LIBERTY UNIVERSITY BAPTIST THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

THESIS PROJECT APPROVAL SHEET

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GRADE

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MENTOR

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READER
ABSTRACT

A STRATEGY TO PLANT A MISSIONAL, MULTIPLYING CHURCH IN PULASKI COUNTY, KENTUCKY

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Liberty Baptist Theological Seminary, 2014

MENTOR: Dr. Charlie Davidson

There is a desperate need for church planters to focus efforts on rural, established communities to reverse trends of declining church attendance and influence. Pulaski County, Kentucky is one such community that sees the unchurched population continue to climb despite hundreds of church buildings. The goal of this thesis project is to reach the numerous unchurched inhabitants of Pulaski County by creating a comprehensive, holistic strategy to design and launch a missional church near Somerset, Kentucky, that will intentionally reproduce itself. Through interviews and surveys of at least 100 local residents, a careful analysis of area demographics and psychographics will guide a contextualized stratagem. Current church planting literature will inform the chronological design of gathering a core group, promotion, raising funds, and launching the church. Finally, a strategy to make disciples, and multiply leaders will be explained to aid our team. These efforts are the most effective way to revitalize and revive church effectiveness in this region.

Abstract length: 157 words.
DEDICATION

To Stephanie Ann, Bethany Grace, Avery Danielle, Abigail Joy, and Josiah Philip;

For your sacrifice, encouragement, and boundless love,

this paper is affectionately dedicated.

Special thanks is given to Jeffrey Harris, who selflessly edited

the manuscript, provided invaluable insights, and

made the final edition far better.
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CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

Why Another Church?

Even a cursory glance at the numerous entries in the yellow pages under “Churches” in the 2013/2014 edition of the Lake Cumberland Area Wide Telephone Directory, a phone book covering six counties in Southeastern Kentucky, would lead most to conclude that the planting of another church would be altogether unnecessary. Indeed, while discussing church planting with the writer, one local pastor predictably voiced this very sentiment when he said, “If there are over a hundred churches in Pulaski County, why would we need another church here?”

Currently in Pulaski County there are 64,457 citizens with easy access to 164 evangelical congregations. Shockingly, despite having so many churches from which to choose, over 48,000 Pulaski County residents opt not to frequent any of these churches on a given Sunday. In fact, according to the Association of Religion Data Archives for Pulaski County reflected in Table 1 below, the period between the years 2000–2010 showed those claiming no religious affiliation in

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1 Interview with a local pastor, Somerset, KY, February 13, 2013. Interviewee’s name withheld by mutual agreement.


3 Rick Gage, “Where Will You Spend Eternity?” (sermon delivered at the Go Tell Crusade, Somerset, KY, September 24, 2014). It is noteworthy that Gage’s evangelistic ministry worked with multiple pastors from different denominations for one-year studying church attendance trends in Pulaski County and concluded that 83% of Pulaski County residents do not attend church. This amounts to 53,499 residents. The number 48,000 is used throughout this work since the survey of Pulaski County residents, conducted by the author, used this figure in the questions posed.
Pulaski County rose 51.5% from the figures shown in 2000.\(^4\) The projected population increases of 12.2% by the year 2016 indicate an increase of non-adherents at a troubling 39.3%.\(^5\) The responsible question then must shift from “how many churches are within reach of the unchurched” to “how many unchurched will the many churches reach?” The research repeatedly indicates, lamentably, that the answer is surprisingly few.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2000</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>Actual Change</th>
<th>% Change</th>
<th>2016 Projections</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Population</strong></td>
<td>56,217</td>
<td>63,063</td>
<td>6,846</td>
<td>12.2 %</td>
<td>8.9 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Adherents to a Faith Community</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• % of Population</td>
<td>69.4%</td>
<td>58.7%</td>
<td>-10.8%</td>
<td>(-10.8%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Evangelical Protestants</strong></td>
<td>33,914</td>
<td>31,865</td>
<td>-2,049</td>
<td>-6.0%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• % Population</td>
<td>60.3%</td>
<td>50.5%</td>
<td>-9.8%</td>
<td>(-9.8%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SBC Adherents</strong></td>
<td>39,005</td>
<td>36,986</td>
<td>-2,019</td>
<td>(-5.2%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• % of Population</td>
<td>40.7%</td>
<td>37.2%</td>
<td>-3.5%</td>
<td>(-3.5%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mainline Protestants</strong></td>
<td>3,896</td>
<td>3,589</td>
<td>-307</td>
<td>-7.8%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• % of Population</td>
<td>6.9%</td>
<td>5.7%</td>
<td>-1.2%</td>
<td>(-1.2%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Unclaimed Religious Affiliation</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• % of Population</td>
<td>30.6%</td>
<td>41.4%</td>
<td>10.8%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Congregations</strong></td>
<td>155</td>
<td>164</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>5.8%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• SBC Congregations</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4.6%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

While there may be many factors one can consider to explain this phenomenon, one well-documented reason that cannot be overlooked is the overall evangelistic ineffectiveness of many established churches on both a corporate and individual level. Addressing the latter, Lifeway’s Jon Wilke recently wrote, “When it comes to discipleship, churchgoers struggle most with sharing Christ with non-Christians, according to a recent study of church-going American


\(^5\) Calculations in this chart, created by the author, are based on data from The Association of Religion Data Archives website: http://www.thearda.com/rcms2010/r/c/21/rcms2010_21199_county_name_2010.asp (accessed 12/2/14).

\(^6\) Ibid.
Protestants.” Ed Stetzer, in the same article, concludes, “While most believers accept personal responsibility to share their belief in Jesus Christ with non-Christians, far fewer are seeking these opportunities.” George Barna ruefully writes, “What stands out among the data, however, is that evangelicals also have among the highest rates of failure in follow through from conviction to action when it comes to sharing their faith. Nearly one-third (31%) believe they should evangelize, but have not done so – at least within the past year.

Regrettably, the corporate evangelistic efforts by local churches, such as revivals and vacation Bible schools, while conducted regularly, appear to make negligible difference in the number of lost people being incorporated into the life of the local church. Over the same ten-year span mentioned in Table 1, SBC congregations added 588 adherents, which work out to 59 people per year. Dividing the net gain of people per year in SBC churches (59) by the number of churches in the SBC (68), the data suggests, statistically, that each SBC church reached less than one person a year (.86 persons). The stark reality appears to be that the mere presence of church facilities, even in large numbers, does not necessarily translate to missiological effectiveness in reaching lost or unchurched people in the county.

Stetzer and co-author Warren Bird identify another reason many churches struggle to reach lost people in their communities, which is an incontrovertible byproduct of the evangelistic unproductiveness previously mentioned. They write, “Among churches of all sizes, growing

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8 Ibid.


churches are rare. In fact, they make up only 20 percent of our churches today. The other 80 percent have reached a plateau or are declining.”

The numerical growth of churches in Pulaski County provides no exception. From 2000-2010 the Pulaski County Baptist Association, representing approximately half of the churches in Pulaski County with over 60 congregations, recorded an average worship attendance of 5,601, an average membership of 12,216, and an average number of baptisms of 367. In 2014, the average worship raised a mere 2.16% to 5,723 and the average membership dropped 1.87 % to 11,987. Despite 440 recorded baptisms representing a 19.89% increase, membership declined and worship attendance rose marginally. Furthermore, there are 16 churches that average 40 or fewer in their Sunday worship services with average total, annual receipts of $30,544.50. This works out to a weekly offering averaging $587.39. Thus the focus for many established congregations shifts, at some point, from reaching beyond their doors to reach the lost to simply keeping their lights on and their doors open.

New church plants, however, have starkly different reviews from missiologists and church planting experts when it comes to effectively reaching unchurched people. Tim Keller, pastor of Redeemer Presbyterian Church in New York City and founder of Redeemer Church Planting Center, is one such proponent when he writes:

New churches best reach the unchurched - period. Dozens of denominational studies have confirmed that the average new church gains most of its new members (60-80%) from the

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12 This information was culled from the 2014 Annual Church Profile for the Pulaski County Baptist Association. The congregation summary provides vital statistics on membership, financial offerings, primary worship attendance, baptisms, Sunday school enrollment, and other key indicators of church health.

13 Ibid.

14 Ibid.

The North American Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention, in an overt attempt to address the staggering number of lost people living within the shadow of American churches steeples, initiated a campaign entitled “SEND North America” to plant additional churches throughout the continental United States.\footnote{16 See www.namb.net/overview-why-send (accessed January 2, 2014)} The NAMB website, after reminding visitors that the primary mission of the church is to share the gospel with the lost, makes this tactical statement:

The question then becomes how do we best go about carrying that message? We believe the evidence is clear: we are sent to reach new people best through starting new churches. Through a coordinated national strategy we call Send North America, our goal is to help move churches and individuals into all regions of North America to do just that.\footnote{17 Ibid.}

Based on a steady stream of reliable research, the best strategy for reaching the 48,000 unchurched or unregenerate citizens of Pulaski County lies squarely with the unmitigated, relentless proliferation and diffusion of new church plants.\footnote{18 This assertion in no way diminishes the efforts by many to revitalize plateauing and declining churches by recasting vision, reallocating resources, and recreating the church’s culture.}

Statement of Problem

Despite such findings and pleas from NAMB, a distinctive mindset from church attendees is that Pulaski County does not need another church.\footnote{19 This mindset has not, however,}
been the norm for churches in this area. The presence of over 60 Southern Baptist churches in Pulaski County means that multiple times, Christ followers saw the need to start new churches even within the same geographical region and zip code, in some cases, even on the same street. While some of these new congregations formed as the result of disagreements and church splits, it would be inaccurate to assert it happened in each of these instances. The kingdom mindset that fueled the planting of these intentional new churches has faded somewhat in the past two decades. The chart below indicates churches that were launched intentionally and do not represent those planted as a result of disagreements or church splits.²⁰ The past 30 years have produced only eight new churches and an additional ten will need to be launched to keep pace with church planting efforts undertaken during the period of 1930-1980.²¹

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²¹ Ibid.
The time period between 2011 to the present provide strong indicators that church planting, and the kingdom mindset inherent in it, is waning. What's more, despite being in the heart of the Bible belt, the citizens of Pulaski County are growing more and more disconnected from the local church.22

Therefore, there is a dual emphasis of this thesis project. The first emphasis is to recapture the kingdom mindset that propelled local churches to start other churches. The second emphasis is to reach the 48,000 unchurched and unsaved residents of Pulaski County by planting a missional church that will intentionally, strategically, and regularly reproduce itself. The writer is convinced that unless there is a concerted effort to plant multiplying, missional churches, the number of lost and unchurched residents of Pulaski County will continue to climb.

**Special Terminology Defined**

Since the objective of this project is to plant a missional, multiplying church in Pulaski County, Kentucky, it is critical to provide distinct definitions of the terms multiplying and missional. The writer will use the term multiplying to describe a church that intentionally, strategically, and regularly reproduces additional autonomous local churches that in turn, will intentionally, strategically, and regularly plant other churches. This definition differs considerably from that used to describe the multi-site approach so frequently utilized by churches today. Although the researcher does not have any theological or philosophical misgivings with the multi-site approach to reach people, the term “multiplying” in this thesis project will be limited to the planting of autonomous, self-sustaining churches, acknowledging that the autonomy may require a gradual phasing in over a one- to three-year period.

Another key term in this thesis project is missional. There are numerous authors who utilize the term missional and attach to it a philosophy of ministry and a prescribed methodology that are not in keeping with the emphasis of the church plants that will be the outcome of this project.23 The term missional, as it will be used here, aligns squarely with the definition of Ed Stetzer gives in his book *Planting Missional Churches*. Stetzer identifies three components that comprise a missional church, namely that they adopt the posture of a missionary by learning and adapting to the culture around them, that they remain biblically sound, and that they actually do mission right where they are by being intentional and deliberate about reaching others.24 More succinctly, Stetzer clarifies the meaning of *missional* as applied to churches when he writes, “A church becomes missional when it remains faithful to the gospel and simultaneously seeks to contextualize the gospel (to the degree that it can) so the gospel engages the hearers and transforms their worldview.”25

**Statement of Limitations**

There are qualifying factors to consider while reading this project that limit expectations and gives clarity to readers. First, the author ministers vocationally as a prison chaplain and, although academically prepared in the subject of church planting, has yet to undertake a church planting endeavor. Additionally, efforts by the author to commence the process of gathering a core group through community outreach efforts have been postponed until the completion of this thesis project. This decision was made, in part, to achieve a workable balance between family,

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23 Examples of authors of “Missional Communities” or “Missional Churches” are Alan Hirsch, Mike Breen, and Reggie McNeal. While these authors have contributed in significantly positive ways to advance the kingdom, the model of ministry they promote differs sharply from what the majority of residents in Pulaski County could relate with and therefore would not, in the author’s estimation, fit contextually.


25 Ibid., 25. Chapter 4 will provide readers an overview of definitions by leading missional leaders along with further clarification of the specific missional approach taken by the author and his future team.
ministry, and school. Accordingly, the content of this paper is, by design, aspirational in nature and must be read bearing this in mind.

Further, the author went through a church planter’s assessment utilizing LAUNCH, a ministry based out of West Ridge Church in Hiram, Georgia, in October of 2013. Results from the assessment indicated that the author was not ready to become the lead church planter for a new work within the next three years. These results however, may have been distorted somewhat due to LAUNCH’s predilection for a particular model of church planting which demands a leader with an extraordinary skill set to spearhead. The approach of church planting, as prescribed in this thesis project, presupposes that minor modifications of the model, the use of teams of ordinary men, and a revised approach of church planting will effectively neutralize the concerns of the LAUNCH assessors regarding the readiness of the writer to lead a church planting effort.

Last, Harvest Fellowship Church will be planted using a bi-vocational approach. The current ministry position held by the writer will aid in lowering operating costs of the upstart church and will aid in connecting with the unchurched at his place of employment. Results from this method of church planting may be somewhat sluggish compared with church plants whose approach includes the use of full-time church planters.

**Theoretical Basis**

The planting and multiplication of churches can be traced back to the book of Acts where the birth of the church was immediately followed by the Spirit-empowered propagation of the church throughout much of the known world. Indeed, Ed Stetzer and Warren Bird write, “the Book of Acts shows that evangelism and church planting are the normal activity of normal
believers filling the normal practice of starting normal churches.”

Further, the Great Commission of Christ to the disciples in Matthew 28 provides the foundation for church planting with its charge to make disciples of all nations. It is a foundational premise of this thesis project that effective discipleship in a local church naturally leads to church planting. Bible scholar Warren Wiersbe agrees when he writes, “The only way a local church can ‘be fruitful and multiply,’ instead of growing by “additions,” is with a systematic discipleship program.”

There has been, in recent years, a significant surge in the number of resources available for those who are interested in church planting. Certainly, there are more resources in the form of conferences, networks, books, podcasts, and websites than ever before in this burgeoning field. Despite these abundant resources, the historical and biblical underpinnings found in the missionary journeys of Paul and the Great Commission of Jesus Christ offer the primary foundation that this thesis project will build upon.

**Statement of Methodology**

The successes of thesis project’s objectives are often contingent upon a research design that is well crafted, cogent and lucid. As such, this section will delineate for the reader the specific approach this study will undertake in order to reach its intended destination, namely, the planting of a missional, multiplying church in Pulaski County, Kentucky. A summary of each

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27 Matthew 28:18-20

chapter developing this theme is provided below followed by a brief explanation of each chapter’s objectives.

Chapter 1: Introduction

The content of the introduction will, to a great extent, mirror what is written in this thesis proposal as it expounds upon the particulars. A thorough background of the need for additional church plants in Pulaski County will be highlighted and explained. Further, the theoretical and scriptural basis for such an undertaking will also be described. Last, a thorough literature review of recent literature germane to church planting, leadership development, and multiplication movements will be listed.

Chapter 2: Pulaski County Demographics and Psychographics

The goal of this chapter will be to research and uncover demographical data concerning the residents of Pulaski County and specifically the city of Somerset, the county’s most populated city and site of the county legislative offices. Demographical tools such as Scan/US Demographics report and a survey of one hundred county residents conducted by the author will be the primary sources of information for this data. Additionally, the survey will also unearth a psychographical profile of residents in this region that will reveal what they value and prioritize. This data will prove to be invaluable when crafting a contextualized approach to reach the unchurched in this community.

Chapter 3: A Strategy to Plant an Operational Church

This chapter will establish a workable stratagem to effectively launch Harvest Fellowship Church. In overview fashion, this section will outline preliminary plans to raise funds, gather a

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29 Psychographics is defined by dictionary.com as “the use of demographics to determine the attitudes and tastes of a particular segment of a population, as in marketing studies.” http://http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/psychographics?s=t(accessed October 28, 2014).
launch team, and raise community awareness of Harvest Fellowship Church. Contextualized outreach events in harmony with the findings of the demographical research will be sketched for the reader, which will add to the core team of HFC drawn from the unchurched population. Last, seminal organizational vision and purpose statements will be crafted. An initial chronogram of six pre-launch services and the launch service will also be provided.

Chapter 4: A Strategy to Plant a Missional Church

Since the natural life cycle of a church includes its birth, stabilization, plateauing, decline, and death, it is necessary to develop an intentional plan to counteract this tendency. A general plan will be explained on how HFC will corporately and intentionally keep evangelistic outreaches central to its values and programming. Plans to recruit, develop, and employ prayer partners will be explained and developed in this section. Last, a spiritual formation plan for members of HFC will also be discussed.

Chapter 5: A Strategy to Plant a Multiplying Church

Since the goal of HFC is to plant a multiplying church, this chapter will explain the plan of leadership development utilizing key resources from Real Life Ministries for discipleship, leadership development, and church planting. A broad plan to identify potential church planters to participate in our leadership pipeline will be explained and developed.

Chapter 6: Conclusion and Recommendations for Further Study

The significant insights and findings of this thesis project will be summarized in this section of this project. Readers who are interested in advancing the Kingdom and reaching the unchurched residents of Pulaski County, Kentucky will be given practical guidelines on how this may be accomplished.

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30 Jim Putman, *Real Life Discipleship: Building Churches that Make Disciples* (Colorado Springs: Navpress, 2010). This resource will serve as a model of ministry that HFC will be patterned after.
Literature Review

Books

Funding Your Ministry by Scott Morton provides church planters an excellent primer on developing a strategy to raise funds for ministry. The book begins by covering common myths, obstacles, and necessary attitudes one must have to raise funds. Morton then gives biblical justification for raising financial support, immersing the reader into biblical texts that deal with this topic forthrightly. Practical issues such as budgeting, stewardship principles, holding face to face meetings, writing newsletters, phone call campaigns, seeking funding from churches, and how to keep donors giving make this an invaluable resource for those seeking financial backing for ministry.

Launch by Nelson Searcy and Kerrick Thomas sketches a “practical strategy that will save time, energy, and money” for those desiring to plant a church. Based on their first-hand experience planting The Journey Church in New York City with no money, no members, and no staff, they discuss the methods they utilized that led to their successful church planting endeavor. Of particular usefulness to the writer are the sections discussing the essential systems to focus on during the first year, the gathering of a launch team, building a staff, and planning the initial services. The author’s encourage readers to determine which demographic to target in their prime ministry area based on which are most prevalent, unreached, and can relate well with the lead church planter. Effective means to reach the target audience are clearly delineated for immediate implementation.

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Viral Churches by Ed Stetzer and Warren Bird propose that in order for churches to remain viable in light of church closures and populations increases a shift must be made from merely church planting to a multiplication of church planting movements. This work will aid our leadership team in thinking exponentially and incorporating the core value of multiplication into every level of ministry from the churches inception. The inclusion of several model churches and church planting networks such as Hill Country Bible Church and Vision360 provide a hotbed of innovative ideas to include in the overall strategy and vision of the church plant.

Ten Most Common Mistakes Made By New Church Starts by Jim Griffith and Bill Easum provide readers with over thirty years of direct church planting, coaching, and consulting experience. The book, first, will be utilized to train the launch team to strategically and methodically avoid common snags other church plants have encountered. Excellent sections include those on spiritual warfare, talking about money before it is too late, and an emphasis on keeping evangelism central to both pre-launch and post-launch effectiveness. Second, this book will be used to train additional teams of church planters sent out from this ministry in subsequent years.

Planting Missional Churches by Ed Stetzer is a comprehensive church planting resource that covers virtually every aspect of new church starts from the biblical moorings and attributes of an effective lead church planter to the multiplication of additional churches being fashioned

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34 Jim Griffith and Bill Easum., Ten Most Common Mistakes Made by New Church Starts (Danvers, MA: Chalice Press, 2008).
into a church planting movement. There are several chapters included in this book helpful to this writer that are given scant attention in other resources of similar ilk, namely choosing a name, preaching, children, and pastor-planter leadership issues. The last topic addresses the necessary tasks church planters must face and the author places helpful time allotments for both the full-time and bi-vocational church planter.

*Building Leaders* by Aubrey Malphurs and Will Mancini is an essential book for church planters who desire to create a church planting movement because it supplies a blueprint and plan to identify and develop leaders. The authors provide a five-step leadership development plan that will cultivate leaders at every level of the church. In-depth discussions are provided to aid ministry leaders in the discovery, placement, training, evaluating, and rewarding of leaders. Helpful to this author are the leadership audits, the leadership covenants, and the discussion of creating a culture that fosters the development of influential, godly people in the congregation and community.

*Spin-Off Churches* by Rodney Harrison, Tom Cheyney, and Don Overstreet is a key resource that will aid in the multiplication of other churches from our original church plant. The book provides a practical and academic guidance for church leaders who desire to spin off another church but simply do not know how. The book covers the five different spin-off models, how to resource the new work, and four phases of development that the sponsoring church must go through to see a successful spin off church. There is an invaluable template of a sponsor

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church covenant that serves as a key communication tool clarifying the terms of the relationship between parties, ministry expectations, use of resources, and steps towards autonomy.

