.”

GO. THE ROAD LESS TRAVELED.



When you think of bikers, do images of people worshipping God and discussing faith immediately fill your mind? They should. This is what happens each week at Bikers’ Church at The EDGE in Mason, Michigan.

Joe Rabideau The EDGE Church
Mason, Michigan
edgechurchministries.com
edgebmxskate.com



In 1997, while on staff at Mount Hope Church in Lansing, Michigan, Pastor Joe Rabideau began a motorcycle ministry outreach to the community. Going out as a group from the church and making connections in the community, Joe soon found that many bikers weren’t comfortable coming back to the church.

“They were welcome there,” he explains. “But on their end, they had ideas of how you had to act.” To help accommodate the bikers, Joe began a service geared around their lifestyle. “There are no pews, just tables and chairs so that they can begin developing relationships,” he says. Quickly growing to nearly 50 people at their services, Joe’s senior pastor approached him about possibly taking the ministry to the next level.

In 2006, Joe planted Bikers’ Church, but acknowledges that this was no typical church plant. “It was a little different,” he explains. “We weren’t just starting a church, we were going after a culture.”

Attempting to reach those in niche groups, Joe approached it as if he were a missionary going into the culture and learning it. “It’s a different world,” he explains. “There are strict rules and a code of ethics, but not necessarily the kind we’d be used to. Once you understand it and respect their rules, they begin to respect you.”

A few years after planting Bikers’ Church, Joe found an opportunity for ministry expansion. The township held a festival where Bikers’ Church put on a BMX skate contest. “On the day of the contest, I was watching and it was clear that it was time to move because we had to reach those kids and their families,” Joe says.

He invited the kids to a meeting and discovered that out of 60 who showed up, only three or four had ever gone to church. “We’ve found that this generation is truly unchurched,” he says. “Their parents don’t go to church and these kids have no idea what church is.” At this point, Joe realized that they needed to expand to incorporate the skater culture. “We have two buildings,” he says. “One we have church in and the other we decided to use as an indoor skate park.” The skate park, which opened in October of 2009, is open six days a week to skaters anywhere from 12-30 years old, with church services on Wednesday nights. “When it comes to Skater Church, if we can make connections with the kids, the parents will see changes and they’ll come and check it out.”

To incorporate both niche cultures represented by the church, Joe felt a name change was in order. Rather than simply Bikers’ Church or Skater Church, they changed to The EDGE, representing their focus on reaching those on the edge of society and accepting them as they are.

The EDGE is seeing exciting things happen as it provides a safe place for them to explore their faith. “One guy from Bikers’ Church, I’m so proud of him,” Joe shares. “He had just been fired from his job and wanted to go to a bar, but instead his first choice was coming to the church to sort it out. He understood that it’s a safe place.”

Looking ahead, Joe sees opportunities for The EDGE to reach out to new cultures. “We’re making connections within the graffiti and tattooing cultures,” he says. “They do wild and weird stuff, but they’re not bad people. Once they know they’re safe with you, you can see some great stuff happen.” While some would argue that including new groups moves away from the church’s original mission, Joe has this to say: “We’re not moving away from it – we’re adding to it. If there’s no change, how can you be a new creation? Jesus adapted and so will we.”

GO.
TAKE
A LEAP.



Growing up in a poor family, living in the slums of a poor country, Luis Solero never believed there was hope for him to ever make it to the United States.

Luis and Ruth Solero
Hope of the City Church
Seattle, Washington
hotcc.org



But in 2001, Luis and his wife Ruth were petitioned by an AG church in Hawaii to serve as their youth and music pastors. Despite the fact that this arrangement fell through, Luis and Ruth were hopeful once again when a fellow pastor told them that if they really had a heart to plant a church, they should go to Seattle. "My heart leaped when I heard 'Seattle'," says Luis. "He told us that a group of people there had no pastor and if we wanted to, we could start with them."



**25 GROUNDBREAKING STORIES
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In December 2002, Luis and Ruth moved to Seattle, Washington, and immediately began contacting those that their colleague had recommended, only to find that the group had dissolved long before they arrived. With their personal belongings already on their way to Seattle and not enough funds to move back, Luis and Ruth felt it was too late to retreat. There they stayed – no jobs, no friends, and no relatives.

Not knowing anyone in the area, Luis and Ruth took an interesting approach to introduce themselves to the community. "We attended parties that we were not invited to. Ruth always asked the host or celebrant if it would be okay for me to sing," says Luis. "It was embarrassing, but we took it as an opportunity to introduce ourselves and get to know the Filipinos in the area." Many of the people they met began to ask about their church, which the Soleros explained was in the making.

The Soleros even began to pray over people in the community who they hadn't even met. "We went to newly built communities in the area and literally stood on the ground and claimed those families who would buy the new homes to be part of our future church," Luis says. "Prayer works! We have at least five or more families now in that community and most of them got saved through the ministry of Hope of the City Church."

In September 2005, Hope of the City Church, launched its first location in Tukwila, Washington, with 150 people in attendance. In January of 2008, their second location was launched just ten miles away in Seattle. The Soleros are excited about what God is doing in the lives of people in their church; most of which are new converts. "One of our passions is worship," says Luis. "Most of the kids and youth are attracted to the church because of music. We have many parents come to know Christ because their kids invited them to the church. Specifically, we have dads who dropped off and picked up their kids for Vacation Bible School for a week. On the graduation day, the whole family came, accepted Jesus, are now baptized and actively involved in the ministry."

In addition to outreaches like Vacation Bible School, Hope of the City Church places an emphasis on weekly small group gatherings. "We call it 'Hope Life'," says Luis. "It's a place where people can fully engage in the Word of God, discover their spiritual gifts and build a relationship with people who love Jesus and pray for one another."

As they've watched God's faithfulness in the growth of their church, the Soleros have also watched as their personal prayers were answered. After nine long years of prayers and immigration attempts, their daughter, Phoebe, arrived in the United States this past Christmas Eve. "Don't give up," says Luis. "There is always hope in God!"

GO. DISCOVER.

On staff at a church in Nashville, Tennessee, for eight years, John McKinzie felt he was to do something else.

