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# **Area Demographical Information**

## Community Narrative & Social Trends

As a suburban community located about 25 miles outside of downtown Nashville, Tennessee, Antioch represents an example of the growing racial complexity and changing suburbs. Antioch is nestled inside the metropolitan Davidson County and borders Rutherford County, one of the fastest growing counties in the state and maybe the country. Antioch benefits from this location in several ways.

The multiple layers of restaurants, stores, a shopping mall, dozens of high-end apartment communities, subdivisions, and entertainment, all serve to give this community a more cosmopolitan feel.

In addition, an analysis of Census 2000 figures found Antioch to be one of the most diverse communities in the 10-county area.

Antioch also has one of the highest percentages of renters between ages 25 and 34 in Davidson County, according to the census figures. In Antioch, there are also a high percentage of young homeowners. One apartment dweller described his apartment community located in the heart of the Hickory Hollow Mall shopping district this way, “It’s kind of like a little Melrose Place with about half the drama.”

In this area, one builder in the Hickory Hollow shopping mall area in Antioch has built 1,795 units since 1995.

Research shows that the Nashville job market during the 1990s drew young professionals to the area fueling a demand for high-end apartments.

In Antioch, Census 2000 shows that 30.7 percent of all households in the community live alone compared to 59.2 percent of the family households. Fifty-five percent are homeowners, while 46 percent rent in this area.

Census 2000 also shows 52 percent of the people in this area are ages 20 through 44, primarily Boomers and Generation Xers, with the median age being 31.

Blacks make up 26 percent, Hispanics 6 percent, and Asians 4 percent. This diversity represents a dramatic increase in the Antioch area alone – greater than any other area in the 10-county Middle Tennessee region. The increase in diversity is nearly a 200 percent increase in the black population and nearly a 500 percent increase in the Hispanic population. At the high school, rebuilt only four years ago, students speak 23 languages and 15 percent of the students are from international families. These shifts are creating a new cultural climate for the area and are evident by the restaurants, stores, and nightlife.

### **Nashville Area Workforce**

The Nashville area economy is among the most diverse of that in any United States region, says the area Chamber of Commerce. As a result, Nashville attracts workers from many business sectors. The occupational mix consists of 32% Services; 25 % Retail/ Wholesale Trade; 15% Manufacturing; 13% Government, 5 % Construction/ Mining; 6% Finance, Insurance, & Real Estate; 5% Transportation, Communications, and Public Utilities.

### **History of the Antioch Area**

In the mid-1980s, this largely rural community was on the brink of a boom. Hickory Hollow Mall brought traffic, the Nissan plant in Smyrna (a few miles away) brought jobs, and builders put up affordable housing. Then, in a federal court desegregation mandate, residents learned they had to increase their black population from 3% to 18% or lose their high school. The school was too far from black neighborhoods for desegregation by busing the court said.

Today the neighborhood's multiple layers – blacks made up 26% of the 2000 population. Hispanics 6% - are creating both benefits and challenges, residents say, according to a local newspaper article.

In addition, Dell Computers move to Nashville (located less than two miles from the Antioch area) a few years ago has brought more jobs as well as people who have relocated to the area.

### **Religious Background of the Area**

Nashville is located in the heart of the “Bible Belt.” Its history of religious publishing greatly impacts the area, as well. Even today, religious publishing comprises about a third of total Nashville printed output and a remarkable 30% of all Bibles produced in the United States are printed in the Nashville area.

Nashville’s first national prominence as a site for printing and publishing came in 1854 when all Methodist-publishing activities were relocated from Philadelphia. Likewise, the Baptists and Church of Christ began publishing in Nashville due to the city city’s strategic location.

Nashville is also home to several denominational headquarters. These factors also influence the religious climate of the city and the Antioch community.

In addition, Nashville’s reputation as the “Athens of the South” for its many colleges and universities has had and will continue to shape Nashville’s religious climate as both liberal and conservative religious thoughts are fostered on these campuses.

In addition to mainstream evangelical churches, Nashville is home to many other communities of faith including Scientology, Mormonism, Islam, Middle Eastern faiths, Unitarianism, and others.