*Deliberate Simplicity* by Dave Browning offers a model of ministry that intentionally eliminates programmatic and procedural excess so as to be able to replicate easily, rapidly, and frequently. The book develops the philosophy of ‘less is more and more is better’ by expanding upon six factors of a deliberately simple church: minimality, intentionality, reality, multility, velocity, and scalability. Each factor has a chapter that explicates the concept, and anecdotes are provided that show how each element is fleshed out in the ministry of Christ the King Community Church. This book and the example of Christ the King demonstrably show how simple organisms reproduce faster and more frequently than complex ones. Church planters who desire to see a church planting movement must sit up and take heed to this message and model.

*Transformational Church* by Ed Stetzer and Thom Rainer attempt to create a new standard whereby churches can assess their current health and vitality. Subtitled *Creating a New Scorecard for Congregations*, the authors refuse to accept traditional means of determining vibrancy such as attendance, buildings, and cash. Instead, they focus on spiritually transformative factors such as prayerful dependence, vibrant leadership, intentional relationships, and a missionary mentality. These specific chapters will be helpful to this writer in creating a culture of spiritual health, vibrancy, and mission all bathed in life-giving, power-imparting prayer of God’s people.

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Articles

“Local Churches with High Capacity Church Multiplication Centers,” by Linda Stanley, distills the results of a five-year pilot project of ‘gathering ‘high capacity church planting churches’ and guiding them to form fifteen church multiplication centers over that time period. The results prove the potential for exponential growth of churches as 466 domestic churches and 266 international churches were planted by theses centers. The article also delineates the 5 S’s of effective church multiplication movements: strong leadership, sure identity, systematic process, significant resources, and strategies for the long run.

“Glocal Church Ministry,” by Mark Galli, is a Christianity Today interview with pastor Bob Roberts of Northwood Church in Keller, Texas. The article outlines the vision of Roberts, who transitioned from trying to be the biggest church in the area to churching their area through church planting. The focus then turned to reaching the world through the local church by mobilizing laypersons to do their trades internationally. Roberts coined the term “glocal” (local and global) to point the local church to have a global impact. This Kingdom multiplication mindset is critical to the vitality of new church plants that desire to become a movement.

In “Exploring New Paradigms for Effective Evangelism,” an article written for the Leadership Network, Brent Dolfo suggests that the invitational model of evangelism that was effective for a recent span of twenty years is proving to be ineffective in our culture. Dolfo


proposes that the salvation/sanctification paradigm of “believe, become, belong, and bless” is more effective when taken as an organic and dynamic process. The author encourages a series of conversations to discuss the story of the gospel. Further, he suggests that non-Christians today respond to belonging first, then believing and joining in on missions trips to bless others so their service can authenticate the message.

In “Church Planting and the Mission of God,” Ed Stetzer articulates the necessity of the church to view church planting as an essential ingredient in the plan for local churches to fulfill the mission of God. Stetzer makes a distinction between churches that start mostly from people who get mad and leave existing churches, and those that are planted strategically based on mission.43 God’s Kingdom agenda will only be advanced by loving Jesus and His bride, the church. Church planting, Stetzer argues, is critical to advancement of each.

Web Sites

_Verge Network_ (www.vergenetwork.org) is a website for church planters who desire to be missional in their approach to ministry. Leading voices in the missional movement such as Mike Breen, Jeff Vanderstelt, Francis Chan, Alan Hirsch, and a host of others contribute helpful articles, videos, and interviews to ministry leaders. The site offers a rich selection of free resources including e-books, digital access passes, videos, and short movies dealing with current issues and reflections on this dynamic movement.

_Relational Discipleship Network_ (www.relationaldiscipleshipnetwork.com) is a ministry founded out of Real Life Ministries whose passion is to create a renewed emphasis on effective discipleship occurring in churches. The stated vision is “disciples of Jesus reproducing disciples

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of Jesus, churches reproducing churches.” Their mission statement is equally as compelling, “We will train and equip churches that will make disciples in relational environments.” Included on this helpful website are training resources from conferences to curriculum, articles on leadership, church management matters, and effective discipleship.

Effective Church (www.effectivechurch.com) is a church planters resource that provides a wealth of training resources under such essential categories such as evangelism, church growth, and discipleship. Founded by Dr. Bill Tenny-Brittian and Bill Easum, each bringing decades of pastoral and coaching experience, the website boasts a store and scores of helpful articles and resources related to practical church building matters.

Tell Start (www.tellstart.org) is an economical and effective tool to telephonically canvas a demographical area of a new church plant to cull for willing, unchurched prospects. Utilizing current technology and a dedicated staff, TellStart does a market research study of the prime target area then calls each residence within that defined area and to publicize your church plant. Should callers want more information about your church or want to be removed from the calling list, they are directed to press the appropriate number to do so. Should they want to learn more about your church, they press another number to hear more detailed information. Should they want someone to call them to speak to a member of the church planting team, they are given the opportunity to leave a message. The staff at TellStart gathers this information daily and provides an Excel sheet of vital information for follow up. This is can be utilized to gather a core team and to announce the launching of the church.

Leadership Network (www.leadnet.org) is a ministry whose goal is to collaboratively provide resources by innovative church leaders for church leaders. This multiplication minded website offers a veritable treasure chest of leadership resources from articles, podcasts, and
downloads arranged categorically under titles such as “multiply,” “develop,” “lead,” “explore,” “restore,” and “learn.”

Converge Worldwide (www.convergeworldwide) is a website of leaders who formerly formed the core of an inter-denominational, city-centered strategy to reach urban areas throughout the United States called Vision360. Since their inception this ministry has expanded to engage in ministry initiatives including mobilizing and planting churches, developing leaders, living generously, showing compassion, and reaching nations. Church planters will find assessments, training, networks, and resources to reach their communities more effectively.

Hill Country Bible Church (www.hcbc.com/about-us/church-planting/training-center/) is a local church based in Austin, Texas that serves as a model for churches who want to reach their city through the launching of new churches. Their senior pastor-led strategy includes locating, assessing, training, mentoring, and financing potential church planters to expand their ministries influence and reach the nearly 50,000 new people moving to Austin annually. This church has proudly posted “20 Churches and Counting” on their website and has developed an entire training center and staff for the propagation of church plants.

North American Mission Board (www.namb.net/sendnetwork) is the flagship website supporting church planters from the North American Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention. Formerly known as www.churchplantingvillage.net, this site offers a variety of training and inspirational resources for sponsoring churches, church planters, and multiplying churches.

Ed Stetzer (www.edstetzer.com) is the website of author, scholar, and seasoned church planter Ed Stetzer. In his role as president of Lifeway Research, Stetzer offers insightful blogs, research, and helpful links related to church planting. Recently added are roundtable discussions
with leading theologians and church planting practitioners who deal with a variety of Kingdom-expanding initiatives. This important resource should provide encouragement and edification for both aspiring and seasoned church planters alike.

*Real Life Ministries* ([www.reallifeministries.com](http://www.reallifeministries.com)) is a tremendous resource for church planters as it serves as a model ministry with a stellar reputation for making disciples, equipping leaders, and then supporting church planting efforts. This ministry will serve as a pattern for this writer for the church plant.

**Biblical Passages**


Leadership development, a fundamental strategy of HFC’s vision, is demonstrated in the following passages of scripture. In Exodus 18 when Jethro, the father-in-law of Moses, confronts Moses on his consolidated leadership that leaves him weary and the people unsatisfied, he exhorts Moses to expand his leadership base. The passage exhorts readers to choose capable, godly men who will be trained to oversee sections of the work. 1Timothy 3:1-13 also shows biblical support for leadership development, as qualifications are given for potential candidates. Current leadership, consequently, must discern the various traits in Paul’s list in the lives of those of the men being tested and considered. Another example of leadership development is Paul and his relationship with Timothy in the 1 and 2 Timothy. Paul identifies Timothy as “my

[44] All scripture quotations will be from the New International Version 1984 translation of the Bible unless otherwise noted.
true son in the faith” and gives wise counsel to this young minister in training. In 1 Corinthians 11:1 Paul gives readers insight into one of his approaches to leadership development, namely modeling for his protégés a life that follows, honors, and mirrors the example that Jesus Christ left them. Paul also seems to have implemented an “on-the-job training” approach as he undertook his missionary journeys. He intentionally brought along with him Barnabas, John Mark, Silas and other companions (Acts 15:36-30 and Acts 16:6) to learn the work of the ministry by doing it.

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45 1 Timothy 1:2.
CHAPTER 2
PULASKI COUNTY DEMOGRAPHICS AND PSYCHOGRAPHICS

The primary objective of a church planter and his launch team is to contextualize the message of the gospel and thus tailor their ministry approach to the unique culture they are called to reach.¹ Contextualization, as Mark Driscoll says, “is about making the church as culturally accessible as possible without compromising the truth of Christian belief.”² In order for this purpose to be realized, the church planter must view his community in the same manner that a foreign missionary would view a new people group he wishes to evangelize. Foreign missionaries spend copious amounts of time observing and learning the culture of indigenous tribes before deciding on how best to minister to them. The church planter who desires to impact a community for Jesus Christ must undertake similar thinking and effort. One set of authors agree when they write about transformational ministries, “Transformational Churches are characterized by a missionary mentality. They know their context. They know their community. They know the stories of the people in their community so they are able to present clearly the claims and power of Jesus Christ to their community.”³ Aubrey Malphurs calls this process of

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¹ Ed Stetzer, *Planting Missional Churches: Planting A Church That’s Biblically Sound And Reaching People In Culture* (Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 2006), 40. Stetzer here writes, “Contextualization is a skill that North American missionaries, like international missionaries, must learn and use.”

² Mark Driscoll and Gerry Breshears, *Vintage Church* (Wheaton: Crossway, 2008), 228.

learning the customs and values of a community exegeting a culture." He writes, “The church must be a student of the world out there as well as of the world in here. If our churches are to remain relevant to our culture, they must spend time exegeting that culture as well as the Scriptures.” Exegeting a culture well also allows ministers to apply the Word of Life in a manner that increases the likelihood of that message being received and acted upon. Malphurs asserts that unless divine truth is applied to real-life situations, a fundamental aspect of communicating biblical truth falls short. He concludes that this will inevitably happen “unless we understand what is happening in people’s lives, both lost and saved.”

Dean E. Flemming, Professor of New Testament and Missions at MidAmerica Nazarene University, agrees when he writes, “In order for the Christian message to be meaningful to people it must come to them in language and categories that make sense within their particular culture and life situation.” This underscores the importance of studying primary ministry areas well.

Further, unless church planters choose to look at their communities with fresh, unbiased eyes, their familiarity with a region may skew their view of who actually resides in the cities they target. Nelson Searcy and Kerrick Thomas concur when they urge church planters to utilize objective demographic reports. Demographical information, according to Malphurs, includes such information as “age, education, marital status, number of persons per household, number of owners and renters, number of women and men, race, household income, and drive time to

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5 Ibid.


work.⁹ Prior to planting The Journey Church in New York City, they surveyed local residents about the cultural trends and identifying characteristics of the different people living in their community. They then measured those responses to the factual demographical data they researched and found that the perceptions of residents were almost always incorrect. They write, “we learned the hard way that the perceptions of residents aren’t the best indicator of what is happening in a particular area. Get the facts.”¹⁰

This chapter, therefore, will attempt to look at the facts through missionary lenses in order to deeply understand what goes on in the lives of Pulaski County residents. First, a brief historical sketch of Pulaski County will be chronicled. Next, data from the demographical studies conducted by the author on Pulaski County will be examined in an effort to understand who resides here and what they are like.¹¹ This will be followed by a psychographical analysis of the citizenry of Southeastern Kentucky in an attempt to unearth their values and priorities. Finally, the writer will summarize key findings that will influence the strategy and ministry approach that will be taken to reach lost and de-churched residents with the gospel.

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⁹ Aubrey Malphurs, Nuts and Bolts of Church Planting, 128.


¹¹ This chapter will refer also to the term “ethnography” which is defined by www.dictionary.com as “the branch of anthropology that deals with the scientific description of individual human societies or cultures.” (see http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/ethnography?s=t [accessed May 21, 2014]). Ethnographical studies include the specific sub-categories of demographics and psychographics which are defined in this chapter.
Pulaski County History

Pulaski County was officially established in 1798 from a 677-acre land given by Green and Lincoln counties. It was named after the Polish patriot Kazimier Pulaski, whose bravery leading a cavalry regiment in the Revolutionary War earned him the rank of brigadier general and honorary United States citizenship. The county seat of Pulaski County is located in the city of Somerset, which boasts 11,320 residents and a new 77,800 square foot courthouse erected in 2010. Other key communities in the county include Burnside, Science Hill, Nancy, Eubank, Ferguson, and Shopville. The City of Somerset voted to go “wet” on June 26, 2012, as did Burnside on October 15, 2013. This vote allowed these communities to sell alcoholic beverages to the public either by package or by drink. All other cities in the county are considered “dry.”

While this latter component of Pulaski County history may seem somewhat odd to include in this section to many readers, culturally, this is a volatile local issue. This is verified by the fact that the popular online encyclopedia Wikipedia, in its entry for Pulaski County, refers to the alcoholic beverage subject in the first main paragraph. This vote dominated local newspaper headlines in 2013, became platforms for those running for local political offices, and was an affront to the posted church covenants of many local churches. This issue has, however, contributed significantly to stimulating the Pulaski County economy by attracting and retaining

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12 This historical information was culled from Wikipedia, an online encyclopedia at www.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pulaski_County,_Kentucky (accessed March 3, 2014).

13 Ibid.

14 Ibid.

15 Ibid.

16 Ibid.
larger name restaurants and businesses in the area. These pros and con arguments formed the crux of heated debates that surrounded this historic vote.

**Pulaski County Demographics**

The following statistics were gleaned from the Scan/US report purchased by the Kentucky Baptist Convention for local church leaders. All data contained in the charts as well as any statistical computations mentioned in this section were culled from this source. The information provided by this report represents the most up-to-date data on local demography. An alternate source of information of the ethnography of Pulaski County residents was a survey conducted by the author on May 16, 2014 at the Pulaski County Public Library, where one hundred residents of Pulaski County who were eighteen years of age or older were surveyed. The results of this survey, referred to hereafter as the ‘library survey,’ will be referred to at various junctures in this work.

**Population**

The population of Pulaski County is currently at 64,457 with a projected 2.76% increase to 66,289 in five years.

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17 Businesses such as Texas Roadhouse, the Wildcat Warehouse (a beer and wine distributor), Apples (a beer and wine distributor), The Pub (a bar), Steak n Shake, Firehouse Subs, Dunkin Donuts, and Jimmy Johns all opened subsequent to this landmark vote. Businesses that foresaw the county going ‘wet’ and moved to the area to get a prime location, such as Ruby Tuesdays, have benefitted greatly.

18 Used with permission from ScanUs from a report furnished by the Kentucky Baptist Convention. See www.scanus.com.
Table 2: 2014 Population for Pulaski County, Kentucky

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>in households</td>
<td>54,997</td>
<td>63,495</td>
<td>65,327</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>in families</td>
<td>46,903</td>
<td>52,235</td>
<td>53,742</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>in non-families</td>
<td>8,094</td>
<td>11,260</td>
<td>11,585</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>in group quarters</td>
<td>1,220</td>
<td>962</td>
<td>962</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>in</td>
<td>159</td>
<td>241</td>
<td>241</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>under age 18</td>
<td>13,156</td>
<td>14,371</td>
<td>14,593</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>age 55 and over</td>
<td>14,576</td>
<td>20,207</td>
<td>22,116</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>age 65 and over</td>
<td>8,486</td>
<td>11,348</td>
<td>13,127</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>age 75 and over</td>
<td>3,712</td>
<td>4,715</td>
<td>5,688</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Race Diversity

The data suggests that the dominant race in the county is a white, Anglo-Saxon contingency. The ethnic diversity in Pulaski County, according to the five-year projection, will increase very slightly and merely one point in the diversity index.

Table 3 2014 Race Diversity Indicators of Pulaski County, KY Residents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Race Diversity</th>
<th>2000 Census</th>
<th>2014 Estimate</th>
<th>2019 Projection</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Race</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>white</td>
<td>54,798.0</td>
<td>61,986.0</td>
<td>63,776.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>black</td>
<td>604.0</td>
<td>738.0</td>
<td>751.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American Indian</td>
<td>123.0</td>
<td>144.0</td>
<td>150.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian, Pacific Island</td>
<td>217.0</td>
<td>311.0</td>
<td>314.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>other, multi-racial</td>
<td>475.0</td>
<td>1,278.0</td>
<td>1,298.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>454.0</td>
<td>1,520.0</td>
<td>1,754.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diversity index</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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19 Used with permission from Scan/US. See www.scanus.com.

20 Ibid.
Age

Table 4 2014 Age Breakdown of Pulaski County Residents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age, total population</th>
<th>2000 Census</th>
<th>2014 Estimate</th>
<th>2019 Projection</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>56,217 %</td>
<td>64,457 %</td>
<td>66,289 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>under 5 years</td>
<td>3,317 5.9</td>
<td>3,815 5.9</td>
<td>4,010 6.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 to 9 years</td>
<td>3,614 6.4</td>
<td>4,030 6.3</td>
<td>3,853 5.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 to 14 years</td>
<td>3,859 6.9</td>
<td>4,193 6.5</td>
<td>4,132 6.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 to 19 years</td>
<td>3,707 6.6</td>
<td>3,903 6.1</td>
<td>4,310 6.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 to 24 years</td>
<td>3,140 5.6</td>
<td>3,667 5.7</td>
<td>3,955 6.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 to 34 years</td>
<td>7,433 13.2</td>
<td>7,443 11.5</td>
<td>7,452 11.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35 to 44 years</td>
<td>8,660 15.4</td>
<td>8,060 12.5</td>
<td>7,760 11.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45 to 54 years</td>
<td>7,911 14.1</td>
<td>9,139 14.2</td>
<td>8,701 13.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55 to 64 years</td>
<td>6,090 10.8</td>
<td>8,859 13.7</td>
<td>8,989 13.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65 to 74 years</td>
<td>4,774 8.5</td>
<td>6,633 10.3</td>
<td>7,439 11.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>75 to 84 years</td>
<td>2,800 5.0</td>
<td>3,520 5.5</td>
<td>4,237 6.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>85 years and over</td>
<td>912 1.6</td>
<td>1,195 1.9</td>
<td>1,451 2.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Median age</td>
<td>38.5</td>
<td>41.5</td>
<td>42.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The data suggests that Pulaski County residents continue on a steady increase in median age. While there may be a general rise in age due to the Baby Boom generation passing through there is also an indication that more residents retire into the community due to the presence of Lake Cumberland. These numbers also may signify that younger residents are not as likely to remain in the same community as their forefathers had.

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21 Used with permission from Scan/US. See www.scanus.com.
According to the 2014 Poverty Guidelines for the 48 Contiguous States and the District of Columbia, a document published annually by the Department of Health and Human Services to determine eligibility for government assistance, the poverty income level for a family of two is $15,730 while a family of three may earn $19,790. This is germane to this discussion since 23.3% of Pulaski County residents are below the poverty line according to the United States Census Bureau. This dramatically affects church health, vitality, and effectiveness in this region as pastors must deal with issues such as government subsidized income, unemployment, aiding the poor, and overall lower charitable giving inherent to the low income level in the region.

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22 Used with permission from Scan/US. See www.scanus.com.


Education

Table 6 2014 Education Level of Pulaski County Residents\(^{25}\)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Education (Persons Age 25+)</th>
<th>2000 Census</th>
<th>2014 Estimate</th>
<th>2019 Projection</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>no high school diploma</td>
<td>34.4</td>
<td>22.3</td>
<td>22.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>high school graduate</td>
<td>34.8</td>
<td>37.6</td>
<td>37.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>some college</td>
<td>15.6</td>
<td>18.0</td>
<td>18.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>associate degree</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>7.5</td>
<td>7.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>college degree</td>
<td>5.8</td>
<td>8.5</td>
<td>8.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>graduate/professional degre</td>
<td>4.7</td>
<td>6.1</td>
<td>6.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The data reveals that the highest education level prevailing among the residents is a high school diploma. Only 14.6% of the population has a four-year college degree or higher while 22.3% of Pulaski County residents have not completed high school. While 3,306 people have obtained an associates degree, 7,915 residents comprising eighteen percent of the population matriculated in school and either are in the process of obtaining their degree or have opted not to finish. The library research supports much of the above data as indicated in Figure 2 below.

Figure 2 Education Level Results from Pulaski County Library Survey

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\(^{25}\) Used with permission from Scan/US. See www.scanus.com.
Labor Force

Table 7 2014 Labor Force Records for Pulaski County, KY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>in labor force</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>employed</td>
<td>23,262</td>
<td>24,701</td>
<td>25,574</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>unemployed</td>
<td>1,244</td>
<td>2,745</td>
<td>2,840</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>in Armed Forces</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>not in labor force</td>
<td>20,096</td>
<td>23,253</td>
<td>24,073</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The numbers in this portion of the demography reveal an inordinately high number of residents not in the labor force, staying at 45.8% of the population. Particularly concerning is the projected increase of the number of residents who are not gainfully employed by the year 2019.

Pulaski County Psychographics

Dr. Aubrey Malphurs, after defining the term *demographics*, gives church planters a working definition for the term *psychographics*. He clarifies: “The term *psychographics* refers to what these people value and how it has influenced their lifestyles. This kind of information will reveal much about the culture.” While demographical information is important to understanding a culture, it does have limitations. Lisa Rea, vice president of intelligence marketing at KBA Group, a Richardson, Texas-based marketing service provider specializing in customer intelligence, agrees. She writes:

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26 Used with permission from Scan/US. See www.scanus.com.

... while demographic data can help identify people who may have a need for your product or service, it can't tell you much more ... Psychographic data helps fill in these missing insights, enabling you to more finely segment your demographic target and hone in on the prospects whose attitudes and experiences make them more likely to become customers.28

This information is crucial to uncovering the values and attitudes of Pulaski County residents, which this section is designed to reveal. The first several annotations are general in nature, while the latter will center on observations concerning the church culture since this is particularly germane to this thesis project. The author has made the following observations over a period of eight years.

