

Community Assessment and Profile

Georgia is one of the fastest growing states in the U.S. with a population increase projected at 20% in the next ten years. Forsyth County is no exception to this phenomenal growth. In fact, over the past five years, Forsyth County has been in the top five of the fastest growing counties in the nation. It led the nation two of those five years.

One of the reasons for this remarkable growth is Forsyth County's location. Nestled just north of Atlanta's Fulton County, Forsyth County provides a get-away for the metro Atlanta worker. In fact, the growth of this county can almost completely be attributed to the urban sprawl of the metro Atlanta area. For the resident who has to work in northern Atlanta, Forsyth County is just a short drive up GA 400; while work is just a short drive down.

Most of the growth Forsyth County has experienced over the past several years has been in the southern and middle portion of the county. However, this will inevitably change soon. As growth continues, residents move further up GA 400 to find a nice, quiet place to live. This accounts for the rapid growth of the northern portion of the county. Within a five-mile radius of our target location, GA 400 and Hwy 369, the population over the past three years has more than tripled. In fact, from 1990-2000 the population increased by 76% and the projected population change from 2002-2012 is another increase of 40%.

All of this points to the urgency to establish a strong gospel witness in this area. By 2012 it is estimated that within a five-mile radius of our target location there will be over 25,000 people who do not attend church anywhere on any given Sunday. Currently, this number is over 18,000. Over 20% of the population in our given area is age 30-39. These are young families looking for meaning and purpose in life. Most of these families have children and this strengthens their desire to find meaning. The northern portion of Forsyth County is also affluent relative to the rest of the state. Over one fourth of the population makes between \$50,000 and \$75,000 a year. Twelve percent of the population makes over \$100,000.

The population is predominantly made up of two types of people; Top Mechanics and Bible Belters.

The Top Mechanics fall into the general class of the Blue Collar winners. Within a five-mile radius, this represents a little over 29% of the population. Blue Collar Winners represent the successful blue-collar workers across the nation. They earn substantial middle class incomes, are predominantly white and reside in their own single-family homes. They consist of high school educated (or with some college attendance), middle-aged, married couples with children.

The Bible Belters fall into the general category of Remote Working Towns. Remote Working Towns consist of white, middle-aged and older, blue-collar workers. Many live in mobile homes or trailers, are married, drive pick-up trucks and have young and older children in their home. Education levels are usually low. Within a five-mile radius, this category represents a little over 70% of the population.

Community Needs

Forsyth County has a long and beleaguered history of racial tension. In fact, the county has been the source of many racial battles since the 1960's. For years, many of the residents of this county would brag that only white people lived within Forsyth's county line. The county has been the location of many white supremacist rallies as well as many civil right's marches.

With the growth of the past ten years much of the racial tension has subsided. It does still exist, but it is either limited in its scope or much less prominent than before. There still needs to be some healing in this community from the wounds of the past. Part of our mission as a new church will be to preach and teach about racial healing and be an example of Christ's love to all people.

Our worship service will utilize a blended, contemporary style of music in order to appeal to a larger segment of the community. Most of those living in the area are families with school-age children and teenagers. Our church will target those families.

A blended style will allow the music to reach many age groups. We also believe that a blended worship style will fill a void in the area that has existed for some time. In the northern part of Forsyth County there is no strong, evangelical church that utilizes a blended worship style. There are many churches that are very traditional in their worship and a few that are very contemporary, but none use the blended style that appeals to a broader range of people.

Strategy Time-Line

Phase 1: June 2003-October 2003

The process to begin North Cross Baptist Church will begin in the summer of 2003. Our first step will be to create our first core group. From this core group we will plan to establish at least two in-home Bible Studies in different neighborhoods.

In addition, we will be intentional about developing relationships with people in the community. The church will host dinners for public workers, provide coffee and doughnuts for teacher work days and host block parties in different neighborhoods to begin to establish relationships and build a reputation in the community.

Phase 2: November 2003-December 2003

During phase 2, North Cross Baptist Church will begin hosting corporate worship services on Sunday evenings in core group member's homes. We will host these on a bi-weekly basis. On a weekly basis, we will begin to establish relationships in different neighborhoods in order to establish more in-home weekly Bible Studies.

We will purchase the lists of new movers, newly married, new babies and newly divorced. We will develop a mail-out for each of these groups and begin to assimilate those who are interested into one of our neighborhood. During this phase we will still be performing acts of kindness and service in the community.

Phase 3: January 2004-March 2004- Launch preparation

Phase 3 will consist of more core group development and recruitment. Through the process of developing and recruiting core group members we will also continue to

disciple those who have become involved and evangelize those with whom we come in contact.

During this phase, we will multiply our in-home Bible Study groups. We will add two weekly Bible Studies in different neighborhoods as well as a Men's Ministry meeting on a weekly or bi-weekly basis. We will begin meeting weekly on Sunday evenings for a time of worship, discipleship and edification.

Phase 4: March 2004-April 2004

This will be the time when we are preparing for our launch service on Easter of 2004. We will continue to mail out information into the community and follow-up with those who express interest. We will have a 10,000 piece mass mail out sent during February to inform people of our presence and our in-home meetings.

We will also begin our "SneakPeak" meetings in March. These meetings will be held in North Forsyth High School. They will be "practice" worship services for our members to prepare for our launch service and for visitors to come see who we are. Throughout these meetings, our main focus will be on our launch Sunday, April 11, 2004.

Two weeks before our launch service we will begin a mass mail-out campaign. We will send our information out to the surrounding area and community. We will also hold several door-to-door evangelism blitzes throughout this time. We will continue utilizing our acts of kindness and community service as well.

Phase 5: May 2004-December 2004

Phase 5 includes follow-up on those who have expressed interest or participated in any of our groups. We will make contact with everyone who visited our service on launch Sunday as well as those who have been participating in our in-home Bible Studies.

Through this time we will implement strategic discipleship programs as well as corporate evangelistic efforts. We will establish our FAITH Evangelism program and encourage all of our core group to participate.

During this time we will also develop our new member's class. This class will be required for all of those who desire membership at North Cross Baptist Church. Following the new member's class the church will begin a SHAPE Class that determines the areas of giftedness and abilities for members. This class will be required for anyone who desires to fill a position of ministry in the church; i.e., Sunday School teachers, deacons, youth workers and children's workers. This way, the process of assimilation can be streamlined.