John & Melissa McKinzie
Hope Fellowship - Frisco, Texas
hopefellowship.net
[@johnmck](https://www.instagram.com/johnmck)
[@hopefrisco](https://www.instagram.com/hopefrisco)



"I was reading all kinds of books about planting, not even on purpose, but I felt led that God was calling me to plant," explains John. "I went to my pastor and we prayed about it. Afterwards we went through the process of deciding where it would be." The result was an unexpected location – the Frisco/McKinney area of Texas. "Where we are was never on the list of where we thought we'd be. But through a series of relationships my pastor had, he suggested we try out that area."

In December of 1999, John and Melissa McKinzie, along with their kids and a handful of other families made their way from Nashville, Tennessee, to Frisco, Texas to start a church. Three weeks later, on January 9, 2000, they opened the doors of Hope Fellowship. Hindsight is 20/20 and John admits that it wasn't the ideal way to start a church. "I'd never tell anyone to do it this way," he says. "There was no advertising. We just started. In hindsight, I'd do that differently. I would live here for at least four to eight months to start building and making connections in the community. We didn't know a soul who lived here that didn't come with us [from Tennessee]. That's ridiculous. But looking back, God was gracious."

When they started out, Hope Fellowship began by reaching out to young families in the area. But over the last 11 years, the scope of who they reach has grown right along with the church. "Starting when we got a building, we began reaching and being open to multiple generations," John explains. Utilizing life groups, classes, bible study and group bible reading plans, Hope Fellowship encourages members to love, connect, grow and serve.

Growing both numerically and spiritually, John sees Hope Fellowship eventually expanding to reach the Frisco/McKinney area. "We want to start and plant churches. We've already been part of a plant in our city and helped another plant in Nashville," John says. "We'll continue to be a part of that, but right now we're in negotiations to buy a building in the city next to us to use as a multi-site campus."

Now a veteran planter, John suggests new planters not start a church without the following:

- Leadership. "There are unique leadership traits that God has gifted you with in order to start a church. If you ignore that, you'll be frustrated and unsuccessful because you're not wired that way."
- A team. "You gotta have a team. You can't do it by yourself. It's not just bringing people with you, but partnering with people in the area."
- Resources. "Don't underestimate having resources and money to launch. It takes money to start a church. If you ignore that and do the 'me and God is enough' thing, it'll be hard."



**“What do you want me to do, God?”
Most Christians know that the answer
to this question may not be what
you want to hear.**

Willard Coleman
Richfield Assembly of God
Richfield, Utah

In the case of Willard Coleman, the answer was to go to Utah to plant a church. Living in Colorado at the time, Willard wasn't interested in going back to his home state, “but God spoke to my heart about Utah, so I contacted a pastor I had known since I was a teen and we began to set up plans for ministry in Southern Utah,” he says.



**25 GROUNDBREAKING STORIES
OF THOSE WHO GO.**

In 1976, Willard and his family settled in Richfield, Utah, a small community of roughly 5,000 people. Here they prepared to begin Richfield Assembly of God, the only Pentecostal church in a mainly Mormon area. When they initially opened the church, the small congregation consisted of Willard and his family along with a handful of others from the area.

In an effort to establish relationships with people in the community, Willard found himself working full time in a hardware store. “I got to know a lot of people and they had a chance to get to know me,” he says. “That gave me a big opening and helped us a lot in being able to minister to people.”

Over the first five years of ministry at Richfield Assembly, between 100-150 people got saved out of the Latter Day Saints (LDS) lifestyle. Despite these salvations, the church didn't increase significantly in number due to the consequences experienced by those coming out of LDS. “Because of the conditions, they had to leave the area to survive,” explains Willard. “Many were shocked at how they were treated after they got saved.”

As frustrating as this was, Willard continued to push ahead in the calling that God had given him. Through the years he got involved in several public programs in Richfield, including working with the police and sheriffs, participating in the annual public Easter program and helping with a local crisis center. “There were a lot of things I helped with and a lot of people were surprised that we were so open to being involved. That opened up the door for a lot of people to see what was going on with our church,” he says.

Things began to pick up for Richfield AG in the mid-90s. Willard attributes this turning point to faithfulness to minister in the community. “Over the years there were a few people who hadn't joined in with us [because they were hesitant to be associated with a specific denomination], but eventually they came in to our church,” he says.

It may not have been an easy journey, but today, over 30 years later, Richfield Assembly averages 100 people in their weekly services and continues to see lives being impacted.

For those who are discouraged or facing obstacles in their planting journey, Willard offers this advice: “Be faithful. Do not despair on small things. I believe that's one of the keys that we so often miss – faithfulness. God is faithful. I was so disappointed in some of the things going on and He spoke to me, saying, ‘You be faithful to what I've called you. Don't worry about anything else.’ That's what we've tried to do and over the years we've seen God change things and work in the hearts and lives of people.”

**Why do we passionately
plant churches in the
Assemblies of God?**



**The expression on Aaron Del Rio's face
answers the question.**

The church is the greatest evangelism tool we have.

Before Gateway Fellowship Church in Helotes, Texas, was planted – by a team led by Pastor John Van Pay – Aaron Del Rio's family did not attend church. Here with the help of Aaron's father, Austin, Pastor Van Pay baptizes Aaron in a makeshift baptistery outside the Silverado 16 Movie Theatre where the church meets.

Working with CMN, the **Assemblies of God Trust** launched the Transform America campaign to provide startup funds for new churches. Visit our website to learn more about how you can help us Transform America one baptism at a time!