Pastime Activities

During the random, ethnographical research conducted at Pulaski County Library, participants were asked to list their favorite pastimes, hobbies and interests. The participants were given multiple options to choose from; including a blank line marked “Other,” and were encouraged to indicate every pastime activity that they regularly participated in. Figure 3 indicates a breakdown of the responses made by the one hundred Pulaski County citizens surveyed.29


29 Due to participants’ ability to choose multiple pastime activities, the numbers indicated on the chart will add up to more than 100.
There are several observations that should be highlighted. First, the reader will note the highest number of 73 is likely inflated due to the survey being conducted at a public library. However, barring conducting the research at the local Wal-Mart, the public library was the next best available option to conduct a random survey of Pulaski County residents. Second, the next highest figure of television viewing is most helpful in marketing HFC. Third, the next several high categories in the research involve activities on Lake Cumberland (boating/swimming), children’s activities, exercise, and sports.
Government Assistance

The region’s high rate of poverty and unemployment contributes to a pervading mindset of entitlement and ‘working the system’ as many have grown accustomed to not working and drawing Supplemental Security Income (SSI) checks. Local churches regularly have people requesting money for gas, electric bills, and other common expenses. In response, local ministers met to address this very pressing issue and subsequently established the Pulaski Emergency Relief Ministry (P.E.R.M.). In order to adequately handle the amount of requests by area residents and to encourage residents to take responsible steps toward self-sufficiency, P.E.R.M. established guidelines governing how often individuals would be permitted to receive assistance. This move, however, proved somewhat counterproductive as those who exhausted their aid from P.E.R.M. returned to local churches for assistance. The author briefly oversaw the ‘benevolence ministry’ at Beacon Hill Baptist Church in Somerset for a period of four months and observed these patterns repeatedly.

Sports

There is a strong draw among the community residents to participate in and to watch sporting events. The University of Kentucky wildcat basketball team was described by one Christian lawyer as ‘almost a religion’ in this area. Area residents are avid outdoorsmen and regularly hunt in the nearby public hunting lands, hike in the Daniel Boone National Forest, and fish in Lake Cumberland. Burnside State Park also offers residents a recently revamped eighteen-hole golf course. Sporting events are highly valued by residents in this community. Sports figures such as Josh Anderson, a product of Pulaski County who went onto play professional baseball, often capitalize on their name recognition in the community and run for public office.\(^{30}\)

\(^{30}\)Anderson opened a baseball clinic in Somerset and recently ran for County Clerk. Richie Farmer, a shooting guard for the University of Kentucky’s famed 1991-1992 team dubbed “The Unforgettables,” ran for and
High Rate of Teen Pregnancy

The number of teenagers bearing children out of wedlock combined with the number of parents aiding the rearing of their grandchildren is noteworthy and contributes to the high number of those on government assistance and regional low-income figures. Parents who become grandparents by the choices of their children feel an obligation to help raise and support their grandchildren. This has become somewhat of an accepted practice in the community due to the high teenage pregnancy rate.

Lake Cumberland

Constructed in 1952 by the United States Army Corps of Engineers, this lake is an economic and recreational source of regional pride. In 1999 alone, the region drew 4.75 million visitors and contributed 1.52 million dollars into local businesses and county budgets. While the lake lures many to the area to find a recreational escape from reality, many pastors are aware that the lake competes with church services in the summer months. Lees Ford and Burnside are two marinas located in Pulaski County that draw a large percentage of local residents annually. Lake Cumberland also is home to General Burnside State Park and Pulaski County Park, which offer safe, family friendly environments for a host of activities.

Role of Pastors

The seemingly ingrained, default expectation of people in this region regarding the role of pastors is that the pastor should be their chaplain or personal shepherd. David Rudd, in his article entitled “Five Kinds of Pastors,” breaks pastors into the following categories: catalytic,

—won the office of Commissioner of Agriculture for the Commonwealth of Kentucky. Although Farmer was raised in a nearby county, his election proves a cultural value on sports and athletes in the region.

cultivators, conflict-quelling, chaplains, or catatonic. Referring to the “chaplain,” pastor Rudd notes the following:

The Chaplain pastor is wired for peace, harmony, and pastoral care. Chaplain pastors eschew change and value status quo. They don’t want to stir the waters; rather, they want to bring healing to hurting souls. Chaplain pastors don’t grow churches. In fact, a Chaplain pastor will hasten a congregation’s demise because they tend to focus on those within the congregation rather than in bringing new converts to Jesus Christ. Churches that have very little hope of transformation and church growth do well with Chaplain pastors who serve as hospice care.

While it is never negative for a pastor to be ‘wired for peace, harmony, and pastoral care’ or to ‘bring healing to hurting souls’ it does become problematic, nonetheless, if this aspect of ministry by the ‘chaplain pastor’, overshadows or excludes altogether the equipping of the saints to do the work of the ministry. Aubrey Malphurs, although shifting to a shepherd metaphor, makes a similar observation when he pointedly writes,

Consequently, most traditional churches expect pastors to visit church members in the home and the hospital, marry couples, bury those who die, and preach sermons on Sunday morning. As ironic as it may seem, this is actually an unbiblical model that encourages churches not to grow. After you get over the shock of what you just read, consider the following. First, where do you find this model in the Bible? Second, the pastor or shepherd of a flock of sheep (on which the biblical term is based) was first a leader who functioned in a number of ways (to feed, protect, discipline, and so on), only one of which was pastoral caregiver. Actually, the term shepherd is equivalent to that of leader.

When the pastor’s role is reduced to that of pastoral care giver, they inevitably struggle to lead the church to a place organizationally whereby the ministry can grow beyond a point that one


34 Ephesians 4:11-13.

35 Aubrey Malphurs, Planting Growing Churches, 214.
man, usually the pastor, can effectively minister to the needs of the congregation. Malphurs writes:

The reality is that churches with this kind of pastor rarely break through the two hundred member barrier and most have fewer than one hundred people, because one person cannot give care effectively to more than one hundred people. There simply aren’t enough hours in a day . . . as the church grows, they’re limited in the number of people they can care for, so they tend to either discourage new growth or burn out.36 Moreover, when pastors fail to create an organizational culture whereby a clear, compelling expectation exists for church members to serve, personally share their faith, and reproduce disciples and servant leaders, they inadvertently opt for managing churches that eventually plateau, become inward focused, and largely fail to reach lost people in their communities.37 Pulaski County churches, with few exceptions, are largely comprised of and managed by ‘chaplain’ or ‘shepherd’ pastors who are voted in by congregations with the tacit expectation of spending the bulk of their time caring for the flock.38 These observations, although somewhat brusque, actually can be attributed to several factors such as socio-economics, training, modeling, and a cultural form of church that has been part of this culture for decades.

Transfer of Membership

It is commonplace for church members in Pulaski County to be accepted in the membership “by letter” from another local congregation.39 Since it is rare that the reasons for

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36 Ibid., 214-215.

37 Alternatively, Malphurs uses church growth expert Peter Wagner’s metaphor of the rancher as a more appropriate descriptor of a pastor’s role, which includes six leadership shifts that pastors must make to enable them to aid church health and growth. See Malphurs, Planting Growing Churches, 215.

38 A recent discussion with a representative from the Kentucky Baptist Convention revealed that only 19 of the 61 churches that are in good standing with the Pulaski Baptist Association have full-time pastors. The remaining are led by bi-vocational pastors who are weary and stretched thin. The author has a tremendous amount of respect for these godly servants who leave their all on the altar weekly.

39 The phrase “by letter” indicates the practice common to Southern Baptist churches whereby members of one Baptist church formally become members of another Baptist church when their names are removed from one membership roll to another which is made official by a letter from one church office to the other.
the transfer are explored or questioned by receiving churches, opportunities to foster reconciliation or offer spiritual correction to erring believers are lost. Often, behind the scenes, there is an undercurrent of pastoral angst and friction between churches that results largely, in part, due to little to no cooperative protocol being followed by churches regarding this issue. Consequently, transfer growth is a high and accepted part of church life in Pulaski County.

Programmatic Evangelism

The most visible form of evangelism in the area comes in the form of Vacation Bible School outreaches. It is not uncommon for local churches to have the majority of their new salvation decisions and baptisms derive from child evangelism largely done in the summer months. Weeklong revivals rate as the second most common option. In this evangelistic event, an outside preacher or evangelist will be brought in for a period of four to seven days to proclaim the gospel and evening and specified morning services. Church members are encouraged to invite their unsaved peers to come and hear the gospel presentations. While there are other service-oriented outreaches such as Operation Christmas Child and Project 58:10, a ministry aimed at feeding children whose parents cannot feed them without the use of government subsidized entities, these are still programmatic in nature and, most importantly, do not require residents to personally share their faith verbally with another. Personal evangelism outside of these events appears to be negligible.

Church Splits, Competition and Church Planting

Due to numerous church splits in recent history in Pulaski County, the subsequent formation of new churches from them, and the negative feelings of members having to choose sides, church planting is generally viewed with suspicion and in a negative light. Despite efforts by the North American Mission Board and the Kentucky Baptist Convention urging local
congregations and pastors to be involved with the formation, planning, and launching of new churches, few local pastors seem open to the idea. One pastor the author spoke to about the lack of receptivity by local pastors about new, local church plants, who had planted a church himself in a neighboring county, smiled and said the following ditty: “A church plant in Africa, to God be the glory! A church plant in my neighborhood, well that’s a different story.”

Usually, the prospect of planting another church in the area is threatening and is viewed by many pastors as competition rather than an opportunity to expand the Kingdom.

Concern Over Hyper-Calvinism

In 2005 a spiritually enervating event happened at a landmark church in Somerset with the resigning of an entire pastoral staff, which effectively split the church, leaving many gaping wounds in the Christian community. The primary issue concerning the split was over the doctrine of Calvinism, a divisive issue that continues to fester in local churches across the state. Dr. Paul Chitwood, Executive Director of the Kentucky Baptist Convention, seeing the glaring need to address this explosive issue and thus avoid further division, assembled leading theologians from both theological camps and put on a conference entitled, “Calvinism: Concerned? Curious? Confused?”

Chitwood, in an article promoting the event, stated the event’s objectives clearly, “My goal is for conference attendees to walk away with a better understanding of our historical and current beliefs, a greater appreciation for those who may hold differing positions on this issue, a commitment to work together, speaking and acting with

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40 Interview with a local pastor, Somerset, KY, May 22, 2013. Interviewee’s name withheld by mutual agreement.

41 This Kentucky Baptist Convention sponsored conference was held on Saturday, August 4, 2012 at Crestwood Baptist Church, Frankfort, KY.
charity.”42 The conference brought theologian Frank Page to “show how Southern Baptists can walk together in unity while holding differing positions on Calvinism.”43 While the debate is far from over, residents of Pulaski County are tentative and skeptical about discussing this polarizing debate, which continues to surface with the formation of each pastoral search committee.

**Congregational Voting**

The predominant form of church polity in Pulaski County, largely due to the high volume of Southern Baptist congregations, is the congregational model, which entitles each individual member of a church to vote on a host of issues affecting the life and direction of the church. Generally, most local churches have no guidelines established in their church constitutions or bylaws prohibiting members who no longer regularly attend from attending business meetings and voting. It is common, therefore, for people who are on the membership role but who neither serve nor financially support the church to show up in numbers to cast their vote on church matters in church business meetings. While this form of church polity is biblical and in keeping with Baptist emphasis on priesthood of all believers, few consider the potential drawbacks this poses church leadership when spiritually immature, non-contributing members have equal voting privileges as mature, contributing members. Nonetheless, this mindset is the norm for most citizens of the county.

**Unclear and Ineffective Discipleship Strategies**

While few would argue that the primary mission of the church is to fulfill the Great Commission’s directive to “make disciples,”44 few churches in Pulaski County have an

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43 Ibid.

44 Matthew 28:18-20
intentional strategy to disciple the people in their congregations. After baptizing a new believer, the default discipleship approach for the majority of churches in Pulaski County is to equate discipleship with a member’s participation in the Sunday morning service, a Sunday School class, Sunday evening service, and Wednesday evening program of the church. Post-baptismal engagement in the aforementioned activities is expected to turn a believer into a disciple. Unfortunately, this is not the case as evidenced by the declining membership and baptisms in the Southern Baptist Convention. The North American Mission Board convened a task force in 2013 to address the declining baptisms among Southern Baptists and released their findings in April of 2014. The task force’s report concluded that there were five problems plaguing Southern Baptist churches. Along with each problem identified, the task force gave an action item to remedy the problem. One of the problems highlighted dealt with a ‘disciple-making problem’ with the subsequent action item crafted in this statement, “As pastors we must create a disciple-making culture – focusing on multiplying disciples who know how to grow in Christ and lead others to Christ.”

The task force’s conclusion may tacitly acknowledge the notion that the discipleship strategy employed by most SBC churches is ineffective.

**Adopted Denominational Theology**

The presence in the county of numerous traditional, mainline denominations that have generational family roots influences greatly the theological viewpoints residents maintain. While these doctrinal views ideally would be the result of a strategic, intentional discipleship program offered by the local churches, the reality is that most churches, as previously mentioned, do not have an intentional, sequential discipleship program that they lead their members through. Consequently, many residents merely adopt certain theological positions that, although aligning

with their particular denominations position, have not been personally arrived at from first-hand study. Whether this stems from a preference to utilize “safe,” denominationally approved resources or from the chosen vehicle of traditional programs such as Sunday School that vary in purpose and effectiveness is moot. Most would concede, however, that many residents of Pulaski County lack enough biblical grounding and theological education to speak intelligently on other theological positions other than their own. This is a primary factor contributing to the confusion and unrest over theological points of divergence.

**Contextualized Strategy**

The demographic and psychographic information listed above provide invaluable insight into breaking the ‘missional code’ of Pulaski County that will unlock an effective, well-received ministry stratagem. Due to the high cross-section of older adults in the community, our strategy will utilize a hybrid approach that caters to this segment of our community while also addressing the preferences of the target age group of 30-55. This dual approach will spill over into all ministries undertaken by Harvest Fellowship Church. The following approaches will be implemented incrementally and in a timely manner consistent with our core values.

**Target Audience**

The reality of church planting is that the people most inclined to be receptive to new church plant ministry efforts are those who are most like the lead planter. Given the lead planter is forty-four years of age, married, has four children, and earns a middle-class income level, HFC will seek to target middle-class families ages 30-55 with children. This affinity-based approach would allow the author to immediately connect in practical ways with this demographic. Start-up
studies centering on family, marriage, and parenting will provide a much needed connection point to establish a core group.

Facilities

Since the traditional church model with its building-centered concept of church dominates the mindset of people in Pulaski County, HFC will plan on renting or leasing a facility with rooms large enough for large group worship experiences as well as rooms for mid-size groups for child care, children’s ministries, and Adult Bible Fellowships for older adults.

Services

As mentioned previously, HFC’s strategy will utilize a hybrid approach that caters to the older segment of the community while also addressing the preferences of the target age group of 30-55. Hence, the plan involves offering residents a worship experience with casual dress, coffee, friendly greeters, and a relaxed overall atmosphere. Songs will be a mixture of new songs and contemporized hymns. Sermons will target growing Christ followers regardless of where they are in their journey and will be immerse attendees in the Scriptures. References to non-Christians, those struggling with certain Christian doctrines, and those individuals who are merely curious about Christ will be addressed regularly to foster a culture where members will feel comfortable inviting their unchurched friends. HFC will emphasize tasteful simplicity and common-sense functionality. While this is not much different from other seeker-sensitive approaches, HFC will continually emphasize that Missional Communities, not the Sunday service, is the engine of the church. This will be discussed further later.

Bible Storying

The selection of a teaching method that can be easily taught, reproduced, and used to equip others to lead is vital to any church plant that wants to start a movement. A look at the
educational level of Pulaski County residents indicates that well over half of the residents have only a high school diploma or less. Therefore a simple, reproducible model of discipleship, leadership development, and multiplication that is within reach of this demographic is essential. Bible storying meets this need. Avery Willis and Mark Snowden define Bible storying as, “A narrative presentation designed to communicate a Bible story to oral-preference communicators; ideally it involves dialogue, interpretation, application, and accountability. It may also include drama, songs, poetry, and proverbs depicting the story.” This approach virtually eliminates the educational and psychological barrier that many have believing that they cannot teach or are not qualified to teach. By using a simple process of telling stories and asking questions, leaders become more facilitators in a biblically rich method that has been used greatly to grow disciples and churches worldwide. This will be further explained later in this paper.

Membership and ‘Next Step’ Classes

Although membership classes will be postponed until six months post-launch in order to determine commitment and willingness to serve, this class will convey the ethos, strategy, vision, core values, doctrinal positions, and expectations of every member. One of these core values is to continually ask ‘next step questions’ for both themselves and others. An example is: “What is the next step spiritually for my spouse, my kids, and my peers?”

“Main Thing” Theology

In a direct attempt to provide leadership, focus, and unity from divergent views on doctrinal matters, HFC will emphasize ‘Main Thing Theology’ which essentially identifies six theological positions that are of primary importance and will serve as doctrinal rallying points. These are listed in the table below.

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46 Avery Willis and Mark Snowden, Truth That Sticks: How to Communicate Velcro Truth in a Teflon World (Colorado Springs: NavPress, 2010), 213.
Table 8 The Six Doctrines of “Main Thing” Theology

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The inspiration, infallibility, and sufficiency of the Bible, which is the final authority on faith and practice.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Trinitarian godhead. God eternally exists in three persons, God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. Each is fully God and God is one.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The substitutionary atonement of Jesus Christ on the cross for the forgiveness of our sins and the salvation of our souls.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salvation from sin that is by grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ alone, through no effort of our own.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The second coming of Jesus Christ at the end of the age.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These doctrines, if personally believed, place one within the Lamb’s Book of Life and obligate brothers and sisters in Christ to treat them in accordance to the “one another” passages.⁴⁷

Although other doctrines are certainly important⁴⁸ and HFC will take positions on theological issues that align with the revised 2000 Baptist Faith and Message⁴⁹, the ministry will be equally clear that these non-salvation doctrines will not distract us from partnering with other believer’s who, while adhering to the six core doctrines above, earnestly desire to advance the cause of the

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⁴⁷ See John 1:12-13, Revelation 21:27. Some of the ‘one another’ passages include love one another (Jn 13:34-35); serve one another (Jn 13:14); forgive one another (Eph 4:32); bear with one another (Eph 4:2); accept one another (Rom 15:7); live in harmony with one another (Rom 12:16); spur one another on towards love and good deeds (Heb 10:24); and encourage one another (Heb 3:1).⁴⁷

⁴⁸ 1 Timothy 4:16 “Watch your life and doctrine closely. Persevere in them, because if you do, you will save both yourself and your hearers.”

⁴⁹ See http://www.sbc.net/bfm2000/bfm2000.asp/. HFC has two notable theological divergences from the Baptist Faith and Message both concerning article VI, the church. First, HFC believes that there is another office that the Scriptures recognize, namely, the office of elder. Second, the church – while autonomous and under the Lordship of Christ, will operate under the ‘staff led and elder governed’ form of church polity rather than by democratic processes commonly found in traditional Baptist churches. Members in good standing will vote on the selection of the senior pastor, elders, deacons, and approval of the annual budget in specially called business meetings. Elders and deacons will be selected by the biblical standards set forth in Titus 1 and 1 Timothy 3, presented before the congregation, and voted on. Their terms will be chronologically staggered and be for three years, after which they will rotate off. The number of elders will be an odd number in keeping with the size of the church with more elders being added as the Lord brings congregational increase.
gospel. HFC will respect other positions concerning non-salvation issues while graciously defending essential salvation beliefs.

Ministries

Sunday services in the morning with children’s ministry concurrently or afterwards will aid in staffing a much-needed children’s program. Teenagers will have their programs at alternate times to enable students to participate fully with their families in the worship services, participate in Missional Communities, as well as serve in the children’s ministry. Wednesday at the facility would be reserved for instruction, concerts of prayer, training, and sending out teams to minister in local neighborhoods and establishments.

Meeting Local Pastors

Meeting the local pastors attending the Pulaski Baptist Associational meetings or the bi-monthly pastors prayer meeting attended by clergy from various denominations would be a strategic, non-intrusive, and natural way to introduce the author, the ministry and vision of Harvest Fellowship Church. This networking will prayerfully minimize tension, aid a cooperative spirit, and potentially garner support among this committed group of godly men.

Contextualized Outreach Efforts

Incorporating ministry efforts into well-established community events is a wise strategy that increases exposure of the new church plant to a critical mass of people. Volunteering to help in the planning of these events, or potential events, also can aid in fostering of relationships that can put us into contact with lost and unchurched residents of our county. Based on the research

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above, the following events or places are well known, frequented by Pulaski County residents, or would be well received.

Block Parties

A family friendly method of outreach that is growing in popularity nationwide involves throwing a block party that includes inflatable games, snow ice, popcorn, music, events, and food. These events can be planned in a short amount of time, can be somewhat reasonable in price, and have proven to be effective for many church plants in gathering a crowd. Funding for the host of resources necessary for this type of ministry will be included in the initial fund raising efforts.

Sports Clinics and Tournaments

Based on the community value placed on athletics, sports-based events such as free baseball clinics, three-on-three basketball tournaments, and golf scrambles would be well received. Local and professional sports personalities who are Christ followers will be invited to speak and attend these evangelistic events to lead people to Christ.

Masters Musicians Festival

Held annually on the third Saturday in July, this event attracts the areas brightest musicians and bands as well as some nationally known acts. Not only would the festival provide an opportunity to minister to the unchurched as it draws hundreds from the community, it is also a place to find contacts for potential worship leaders who could develop others for a strong, vibrant, and on-going feeder system for a worship team.\(^5\)

Lake Cumberland

\(^5\) See www.mastersmusiciansfestival.org/.
The use of Lake Cumberland would provide an opportunity to reach the Pulaski County residents who frequent the Burnside and Lees Ford Marina. Currently, both Walmart and the City of Somerset conduct annual bass fishing tournaments with large cash prizes that draw over 200 boat entries per event. Participation in this event would be profitable for a community outreach as well.