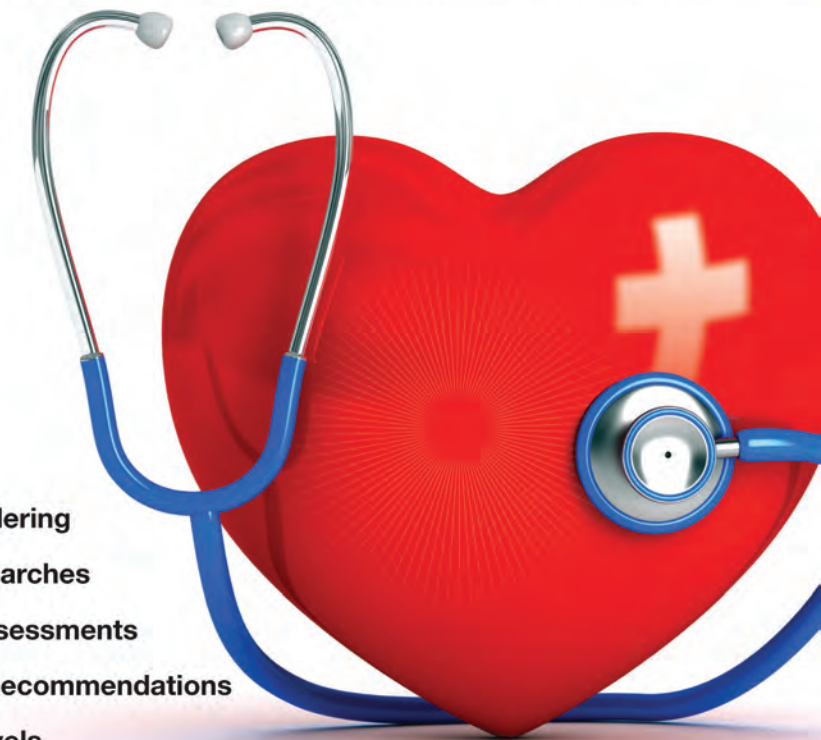
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CHILDREN

YOUTH

ADULT

LEADERSHIP

SPANISH

GO.HOME. TO HOME.

“Christians are people who vote for George W. Bush, hate homosexuals and don’t recycle.”

When Eric and Leila Ojala arrived in Summit County, Colorado in 2007 on an exploratory trip, these were the perceptions that many residents had in regards to Christianity.

Offering passersby five dollars for five minutes of their time, they found the people of Summit County to be fiercely spiritual, but anti-Christian. Eric and Leila quickly realized that they had a lot of work ahead of them. “We couldn’t redefine church,” says Eric.

Eric & Leila Ojala
Elements Church
Summit County, Colorado



25 GROUNDBREAKING STORIES OF THOSE WHO GO.

“We had to redefine Christianity.”

In order to do that, Eric and Leila, along with co-pastors Jeff and Cheryl McElhattan, knew they had to grow a tightly knit core team. “Once we all moved here in 2008, we really started focusing on building hardcore community and trust among our team,” explains Leila. “We put an entire year into getting to know the team and that factors in to how we want to see this church happen.”

Eric and Leila believe that discipleship needs to happen through community and that one person can’t take on the full responsibility of discipleship for another person. “We all add into others’ lives,” says Leila. “We believe that people will be more interested in Jesus if they see His body as something they actually want to join, instead of run from. We want them to be able to see a group of Christians who really love and sacrifice for each other. We think that’s the kind of community people will actually want to be a part of.”

With their team established and living in a culture of love and service to one another, they began attending missions school – Summit County Missions School to be exact. A mostly transitory area with only 30,000 full time residents, they knew it would be a unique challenge. “Many of the residents are 18-year-olds who want to take a year before college to work at a ski resort, or migrant workers and small business owners,” Leila explains. “We decided that we could fight against it and have something stable or make it so simple that we don’t have to worry about it.”

The simplistic option won out and the core team of Elements Church began inviting coworkers, neighbors and others in the community into their lives. “We’re trying to be as organic as possible. We’ve

found that people want to ask questions and be heard, so we get together for coffee and talk,” Eric says. “Our main concern is inviting people into our lives.”

With this in mind, Eric and Leila have opted to start house churches around the county. “We want to start a church planting movement, but they might never have a building attached to them,” Leila says. “We want to multiply, to plant churches that plant churches and make disciples who make disciples.” Rather than using traditional routes of mailers and advertising, Elements Church has found that simply experiencing life with their new friends opens up opportunities to bring them into their weekly home church meetings. “We let people into our lives and then they want to come see what we do in our services,” Eric explains. “We’ve actually built credibility that way.” In fact, the majority of those who have come to Christ as a result of Elements Church have done so outside of their house church services.

Since 2008, the Elements Church team has had the opportunity to see people come to know Christ as well as watch others take great strides in their faith journeys. Building relationships with people who have lifestyles very different from their own, Eric and Leila have often found themselves in uncharted territory. “Sometimes we look at each other and say, ‘This isn’t in the manual,’” Eric admits. “There are times that we feel like we have no clue what we’re doing, but it’s been a great time for us to get closer to Jesus and rely on the Holy Spirit more than we ever have before.” Through these situations, the couple has even found a change happening in themselves. “We’ve stopped seeing people as souls or projects, and started viewing them as our friends. Now we don’t just want to see them receive Christ, but we want to help them be whole in every area of their lives,” says Eric. “We’ve fallen in love with these people.”

Tell us about the moment that made you ask, “What was I thinking?”

My first ‘what was I thinking?’ moment was when we drove our Escape across the Arkansas/Texas border. We had junk tied to the roof and were pulling a U-Haul trailer and, while waiting to gas up my car, I thought, “What am I doing?” There was no turning back.

- John Van Pay, lead planter of Gateway Fellowship Church in Helotes, Texas



CHURCHMULTIPLICATION.NET



GO. FOR SOME JOE.

“I like coffee and church – I’m in.” This is a typical response when people hear about North Creek Church, more commonly known as Coffee Church, in Vancouver, Washington.

Mark & Stacy Newell
North Creek Church
Vancouver, Washington
coffeechurch.com



Feeling released from their role after 14 years as youth pastors, Mark and Stacy Newell felt called to plant a church. “We wanted to do something creative in the church as a whole,” Mark explains. “We wanted to take the traditional structure of the church and change some of the methods by which we were reaching people.”



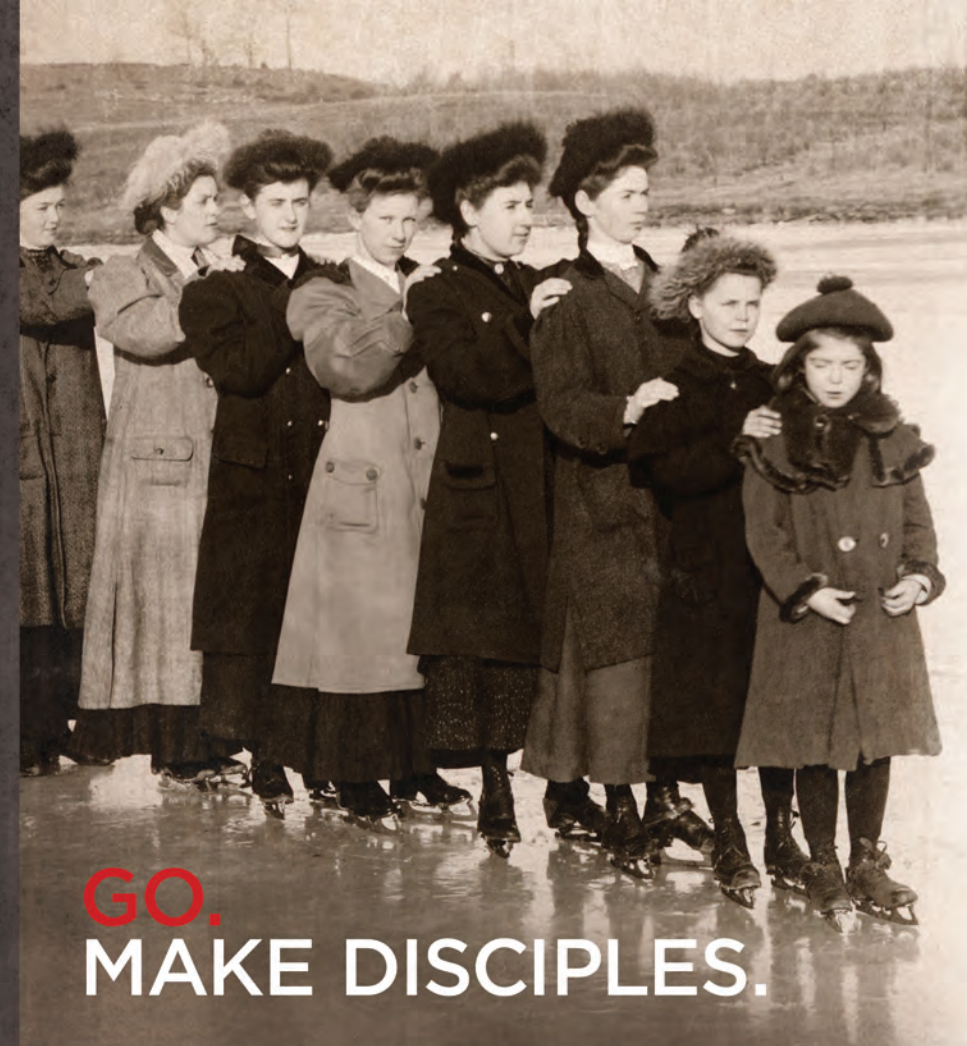
**25 GROUNDBREAKING STORIES
OF THOSE WHO GO.**

In September 2006, North Creek Church began in a local school. Within two years they were given the opportunity to move into a former nightclub, which previously had a negative reputation for drugs, violence, and crime. “The fact that a church moved in was very well received by the community,” he says. “We improved the building and the image of that corner, while we were simultaneously pointing people to Jesus and improving lives.”

The Pacific Northwest is a largely unchurched area. With this in mind, Mark and Stacy felt the nightclub atmosphere was a creative way of helping people feel comfortable coming to church for the first time. They chose to keep much of the layout the same, including the bar area which now serves coffee. “We didn’t change a lot of the nightclub aesthetics,” he says. “We kept the corrugated metal and subdued light. The fun part about where we’re meeting is hearing the comments,” explains Mark. “Our favorite is, ‘The last time I was in this building it was a nightclub.’ People are looking back at a previous lifestyle and now they’re in the same building for such a different reason.”

Because so many people in the area are wary of the church experience, Mark and Stacy strive to ensure that North Creek Church has a culture of friendliness and acceptance. “Jesus modeled belonging before believing. We let people be a part of our environments as they learn about the teachings of Jesus without a lot of pressure to believe. We’ve watched so many families take the time to discover the truths of the Bible and when they do, they choose to give their hearts to Christ, get baptized, and change the lifestyle habits that they need to.” Mark has watched this approach work in the lives of one family in particular. “Four years ago, a family, who had literally never been to church before, walked into North Creek,” he says. “In experiencing our environment of belonging, now every single member of the family has accepted Jesus and been water baptized. This family is now serving: the kids are assistants in classes, the wife runs our financial ministry and the husband serves as part of our preaching team.”

North Creek is now trying to purchase a larger building just down the street in another high-crime area of Vancouver. They intend to use this project as an opportunity to revitalize an under-resourced part of their city with a coffee shop that includes a large play area for children, a youth center, a sound studio, and multiple venues that will open up the building to the community. “We want to see more people have a place to belong, regardless of their church membership, to best leverage our resources for our community.” You can check out their website at www.19centsofffaith.com for more information about their plans for this project.



GO. MAKE DISCIPLES.

As a young woman, Flora Vergara went to bible school knowing that she would go on to plant churches. Three years later, upon graduating, Flora moved to Oregon to plant her first church in Roseburg in 1981.

Flora Vergara
Life in Christ (Vida en Cristo)
Bend, Oregon

Flora originally set out to minister to the Hispanic population in her city, but God began to open doors for opportunities to minister to new groups and languages.

During the time she was planting her first church, the Lord called her to ministry at the local jail. Speaking mainly Spanish and limited in her English, Flora began ministering to inmates of all languages and races. “With the ministry in the jail, God gave me grace to minister to every language possible. Since then I’ve been reaching whoever comes to us,” says Flora.

Since 1981, Flora has planted ten churches in Oregon. Now 72 years old, Flora is currently helping her two latest church plants come to life – Life in Christ (Vida en Cristo) and Bridge of Hope (Puente de Esperanza).