Somernites Cruise

Recently, the Kentucky State Legislature dubbed the city of Somerset “The Car Cruise Capital of Kentucky.” Somerset is home to the Somernites Cruise, a car show—held the fourth Saturday of each month from April through October—that showcases a variety of antique, classic, and specialty cars. The Friday before the cruise, Walmart sponsors a block party including live bands, a vendor’s alley, and inflatable games. Renting a booth, entering a car, or conducting service projects at this event would yield positive dividends.

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52 See www.somernitescruise.com for the events website.
CHAPTER 3
A STRATEGY TO LAUNCH AN OPERATIONAL CHURCH

A Working Strategy

Next to the calling, gifting and empowering that only Jesus Christ can give to a church planter and his team, the next foundational component to a successful church plant is a well-thought-out, well-communicated strategy to launch the church.\(^1\) As Nelson Searcy says, “One of the most common mistakes that enthusiastic and well-meaning church starters make is to move to a new location and start trying to reach people without even a short term strategy.”\(^2\) A popular online dictionary defines strategy as ‘a plan, method, or series of maneuvers or stratagems for obtaining a specific goal or result.’\(^3\) This section, therefore, will outline Harvest Fellowship Church’s plan to launch a new church that is strong, viable, operational, and poised to become self-sustaining.

Few resources on starting new churches offer many ideas that are original but rather differ primarily in terminology, order, and emphasis. Therefore, this chapter will compile the essential, universal elements of launch strategies common to leading church planting experts and practitioners. This section will largely follow the outline and flow from Aubrey Malphurs’ book *The Nuts and Bolts of Church Planting* primarily due to the logical flow, intuitive progression,

\(^1\) The practical nature of this thesis project strives not for originality and verbosity but rather pragmatism and brevity. Nancy Jean Vyhmeister records this very notion when addressing the mechanics of a Doctor of Ministry thesis project involving a church plant. She concludes, “The body of the paper should be less than 100 pages long. The bulk of the work is in doing, not in reading or writing.” [Nancy Jean Vyhmeister, *Your Guide To Writing Quality Research Papers: For Students of Religion and Theology* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2008), 228.] This concept is manifest in this chapter of this thesis project most prominently.


and diagrammatic scheme that accompanies his explanations. The following universal elements, as determined by the author’s perusal of the most recent church planting literature, will be part of the stratagem to plant HFC: core values, mission, vision, gathering a launch team, community outreach, finances, and setting. Each of these elements will be given a brief conceptual overview followed by a tailored description of this element for the ministry of Harvest Fellowship Church. Next, the approach to planning the first service will be examined and outlined.

**Core Values**

The importance of a ministry’s core values can hardly be overstated. Nelson Searcy likens a ministry’s core values to “a filter through which you fulfill your strategy.”

Ralph Moore thinks of core values as a “blue print and teaching tool.”

Aubrey Malphurs writes, “The wrong values result in the wrong mission, vision, and strategy.” While these seasoned church planters may describe core values somewhat differently, what is beyond question is the importance each places on the creation and communication of a church plant’s core values. Malphurs gives his definition of core values by writing, “I define a planted churches core values as its constant, passionate, biblical core beliefs that drive its ministry.” Thus, according to Malphurs, the core values of a ministry are vital to clarifying a ministries identity, communicating its unchanging beliefs, inspiring action and alignment of members, and describing the “why behind what it does.”

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7 Ibid., 67.

8 Ibid., 65-66.
With this information in mind, the following core values reflect the personal convictions, passions, and beliefs of the author that will inevitably spill over into the vision, identity, actions, and direction of the church.

Harvest Fellowship Church’s Core Values

*Magnifying Christ*

We passionately express our love for Jesus through song, service, and Spirit-empowered holy living. Ministry is done with quality in order to represent Him well.

*Making Disciples*

We are committed to developing Christ followers who know Him, are transformed by Him, and who are on mission for Him.\(^9\) Discipleship fuels church planting.

*Missional Ministry*

We believe that as a ‘sent people’\(^{10}\) we’re to be continually mobilized into teams to constantly minister throughout our community with a message of faith, hope, and love. We are an ‘arrows out’ church.

*Multiplying Leaders*

We continually identify, equip, and empower leaders at every level of our church by making ministry simple and accessible. All are asked “What’s your next step?”

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\(^{10}\) John 20:21
Meaningful Relationships

We love people so much that we share our lives with one another\textsuperscript{11} setting an example to a watching world that craves genuine relationships.

Moving Generosity

We seek out opportunities to cheerfully bless others, meet needs, and show God’s grace through our use of the time, talents, and resources God has entrusted to us.

‘Main-Thing’ Theology

Unity of the church is kept by pursuit of our vision and insisting on only six key doctrines of the faith for the propagation of the gospel. We ‘one another’ our brothers and set preferences aside.\textsuperscript{12}

Mountain Moving, Prayer Inspired, Faith

We believe that obstacles in life and ministry can only be moved by prayer and by taking faith-inspired risks. Prayerful dependence upon Christ is our plan.

Mission Statement

“What is your ministry all about? What is your focus and ultimate goal?” These are the essential questions every person will ask a church planter when speaking of their new church. Leaders who neglect to think through these foundational questions will inevitably lead ministries that drift, that struggle to attract and retain quality staff, and that often flounder before failing. Malphurs concurs when he writes, “Where there is no mission or unclear mission, there will be

\textsuperscript{11} 1\textsuperscript{ Thessalonians 2:8

\textsuperscript{12} For a more detailed explanation of this core value see pages 39-40.
general ministry ineffectiveness.” Speaking to the dire need for churches to have clear mission statements, Dave Browning, founding pastor of Christ the King Community Church, sorrowfully says, “the greatest sin of the church today is not any sin of commission or omission but the sin of no mission.”

Jorrian Gelink, founder of a website entitled Peter Druckers Management Philosophy, writes that ‘the starting point of any organization is getting down to the core of what the mission is.” In the article, although using different terminology, Gelink affirms that a well-thought-out and crafted mission statement serves as the heart, compass, and measuring stick of any organization. He writes:

The mission is the heart of the organization; a starting point that is the pulse of why everyone there does what they do. Great organizations continuously follow their mission and rarely stray from it; as even a deviation can result in a flutter of ineffective activity and confusion . . . A mission statement should be concise and to the point; but be broad enough to empower those in the organization to look at it and ask: “Am I contributing to our goal?” The mission needs to have an emotional attachment; it is the guiding light for everyone within the organization. The mission should resonate with everyone whether they just joined an organization, or have been there since the beginning.

So critical is the mission statement to obtaining and maintaining a unified organizational direction, Malphurs writes, “A shared mission is essential to the church’s unity and ministry effectiveness. A mission that is not shared by all involved results in disunity and ministry ineffectiveness. Thus the new church must insist on mission unity on the part of the

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13 Aubrey Malphurs, The Nuts and Bolts of Church Planting, 84.


16 Ibid.
The church planter must lead or guide the team towards a mission statement that contains all of the aforementioned elements and, once arrived at, must continually communicate the mission in various mediums, never deviating from the course it charts.

Harvest Fellowship Church’s Mission Statement

The Great Commission-oriented mission statement that will serve as the pulse, heartbeat, compass, guiding light, and measuring stick for Harvest Fellowship Church is the following: “Making, Mobilizing and Multiplying Every Day, Everywhere Followers of Christ.” This mission statement speaks to several cultural concerns mentioned in the ethnography of chapter 2 and captures the essence of what a multiplying, missional church is about. It is both inspirational and aspirational and has the ability to infuse purpose and meaning into every task done for HFC whether that be stuffing envelopes, setting up chairs, cleaning toilets, or working in the nursery. It is broad, specific, charts a course for the ministry, and enables leadership to ask the most critical organizational question of all, “How are we doing at what we’re about?” The author, and prayerfully the reader, would be able to give a lifetime of service to the fulfillment of this mission.

Vision

Rosabeth Moss Canter once wrote, “A vision is not just a picture of what could be; it is an appeal to our better selves, a call to become something more.”\(^{18}\) One of the primary roles the church planter must fulfill is that of creating a picture in the minds of his team of the ministry to become something much more than what they currently are. It is the essence of what Hebrews 11:6 says regarding the seeing component of faith when the author writes, “Now faith is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see.” This faith-inspired vision is what must be impressed upon the people’s minds for a church plant to thrive. James R. Kouzes and Barry Posner, in their book *The Leadership Challenge*, add another dimension to when they define vision as ‘an ideal and unique image of the future.’\(^{19}\) They add the element of uniqueness to vision that sets an ideal image of the future apart from that of others. The ability to cast a compelling vision of an ideal and unique future is something that John Maxwell describes as ‘an indispensible part of leadership.’\(^{20}\) Malphurs speaks candidly to the importance of vision for church planters, “The vision is of utmost importance to the new church because it provides energy, fosters risk taking, legitimizes leadership, empowers the church, sustains ministry, keeps the people looking forward, and motivates giving.”\(^{21}\) Indeed, the organization largely rises and falls upon the leaders ability to cast a compelling vision for the future of the church. Church plants can effectively hamstring their efforts from the outset by failing to give adequate attention to the vision of where the church is headed in the future.

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\(^{21}\) Aubrey Malphurs, *The Nuts and Bolts of Church Planting*, 97.
Harvest Fellowship Churches Vision Statement

Because HFC’s mission is to mobilize and multiply every day, everywhere followers of Christ and, because of the deep-seated conviction that this is a God-glorifying, God-inspired mission, the following vision statements are confidently shared concerning the future undertakings of Harvest Fellowship Church:

We foresee a community where the gospel of Jesus Christ is proclaimed graciously yet boldly; where it will be taught by gifted and growing teams of communicators; where stories of gospel-based life change are celebrated regularly; and where a responsive audience enthusiastically celebrates steps of spiritual growth; a community of mobilized Christ followers that enjoy gathering throughout the community, throughout the week to tell the stories of Scripture and the stories of their own spiritual journeys; where ministering to others is made simple, attractive, and enjoyable; where people feel comfortable asking each other regularly “What is your next step in your relationship with Christ?” and where this community provides the primary care and nurture for each other through meaningful relationships; a discipleship plan that is integrated, age specific, and is easy to use, understand, communicate, and track; where cutting edge, web-based discipleship and training resources will allow people to monitor and progress through a robust and dynamic discipleship plan from the comfort of their home; and where parents are resourced and encouraged to disciple their own children; a community where accountability relationships are cultivated in order to foster spiritual maturity; where an emphasis on the biblical ‘one anothers’ creates a culture where grace is felt and unity is maintained by each member; and where we lovingly keep the main things the main things with our theology; a church with a desperation and dependence upon God that is immediately noticeable by visitors through an emphasis on prayer; where spontaneous prayer among people is normal and natural;
where concerts of prayer are a weekly highpoint of our church; where answers to prayer
courage and inspire more prayer; and where a ‘wall of answered prayer’ will serve as a
continual reminder of God’s power and willingness to be moved by the prayers of His people; a
church whose emphasis on leadership development intentionally produces leaders from within
the church; where the staff is mostly comprised of leaders we have developed; where each
position of service is led by leaders seeking and training apprentices to replace them in order to
develop additional ministry at all levels of our church; where internship programs with bible
colleges and seminaries will be established to further aid fulfillment of our vision; and where our
facilities and technology will be used to equip people with undergraduate and graduate level
theological training; a church facility that is tastefully simple, clean, spacious, technologically up
to date and multifunctional; where the children’s and student ministries are attractively decorated
with age-appropriate furnishings and themes to encourage spiritual growth; where parents feel
comfortable leaving their children due to the safe and simple check in system; and where each
ministry is staffed by friendly, trained, and background-checked volunteers for the peace of mind
of guests; the location of our church to be on, or similar to, the 25-acre lot on the corner of the
914 Bypass and county road 1247; where additional parking will be located across the street with
a sky walk spanning the road for the safety of our guests; where the grounds will be beautifully
landscaped and maintained to provide an inviting, peaceful atmosphere; and where other
properties will be sought for ministry expansion and development; guests being warmly
welcomed from the moment they drive onto our grounds by teams of friendly people excited to
see them; where guests entering our building are met with the smell of fresh coffee and clear
signage directing them to where they need to go; where a clean, organized, well staffed welcome
center answers any questions our guests may have; a church that is passionate about beginning
new churches intentionally, strategically, and regularly; where partnerships with local Christian businessmen are formed and businesses are intentionally started or run to fund new church plants and to resource church planters; where a regional church planting network will be launched to train, fund, and resource those called to plant churches; where key sections of the community will be completely renovated, restored, and utilized to further the gospel and ingratiate ourselves with local officials; multitudes of teams regularly doing service projects both locally and abroad so as to bless our cities, build relational bridges, and to tangibly show the love of Christ; where people’s hearts are cultivated to hear the gospel by seeing the gospel in action; where communities are transformed by Jesus because of expressions of heart-moving generosity; supporting international missionaries with full support to foster ongoing, long-term relationships with targeted countries throughout the world; where our church regularly sends work teams on short-term missions trips to aid the work and to encourage involvement in global evangelism and ministry efforts.

Despite wonderful attempts at describing in words what a church aspires to become, some find it helpful to visualize what a church will be like by finding a model of church that already exists. There are two ministries that are currently functioning in a very missional and attractional way and seeing Christ powerfully move in their midst. A hybrid of these two churches would describe perfectly what HFC will be like in twenty years. The first is Jim Putman’s church named Real Life Ministries in Post Falls, Idaho.\(^{22}\) The other is Adullam Church in Denver, Colorado.\(^{23}\) Their commitment to discipleship, to being on mission, and to gathering

\(^{22}\) See www.reallifeministries.org.

in larger groups as well as in outreach-oriented small groups harmonize well with the aspirational vision and outcomes of HFC.

**HFC’s Launch Strategy**

Ralph Moore, founder of the Hope Chapel movement, unequivocally states, “church planting is a team process.” While the lead planter spearheads the team, a supporting cast of godly, kingdom-minded, servant leaders is foundational to a new church plant’s success. Since Harvest Fellowship Church is considered a ‘cold start’ or a church with no central group established, one of the first priorities will be to assemble a launch team. This is one of the most challenging aspects of planting a new church from scratch. Ed Stetzer writes:

> The most difficult phase comes early, when the church planter is attempting to attract a launch team. At this stage the planter can offer no relationships, no meeting place, no programs, and no music. People have difficulty committing themselves to a dream they can’t see. Recruiting a launch team is challenging but essential. It’s when the planter lays a foundation for the birth of the new church.

Before explaining the strategy of HFC to gather a launch team it is important that several philosophical and methodological variations be explained for the reader to comprehend more fully the approach HFC will utilize. These include variations over such issues as the purpose of the launch team and the intended size of the church at startup. Closely related to this will be a discussion of the purposes of three essential groups of varying sizes that contribute to the health of a church. The unique dynamics of HFC will then be explained to validate the distinctive launch-team-gathering approach taken.

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24 Ralph Moore, *Starting a New Church from Scratch*, 77.

25 This is a term coined by Aubrey Malphurs in *The Nuts and Bolts of Church Planting*, 92.

Three Groups Essential to a Healthy Church

Churches are planted with the postulation that they will be healthy and therefore able to reproduce. Mike Breen champions the notion that in order for a church to be healthy, it must meet the various needs of people through value-based gatherings of people in groups of varying sizes. Breen posits that people need four spaces to feel fully connected in community, although only three can be organized by the church.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Public</th>
<th>People share a common experience and connect through an outside influence.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Social</td>
<td>Where people share an authentic “snapshot” of who we are, which shows what it would be like to have a personal relationship with us.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal</td>
<td>Where we share private experiences, thoughts, and feelings.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intimate</td>
<td>Where we share “naked” information about who we are and are not ashamed.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

He writes:

When someone comes into our church community, at whatever gathering size, that person is hoping for some level of relational connection. For this to be fully expressed, we need to enable people to come to the place where they experience this in all four spaces (or the top three at least, since those are the ones that we can organize). This is not usually an overnight occurrence, but nevertheless, this should be our goal, as this will provide the various contexts required for all individuals to gain and to give the most.

Breen then encourages churches to design gatherings around these relational needs and further directs leaders to assign values and outcomes to the groups as well. With this notion in mind, the following groups with their corresponding values and outcomes will be utilized to discuss HFC’s launch strategy:

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27 Mike Breen and Alex Absalom, *Launching Missional Communities: A Field Guide* (Pawley’s Island, SC: 3DM, 2008), 45. He writes, “People belong to one another at different levels of intensity, and healthy churches enable people to belong to all four gathering sizes.”

28 Ibid., 43.

29 Ibid., 46.


Table 10 HFC’s Three Group Sizes and Corresponding Values and Outcomes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Values and Outcomes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Large Group (100-200 people)</td>
<td>Corporate worship, inspiration, preaching, and motivation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mid-Sized Group (10-30 people)</td>
<td>Discipleship, fellowship, care, mission, &amp; leadership training.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal Group (2-3 people)</td>
<td>Spiritual disciplines, accountability, and multiplication.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Purpose of the Launch Team

While the purpose of a launch team seems blatantly obvious, there are divergent views as to whether the launch team is a temporary team that disbands after the launch or whether it becomes a core leadership team holding key positions in the future church. Accordingly, Searcy and Thomas make a key distinction between a launch team and a core team. They define a launch team as:

A team of committed individuals who will assist you in preparing for and executing an effective launch. This is a team of people currently living in the area where your new church will meet – a team that you will build from scratch. The launch team is in existence only through the first weekly service.\(^{30}\)

This team essentially serves one function, which is to help successfully launch a new church. Once the mission of launching the church is accomplished, the launch team’s function ceases to exist.

A core team, by contrast, are individuals who are committed to serving the church in a more long-term fashion, and whose focus is on strengthening and solidifying initial members of the church.\(^ {31}\) Ideally, these would be individuals who are gleaned from the unchurched populace of Pulaski County. Whether a church plant uses these distinctions largely depends upon how they

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\(^{30}\) Nelson Searcy and Kerrick Thomas, *Launch*, 142

\(^{31}\) Ibid., 143.
intend to launch and whether they have mechanisms in place to keep an outward, evangelistic ministry perspective.\textsuperscript{32}

**Intended Size of the Church At Startup**

Next it is important to clarify two distinct approaches church planters take when attempting to start a church. These differences will account for a wide range of differing emphases among church planting experts and resources. The first approach that is typified by Searcy and Thomas is to gather a launch team with the explicit goal of launching as large as they can with as many people in attendance as possible. This very common approach is also known as the *Crowd to Core* model and is illustrated in Figure 4 below.

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\textsuperscript{32} Nelson Searcy and Kerrick Thomas, *Launch*, 143. Kerrick and Thomas primary concern is that a core group will become inward focused over a period of approximately two months thus hindering the outward, evangelistic focus of the church plant. However, these concerns can be mitigated in other ways as will be further explained in the forthcoming pages.
Church planting initiatives that launch large without pre-existing, multiplying, healthy, and missional small groups often play varying degrees of catch up. Initially, church planting teams feverishly labor for months to gather a crowd for their public launch. Then, if successful, the church planter correctly attempts to funnel people into smaller groups where more personalized discipleship, care, and connection can occur. The challenge lies in the fact that the small groups are often new and untested. While the new church plants makes the difficult adjustment to weekly services and the output of energy that this demands, the planter often simultaneously attempts to launch, lead, train, and evaluate the new small groups.

The other approach typified in organic models of churches can be called *Core to Crowd*. This method chooses to build the church from the micro level proceeding to the macro level. The goal is not to launch large; rather, to begin small in groups of 2-3, which then multiplies and forms into a multiplying mid-sized group. As these mid-sized groups multiply they organize into a large group or a church. This is pictured the figure below.

![Figure 5 Core to Crowd Church Planting Model](image-url)
The strength of this method is that it ensures that multiple healthy, stable and multiplying small groups are already operational and in place prior to the launch of the church so it more easily can incorporate an influx of new people. Additionally, when multiplication occurs at the micro level it provides a key indicator of the ability of the mid-size, and ultimately the large size groups to multiply as well. Articulated another way, if multiplication does not occur at this ‘micro-level’ there should be legitimate concern of the team’s ability to multiply at the ‘macro-level.’ Since the vision of HFC is to plant a missional, multiplying church, it follows that multiplication at the lowest levels of the church are vital to the fulfillment of the vision.

HFC Unique Characteristics and Launch Team Approach

HFC is unique in the sense that it will not only be a cold start but also will be led by a bi-vocational church planter. These two variables warrant an approach that differs from conventional approaches. Therefore, the author will heed the counsel of Aubrey Malphurs when he warns cold start church plants not to launch publicly until they have a core of ten to twelve families and between 50 to 80 regular attendees. This milestone of 50 people or 10-12 families will function as a barometer as to whether to proceed into phase two where a launch team will be actively pursued. One of the key indicators of a church plant’s success is that the lead church planter must be able to recruit, mobilize, and lead a growing team of people towards multiplication. David Putman asks potential church planters the question, ‘Who are you bringing to the party with you?’ He writes, ‘Those who bring no one in the early stages or struggle to get

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33 This concept is reflected in both the organic model and in the missional model of churches. Neil Cole writes, “All reproduction begins at the molecular level and develops from the micro to the macro, from the simple to the complex. It is the same with the Kingdom . . . If we cannot multiply disciples, we will never multiply leaders. The way to see a true church multiplication movement is to multiply healthy disciples, then leaders, then churches and finally movements – in that order. [Neil Cole, Organic Church: Growing Faith Where Life Happens (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2005), 97-98.]

34 Aubrey Malphurs, Planting Growing Churches for the 21st Century, 186-188.
people on board may lack the capacity to lead. Obviously, one of the defining characteristics of a leader is when he looks behind him and he has followers.”