Through the years, Flora has found discipleship to be a key factor in her ministry. As people came through her churches, Flora would pour into them individually. “I invest time in them. Some of them have gone with me to do ministry and tell others about Christ, while others I have taken into my home for anywhere from three to six months. For many people it makes an impact,” she explains. Through this, their faith grew and now some who were saved in Flora’s churches have gone on to become pastors as well.

Discipleship especially resonates with Flora due to a health scare she experienced two years ago. Faced with heart failure, Flora found herself in tears. “I cried not because I wasn’t right in my heart, but in the sense of work I felt like I needed to still do more to train a younger generation,” she says. With that in mind, Flora took a group of 13 students on a spring break trip to Ontario, Oregon, to help declining churches. “We went to help the churches, but I was focused only on the young people,” she says. Watching Flora’s interaction with the students and how she invested in them, the eyes of one pastor were opened. “He was so blessed and opened his heart and told me that he has to [adopt my mindset] from now on,” she says.

In the years to come, Flora plans to continue helping to start new churches as well as raise up a new generation of believers. “There is a spirit in my heart that I need to transfer to this generation. All I ask is that the Lord glorifies His name in this vessel.”



Fourteen years ago as Brad Davis prayed over a map, he felt that God was calling him to the city of Chandler, Arizona.

Brad Davis
Desert Springs Church
Chandler, Arizona
desertspringschurch.com



At the time, he was the student ministries director at a church in Minneapolis, Minnesota, and was about to become a youth pastor. God had given Brad a deep burden and a vision for the younger generation. However, Brad was not sure about what he was supposed to do until God revealed it to him.

"The full extent of the vision was to have a church that would meet the needs of that generation." Brad began to do some research and discovered that the median age in Chandler was 28. He quickly realized that this was exactly where he needed to be. In October of 1997, Brad and his family moved to Chandler,



**25 GROUNDBREAKING STORIES
OF THOSE WHO GO.**

Arizona, with a dream of reaching out to the young adults and young families in the area.

On Easter Sunday in 1998, Desert Springs Church was launched in a local school with 104 people in attendance. Over the next ten years, the church continued to meet in several rental facilities. When they finally acquired their own building in 2008, their attendance tripled to nearly 700 people. "It's given us a presence in the community," says Brad.

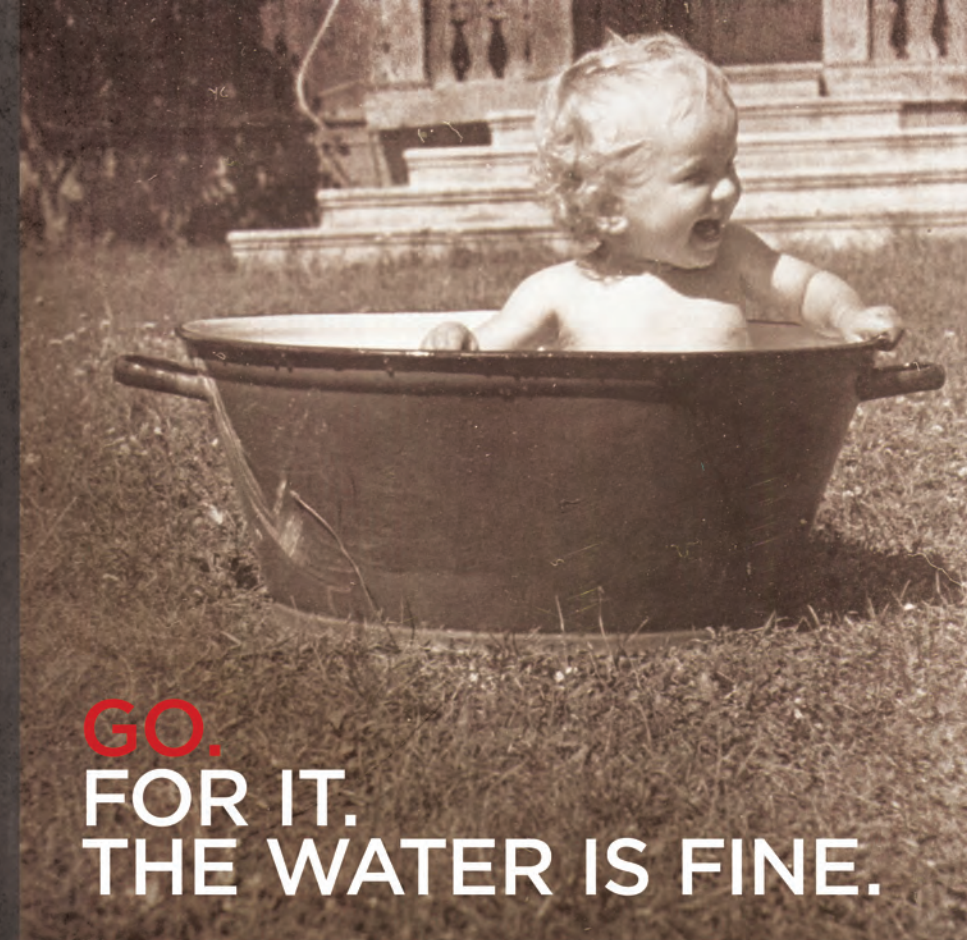
According to Brad, the biggest challenge in Chandler, Arizona, is the city's "vacation mentality." "It's hard to get people to commit," he explains. Because of that, Brad has found it necessary to train and disciple people to know that they have individual gifts that the church needs.

Brad's dedication to the church and people of Chandler has resulted in the steady growth of Desert Springs Church. The congregation of 700 people initially started off as a Bible study of 50 people in a home. In addition, several hundred people have been saved since the church's inception. "It is a difficult process to plant a church," says Brad, "You have to be willing to hold on and refuse to let go."

Desert Springs Church has continued to impact the people of Chandler both inside and outside of the church through their ministries and community involvement. The church's ministry outreach, Servolution, distributes food and clothing every other month to those in need and ministers to the homeless and needy families in the area. The church also hosts an annual city event called Live Love where they go into the rough parts of town to fix people's homes.