Therefore, the second of the three phase launch team gathering initiatives listed below will be undertaken when this critical mass of people is reached.36

HFC’s Three Phase Strategy of Gathering and Launching

The strategies that will be employed for HFC to gather a launch team will involve three distinct phases comprised of the following initiatives. Each phase is dependent upon the Lord powerfully moving in the hearts of men and blessing the works and plans of the men He sovereignly assembles to accomplish His will.

PHASE ONE Gathering Initiatives

*Networking with friends and associates*

The primary means of gathering a core group for HFC will be to tap into the already extant relational networks of the author and his family. These relationships include neighbors, work associates, relatives, and friends from community involvement. Social events such as dinners, camp outs, and book discussion groups will serve as opportunities to cast the vision for HFC in a casual, non-threatening way to see who may show interest.

*Intercessory Prayer Team*

The book of Acts records that prior to the birth of the church in Acts 2, there was a concerted effort of prayer. After naming the apostles who were present, Luke writes, “They all joined together constantly in prayer, along with the women and Mary, the mother of Jesus, and

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36 It will be noted that fundraising efforts, proposed budget, and programs discussed herein are chronologically tied to post-second phase initiatives and, in some cases, post launch activities.
with his brothers.” This was not Luke merely offering readers pious, informational ‘filler’ prior to describing the birth of the church but rather he describes a foundational precursor of any earnest attempt to plant a church. Malphurs writes:

Before we look at the first step, we need to consider the place of prayer in starting a church. Actually the first step is prayer. Before we attempt to plant a church anywhere, it’s imperative that we spend hours on our knees in prayer. In fact it would be wise for church planters to recruit personal intercessors to make up an intercessory prayer team who will pray for them, their teams, and the entire planting endeavor on a constant basis.

To underscore the preeminent place of prayer to the task of church planting, Malphurs emphatically states, “We can’t place enough emphasis on prayer.” Jesus’ reminder that “apart from me you can do nothing” fuels the notion that church planting must originate from a spiritual state of insolvency and desperation. Protracted sessions of desperate pleading with God to move, to provide, and to raise up a launch team for this great work is paramount to HFC’s strategy. The conviction exists that unless the team learns to depend upon the Lord to provide strength, unity, wisdom, people, opportunities, and His favor upon the team’s efforts, then all labors will be in vain.

*Inaugural Life Change Groups*

The author and his spouse will prayerfully assemble one or two others to begin meeting to go through Church Multiplication Associate’s Life Change Group accountability pamphlet.

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39 Ibid.

40 John 15:5c.

41 See https://www.cmaresources.org/files/LifeChangeGroup2011Sample.pdf (accessed 5/21/2014). Neil Cole is a key founder of this ministry which is committed to discipleship through divine truth, nurturing relationships, and an ‘apostolic mission’ of being ‘sent out’ to reach others with the gospel.
These Life Change Group’s (LCG’s hereafter) provide personal accountability, a strategy to grow spiritually through interaction with Scripture, along with a vision to adopt a missional, multiplying lifestyle. The pamphlet explains the essence of what a LCG is and does which is described in the table below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 11 Essential Concepts of a Life Change Group</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Definition of a Life Change Group (LCG)</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Life Change Group is a group of people who need Jesus to change their lives from the inside out. Men meet with men and women with women. When more than three people are part of the group it turns into two groups of two.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Five Values of LCG’s</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Team - We need each other (Eccl 4:9-12)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Help - We need each other to live like Jesus wants us to live (1 Tim 5:19)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secret - We share our sins in confidence to grow and pray for one another (Matt 18:15-17)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Easy - Groups can meet anytime and anywhere (Matt 18:20)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multiply - We find others who want to grow and launch other LCG’s (2 Tim 2:2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Three Activities of a LCG</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accountability questions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bible reading, discussion and application.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Praying for others to come to know Christ.^{42}</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These groups will essentially be the starting blocks of HFC, as multiplication will occur at the smallest possible level of the ministry from the outset. A key aspect of the success of these groups is the vision of a future missional, multiplying church, which is fed by the streams of LCG’s and Missional Communities. These are discussed further below as the second initiative of the phase one gathering strategy. The vision of gathering the people in these LCG’s into missional communities and then into a missional church dedicated to reaching Pulaski County for Christ will foster unity and generate excitement and momentum.

Inaugural Missional Community

The author will prioritize an initiative to prayerfully identify kingdom-minded Christian friends from existing relationships with people at work, the community, and the LCG’s and invite them to come to participate in the inaugural Missional Community (MC hereafter) for HFC at the author’s home. The name ‘missional community’ aligns with the core values and mission of HFC and makes the purpose and expectation of these groups clear from the outset. Initially this inaugural MC group will hear the heart of the lead church planter to reach the 48,000 unchurched residents and how they can assist in that purpose. The lead planter will share the mission, vision, and core values of HFC and unpack the purpose of the MC. All participants of the MC will be encouraged to participate in a LCG. The strength of this strategy is that it taps into already existing relationships. Stetzer, speaking on gathering a launch team, clearly says that “people are reached most effectively through relationships.” Church planter Ben Arment asserts that this is God’s preferred way of launching a church. He writes, “God builds his church by creating social networks around you. He brings you into contact with people and circumstances that contribute to a thriving congregation. By ignoring this divine field positioning, we miss out on the church God has been building around us all this time.”

This group of believers will begin to corporately grow together through times of worship and discussion of God’s Word, flesh out the biblical ‘one anothers,’ and reach out to the unchurched community in the respective neighborhoods in which they reside. Initially, each team

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43 The foundational belief that the Missio Dei is best accomplished within the context of a relational community that is focused on learning, applying, and implementing biblical commands is the sine qua non of HFC’s ministry. This aligns with Neil Cole’s triad Divine Truth, Nurturing Relationships, and Apostolic Mission (DNA).

44 Ed Stetzer, *Planting Missional Churches*, 204.

member participates in the other’s group to form a critical mass for the groups that meet weekly two nights a week. Groups will prayerfully adopt a section of our county to bless and minister to.

*The Trigger of Phase Two*

As previously mentioned, the key to moving ahead into the second phase of HFC’s strategy to plant a missional, multiplying church is when the MC’s have effectively multiplied to the point where ten to twelve families have joined the MC’s or a critical mass in these groups reaches 50 – 80 people. This is visually depicted in the figure below.

![Figure 6 Launch Team Origin](image)

**PHASE TWO Launch Team Formation**

*Selection of Potential Launch Team Members*

The clear, compelling vision of merging groups of MC’s into a larger, expanding church is essential in order to move the MC’s from becoming merely isolated, independently functioning pockets of small groups. This vision gains traction when the lead church planter prayerfully begins to schedule meetings with members of MC’s who meet the following criteria:
Table 12 Launch Team Selection Criteria

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Leadership Capacity</th>
<th>One who faithfully and effectively leads a Missional Community to the point of multiplication</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Availability</td>
<td>One who demonstrates the willingness to rearrange their lives to be available to disciple and lead others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Champions the Vision</td>
<td>One who passionately believes in the vision and strategy of HFC to the point that they can champion it to others.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial Investor</td>
<td>One who sacrificially gives to fund the vision</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A person that possesses these traits is a prime candidate for invitation to become part of the launch team.

*Launch Team Challenge Event*

The purpose of this event is to challenge leaders meeting the above criteria to prayerfully consider joining the launch team which will be primarily responsible for inaugurating the third phase expansion plans of HFC. Those expressing interest will be invited to a weekend retreat where the vision will be cast for the third phase of HFC where the responsibilities and expectations of launch team members will be explained. Bible passages pertaining to vision, sacrifice, leadership, risk, and living by faith will be read, taught, discussed, and applied.

Next, the following expectations, taken from J.D. Payne’s book *The Barnabas Factors: Eight Essential Factors of Church Planting Team Members*, will be read, discussed, and agreed to be maintained by each member of the launch team in subsequent meetings: After the launch team is assembled, this list will be tailored to the vision and core values of HFC. Each launch team member will be challenged to agree to walking with the Lord, maintaining an outstanding character, serving the church, remaining faithful to the call, sharing the gospel regularly, raising up leaders, encouraging others with speech and action, and responding appropriately to conflict.⁴⁶

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Last, the lead church planter will people still interested to sign a ‘launch team covenant’ and will be given a schedule of meetings to help initiate Harvest Fellowship Church.

PHASE THREE Gathering Initiatives

*Informational Meetings*

These meetings, to be held in the in a local hotel conference room, will provide local residents the opportunity to come and hear about the vision, core values, mission, and heart of the church planter for HFC. The informational meetings will be advertised via radio, newspaper, fliers, and social network sites and will provide both the information and inspiration they will need to make a prayerful determination as to whether they would like to be a part of the launch team. The MC’s will be encouraged to attend and serve at these meetings. There will be time of question and answer after the presentation by the lead church planter. Information cards and an opportunity for attendees to make a financial investment into HFC will be part of the program.

*Telemarketing Campaign*

We will use the services of TellStart, a ministry that calls every resident within predetermined geographical boundaries informing them of the aforementioned church informational meetings, prompting them to press a number for more information, and last to leave their contact information for those interested in speaking with someone from the church. Each day a spreadsheet is sent to the church with the contact information of residents who asked to be contacted.

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Door-to-Door Surveys

Fourth, the church planter and the MC’s will begin going door-to-door throughout the cities of Somerset, Ferguson, and Burnside to conduct a survey for HFC which will provide critical feedback to be used to effectively reach the residents as well as giving the author an opportunity to personally meet and invite residents to the informational meetings. Literature will be left with residents directing them to the HFC website for further information.

Mature Believers from Existing Churches

This approach tacitly acknowledges that while upwards of 60-80% of a church plant’s attendance is from the unchurched population, the remaining are people who come from other churches looking for a change or a challenge. The initiatives in the second phase essentially involve casting a huge net into the community where the catch will include those who are churched and unchurched. While not targeting the churched per se, some will unavoidably be exposed to what HFC is planning to do and some will want to join the adventure. This is exactly what Malphurs had in mind when he says, “It’s important that just as you cast a fishing line out into the waters and see what follows as you reel it in, so you do the same with the dream. As we cast the vision, who follows it or shows interest?"48 Frankly, some of those who will show interest in the vision of HFC are currently members of other congregations. New churches, despite their best efforts, will draw people from existing congregations, which is the primary reason local pastors tend not to get excited about a new church plant in their city. Rather than pretend this will not occur, the author acknowledges that HFC will utilize these mature believers in the launch strategy, albeit as a ‘plan B’ endeavor. In a similar vein, while casting our net broadly in the community via telephonic contact and other outreach efforts, it should be expected to also

make contact with local pastors and current church members. Since everyone in the community will receive these contacts, it reduces somewhat the perception that the church planter is targeting members of other congregations.

**Community Outreach**

Church planting is birthed out of hearts that are prayerfully broken for the number of lost, unregenerate people in their communities who are like sheep without a shepherd. Like Jesus’ teachings in the parable of the lost sheep, the lost coin, and the lost son, church planters and those who join their teams must look upon the great worth of unredeemed people in their community, which should fuel their desire to reach them.\(^{49}\) Subsequently an effectual search and recovery effort must be launched in order to bring them life, hope, and freedom that can only come from a relationship with Christ.

**Outreach “Sweet Spot”**

In order to maximize outreach efforts the approach must be contextualized. This is accomplished by asking “what is the wisest, most effective manner to engage the people of Pulaski County with outreach events that will connect people to Christ and His church?” Nelson Searcy and Kerrick Thomas ask three questions that are critical in planning for successful outreaches. They ask, “Who are the key population groups living in my area? What population group is not being reached effectively? And what population group does the church planter best relate to?\(^{50}\) They posit that the answers to these three questions intersect at a place they call the

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\(^{50}\) Nelson Searcy and Kerrick Thomas, *Launch*, 166-168.
“sweet spot,” a group that the church planter “could effectively and enthusiastically reach.”51

The following section answers these questions based on the studies performed in chapter two.

**Key Population Groups in Pulaski County**

The ethnography unearthed in the second chapter of this thesis project revealed that 36 percent of the residents of Pulaski County are between the ages of 25 – 54.52 This is the key population group in Pulaski County and varies only slightly from the target age group previously mentioned of 30-55.

**Most Unreached Population Group in Pulaski County**

Although the age group that is most noticeably absent in Pulaski County churches are the 20-34-age bracket, this demographic only comprises 17.2 percent of the populace.53 The age bracket of 25-54 comprises 38.2 percent of the population and, when combined with the fact that 82 percent of residents are included in a traditional family unit, this demographic seems to be the most strategically important group to target.54

**Population Group Which Relates Best to Church Planter**

The only question left unanswered is what population group the church planter best relates to. To answer that question, a biographical sketch of the lead church planter is in order. The lead church planter is currently 44 years of age, married, and has four children between the ages of eleven and five. The author was raised in a blue-collar, middle-class, nominally Roman Catholic family where matters of faith were largely marginalized. The writer, a full-time prison chaplain, is completing a terminal degree, enjoys to read, to discuss theology, and to lead people

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51 Ibid.

52 See Table 4 in Chapter 2 for source information.

53 Ibid.

54 See Table 4 for source information.
towards greater intimacy with Christ. Therefore, the sweet spot of ministry for the lead church planter seems to be married residents with children, who are slightly more educated, who are blue collar to middle management in their places of employment, and who are interested in spiritual maturity and engaging more fully in strategic ministry.

The outreach efforts for Harvest Fellowship Church, therefore, will target this “sweet spot” listed above. Since the methods of outreach previously listed in chapter 2 were consistent with the ministry “sweet spot” just discussed, they will not be repeated here. It does, however, warrant mentioning that these outreaches will be creatively adapted, expanded, and implemented by the launch team after brainstorming and planning sessions are conducted.

**Finances**

While the ultimate purpose of church planting is spiritual in nature and geared toward encouraging people to make faith decisions to know and follow Christ, another set of critical organizational decisions must be given sufficient attention to in order for the new church to flourish. Raising funds to finance the new church is chief among organizational concerns. Nelson Searcy agrees when he writes, “But thinking through the issue of money is just as integral to the start of your new church as thinking through evangelism or strategy. One thing is for sure: No matter how strong your calling or how good your intentions, a new church cannot succeed without funding.”\(^5^5\) Once again the word *strategy* is determinative when it comes to executing a plan to stimulate cash flow necessary to fulfill the vision. The following strategy outlines how the author plans to effectively raise the capital to launch HFC. This budget is primarily for the initiatives in previously mentioned phase two of the gathering initiatives, which presupposes a core team of approximately 50-80 people.

Budget

People give to leaders of ministries with a clear and compelling vision. Malphurs writes, “It’s interesting that donors give not only to organizations that cast vision for their ministries, but to churches and parachurch organizations that cast big vision.” After coming up with a mission statement, vision statement, and the core values of the ministry that donors can rally behind, the next thing supporters will look for is a well-researched budget that communicates to them that informed decisions guided the formation of the proposed ministry budget. Searcy and Thomas, after counseling church planters to avoid a budget that’s too small and one that’s too large, argue for a budget that is “realistically conservative.” With this in mind, the following discusses the capital start up costs followed by the non-capital costs for Harvest Fellowship Church:

Start Up Costs

These expenses are non-repeating, one time expenditures needed to successfully launch the church. Most of these purchases would be considered depreciable assets for tax purposes.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category / Item</th>
<th>Cost</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Staffing (Multiple Positions)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P/T and Bi-vocational staff; Worship, Training Events</td>
<td>$50,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Portable Stage &amp; Sound System (PortableChurch.com)</td>
<td>$60,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stage, trailer, screens, lighting, training, projectors</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Facility (Somerset Family Fitness Center)</td>
<td>$18,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whole facility: $250/week x 52 weeks; floor protection $4,000; S&amp;H</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chairs &amp; Tables (200 Chairs / 10 Tables / 4 dollies)</td>
<td>$8,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$25/chair; $60/table; $400/dollies/shipping</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pulpit / Communion / Offering Plates / Altar</td>
<td>$2,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children/Student Ministry (whatisorange.org)</td>
<td>$8,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orange252/XP3, TVs, misc. supplies, snacks</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Website</td>
<td>$5,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Office Supplies</td>
<td>$10,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Computers, printers, scanners, stationary, cell phones, copier

Publicity
Mailings, signage, flyers, printing, TellStart (.10/call); faithmarketing.com (marketing campaign) $25,000

Outreach (concession-supply.com)
Food, promotional products, rental equipment, misc. $25,000

Two 7 x 16 Trailers Enclosed/Concession (colonycargo.com) $10,000

Outreach / storage

TOTAL $221,000

Operating Expenses

The budget below represents recurring expenditures that will continue for the entire existence of the church\(^\text{58}\). Church planting leaders recommend raising the full amount of support for three years to allow for giving to attain self-sustaining levels. The following figures represent three year totals:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cost</th>
<th>Annually</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fellowship One (Web Based Administration) Select: $250/month with child check in add on</td>
<td>$9,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Postage/Post Office Box</td>
<td>$12,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phone, Internet,</td>
<td>$2,600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Insurance</td>
<td>$10,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staffing</td>
<td>$150,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Facility Rental</td>
<td>$39,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leadership Training</td>
<td>$15,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Office Supplies</td>
<td>$15,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>$253,100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^{58}\) A main variable to these annual expenses is the line item for staff salaries. Should the elders and key pastoral staff agree that it is in the best interest of HFC to continue with the bi-vocational method utilized to start the church as another mechanism that ensures the priesthood of all believers is kept at the fore, then this annual expense will be modified significantly.
Sources of Funding

While each church plant is unique, there are generally standard sources of funding that church planters have historically utilized to garner their ministries financial backing. The following represent the sources of funding that HFC will plan on utilizing based on their unique set of circumstances:

Staff Salaries

The lead pastor will utilize his position as a full-time prison chaplain to work bivocationally for HFC. Additional staffing will be brought on in a part-time capacity until funding and or needs of HFC determine otherwise. This approach to church planting has several advantages including reducing the financial burden on the church to pay for retirement, healthcare, and other expenses that are incurred with full-time employees. Next, the staff can relate more with what the rest of the church experiences regarding work-related pressures and time constraints. Last, the tithe of the church planter benefits the church plant significantly as this provides another stream of cash flow.

Support Letters To Friends and Families

Support will be sought from friends and family members of each staff members to raise funding for the church plant. A brochure of HFC, a support letter, and a prepaid stamped return envelope will be sent to a list of potential donors asking them prayerfully to consider contributing to the start up costs of HFC. Tapping into this relational network has provided a financial kick-start to many church planters.

Core Team

One of the preconditions of being on the core team is that they contribute financially to HFC. This is important for several reasons. First, people usually do not financially support
ministries that they aren’t in full agreement with. This is a great test to determine whether their hearts are fully committed to the vision, mission, and core values of the church. Second, it serves an example to the rest of the church of giving sacrificially to the service of the Lord. Last, it helps create financial momentum in giving.

Director of Support Ministries

There are several people with whom the author has ministered in prior churches who believe in the ministry of HFC and who would serve well in the capacity of overseeing the fund-raising operations for HFC. The Director of Support Ministries would be responsible for developing, arranging, and executing campaigns designed to raise funds and prayer support for HFC.

Big Donors and Special Fundraising Events

There are several prominent Christian businessmen in the Somerset area who have strong ties to the Pulaski County region. These men possess great connections, a host of resources helpful to church planters, and a generous spirit. Banquets, golf-scrambles, races and other fundraising events will be planned and executed to reach the target goal for launch.

Financial Oversight

HFC has enlisted the services of a local Certified Public Accountant who oversees the financial undertakings of the ministry. This accountant is thoroughly familiar with the necessary legal requirements for non-profit organizations as well as the seven standards for financial stewardship from the Evangelical Council for Financial Accountability (ECFA).59 These standards include governance, financial oversight, use of resources and compliance with the law, transparency, compensation-setting and related-party transactions, and stewardship of charitable

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gifts. Since HFC currently has a handful of regular donors to this ministry, these mechanisms have already been set in place prior to the anticipated uptick in financial giving.

Setting

The importance of choosing a location for the birth of a new church is another important element the church planter needs to thoughtfully consider to aid an auspicious launch. The fact is that the location of the church will either help or hinder the churches chances of reaching certain portions of the community. Aubrey Malphurs concurs when he says:

The setting is important to the church plant for several reasons: it affects who will and who will not attend the church, it determines the church’s visual presence in the community, it determines the effectiveness of ministry to the community, it can provide strategic advance, and it provides the church with a way to accomplish its goals.\(^{60}\)

Countless decisions must be made such as where the facility should be located, seating capacity, parking, cost, additional space for classes and nursery, long-term or short-term lease, set-up and tear-down times, storage, and community perception. Church planters have chosen a host of venues for the location of their new church plants with each having advantages and disadvantages. Some of these sites include movie theatres, fire halls, local businesses, restaurant meeting rooms, hotels, school auditoriums, funeral homes, and Seventh-day Adventist church facilities.

Harvest Fellowship Church as chosen a facility that favorably addresses the majority of decisions mentioned above and also provides expansion opportunities as well. The location for the launch of HFC is the entire facility of Somerset Family Fitness Center, which was formerly the local YMCA. The facility is appealing for the following reasons: First, the facility is attractive, is well maintained, has ample parking, and has a pool available to utilize for baptisms.

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Second, the Somerset Family Fitness Center is frequented by a large portion of Pulaski County residents for sports leagues, swim teams, the outdoor pool, and membership at the facility. Third, the facility is well known to the 30-55 age range population of Pulaski County and would provide a strategic place for marketing HFC’s preview services and public launch. Fourth, the cost to rent the entire facility, which includes a large gymnasium, nursery area, pool, foyer area, plenty of restrooms, and several classrooms, would be $225 per week. The facility doesn’t open up until one p.m. on Sundays, so it would be available for two services should the Lord bless our efforts and we are forced to go to two services. Last, the facility is run by the city of Somerset, which would aid our communication with and service opportunities for the decision-makers of our community.