Brad's planting journey did not stop with Desert Springs Church, however. He has since been involved in various stages of church plants in 20 other churches, most of which are overseas. He has also planted churches in the cities of Phoenix, Arizona, and Portland, Oregon, as well. Within Phoenix alone, Brad has planted three churches - two stand-alone and one satellite church, Desert Springs Church Maricopa. "Our vision is to take the model of Desert Springs Church and reproduce that."

Currently, Brad's goal is to have a satellite campus in every growing community around the Phoenix area. Because of that, Desert Springs Church is in the process of creating a leadership-training program to prepare future church planters to be launched into satellite campuses. Brad describes church planting as the "most fun thing and the hardest thing you will ever do," and encourages future church planters to attend a CMN BootCamp. "Now is a great time to be a church planter and to take advantage of all that has gone into the CMN BootCamp strategies and training."



When Kimberly Campbell was a little girl, she would sing and preach to her teddy bears.

Kimberly Campbell
Fountain Of Life Church
Clarkesville, Tennessee
folclarksville.org



Little did she know that God would call her to be a church planter one day. When God called Kimberly, she had just started a small Bible study of seven people.

During that time, someone approached her with an opportunity to plant a church, but it took her much prayer along with heartfelt advice from Tennessee Church Planting Director Terry Bailey before she truly realized her calling.

Recognizing a need for a church in the area, Kimberly went on to plant Fountain Of Life Church in Clarkesville, Tennessee.

As a single female pastor and church planter, Kimberly admits that she faces plenty of challenges. "I just feel like sometimes I have to push a bit harder to get through obstacles. It's easier when you have a partner." Despite the struggles, her circumstances have worked in her favor to create a unique reputation for her. "I used it to my advantage because I don't want to be in the box anyway," says Kimberly.

For awhile even after Fountain Of Life Church was launched in 2007, Kimberly worked as a home therapist specializing in working with families and at-risk juveniles. As a result, she was on-call 24 hours a day for five to six days a week in addition to bearing her pastoral responsibilities. Still, through all of her experiences, Kimberly is thankful for where God has brought her in life. "I love that I get to be bigger than what I intended to be."

Fountain Of Life Church began with a congregation of 30 people at a women's club in an 1800's house. The church continued to meet there weekly for a year and a half before acquiring their own rental building in November 2009 to accommodate their growth. Currently, around 75-80 people attend Fountain Of Life Church, and the congregation is composed largely of new converts as well as people from a wide variety of denominational backgrounds. "We do our best to meet every need," says Kimberly.

Outside of the church's discipleship program, Kimberly personally discipled people until they are strong enough to be placed under someone else. Right now, an age-factor discipleship program is in the process of being developed.

Within the church, Kimberly has emphasized the importance of modeling Christ's love by being a blessing to the community. The church has been able to impact the community through their charitable donations of food and care baskets to local organizations such as Centerstone and the Pregnancy Center, and in May 2010, they reached out to the people who were affected by a local flood. This year, their goal is to serve food to the community at Christmas. "Our whole desire is to build the kingdom of God."

AG CHURCH PLANTS IN 2010: 325

31



Alameda • Altoona • Annandale • Apex • Arleta • Asbury Park • Atwater • Austin • Avondale • Barrington • Berkeley • Berrien Springs • Berryville • Bethany • Bethel Park • Billings • Blanchard • Blountville • Bourbonnais • Bozeman • Brenham • Broken Bow • Bronxville • Brookeland • Brooklyn • Brooklyn Center • Brownfield • Buena Park • Burbank • Burlington • Camuy • Canton • Cape Coral • Cape Girardeau • Chalmette • Chandler • Chatsworth • Chester • Chesterfield • Chicago • Chickasha • Chicopee • Clackamas • Clearwater • Cleburne • Cloquet • Coldwater • College Point • Columbia • Columbia Falls • Conrad • Copley • Corona • Danville • Dardanelle • Deland • Desert Hot Springs • Detroit Lakes • Dunn • East Bridgewater • East Orange • East Saint Louis • Eastpoint • Eatonton • Eatontown • Elizabeth • Elkhart • Elmont • Fairfield • Faribault • Fitchburg • Fort Pierce • Fort Wayne • Fort Worth • Fraser • Frenchtown • Garland • Gatesville • Georgetown • Glendale • Glenns Ferry • Glenwood Springs • Graysville • Greensburg • Greenwich • Guayama • Hackettstown • Hampton • Harrison • High Shoals • Hilo • Hope • Houston • Huntington Beach • Huntsville • Independence • Indio • Jamaica • Jenkins • Kansas City • Kearny • Kent • Kimberly • Kinston • Kirksville • Lafayette • Lahaina • Lake Elsinore • Lawrence • Lees Summit • Lenoir City • Lexington • Liberty • Little Falls • London • Longmont • Lonsdale • Los Alamitos • Los Banos • Lowell

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TOP MULTIPLYING DISTRICTS IN 2010



SOUTHERN PACIFIC - 33 // SPANISH EASTERN - 20 // NEW JERSEY - 19 // MINNESOTA - 13 // NORTH CAROLINA - 12 // NORTH TEXAS - 12 // GULF LATIN - 11 // NORTHERN CALIFORNIA/NEVADA - 11 // OKLAHOMA - 11 // PENNSYLVANIA-DELAWARE - 11 // SOUTHEASTERN SPANISH - 11

GO. AGAINST THE FLOW.

**“Stop complaining. Start a revolution.”
Those were the words on a bumper
sticker that changed Chad Stafford’s
life completely.**

Chad Stafford
Coastal Church
Daphne, Alabama
coastalchurch.tv



At the time, Chad was pastoring a church in Bentonville, Arkansas. However, he soon realized that he did not fit into the culture because of the religious strongholds in the area. “The religious people didn’t want growth.” During this time, God placed it in Chad’s heart to plant a church in the coastal area of Daphne, Alabama, where he grew up.