**First Service Preparation**

The importance of the first service in the life of a nascent church can hardly be overstated. This service is viewed by many to be a key predictor of future success of a church plant as, in many ways, it showcases the church planter’s ability to assemble a team, raise the necessary funding, and to draw a crowd. Many have likened the birth of the church to the birth of a child, with attendance akin to birth weight, the higher the birth weight of the child, the healthier the child. Many church plants that have failed to successfully launch well have failed altogether shortly thereafter. Nelson Searcy and Kerrick Thomas clarify the purpose of the first service when they write, “As you think about your launch date for your church, remember that your top goal is to launch as publicly as possible, with as many people as possible.” 61 The significance of such a pivotal event demands that a well-planned and executed blueprint is set in motion. The following elements are part of HFC’s strategy to launch with strength:

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Launch Date

The need to select a launch date that maximizes the potential for the greatest number of attendees as possible is vital to a successful church planting strategy. Nelson Searcy and Kerrick Thomas agree when they write:

Your launch date is the kick-off point for your new church. . . Everything hinges on this date – funding, strategy, publicity, systems, teams . . . everything. A confirmed launch date is especially essential because it justifies your budget, builds excitement among your team, gives you a goal to keep you moving forward, creates a sense of urgency, sets your publicity plan, establishes your timeline, brings focus to your efforts, holds you accountable, and shows partners and onlookers that you’re serious.  

There are typically two times of the year when people are generally poised to remain home and actively seek to establish new routines in their community. These times, closely associated with the school calendar, are after the first of the year and the start of a new school year. People are open to new routines after the first of the year because they have survived the holiday rush and children and college students are returning to the routine of school. The beginning of a new school year also finds families open to exploring new scheduling habits after the summer vacation and travel plans are generally behind them and students return to classes. While there is much to be said about launching on Easter Sunday, a time when most unchurched people are most likely to attend church services, the downside is that Easter is soon followed by the summer months, when churches historically struggle in both giving and attendance. A fledgling church will struggle greatly to try to maintain momentum during this difficult season and, therefore, HFC will not consider this option. Taking these facts into consideration, the established launch date for Harvest Fellowship Church will be on Sunday, September 6, 2015.  

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63 It will be noted that Searcy and Thomas are advocates of launching utilizing the Crowd to Core method previously discussed. Searcy and Thomas successfully planted in ‘cold start’ fashion but key to their success was the
Preview Services

Four months prior to the launch date of September of 2015, the first of four preview services will be conducted. These services, beginning on May 3, 2015 and then June 7, July 12, and August 2, are designed to pique interest in the community and to test the team’s planning, execution and systems. A four-part teaching series entitled “God and New beginnings,” based on the book of Nehemiah, will be the focus for the services. These preview services, with the theme, dates, location and service times, will be highly publicized throughout the community. Searcy and Thomas remind planters of the tremendous benefits reaped from these services when they share:

Monthly services are more than worth the effort that goes into them. We have seen the majority of churches who skip this step start with smaller number and struggle longer. But remember, monthly services attract a launch team, build momentum, give you practice and allow you to improve your skills, give you a chance to grow, provide more time for follow-up, enable more efficient use of initial resources, lower your stress level, make your launch day less intimidating, build greater awareness of the church, build excitement within the church, help you stick to your launch date, allow you to test your meeting location, allow you to test a worship, and build your database of future weekly attendance.65

These benefits make offering preview services an attractive approach to employ leading up to the first service of HFC. Staffing for these services will be primarily the lead church planter, a worship leader, and the initial core team members from the missional communities and life-

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64 These dates presuppose that a core team has been assembled and missional communities have been launched and have effectively multiplied to the point of having between 50-80 regular attendees. All dates will be adjusted until this threshold is met.

65 Nelson Searcy and Kerrick Thomas, Launch, 120.
change groups. Visitors’ information will be collected, and they will be contacted within one to two days and invited to a social event called “Connection Events,” designed to incorporate visitors into a loving community of Christ followers.

**Stabilizing Systems**

Most church planting practitioners agree that there are several essential systems to think through and plan prior to launching the church so that the fledgling church does not flounder. These systems are staffed, thoroughly planned, and tested prior to launching the church.

**Assimilation Process**

The strategy to move casual attendees toward becoming intimately connected to the life and ministries of the church are vital to the success of the new church plant. Stetzer reminds readers of the objectives of an assimilation plan when he writes, “the object of assimilation is to encourage attendees to become fruit-bearing disciples . . . a church needs a system to help people find stability that leads to long-term spiritual growth.”66 The following entities are key components of HFC’s assimilation strategy.

*Life Change Groups*

The smallest element to the strategy of Harvest Fellowship Church involves the personal accountability of each member in the form of Life Change Groups. Although the details of this and the following components of HFC’s assimilation strategy have been previously explained, a truncated version is appropriate. These are same-sex groups of 2-3 that meet weekly at any time and any place to ask accountability questions, read and discuss Scripture, and to pray for the lost. Ultimately, the group seeks to invite others, share their faith with others, and thereby multiply the number of LCGs.

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Missional Communities

The heart of Harvest Fellowship Church’s strategy to create disciples are Missional Communities, which are groups of 10-25 people who commit to growing, serving, praying, and caring for one another and their community. The fellowship centers around a partnership in the advancement of the gospel as taught in Philippians 1:5. All visitors, regular attenders, and members will be directed to join and actively engage in these missional communities.

Fellowship One Church Management

This web-based church management software system will allow HFC to efficiently manage information, mailings, event and Missional Community registrations, offerings, attendance, and children check-in events. This tool, accessible by key leaders having internet access, will enable leaders to focus on ministry while simultaneously ensuring a cost-effective, reliable means to manage a growing church.

Connection Events

These events are designed to offer visitors an opportunity to connect with members of HFC in a non-threatening, social environment where the focus will be on getting to know them and inviting them to connect further in the ministries of HFC. These events, occurring after preview services initially and monthly thereafter, include fun events such as cook outs, fishing trips, parents’ night out, et cetera.

Starting Point Classes

These classes, which will begin the Sunday after the initial launch of the church and every month thereafter, offer visitors more information about HFC the opportunity to hear about the vision, core values, and mission of the church. This class, initially led by the lead church planter, will serve as the pre-cursor to the membership class. The goal of this class is to provide a
forum whereby guests can gather the information necessary to determine if membership is something they would like to pursue.

Church Website

The church website is as important to today’s culture as PowerPoint was to the church in the middle of the 1990s. An attractive, user friendly, and informative website allows residents of the community to anonymously browse, sample, and explore all areas of your ministry. Often, people will first explore a churches website before ever stepping foot into the churches services. Modern websites contain helpful features such as contact information, service locations and times, upcoming events, and instructions on where to obtain more information. Currently, HFC has a website that has been operational for over a year but more than likely will be updated and revamped prior to the official launch. Nevertheless, the necessity of having a “Technology Team” is a vital system to have set in place prior to launch.

Children’s Ministry Team

The missional communities will utilize the inter-generational approach and will incorporate children into the fabric of the ministry. Since children are part of our families and are in need of discipleship and modeling, it is vital that we include and assist them in engaging in worship and understanding the family of God. However, once the church is publicly launched, the need arises for a children’s ministry team to be created for the Sunday gathering. This team will utilize the teachings, curriculum and resources from Orange (www.whatisorange.org) to facilitate the spiritual nurturing and development of our children that isn’t associated from the growth occurring in the missional communities.
Sunday Gathering Team

Since the Sunday gatherings are the most visible expression of the fledgling church, failing to develop a system that enables it to run smoothly and efficiently would be misguided if not fatal. These teams would plan sermon series, music selection, appropriate teaching props or skits, and church announcements. Planning several weeks ahead can begin to reduce the level of weekly stress often felt when teams transition from monthly services to the weekly services. A helpful approach many ministries take, and the fledgling HFC can aspire to, involves planning a preaching schedule for a complete year based upon the pastor’s prayerful assessment of the congregations needs.

Leadership Development

Church planters must have a plan to delegate key areas of the ministry to trained, capable, and gifted men and women so that other areas of ministry can be developed, strengthened and launched. Although a whole chapter will be devoted to this system within the corpus of this thesis project, a key plan would be to meet weekly with staff and monthly with volunteers in order to train and equip them to lead well. These “Core Team Trainings” will consist of prayer times, planning, and a host of leadership topics. Ideas for the content of these meetings would include Andy Stanley’s leadership podcast, leadership books, personality and spiritual gift inventories, and missional community training focused on multiplication.
CHAPTER 4
A STRATEGY TO LAUNCH A MISSIONAL CHURCH

As previously stated in the statement of limitations in Chapter 1 of this work, the term ‘missional’ can assume a host of meanings according to the theology and philosophy of ministry of a church’s leadership. Clarifying what is meant by the term ‘missional’ and delineating how these missional characteristics will be practically manifested into the ethos, programs, and ministries of HFC is vital. Therefore, this chapter will first explore the various definitions of what a missional church is by leading missional authorities and distill key principles of the movement. Next, key differences between these missional leaders will be examined which will be followed by a proposed nomenclature shift that will accurately describe how and where HFC will fit into the category of missional. The remainder of the chapter will reveal the general manner in which HFC will implement missional ministry into the respective segments of its overall ministry strategy and philosophy.

Definitions of a Missional Church by Missional Leaders

Prominent missional leaders, while sharing many similar core characteristics that are considered ‘missional’ by many, differ in subtle and, in some instances, not so subtle ways. It is important for the reader to be able to identify where points of agreement and dissonance occur as the discussion turns towards how HFC plans to become a missional church. The following chart, with the exception of the last entry, was created from a series of articles authored by top missional church leaders during a two-week interval spanning from December 2010 until January 2011. Note both the variations and similarities of each as the entries are read.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Missional Leader</th>
<th><strong>Definition of “Missional Community”</strong></th>
<th><strong>Unique Concepts</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Neil Cole</td>
<td>A missional community is a spiritual family (community) with the Spirit of Christ in their midst, called out to join Him on His mission to the ends of the earth.²</td>
<td>Divine Truth, Nurturing Relationships, Apostolic Mission; Church = Spirit of Christ present; God’s on mission, His church joins Him.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jeff Vanderstelt</td>
<td>A missional community is a family of missionary servants who make disciples who make disciples.³</td>
<td>MC’s live, love, and serve others as if they’re family; re-orient life to make disciples in gospel gaps of society; serve in a manner that the only explanation is the Gospel and Kingdom; disciples made by life on life visibility, a community living out the ‘one anothers;’ and discipleship while on mission.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hugh Halter</td>
<td>Missional communities are intentional webs of relationships bound together for the express purpose of bringing to light the Kingdom of God to those outside the faith.⁴</td>
<td>Gen 12 is the first MC where Abraham was sent to be a blessing (tangible touch of God in real life); live close to lost and architect schedule to meet needs in culture; learning, listening, and responding to needs around you; most like ‘social justice’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Felicity Dale</td>
<td>Missional communities are patterned on the principle of going, so they meet where life happens. They are families of God’s people, centered on Jesus, sharing life together, and intentionally reaching out with the Good News of the Kingdom.⁵</td>
<td>Key role of the church is to listen to God and respond to what He tells them; Making disciples is key – Jesus will build His church; Mission is at the heart of the Godhead.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JR Woodward</td>
<td>They (missional communities) are a sent people, sent to be disciples of Jesus in the world and for the sake of the world. They are mid-sized groups [20 - 50] living out their</td>
<td>Missional Communities are defined by their identity or by asking the “who” question.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

¹ For the purposes of this work, the terms Missional Communities and Missional Churches will be used interchangeably.


| Alan Hirsch | “sentness” together in specific missional spaces; learning to live in the way of Jesus; bringing God’s love, forgiveness, compassion and justice to specific people and neighborhoods.\(^6\) | We are a sent people to do life together and equip one another to live out our calling, walk with God, incarnate the Gospel, pursue wholeness in community, and inhabit the sacred text. |
| Alan Hirsch | (Missional communities) are sent (missio) by Jesus into the villages of which they’re already a part. The destiny of Jesus’ people is tied into that of the broader community in which they exist. They are there to add value, to bring wisdom, to foster a better village. In short, to participate with the work of Kingdom of God going on all around them.\(^7\) | Must redefine our understanding of the church and change metaphors. This will solve the problems of the church. |
| Mike Breen | A missional community is a group of 20 to 50 people who exist, in Christian community, to reach either a particular neighborhood or network of relationships. With a strong value on life together, the group has the expressed intention of seeing those they are in relationship with choose to start following Jesus through this more flexible and locally incarnated expression of the church. They exist to bring heaven to the particular slice of earth they believe God has given them to bless.\(^8\) | Identifies the vehicle created in the ‘80’s in the UK; Being a disciple and being missional are inseparable; each MC attends to three dimensions of life: time with God, time with believers, and time with unbelievers; MC’s are the size of an extended family 20-50 people who exist to bring heaven to a particular slice of earth as a community. |
| Aubrey Malphurs | The church’s mandate isn’t to stay – or in some cases hide away – inside the four walls of the church. It’s to move out, reach out, and connect or rub shoulders with people where they are in their communities . . . the biblical emphasis is more incarnational than invitational. We are to invite and we are to go. Thus we have all the more reason to develop an incarnational strategy for going out into and reaching out to our communities. We’re to be Great Comissional churches.\(^9\) | Links the concept of mission to the Great Commission of Matthew 28:18-20. Adopts a both/and view of both invitational and incarnational. |

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\(^9\) Aubrey Malphurs, *The Nuts and Bolts of Church Planting*, 124. Although Malphurs wouldn’t be classified by most scholars as a ‘missional’ leader per se, his name is included to underscore that ministries that are faithfully, strategically, and intentionally prioritizing the Great Commission programmatically, philosophically, and homiletically can rightfully be categorized as ‘missional.’ This is in keeping with the author’s definition of ‘missional.’
Key Characteristics and Differences of Missional Churches

Key Characteristics of a Missional Church

A careful reading of the entries in the previous table will reveal there is much commonality shared between the various missional experts. The following characteristics are shared among all of the missional leaders listed above as well as those not included in this group.

_A Commitment to Scripture_

Each missional leader places a premium on the Bible as the source of spiritual life, sustenance, direction, wisdom, and purpose. Indeed, the mission of God that typifies this movement is culled from the Word of God.

_A Commitment to God’s Kingdom Agenda_

This movement draws its identity and gives allegiance to the furtherance of God’s Kingdom. Ministries are evaluated based on adherence to God’s Kingdom rather than man’s.

_A Commitment to Relations and Community_

Although the nomenclature may vary from metaphors of family, body, and community, all missional leaders are committed to reaching communities together as a social, interpersonal whole.

_A Commitment to Being a ‘Sent People’ on Mission for God_

The sine qua non of missional ministries is their unwavering commitment to the missio dei. They fully believe that the mission of God existed before the church and that the church simply joins in on the mission that God is already on. John 20:21 “As the Father has sent me, so I am sending you” is a key verse for this concept. Neil Coles’ _Apostolic Mission_ taps into the Greek word for apostle, which means sent.\(^\text{10}\)

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\(^{10}\) Neil Cole, _Organic Church_, 115.
**A Commitment to Practical Demonstrations of God’s Love to Others**

Missional ministries are resolved to demonstrably, visibly, and pragmatically showing the love of God to their neighbors. Hugh Halter’s expression in the quote above is to show “a tangible touch of God in real life.”

**A Commitment to the Priesthood of All Believers and Decentralized Ministry**

Many churches say that every member is a minister, but missional communities not only declare this value, they expect it as part of their ethos. Their mission is to personally take Christ from the four walls of the church and to insert him into coffee houses, work places, athletic teams, and any other segment of society to advance the Kingdom of God.

**A Commitment to Listening to God’s Voice and Responding**

Mike Breen’s “huddles,” the leadership development element to his ministry, are meetings where members actively engaged in the mission of God for their community are asked two questions by leaders: “What is God saying to you?” and “What are you going to do in response?” Missional ministries consistently want to be led of God, to hear His voice, and respond in obedience.

**A Commitment to Leadership Development Through Multiplication**

Said another way, leaders are identified and made while the community is actively engaged in the fulfillment of God’s mission. Jeff Vanderstelt’s definition and Neil Cole’s vision above involves ‘making disciples who make disciples’ encompassing a process of discipleship that reaches to the end of the earth. Multiplication and leadership development are central to missional ministries.

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11 Mike Breen, *Launching Missional Communities*, 71.
While the above characteristics are not exhaustive, it provides readers with a general overview of most of the qualities shared among ministries that are considered missional. The core values of HFC align and harmonize tightly with each of these traits of missional ministries.

Key Differences Between Missional Churches

Despite the numerous characteristics missional churches share, there are key areas where these ministries diverge. Identifying these theological and philosophical points of disparity will aid in understanding where HFC falls in the spectrum of missional churches.

Definition of Church

The definition of what a church is has long been discussed among theologians with much variation. Indeed, when church planting agencies declare numbers of churches that have been planted it is important to unearth their definition of what a church is before joining in the celebration. When, for example, does a group of people studying the Bible become a church? This issue of what a church is, does, and when a church becomes a church surface frequently in the writings of missional leaders with considerable variances. Mike Breen, on one hand, so closely associates the mission of the church to the definition of the church that the closest he comes to defining a church is found in the statement, “there is a church because there is a mission, not vice versa.”\(^{12}\) Neil Cole defines the church as “the presence of Jesus among His people called out as a spiritual family to pursue His mission on this planet.”\(^{13}\) Dave Earley, whose ministry and writings are not technically labeled “missional” by most yet bear every characteristic of such, defines church as “a gathering of baptized believers under the leadership

\(^{12}\) Mike Breen and Alex Absalom, *Launching Missional Communities: A Field Guide* (Myrtle Beach: Sheriar Press, 2010), 25.

of a pastor that practices the ordinances and church discipline and wars to advance the kingdom while living on mission as a house of prayer for all nations.”

*Degree of Decentralization*

The expression of a missional church can assume a variety of forms based on how centralized the governing body is in relation to the members of that particular church. Often, though not always, utilization of a church-owned facility or the lack thereof gives a significant clue as to how decentralized the governing body of a missional church is. The illustration that is used to understand decentralization is that of a starfish which, if cut into five pieces, will then form five different, autonomous starfish due to a decentralized nervous system. Neil Cole is on one side of the decentralized spectrum in that he seemingly rejoices when he cannot answer how many churches are in his network. His inability to track the number of churches and members is indicative of an extreme expression of decentralization.

*Degree of Authority for Church Leadership*

The priesthood of all believers is a key doctrine of not only the Protestant Reformation but also a critical part of the discussion of the role and authority of church leadership often in the form of pastors, elders, or bishops. Closely linked to the issue of decentralization discussed above is the question, how much autonomy does each expression of Christ’s church contain? Does the leadership have the authority to legislate in matters pertaining to orthodox doctrine, expressions of worship, church discipline, selection and removal of leaders, et cetera?

Model Ministries Reflecting HFC’s Stance

The best way to communicate where HFC will stand on each of these issues is to give an example of the ministry HFC will be patterned after. Real Life Ministries in Post Falls, Idaho,

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has a church building, an elder board, and a pastoral staff that are committed to equipping leaders to lead small groups that are the primary means of building their church. The Sunday service, while part of their strategy, is downplayed and is described by leadership as “a gateway for getting people into small groups where discipleship can start.” Biblically qualified leaders will undertake and oversee biblical initiatives in a biblically prescribed manner in order to achieve biblically mandated outcomes, namely, to make disciples of all nations and to teach them to obey everything Jesus commanded of them.

**Merging Nomenclature for Harvest Fellowship Church**

The position of this author is that the term *missional*, when applied to a church’s strategy, purpose, and philosophy of ministry, is merely a renewed emphasis on principles of the Great Commission and the practices of the early New Testament church. While not utilizing the term *missional* per se, the book of Acts shows the church “making, mobilizing, and multiplying every-day, everywhere followers of Jesus Christ” that led to extensive church planting initiatives. If the church is making disciples who obey everything Jesus commanded them to do, the result will be a community of redeemed Christ-followers who are making disciples who will make disciples. This is the essence of being missional. When a church prioritizes the intentional making of disciples then that church also will be missional. Dr. Dave Early agrees when he links being missional and making disciples in the following quote and statement, “David Borsh concurs,

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16 The model of church HFC aspires to be is a hybrid between the attractional and the organic which values both gathering and scattering. This is similar in nature to Adullum Church led by Hugh Halter as described in the book he co-wrote with Matt Smay entitled *AND: The Gathered and The Scattered Church* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2010).
stating, ‘It is impossible to talk about church without at the same time talking about mission. Because God is a missionary God, God’s people are missionary people. The church’s mission is for its mission.’ The same could be said of a disciple.” (Emphasis mine)\(^{17}\)

Obedience to the Great Commission and Great Commandment

The strategy to launch a missional church must incorporate a plan to be faithful to the Great Commission and the Great Commandment. The mission of Harvest Fellowship Church, although creatively expressed, is inextricably linked to these divine orders which are found in Matthew 28:18-20 and Matthew 22:37-40 respectively. Together, these commands\(^ {18}\) form the foundation upon which HFC establishes her authority, objectives, and identity.\(^ {19}\) Therefore, to assert that the mission of HFC is to “make, mobilize, and multiply every-day, everywhere followers of Jesus Christ,” is also to avow that the fulfillment of this mission satisfies the two previously mentioned directives Jesus left for His church. Mike Breen, addressing the tendency

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\(^{18}\) It will be noted that while “make disciples” in Matthew 28:19 is in the imperative mood suggesting it be interpreted as a command, the Greek word agape used in Matthew 22:37 “Love the Lord your God,” is not in the imperative mood but rather the indicative which usually is interpreted as a statement of fact. The context, however, indicates that Jesus was responding to the question posed by an expert in the law asking, ‘Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the Law?’ Jesus’s answer, quoting first from the directive in Deuteronomy 6:5 — the basis of the Shema, is therefore to be taken as a commandment. This mirrors the conclusions of M. Eugene Boring in The New Interpreter’s Bible. General: Articles on the New Testament, the Gospel of Matthew, the Gospel of Mark, Volume VIII. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1995, 424-425. Boring discusses the implications of agape while using the word ‘command’ liberally in his commentary and likening its usage to the Hebrew word hesed or ‘covenant love.’

\(^{19}\) The name Harvest Fellowship Church is derived from a combination of Matthew 9:37 “The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field,” and Philippians 1:5 which states “because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now.” The word ‘partnership’ in the latter verse is the Greek word koinonia which is often translated ‘fellowship.’ Thus the ‘fellowship’ of HFC is inextricably linked to the missional furtherance of the Gospel and the subsequent yield of a glorifying harvest for Christ.
of some missional ministries downplaying discipleship in favor of mission, offers a rebuke when he writes:

Look, I’m not criticizing the people who are passionate about missional—I am one of those people. I was one of the people pioneering Missional Communities in the 80’s and have been doing it ever since. This is my camp, my tribe, my people. But it has to be said: God did not design us to do Kingdom mission outside of the scope of intentional, biblical discipleship and if we don’t see that, we’re fooling ourselves.  

“Great Commissional”

Aubrey Malphurs coined a word that summarizes the essence of the missional church HFC aspires to become when he describes the ideal church as being “Great Commissional.”

After exegeting two passages containing the Great Commission, namely Matthew 28:19 and Mark 16:15, Malphurs writes:

In either case the point is that the church’s mandates isn’t to stay – or in some cases hide away – inside the four walls of the church. It’s to move out, reach out, and connect or ‘rub shoulders’ with people where they are in their communities . . . the biblical emphasis is more incarnational than invitational. We are to invite and we are to go. Thus we have all the more reason to develop an incarnational strategy for going out into and reaching out to our communities. We’re to be Great Commissional churches.

This is the esprit de corps of the future team and ministry of Harvest Fellowship Church.

Without this focus and emphasis being central to this supernatural undertaking, church planting efforts may inadvertently be reduced to human strategizing, felt-needs marketing, duplication of large ministries trendy methodology, and an ever increasing output of spiritually inconsequential programming. However, since being Great Commissional harmonizes with God’s purposes, initiatives undertaken that focus on winning people to Christ, building them up in their faith,

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21 Aubrey Malphurs, The Nuts and Bolts of Church Planting, 11.

22 Ibid., 124.
equipping them to be effective ministers, and empowering them to lead and multiply will have the distinctive zest and evidence of God’s power and favor mantled upon them.

**Overview of HFC’s Great Comissional Ministry Strategy**

The discussion now turns to how the future team of HFC will conduct its ministry or, as it is sometimes called, its philosophy of ministry. The strategies herein described represent borrowed material, mostly unaltered, from the ministries and writings of Dr. Dann Spader from Sonlife Classic, Jim Putman’s Real Life Ministries and its subsidiaries, and Dr. Dave Earley’s books, coursework, and ministry example in Grace City Church, Las Vegas, Nevada.

Recapitulating a previously shared thought, the objective in this thesis project is not for originality but rather to faithfully and relentlessly apply biblical truth contextually in Pulaski County, Kentucky, to reach people residing in it for Christ. HFC exists to make, mobilize, and multiply every day, everywhere followers of Christ.

**HFC’s Great Comissional Product**

The ultimate goal of any and all ministry efforts undertaken by HFC is to glorify the Lord by the faithful, continual pursuit of making disciples who make disciples. It is so important to the mission and vision of HFC that defining exactly what we mean by a “disciple” is in order. The definition is credited to Putman’s careful exegesis of Matthew 4:19 and its component parts. Consequently, *a disciple is someone who knows and follows Jesus Christ, one who is...*
**transformed by Him, and one who lives on mission for Him.** If we fail in making disciples who know, follow, are transformed by, and are on mission for Christ, we forfeit our purpose of existence.

**HFC’s Great Commissional Process**

A matchlessly admirable aspect of Putman’s discipleship process is the careful, thorough, and sequential description of spiritual developmental phases a maturing disciple of Jesus Christ goes through. Additionally, Putman takes the usability of this discipleship process and adds inestimable value to it by not only giving a diagrammatic sketch of the process but also describing phrases, attitudes, and behavior characterizing each spiritual phase. Consequently, people can gauge where they are in the spiritual maturity process currently and then where to go next. This also is useful in aiding in where others are in their spiritual development process as well. This tool will play a vital role in the ministries of HFC for years to come due to its biblical principles and usefulness in the process of disciple making.

The following is a general overview of each of the phases, beliefs and behaviors, and prescribed needs to advance to the next spiritual phase.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Spiritually Dead</strong></th>
<th><strong>General Characteristics</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Rebellious, unbelieving</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Typical Beliefs, Behaviors, and Attitudes</strong></th>
<th><strong>Spiritual Needs for the Stage</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Disbelief of the supernatural or belief in many alternate deities</td>
<td>A secure relationship with a mature believer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belief in many ways to get to God or that all go to heaven</td>
<td>A picture of the real Jesus lived out before them</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anger towards Christianity or the church</td>
<td>Answers and evidences of Christianity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Confusion about God, Jesus, and the church</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belief that they’ve done too much wrong and therefore cannot be saved</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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See Jim Putman, *Real Life Discipleship: Building Churches that Make Disciples* (Colorado Springs: Navpress, 2010), 25-33 for a fuller explanation of this material. In the author’s opinion, there are no discipleship strategies that surpass the one employed by Real Life Ministries with their results bearing clear testimonial support.
An explanation and invitation to receive the Gospel

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Spiritual Infant</strong></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>General Characteristics</strong></td>
<td>Ignorant, Confused, Dependent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Typical Beliefs, Behaviors, and Attitudes</strong></td>
<td>Ignorance about what they need and what the Bible says about life and the purpose of a Christian Ignorance about or frustration toward Christianity/church Belief that Christians make no mistakes; unrealistic Worldly perspective about life with some spiritual truth mixed in</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Spiritual Needs for the Stage</strong></td>
<td>A spiritual family Help for how to start feeding themselves Teaching about who they are in Christ Teaching about how to have a relationship with Christ Teaching about how to have relationship with other believers Teaching about appropriate expectations concerning other believers</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Spiritual Child</strong></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>General Characteristics</strong></td>
<td>Self-Centered or Absorbed, idealistic, prideful, low view of self; interdependent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Typical Beliefs, Behaviors, and Attitudes</strong></td>
<td>Excitement over having deep relationships Disillusionment because of their high expectations of others Belief that feelings are most important, leading to spiritual highs and lows Lack of wisdom about how to use what they are learning (too aggressive when sharing their faith, legalistic in dealing with others) Belief that people are not caring for them enough Tendency to mimic mature Christians behaviors in order to look good and gain praise Enthusiasm about new teachings Confusion and unyielding nature regarding complex issues due</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Spiritual Needs for the Stage</strong></td>
<td>A spiritual family Help for how to start feeding themselves Teaching about who they are in Christ Teaching about how to have a relationship with Christ Teaching about how to have relationship with other believers Teaching about appropriate expectations concerning other believers</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Spiritual Young Adult</strong></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>General Characteristics</strong></td>
<td>Action/Service oriented, zealous, God-centered, other-oriented, mission-minded but incomplete in understanding, independent.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Typical Beliefs, Behaviors, and Attitudes</strong></td>
<td>Desire to serve others for others’ good and the glory of God Tendency to feel responsible for how others respond to the message; possible pride if a person accepts the message and possible discouragement if he or she doesn’t Desire to serve but not strategic about how to train others Naivety about other believers – for example, they believe that others are on fire for Jesus because everyone seems to be “fine” at church Tendency to be black-and-white about what should happen in a church</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Spiritual Needs</strong></td>
<td>A place to learn to serve</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
for the Stage

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Spiritual Parent</th>
<th>General Characteristics</th>
<th>Ongoing relationships that offer encouragement and accountability</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A spiritual parent who will debrief them about ministry experiences</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Help for establishing boundaries</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Guidance regarding appropriate expectations of people they will serve</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Help in identifying their gifts</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Skills training</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Spiritual Parent</th>
<th>Typical Beliefs, Behaviors, and Attitudes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ability to think in terms of what a team (rather than an individual) can do</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A coaching mindset</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Desire to see the people they work with mature and become fellow workers who love them but aren’t dependent on them to complete the mission</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Spiritual Needs for the Stage</th>
<th>An on-going relationship with co-laborers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A church family</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Encouragement</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These phases are extremely helpful to most believers who have not been exposed to a systematic, sequential, and thorough discipleship development program. Most believers that read this for the first time describe a feeling of excitement or relief as they finally can resonate and relate with a process that is simple, effective, and involves a spiritual roadmap for themselves and those they love.

HFC’s Great Commissional Programming

The programs of a ministry are the chosen vehicles that are used to strategically and methodically move people toward a process of spiritual maturity. The author firmly espouses the notion that programs need to be regularly evaluated for effectiveness and summarily eliminated upon verifiable proof of unproductiveness. HFC will not allow any program to begin or continue on in existence that is proven to be detracting from our mission “to make, mobilize, and multiply every-day, everywhere followers of Christ.” Thom Rainer, in his book Simple Church, puts forth

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a principle that resonates with the author, namely “Focus: Say ‘No’ to Almost Everything.”

The principle is communicated best by the following quote:

One would think that the more programs and special events that are offered, the greater the impact. Our research has confirmed that the opposite is true. Unfortunately, the big and expanding menus are not producing vibrant churches. The conclusion: fast-food spirituality is not healthy. In fact, the large and fast-menu approach to ministry is killing our churches. The appropriate response: stay focused on your simple process. Say no to everything else.

Dave Browning, founding pastor of Christ the King Community Church, agrees with Rainer’s thoughts completely suggesting that when it comes to ministry programs, less is more, especially when doing less entails increasing the quality and impact of the remaining programs. He writes, “A deliberately simple church is focused on doing few things and doing those few things well.”

The following programs will be the core programs of HFC that will effectively and efficiently be the vehicle our members will utilize towards spiritual maturity. Each will be listed with a brief description that will give an overview of its intended purpose.

*Life Change Groups*

These groups of two to three people meet weekly at a convenient time and location to provide accountability, prayer, and assistance on an individual basis in order to grow spiritually.

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28 Ibid., 199-200.

29 Dave Browning, *Deliberate Simplicity: How the Church Does More By Doing Less* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2009), 47.
Missional Communities

These groups of between 10-30 people meet weekly at a convenient time and location throughout the community in order to live out the biblical “one anothers,” grow spiritually, experience a mission-based fellowship as they regularly reach out to serve others in segments of Pulaski County. This is the flagship “program” of our church which is designed to make, multiply, and mobilize every day, everywhere followers of Christ.

Concerts of Prayer

These corporate times of prayer are the life blood of HFC as we cry out to God in desperation to break our hearts for the lost in our community, to experience spiritual breakthroughs in making disciples, to experience the power of God in our lives and ministry, and to live faithfully, righteously, and on mission as a community. Two Missional Communities will rotate through the concerts of prayer weekly with one staying at one location in prayer while the other is going out into the community to serve and incarnate the gospel.

Sunday Gathering

These gatherings will serve the purpose of a corporate time of inspiration and celebration for the Missional Communities. Observance of the ordinances, times of worship, offering tithes and offerings, and proclamation of Scripture are the hallmark practices of this time. Quarterly, the Missional Communities do not gather but rather go out into the community to be the hands and feet of Christ. This built-in mechanism aids HFC in keeping its focus outward on the needs of others and living missionally.
Servant And Leader Training (S.A.L.T.) Meetings

These monthly meetings are specifically designed for ongoing servant and leader training. Through corporate times of sharing, training, brainstorming, and praying, the purpose is to strengthen our ministry effectiveness and fruitfulness. Evaluation of the effectiveness of current programming, ministry efforts, messages, and an emphasis on doing things better will be highlighted.
CHAPTER 5
A STRATEGY TO LAUNCH A MULTIPLYING CHURCH

The primary premise of this thesis project is that effective discipleship undertaken by a faith community logically and supernaturally leads to the planting of new churches. Dr. Dave Earley, founding pastor of Grace City Church in Las Vegas and former associate professor of Pastoral Leadership at Liberty Baptist Theological Seminary, concurs when he writes:

Fulfilling the Great Commission naturally results in church planting. Given our understanding of the Great Commission above, the question remains: how does God expect His followers to implement it? The obvious answer is: by planting churches [emphasis his]. Church planting involves all the elements of fulfilling the Great Commission. New churches are the result of Christians intentionally pursuing the lost, preaching the gospel, baptizing believers, and training them to live for Christ and make more disciples.¹

Dr. Dann Spader, founder of the Great Commission-oriented Sonlife Classic Ministries, which equips thousands of church leaders to prioritize disciple-making, also makes a similar claim. He writes, “Our desire is not just to see fully trained disciples making new disciples, but also to ultimately see healthy, reproducing ministries plant other healthy, reproducing ministries.”²

Indeed, unless people are multiplying themselves individually as disciples in their every day circles of influence, it would be presumptuous to expect to multiply corporately as a ministry. The converse, however, is also true. If each “every day, everywhere” follower of Jesus Christ’ faithfully, prayerfully, and expectantly seek out relationships with unredeemed people in


order to influence and invite them to become followers of Jesus Christ, multiplication inevitably occurs. When this occurs at the individual level, this spills over into the mid-size groups and the large group meetings of a church as well. It will then only be a matter of time before the math of multiplication demands the expansion of churches. Andy Stanly, in his monthly leadership podcast, described a critical moment in the life of Chic-Filet when the restaurant chain was facing extreme pressure from a formidable competitor. Amidst frenzied boardroom discussions of getting bigger faster, owner Truett Cathy pounded his fist on the table and asserted, “Gentlemen, if we get better, our customers will demand that we get bigger.” This is the essence of HFC’s strategy of multiplying churches. Mike Breen strongly asserts:

If you make disciples, you will always get the church. But if you try to build the church, you will rarely get disciples. If you’re good at making disciples, you’ll get more leaders than you’ll know what to do with. If you make disciples like Jesus made them, you’ll see people come to faith who didn’t know Him. If you disciple people well, you will always get the missional thing.

Therefore, the focus at HFC will ever be upon getting better at making disciples and multiplying disciples. As this occurs faithfully over time, we plan on unfolding a strategy for multiplying leaders and then churches. This is what the remainder of this chapter will explain.

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Multiplying Leaders

A critical question must be asked of any ministry whose identity and mission is to reproduce multiplying and missional churches and that is simply, “How will we find the leaders to lead these additional ministries?” Ministries are only as effective as the leaders who lead them. The strategy of HFC is not to find leaders but to be unequivocally committed to creating a culture and processes for developing and producing leaders at every level of the church. Once again, it is critical to explain and simplify the process. The author’s observation has been that there are relatively few ministries locally that have a well-developed strategy to identify, train, and mobilize leaders. When one is found, the process typically takes several years to effectively pass the baton of leadership to others, which places additional burdens upon the pastoral staff. HFC is committed to simplifying this process and to reduce the amount of time needed to reproduce leaders. The MCs will provide the basic forum for leadership development. Here are key components of HFC’s leadership development strategy:

Developing Local Residents Into Leaders

God calls the local church to first develop people into followers of Christ in their own Jerusalem. Subsequently, pastors are to develop these same local people into expanding roles of leadership so they can develop and serve to the highest levels their gift mix and skill sets will allow. This stems from the conviction that leaders are to be developed, not merely discovered. Jim Putman describes two approaches to leadership development by using a helpful analogy of the way football coaches at the both the high school and collegiate level approach coaching their team. He writes:

Acts 1:8 “But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and in Judea and to the ends of the earth.” The principle is that our labor and witness for the Lord should focus on the primary ministry area in which our church is planted. The ‘Jerusalem Emphasis’ includes evangelism, discipleship, and leadership development.
A high school coach knows he has no money to give as an incentive to play. He leads a volunteer organization. To win he must develop his own players. A college coach also develops players but he heals with athletes who already have a skill base developed by past coaches and experiences. He travels all over the country finding these nearly finished products for his team. If a coach can get the best players, he will have a team that can win – winning teams fill seats. I believe most leaders of churches behave like college coaches, looking for stars that can be plugged in immediately with little or no development. Jesus, on the other hand, taught His future coaches to work like good high school coaches.\(^6\)

Essentially, Putman argues that we must develop the people in our pews into the leaders God has called many of them to be. Dave Earley agrees when he writes, “All of God’s people are to be trained to do the work of ministry. Every member is to be a minister. Therefore, every member can be trained for leadership.”\(^7\) No other approach squares with God’s sovereign placement of our church in the mission field of our community.

**Developing a Leadership Pipeline**

This term, first heard by the author from Mac Lake during a church planters assessment, describes the pathway that disciples take as they journey towards a place of leadership. Each stage along the way requires disciples to assume increasing levels of responsibility where their faithfulness, giftedness, and abilities can be further evaluated. These increasing levels of responsibility call for disciples to:\(^8\)

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\(^8\) This is adapted from Dave Ferguson and Jon Ferguson, *Exponential: How You and Your Friends Can Start a Missional Church Movement* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2010), 205.
Table 17 Leadership Progression Plan For Missional Communities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participate</th>
<th>Attending a Missional Community where leadership development is modeled. People observe how the leader mentors the apprentice and involves all the group in the meeting time.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assist</td>
<td>Aiding in the running of a MC through calls before and after the meeting, organization, clean up, child care, et cetera</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apprentice</td>
<td>Co-leading in a MC where they help guide a MC towards missional living</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lead</td>
<td>Assuming responsibility for leading a MC by recruiting an apprentice and launching. Prayerfully listening to God’s leading as to which segment of the community He wants them to reach out to.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Direct</td>
<td>Administering and training other leaders of MC’s to mentor them towards increased ministry effectiveness.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pastor</td>
<td>Leading leaders to provide vision, encouragement, and ongoing training.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Developing a Plan for Leaders To Develop Other Leaders

The goal of leaders is to equip and enable others to do what they do. In other words, they are to create pathways and tools to empower leaders to create other leaders. The following plans are taken from Dave Earley’s book instructing readers how to effectively lead a small group. These principles provide keys that unlock fruitful, effective, and faithful ministry as a missional community leader. Ongoing training of these components will equip an ever-expanding corps of effective lay leaders for missional communities.

Table 18 Eight Habits of Effective Small Group Leaders

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Habit</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dream</td>
<td>Write out specific goals for the growth and multiplication of the group you lead</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pray</td>
<td>Pray for your group members and multiplication daily</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Invite</td>
<td>Invite new people to your group weekly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contact</td>
<td>Contact group members regularly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prepare</td>
<td>Prepare diligently for your group meeting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apprentice</td>
<td>Have and mentor apprentice leaders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plan</td>
<td>Plan fellowship activities</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

9 See Exodus 18:1-27 which provides an essential primer on the necessity of leadership development from the life of Moses and his father-in-law Jethro. Ministry effectiveness depends upon selecting, training, and deploying leaders at various levels and capacities.

10 The terms “small group leader” and “missional community leader” will be used synonymously.
The next resource trains people on how to be successful at leading other people in missional communities to become leaders themselves thus multiplying the scope and span of ministry. These transferable principles guide leaders step-by-step through eight vital steps of leadership development.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 19 Eight Steps To Develop Small Group Leaders</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Eight Steps To Developing New Small Group Leaders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dream</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demonstrate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discover</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deepen</td>
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<tr>
<td>Describe</td>
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<tr>
<td>Determine</td>
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<tr>
<td>Develop</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deploy</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Developing Ongoing Leadership Training**

These monthly meetings, named S.A.L.T. after “servants and leadership training,” will be designed to encourage, equip, and empower those who are serving to be able to minister more effectively. Teachings will center on leadership issues that arise in the MC context such as marks of effective missional communities, discipleship, outreach, evaluation, vision casting, hearing from God, et cetera. This group will be restricted to those currently serving in leadership positions and their apprentices.

**Utilize A User-Friendly, Transferrable, and Effective Teaching Method**

The Bible Storying method of teaching, first employed by foreign missionaries associated with the Southern Baptist’s International Mission Board (IMB) to overcome language and literacy barriers, has also proven effective in the United States, specifically for leadership multiplication. Dr. Avery Willis, key member of IMB and author of the widely used Masterlife discipleship curriculum, met Jim Putman from Real Life Ministries at a conference, where they
began sharing concepts of more effective discipleship at the small-group level. Putman and his leadership team were so intrigued by the concept of Bible Storying that they decided to implement this method in a few of their small groups. Lisa Sells describes the results along with the benefits of Bible Storying:

The experiment was so successful that they trained all their pastors, community pastors, and small group leaders to use Bible Storytelling. Some were reluctant at first, but soon found that Bible Storytelling . . . helps people learn the Bible; makes it easier to recruit small group leaders; facilitates real learning; equips members for ministry; empowers parents to disciple their kids; helps small group leaders understand the spiritual needs of those they are discipling; keeps small groups from becoming boring; encourages transparency and real relationships.\textsuperscript{11}

The reason is that this removes the obstacle in the minds of many who feel unqualified to teach and do ministry due to a lack of training and education in theology. The way in which Bible Storying removes this barrier is by means of a public reading of Scripture, re-telling the story, and the leader facilitating a discussion time centering on the same five questions regardless of the text. The five questions, with some variation\textsuperscript{12}, are:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What do we learn about God, His nature and character, from this passage?</td>
<td>Tackles the foundational aspect of faith.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What do we learn about others or the world we live in based on this passage?</td>
<td>Provides context and relational understanding.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What do we learn about ourselves or who do we most identify with in this passage?</td>
<td>Encourages self-reflection and identity alignment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What is God asking you to do based on the truths of this passage?</td>
<td>Directs action and application in practical terms.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How will the application of this truth to our lives help Harvest Fellowship Church fulfill the vision of ‘mobilizing and multiplying “every day, everywhere” followers of Christ?</td>
<td>Ensures alignment with the church’s mission.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


\textsuperscript{12} These questions are culled from the work of Avery T. Willis, Jr. and Mark Snowden, \textit{Truth that Sticks: How to Communicate Velcro Truth in a Teflon World} (Colorado Springs: NavPress, 2010), 72.
Multiplying Churches

The foundation of multiplication for individual has been effectively established in Chapter 4 and the first section of this chapter. The next question, however, is how is HFC going to practically multiply itself organizationally? The core strategy is based upon an intentional reduction in complexity of ministry. Paring the church down to its most basic, essential components will aid in reproducing the church multiple times. The churches we plant and multiply through must be simple, reproducible, scalable, and cost effective. This is what Dave Browning refers to as a ministry that is committed to the value of “mutility” which he defines as “a commitment to multiples of something, instead of a larger version of that thing.”\(^\text{13}\) In so doing, Browning argues that the multiples must be simple, reproducible, scalable, and cost effective. Browning writes, “Mutility is growth by cell division, the replicating model of organic systems. Organic systems are implicitly self-sustaining and reproducible. They reproduce by germination, reproduction, and mitosis.”\(^\text{14}\)

HFC Mother Church

The initial church plant of HFC, grown from Core to Crowd initially, then from Crowd to Already Healthy Core, has an organically fed attractional and missional reproductive system. The LCGs and the MCs will continue to provide streams of healthy, reproducing followers of Jesus Christ who follow Him every day and everywhere. This mother church will then reproduce additional churches while providing a steady stream of ministry-tested leaders and financial backing to the church plants.