**25 GROUNDBREAKING STORIES
OF THOSE WHO GO.**

In July 2009, Chad started a weekly Bible study with only three other people aside from his family and a strong determination to reach the unchurched. He now pastors Coastal Church in Daphne with approximately 140-175 people.

Moving from Bentonville, Arkansas to Daphne, Alabama introduced a huge cultural shift and a whole new world of challenges to Chad. While religious and traditional strongholds were the main problems in Bentonville, worldliness proved to be the biggest challenge in the coastal environment of Daphne. The area has a predominant Catholic and Baptist background and is also one of the key locations for annual Mardi Gras celebrations. “You cannot go into a coastal environment without first understanding the culture,” he says. Despite the challenges, Chad felt called to make a difference in the area by reaching the unchurched through the reinvention of church. “We want to create the culture here,” he says. Chad believes in re-introducing the people of Daphne to the idea of church as well as Pentecostalism through a unique approach. “You can’t really come into this environment with a traditional mindset and hope to make a difference. We’re AG to the core. We’re just marketing things differently.”

On January 10, 2010, Coastal Church launched with approximately 71 people in attendance. The advertising for launch was minimal and mostly relied on word of mouth. This allowed the church to re-invest the money that was saved on marketing back into missions and community efforts. “We want to model generosity to our community,” Chad says. During the first year, Chad worked three jobs and invested 20 percent of the church’s income in missions and people. “The changed lives have been the best advertising for us.”

Since the beginning, Coastal Church has met in the auditorium of a local elementary school where Chad serves as a substitute football and baseball coach. While Chad believes that God will give them their own building one day, he also believes that this venue has opened the door to many ministry opportunities that would have been otherwise impossible. “We pastor a lot of people who don’t attend church.” With the high failure rate of former church plants in the area, Chad’s goal was for the community to miss the church if they were gone. Among other things, the church has blessed the local policemen and firemen with food, held outreaches during Mardi Gras and also given donations to the local football concession stand. “Our church really loves the community.”

As for church planting, Chad’s endeavors do not end with the success of Coastal Church. His goal is to plant a church every three years starting in a foreign country before they plant locally. “We’re committed to being here for the rest of our lives so we really want things to be done well.”

GO. FISH.

**When Daniel McNaughton was 20 years
old, God birthed in him a desire to plant
churches during a missions trip to Mexico.**

Daniel McNaughton
Spring Valley Community Church
Spring City, Pennsylvania
cometoconnect.com

At that time, he thought that he would become a foreign missionary; however, God had other plans for him. Twenty-four years later, while he was teaching at Valley Forge Christian College, he found himself being prompted by God to plant a church.

“I kept feeling a nudge that it needed to be me, but it did not compute,” Daniel says. He asked God to speak to Him clearly by letting the pastor of his mother church call and ask him to plant if this was truly what he was supposed to do. Approximately two weeks later, he received the call. “It was a very emotional moment for me,” says Daniel.

In September 2005, Spring Valley Community Church launched in Spring City, Pennsylvania, with 237 people in attendance. Since then, the church has experienced significant growth, especially in their nursery and children’s ministry, requiring them to move from the school gym that they were meeting in, to a different school facility where they continue to meet at weekly.

Since the church’s inception, approximately 100 people have been saved through Daniel’s ministry. “For us, Sunday morning is all about the lost,” he says. Because of this, Daniel’s emphasis on discipleship has proved to be a valuable influence on the spiritual growth of the members at his church. “There is only one command in the Great Commission. It’s to make disciples,” he says.

“We believe that everybody needs three contexts to hear about Jesus – large groups, small groups and one-on-one.” The large groups, which are the Sunday services, primarily cater towards the lost, while the small groups, also known as connection groups, encourage believers to discuss and apply the Sunday sermon. In addition, there are currently 45 certified spiritual coaches at Spring Valley Community Church that provide one-on-one spiritual coaching. “My passion is that every person who follows Jesus will make other disciples.”

Within the community, the church has made their mark through their involvement at a local food pantry and hosting events such as quarterly in-house breakfasts, community Easter egg hunts and also “Backyard Bash,” a block party with a carnival-like atmosphere featuring bounce houses and artwork. The fun atmosphere of the community events allows people to get connected with the church in an exciting yet casual setting. “We tell them ‘God loves your family, and if you’re interested in going to a church, come check out Spring Valley,’” Daniel says.

Along his journey as a church planter, Daniel has discovered that the most important aspect of church planting is obedience. Though at first he doubted his calling because he felt that he did not have the right personality for the job, he soon realized that God does not just call specific types of people. “It’s not about me. God can plant a church through anybody He wants. It’s about obedience,” he says. As a church, Daniel hopes to achieve the ultimate goal of fulfilling the Great Commission while keeping Jesus the main thing. “A lot of guys get excited about methods, but it’s important to keep the main thing as the main thing,” he says.

As this issue went to print, Daniel accepted a full time role developing church planters.



GO.
TO BOOT CAMP.

CMN BootCamp provides strategic planning to prepare people to start new churches. During this process, church multipliers review all aspects of the planting process under the leadership of facilitators and coaches with real world experience.



Prior to BootCamp, participants are required to complete pre-work assignments. By arriving on site with your work completed, you'll be prepared for the discussions and exercises that will take place throughout the week.

For more details or to register for a CMN BootCamp near you, visit cmn.ag.org/bootcamp.

Got questions? You can contact the Church Multiplication Network team by emailing questions to cmnbootcamp@ag.org or by calling 417.862.2781 x 3500.

"CMN BootCamp led me to the right materials, the right focus, the right heart and the right people. If not for BootCamp, I would have been running with a God-given vision, but no practical training or connections to hit the ground with." - Nathan Kollar, Lead Planter of Clarity Church in Los Angeles, California



GO.
WITH MATCHING FUNDS.

In the last four years **over \$5,000,000** has been directly invested into nearly 170 church plants. But that's only part of the story.

These churches have seen almost **10,000 people make confessions of faith**, given over **\$1.3 million to missions** and paid forward over **\$800,000 to the Matching Fund** that, in turn, **funds another 26 churches**. On top of all that the ability of these churches to not simply survive, but thrive, is over 97 percent in the last four years.

In spite of this success, people still think there has to be a catch, but that's simply not the case. The Matching Funds provided by AG Trust through the Church Multiplication Network (CMN) are simply that - matching funds. With no fixed payment or interest, it's not a loan. And because we ask that you pay it forward to bless more churches with start-up money, it's not a grant. These principles lead to a perpetual church planting fund that will be available indefinitely. Sure there are criteria that have to be met in order to be eligible, but that's because we know that following that process leads to a more healthy, vibrant church. **To find out more about Matching Funds or to apply, visit churchmultiplication.net.**

CHURCHMULTIPLICATION.NET

GO. TO THE TOP.



“The Lord has put it on my heart to start a church.” Not the type of announcement you’d typically expect to hear at someone’s birthday party,

Hiawatha Hemphill
Servant’s Heart Worship Center
High Point, North Carolina
myservantsheart.org



but for Hiawatha Hemphill, this wasn’t a typical party. “That was my marketing,” he explains. “I had a birthday party and paid for it myself. That’s how I made the public announcement that I was starting a church.”



**25 GROUNDBREAKING STORIES
OF THOSE WHO GO.**

Downsized after working in corporate America for years, Hiawatha spent a lot of time seeking God. In this time, God began to reveal the plan He had. “I had a vision where I saw this building with Roman architecture. The pillars were people and the Lord told me to put myself at the bottom of the foundation. God’s name would be at the top of the building,” explains Hiawatha. “As I start to support people, we’d lift up God and add more pillars. In Philippians 2:7 it tells us that God made himself a servant. Based on that principle those pillars became core values – service to God, to our families, to the church, community, and service to world evangelism.” From there, Servant’s Heart Worship Center was born.

Like any new church, there are a lot of things to be done, but not a lot of money to do it with. Pastor Hiawatha has found innovative and tech-savvy ways to minister to those in the community. “One day I was walking down the street and went into a restaurant. God gave me a word for the owner, so I started encouraging her. The lady broke down and cried,” he says. “She told me, ‘Many pastors come in here and nobody senses my pain.’” During their conversation, Hiawatha asked the woman if she would attend a bible study if he had one. She replied by telling him he could hold it at the restaurant. Now known as Message and a Meal, weekly bible studies are being held at various restaurants in the community. In addition to this, Servant’s Heart Worship Center uses a Heart to Heart Conference Call for bible studies, does a weekly teaching on a 24-hour preaching network, and regularly interacts with people via Facebook and email about the week’s sermon points. The church has found a unique opportunity for ministry as they periodically hold services known as ‘Church on the Lake’ – a special ministry to the homeless in the area where a salvation message is presented, games are played and they’re given a meal.

Launching in Fall 2011, Hiawatha and his team are already reaching out to singles and families as diverse in their ages as in their ethnicities, and watching God change lives. “One night, during Message and a Meal, a young lady slammed her cigarettes down on the table,” he says. “I was about to rebuke her, but the Lord said ‘no’. She asked me to pray for her to be able to quit because she doesn’t want to hide her sin.”

While he rejoices over every changed life, Hiawatha was especially pleased to see a transformation in his sister. “She was in a cult church that had really hurt her, so much so that she would have nightmares,” he explains. “She was a good person and a believer, but that pain was so overwhelming to her that she just wasn’t free. This year she got free and the Lord gave me a word for her. He was delivering her from the pain of the hurt of that church. She broke down in tears in church. To see the joy on her face was a sight to see. Now she is involved in church and happier than I’ve ever seen her in my life.”



“The Lord had been dealing with me about church planting, and to be honest, I didn’t really want it,”

Kenny & Amy McNatt
Canvas Community Church
Manchester, Tennessee
canvasmanchester.com



says Kenny McNatt, lead planter and pastor of Canvas Community Church in Manchester, Tennessee. At the time, Kenny was already serving in the ministry and he and his wife Amy were in the midst of an adoption process. However, when their plans fell through, they soon realized that God had other plans in store for them.

Kenny and Amy soon took in four foster children – a two-year-old, five-year-old and three-month-old twins who had previously suffered abuse and neglect. “It was in the process [of having] these children in our home that God placed it in our hearts to plant a church targeting young families,” says Kenny. One morning, as Kenny was praying with a burdened heart for

the twins to find a loving home, God spoke to him saying, “That’s my heart for the people in Manchester who don’t have a father.” In that moment, Kenny made the decision to plant a church in Manchester, Tennessee.

Manchester is a growing rural community of about 10,000 people. The area, which consists mostly of young families, struggles mainly with family issues and substance abuse problems primarily involving meth. While the culture of Manchester is very religious and traditional, there is no growth in the surrounding churches. This has resulted in many churches in the area shutting down.

In August of 2009, Canvas Community Church officially launched in the Manchester Arts Center with approximately 70 people in attendance. “It was amazing to see our vision for planting the church come to life,” says Kenny. According to Kenny, Canvas Community Church primarily focuses on ministering to the younger, post-modern generation. “A lot of people don’t realize it, but there’s a generation of people all over the country who are not being reached.”

For 16 months after launch, the church continued to meet in the Manchester Arts Center, which proved to be a great, community-friendly location. As a result of their unique venue, the church began to attract people that normally would not attend church. Coincidentally, their location also perfectly united the name and vision of Canvas Community Church, which was established even before the church was launched. “Our vision for the church is for the power of the Holy Spirit to create new things,” says Kenny.

Since its beginning, Canvas Community Church has been impacting its surrounding community through its various outreaches and ministries. Every year, they have hosted the Annual Manchester Outreach, which features exciting events for young families and kids. They also hold an annual outreach at the site of the Bonnaroo Music and Arts Festival a day before the gates are opened. Partnering with another church, Canvas Community Church has been able to facilitate a weekly after-school program for at-risk kids. They have also worked with the Child Advocacy Center to help abused children. Currently, the church is working on developing a ministry tailored specifically to provide support to foster families.

In February of 2011, Canvas Community Church finally moved into their new building. Since its launch, close to 60 people have made the decision to follow Christ, and the church’s average attendance has grown to approximately 156 people.

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