\(^\text{13}\) Dave Browning, Deliberate Simplicity, 128.

\(^\text{14}\) Ibid., 128-129.
HFC Daughter Church Plants

These church plants will begin similarly to the way the HFC began with LCGs and MCs but will benefit from the spiritual insight, financial backing, ministry resources, and supportive church leadership who will coach, mentor, and encourage the fledgling church throughout its lifespan. These church plants, as mentioned previously, will be encouraged to become autonomous and self-sustaining within a period of one to three years.
CHAPTER 6
SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

The objective of this paper, to recapitulate, is to construct a strategy to plant a missional, multiplying church in Pulaski County, Kentucky. Ultimately, as disciples are made, mobilized, and multiplied, new church plants would be birthed that would continue to do likewise. The author envisions a county where, over time and in due season, the majority of residents are redeemed, meaningfully connected to a local church, and investing their lives into the service of others for the sake of Jesus Christ. The author is not aware of a ministry in Pulaski County whose ministry goals, vision, and objectives, from its very inception, were to strategically and intentionally saturate Pulaski County with reproducing churches in order to reach the residents separated from Christ. Although church revitalization is needed and concerted efforts must be undertaken to awaken already-existing churches, the premise of this paper, and the belief of countless church planter authorities, is that the most effective way to reach lost people is through church planting. This paper is result of the author’s prayerful, earnest attempt to see this goal materialize.

There may have been portions of this work that have been uncomfortable and unsavory to readers who are current and future ministers serving in Pulaski County. Perhaps the methodologies suggested, the strategies described, and positions taken have evoked feelings of strong disagreement that further distance readers from wanting to partner in the accomplishment of the objectives discussed. Other readers, perhaps, will balk at the need for another church where hundreds presently are located and, frankly, take offense at the thought of another work being undertaken locally. It is possible, moreover, that some readers view this new work as a
personal indictment and judgment on their effectiveness and value as ministers. The prayer of the author is that the current ministries of local pastors who faithfully labor and serve Christ would flourish and thrive. The intent of this paper and HFC is to complement and augment current ministries rather than compete against them. The author is continually amazed at the hard working, faithful pastors of this region who press on shepherding, leading, and feeding their churches. Honor and praise are certainly due to the godly men who serve in Pulaski County, many of whom are bi-vocational. Serving shoulder to shoulder in the trenches with local pastors to advance the gospel in Pulaski County in a spirit of unity, cooperation, and Kingdom-mindedness would bless the author and glorify God copiously. Research and history suggest, however, that some will respond differently. Some, despite reading words to the contrary, will feel threatened and will remain unsupportive of the idea of a new church plant in Pulaski County.

Nevertheless there will be those whose eyes pour over the words of this document whose hearts will be stirred at the thought of the Lord doing a new work, for a new day and for generations thereafter. Perhaps there will be readers whose spirits, after reading these words, resonate and burst with hope and excitement at the thought of what could be if His people joined hearts, hands, and minds to accomplish this vision. Maybe there will be those ministers who read this thesis project who have been challenged enough to take the task of reaching into the darkness of Pulaski County so seriously that they will spearhead efforts and leverage their influence to aid in the pioneering of new churches. The following recommendations are for you. These practical guidelines are intended for those current and future church planters who share similar passions to see the Kingdom of God advanced in Pulaski County, Kentucky.
Recommendations

Seeing Pulaski County Christianity with Fresh Eyes

During the survey conducted at the Pulaski County Library for this thesis project, one question asked participants whether they realized that over 48,000 residents of Pulaski County were unchurched.

The largest segments of respondents, 44%, were unaware of the vast number of unchurched residents in the county, though most said they knew it would be fairly high. While there is some comfort that 39% of the residents surveyed were aware of the high rate of unchurched residents living in their midst, 79% of those responding said they felt that their church was doing enough to reach them. The need for the hard, unpleasant facts of the dismal spiritual state of Pulaski County residents to be communicated to the churched residents is great. Prayerfully, this information will open their eyes to the great need that God is beckoning them to meet.
Powerful Corporate Prayer

History speaks with striking clarity that the primary means to move God to mightily move and bless a ministry is through concerted, focused, and abundant times of prayer. Indeed, none of the subsequent recommendations will gain a substantial foothold save for the supernatural moving of God’s omnipotent hand to change the hearts, values, and priorities of area residents and church leaders. The initiation of a movement of missional, multiplying churches that will make, mobilize, and multiply “every day, everywhere” followers of Christ will only occur when the people of God will fall to their knees in prayer to the God who is able.

Brokenness For The People of Pulaski County

A prayer of primary importance for this work to gain traction and to make inroads into the hearts of the 48,000 Pulaski County residents who are separated from Christ is to have the hearts of God’s people be utterly broken and burdened for their spiritual welfare. This necessitates a change of focus, priorities, and outlook, which frankly, man alone cannot accomplish. This is a supernatural task that relies upon supernatural, mountain-moving, faith-filled prayer of His people prior to taking root. Jesus Christ must divinely open the eyes of His church to emotionally awaken over the fact that over 48,000 people in our neighborhoods, schools, and businesses are teetering on the precipice of a Christless eternity.

Recent international media coverage has been afforded the tragedy involving Malaysian Flight 370, which disappeared with 239 people aboard. Images of distraught family members and concerned national figures flooded the internet while the largest multinational search and rescue operation ever undertaken was inaugurated. The brightest and best national experts were tapped to execute a strategic recovery operation that demanded fresh strategies, new priorities, and
massive amounts of funding. An overwhelming outpouring of letters, prayers, funding, flowers and other expressions of support and concern were offered to the families of these victims. By amazing contrast, however, the number of people who are separated from Christ in Pulaski County would fill roughly 200 Boeing 777 airplanes like Malaysian Flight 370 and, frighteningly, most of the redeemed in Pulaski County are blithely unaware, detached, and unmoved from a crisis of epic proportions playing out right before them! Christ followers in our churches must emotionally engage as plane, after plane, after plane, after plane taxis down the spiritual tarmac, awaiting their turn to speed down the runway, lift off, and disappear into a fate far worse than the distant, chilly waters of the Indian Ocean.

Consider the brokenness of heart of the following biblical characters for their people. The national reforms and the rebuilding of the temple that Nehemiah undertook in his day stemmed from his heartfelt concern and brokenness for His people who were in “great trouble and disgrace.”¹ This led Nehemiah to weep, mourn, fast, and pray solemn prayers of repentance before the Lord. Indeed, one may verifiably question whether Nehemiah would have been able to accomplish the great feats history tells us he did without a heart that was rent for the welfare of his people and the state of the temple. Joel also had a personal burden for the welfare of his people when the plague of locusts decimated his people’s land and livelihood. Throughout the book that bears his name, Joel responds similarly to Nehemiah when he urges his people to mourn, fast, pray, repent, and consecrate themselves afresh to the Lord.² The author is convinced that this sort of revival must occur in the hearts of God’s people before sweeping, lasting, supernatural change will occur in our region.

¹ See Nehemiah 1:2-7.
² Nehemiah 1:13-14; 2:12; 2:16
Cultivate A Kingdom Mindset

The urgent need for ministers in Pulaski County to foster and promote a kingdom mindset is of utmost importance due to the alarming number of citizens disconnected and uninfluenced by our present ministries. Building THE kingdom must supersede and supplant a mentality of building OUR kingdom. When a pastor is more concerned about his own particular church, which can be hidden under religiously accepted jargon, it perpetuates an unhealthy competition between ministries rather than cooperation to reach the lost people around us. Small churches and large churches alike can have a huge impact on reducing the lostness of Pulaski County if our thinking and priorities shift toward Kingdom initiatives. Rodney Harrison, while urging existing churches to be supporting of church planting efforts, agrees when he writes, “the size of one’s church is not the critical factor in sponsoring a new work, but, rather, having a heart for the kingdom of God.”\(^3\) The survey conducted for this study revealed that 64% of residents who go to church regularly would support a church plant to reach the lost. Prayerfully, godly men in leadership positions in local churches will follow suit.

Bold Leadership of Existing and Future Pastors

There is an urgent need for pastors to think creatively, corporately, and outside of conventional denominational boxes. Dave Browning sums up well what is needed for ministers in Pulaski County when he writes:

The kind of leader we are looking for is a ‘pastorpreneur.’ A pastorpreneur (pastor/entrepreneur) is a kingdom-minded leader who has a heart for people and the ingenuity to reach them. A pastorpreneur has received from God both the heart and the head, the sensitivity and sills, to make a difference. Pastorpreneurs are so concerned about reaching lost people that they will launch a new ministry endeavor to save them.\(^4\)

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\(^4\) Dave Browning, *Deliberate Simplicity*, 193.
Unless these types of ministers are supernaturally raised up, geared up to challenge the status quo and boldly pioneer new ministries, the number of unchurched and dechurched sadly may continue on its current lamentable trajectory.

God’s Timing

Richard Blackaby begins his book *The Seasons of God* by asking a timing question. He simply asks:

Are you sure you should be reading this book? I mean, right here, right this moment? Now, to be honest, I’m fairly confident your best answer to that question is yes – maybe even ‘yes, absolutely!’ I asked because, you see, this book explores something that involves getting your timing right for all you do and where you do it.⁵

Church planting is also about timing, specifically His timing, and getting it right. Ultimately it is God’s responsibility to grow His church in His time and way. God never promised to bless our strategies, methods, or timelines. He has promised to build His church.⁶ Speaking to God’s timing and His favor upon church planting efforts, Jim Putman gives sage advice when he writes:

Timing is a big part of how successful a ministry will be. Twice before, groups had come to the Coeur d’Alene area to plant a church like ours. Both times they failed. I believe God wanted to plant a church here, but it had to be the right time with the right people. Just because you have a good idea doesn’t mean its God’s idea or His timing.⁷
Make It Happen

The temptation will come to church planting teams to invest countless hours into a church planting strategy only to fail to implement the plans thus escorting the dream into reality.

Malphurs writes:

The greatest problem in developing an overall ministry strategy is implementation. Church planters can catalyze and articulate a fresh, innovative, powerful strategy, but somehow never get around to implementing it. They fail to follow through. Thus it dies a quick death for lack of implementation.⁸

A key component of implementation is deciding on a launch date, which serves as an organizational deadline and target. Nelson Searcy is adamant that once a launch date is selected, this date is changed only under extreme circumstances that force a moving of the date:

Once you have sought the Lord’s guidance, thought through the information we’ve outlined above and have confirmed your launch date, don’t ever change it. Don’t let anyone or anything convince you to second-guess that date. We can guarantee you this: Temptations will come. The enemy will attack. The most well-intentioned plans will go awry. You’ll have a hundred excuses to change that date, but stick with it! God has given you a vision, and now a date to launch that vision into being. Stay the course!⁹

The trigger must be pulled, the maiden voyage must be undertaken, and the rocket ship must be launched. No obstacle should hinder the quest to advance the Kingdom of God. As one writer mentioned, “You must decide to walk into the adventure for which you feel God is calling you.”¹⁰

Real Life Ministries, a church of over eight thousand people, began in 1998 as a small group led by Jim Putman. He believed that ‘relational discipleship’ could produce incredible

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results if faithfully employed by the church. His church currently has over ninety percent of its membership involved in small group life which is the driving engine behind their discipleship strategy. The multiplication occurred at the individual and small group level which then spilled over into the large group setting. This same pattern is essentially the strategy of HFC and the author believes it can have explosive results as each phase of the ministry is implemented.

**Conclusion**

Ralph Moore, with great insight, wrote that “faith seems to be an ability to see in advance what others will recognize only in the rearview mirror.”¹¹ The author’s earnest prayer is that twenty years from now, people will be in awe of what God is doing in Pulaski County, Kentucky, as the majority of residents, who at one time may have been just “doing church,” have chosen to make a supernatural shift to incarnationally “be the church.” May they decide to become “every-day, everywhere” followers of Jesus Christ, committed to making, mobilizing, and multiplying disciples. Finally, and most importantly, may the faith-filled, obedient fulfillment of this vision cause God to bask in the warm, holy, radiant light of glory forever.

APPENDIX A

Community Survey of Church Beliefs, Habits, and Perspectives

The purpose of the survey is to capture a representative sample of the attitudes, practices, and belief of Pulaski County, Kentucky, residents concerning church-related issues along with collecting demographic and psychographic data. After securing permission from officials from each of the following high-use regional establishments, this survey will be conducted at the Pulaski County Library and a suitable location at the Somerset Super-Walmart. Light refreshments or hard candies will be available for participants.

Please answer the following general questions about yourself.

1. **Sex:**
   a) Male  
   b) Female

2. **Marital Status:**
   a) Married  
   b) Single  
   c) Divorced  
   d) Widowed

3. **Children:**
   a) 1  
   b) 2  
   c) 3  
   d) 4  
   e) None  
   f) Other: _____

4. **Education:**
   a) High School Diploma/GED  
   b) Associates Degree  
   c) Bachelors Degree  
   d) Masters Degree  
   e) Doctorate

5. **Political Views:**
   a) Democrat  
   b) Republican  
   c) Independent  
   d) Other

6. **What are your favorite pass times or activities to pursue? (Circle all that apply)**
   - Hunting/fishing
   - Watching TV
   - Reading
   - Exercising
   - Boating/Swimming
   - Nascar
   - Kids Activities
   - Sports
   - College Activities
   - Comm. Service
   - Service at Church
   - Other: _______

Please answer the following questions about your participation and views of Church

7. **Do you currently attend a church?**
   a) Yes  
   b) No  (please continue to #8)

   a. If “Yes”, please answer the following questions:

   b. **What denomination church do you attend?**

   c. **Church attendance per month?**
      a) 1  
      b) 2  
      c) 3  
      d) 4

   d. **Are there seasons of your year in which your participation in church wanes?**
      a) Yes  
      b) No

      i. If “Yes”, please answer the following:

      1. During which seasons? _________
2. What is the primary reason you miss church during this season?

___________________

e. How do you rate your spiritual maturity? a) Immature b) Avg c) Mature
   i. You answered above primarily because of: (Circle One)

   Bible knowledge Experiences Life Change Personal Problems
   Training Mentors Intentional Plan Other: __________

f. Have you ever personally led another to saving faith in Jesus Christ? a) Yes b) No

g. If given the opportunity, would you feel comfortable explaining how one can get to heaven? a) Yes b) No

h. Are you 100% sure that when you die you will enter heaven? a) Yes b) No

i. Did you know that there are currently 48,000 unchurched people in Pulaski County which only has 63,003 people? a) Yes b) No

j. Do you feel your church does enough to reach them? a) Yes b) No

k. Would you support your church planting another church from your existing congregation strategically to reach the 48,000? a) Yes b) No
   i. If “No” why not? ____________________________

8. If “No” you do not attend a church, please answer the following questions:

   a. Are you a member of a non-Christian faith community? a) Yes b) No
      i. If “Yes”, which faith community do you subscribe to? __________

   b. Were you formerly active in a local church OR raised in a particular denomination? a) Yes b) No
      If, “Yes” which one? __________

   c. What are the top two reasons why you do not attend a local church:
      i. Because of Who goes to church (Someone you know)
      ii. What they teach (Something you disagree with) ______________
      iii. When they meet
      iv. Where they meet
      v. Because of their Emphasis on __________

   d. What would be the top two reasons you would want to return to church?
      i. Authenticity in Beliefs
      ii. They Serve People
      iii. They Welcome all
## APPENDIX B

### Definitions of ‘Missional Communities’ By Various Missional Leaders

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Missional Leader</th>
<th>Definition of “Missional Community”</th>
<th>Unique Concepts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Neil Cole</td>
<td>A MC is a spiritual family (community) with the Spirit of Christ in their midst, called out to join Him on His mission to the ends of the earth.</td>
<td>Divine Truth, Nurturing Relationships, Apostolic Mission (D.N.A.); Church = Spirit of Christ present; God is on mission and the church is to join Him.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jeff Vanderstelt</td>
<td>A missional community is a Family of Missionary Servants who make Disciples who make Disciples.</td>
<td>MC’s live, love, and serve others as if they’re family; re-orient life to make disciples in gospel gaps of society; serve in a manner that the only explanation is the Gospel and Kingdom; disciples made by life on life visibility and while on mission.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hugh Halter</td>
<td>Missional communities are intentional webs of relationships bound together for the express purpose of bringing to light the Kingdom of God to those outside the faith.</td>
<td>First MC was Gen 12- Abraham was sent to be a blessing (tangible touch of God in real life); live close to lost; architect schedule to meet needs in culture; learning, listening, and responding to needs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Felicity Dale</td>
<td>MC’s are patterned on the principle of going, so they meet where life happens. They are families of God’s people, centered on Jesus, sharing life together, and reaching out with the Good News of the Kingdom.</td>
<td>Role of the church is to listen to God and respond to Him; Making disciples is key – Jesus will build His church; Mission is at the heart of the Godhead.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JR Woodward</td>
<td>They (missional communities) are a sent people, sent to be disciples of Jesus in the world and for the sake of the world. They are mid-sized groups [20 - 50] living out their “sentness” together in specific missional spaces; learning to live in the way of Jesus; bringing God’s love, forgiveness, compassion and justice to specific people and neighborhoods.</td>
<td>MC’s are defined by their identity or by asking the “who” question. We are a sent people to do life together and equip one another to live out our calling, walk with God, incarnate the Gospel, pursue wholeness in community, and inhabit the sacred text.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alan Hirsch</td>
<td>(MC’s) are sent by Jesus into the villages of which they’re already a part. The destiny of Jesus’ people is tied into that of the broader community in which they exist. They are there to add value, to bring wisdom, to foster a better village. In short, to participate with the work of Kingdom of God going on all around them.</td>
<td>Must redefine our understanding of the church and change metaphors. This will solve the problems of the church.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mike Breen</td>
<td>A MC is a group of 20 to 50 people who exist, in Christian community, to reach particular neighborhoods or networks of relationships. With a strong value on life together, the group has the expressed intention of seeing those they are in relationship with choose to start following Jesus through this more flexible and locally incarnated expression of the church. They exist to bring heaven to the particular slice of earth.</td>
<td>Identifies the vehicle created in the ‘80’s in the UK; Being a disciple and being missional are inseparable; each MC attends to three dimensions of life: time with God, time with believers, and time with unbelievers; MC’s are the size of an extended family 20-50 people who exist to bring heaven to a particular slice of earth as a community.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aubrey Malphurs</td>
<td>The church’s mandate isn’t to stay inside the four walls of the church. It’s to move out, reach out, and connect or ‘rub shoulders’ with people where they are in their communities . . . the biblical emphasis is more incarnational than invitational. We’re to be Great Commissional churches.</td>
<td>Links the concept of mission to the Great Commission of Matthew 28:18-20. Adopts a both/and view of both invitational and incarnational.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX C
Permission Letter

Letter from Scan/Us granting the author permission to use data and charts in chapter two of this thesis project.

Scan/US®

December 3, 2014

To whom it may concern,

Scan/US, Inc. hereby grants permission to Dan Basile to include the demographic reports in his academic dissertation “A Strategy To Plant A Missional, Multiplying Church in Pulaski County, Kentucky” for his Doctor Of Ministry degree from Liberty Baptist Theological Seminary.

Scan/US, Inc. understands that the dissertation, including the Scan/US demographic reports, will be published on the Digital Commons and available on the internet.

Michael D. Kim
Product Manager
Scan/US, Inc.
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March 12, 2014  
Daniel R. Basile  
IRB Exemption 1804.031214:  
“A Strategy to Plant a Missional, Multiplying Church in Pulaski County, KY”

Dear Daniel,

The Liberty University Institutional Review Board has reviewed your application in accordance with the Office for Human Research Protections (OHRP) and Food and Drug Administration (FDA) regulations and finds your study to be exempt from further IRB review. This means you may begin your research with the data safeguarding methods mentioned in your approved application, and that no further IRB oversight is required.

Your study falls under exemption category 46.101 (b)(2), which identifies specific situations in which human participant research is exempt from the policy set forth in 45 CFR 46:

(2) Research involving the use of educational tests (cognitive, diagnostic, aptitude, achievement), survey procedures, interview procedures or observation of public behavior, unless: (i) information obtained is recorded in such a manner that human subjects can be identified, directly or through identifiers linked to the subjects; and (ii) any disclosure of the human subjects' responses outside the research could reasonably place the subjects at risk of criminal or civil liability or be damaging to the subjects' financial standing, employability, or reputation.

Please note that this exemption only applies to your current research application, and that any changes to your protocol must be reported to the Liberty IRB for verification of continued exemption status. You may report these changes by submitting a change in protocol form or a new application to the IRB and referencing the above IRB Exemption number.

If you have any questions about this exemption, or need assistance in determining whether possible changes to your protocol would change your exemption status, please email us at irb@liberty.edu.

Sincerely,

Fernando Garzon, Psy.D.  
Professor, IRB Chair  
Counseling  
(434) 592-4054  
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