## Community Survey

*Place: Hickory Hollow Mall in Antioch, TN*

*Date: November 15, 2001*

#	<u>Question</u>	<u>Music Type</u>	<u>Survey Response Total</u>	<u>% Include No Answer</u>	<u>% Exclude No Answer</u>
<u>Survey Participants - Race</u>					
	Afro-American		29	56.86%	56.86%
	Hispanic		9	17.65%	17.65%
	White		13	25.49%	25.49%
			51	100.00%	100.00%
1	Which statement(s) would best describe your level of involvement in church?				
	"I regularly attend church."		19	37.25%	38.00%
	"I attend church from time to time."		16	31.37%	32.00%
	"I do not attend church."		6	11.76%	12.00%
	"I don't go to church as much as I used to."		9	17.65%	18.00%
	Subtotal		50		100.00%
	No Answer		1	1.96%	
	Total		51	100.00%	
2	What do you perceive is the greatest need of this community?				
	Better - More Education / Kids and Adults		5	9.80%	13.16%
	Youth Activity		5	9.80%	13.16%
	Children's activities		4	7.84%	10.53%
	Free / Fulltime Recreation		4	7.84%	10.53%
	Christ / Evangelism		3	5.88%	7.89%
	Help Needy - More homeless shelters		2	3.92%	5.26%
	More Afro-American people		2	3.92%	5.26%
	Another Church		1	1.96%	2.63%
	Better Law Enforcement		1	1.96%	2.63%
	Drug Rehabilitation Program		1	1.96%	2.63%
	Fast Food near church		1	1.96%	2.63%
	Hispanic ministry		1	1.96%	2.63%
	Leadership		1	1.96%	2.63%
	More community involvement		1	1.96%	2.63%
	More Selfless people		1	1.96%	2.63%
	No real problem		1	1.96%	2.63%
	Pay raise		1	1.96%	2.63%
	Relationships / friends		1	1.96%	2.63%
	Unity in races		1	1.96%	2.63%
	Word of God		1	1.96%	2.63%
	Subtotal		38		100.00%
	No Answer		13	25.49%	
	Total		51	100.00%	
3	What radio station do you listen to most often?				

	92.1	Rhythm & Blues	9	17.65%	19.57%
	88.7 / 89.1 / 1380 AM / 1460 AM	Christian / Gospel	8	15.69%	17.39%
	101.1	Rap / Hip-Hop	8	15.69%	17.39%
	102.5 / 107.5	Top 40	6	11.76%	13.04%
	92.9	Soft Rock / Easy listening	5	9.80%	10.87%
	99.7 / 1240 AM	Talk	4	7.84%	8.70%
	95.5 / 103.3	Country	3	5.88%	6.52%
	102.9	Alternative Rock	1	1.96%	2.17%
	91.7	Inspirational / Moody	1	1.96%	2.17%
	104	Rock	<u>1</u>	1.96%	2.17%
	Subtotal		46		100.00%
	No Answer / No Special Station		<u>5</u>	<u>9.80%</u>	
	Total		51	100.00%	
4	Age of person completing survey:				
	Under 18		7	13.73%	14.00%
	18-25		20	39.22%	40.00%
	26-35		12	23.53%	24.00%
	36-45		8	15.69%	16.00%
	46-55		2	3.92%	4.00%
	56-65		1	1.96%	2.00%
	66 and up		<u>0</u>	0.00%	<u>0.00%</u>
	Subtotal		50		100.00%
	No Answer		<u>1</u>	<u>1.96%</u>	
	Total		51	100.00%	
5	Based on the name alone, which of the following would you most likely attend?				
	True Life Baptist Church		22	43.14%	45.83%
	True Life Church		14	27.45%	29.17%
	True Life House of Prayer		11	21.57%	22.92%
	Church of Christ		<u>1</u>	1.96%	<u>2.08%</u>
	Subtotal		48		100.00%
	No Answer		<u>3</u>	<u>5.88%</u>	
	Total		51	100.00%	
6	Based on the name alone, which of the following would you least likely attend?				
	True Life Baptist Church		20	39.22%	42.55%
	True Life Church		10	19.61%	21.28%
	True Life House of Prayer		<u>17</u>	33.33%	<u>36.17%</u>
	Subtotal		47		100.00%
	No Answer		<u>4</u>	<u>7.84%</u>	
	Total		51	100.00%	

7	Number of persons in household:			
	Adults	91	71.09%	71.09%
	Preschool	11	8.59%	8.59%
	Elementary (K-5th grade)	8	6.25%	6.25%
	Youth (grades 6-12)	18	14.06%	14.06%
		128	100.00%	100.00%
8	What is one thing you would love to see in a new church?			
	Feeling welcome / Friendliness / Open Relaxed Atmosphere	10	19.61%	23.26%
	Honesty / No Hypocrites / Real People	5	9.80%	11.63%
	Youth group - More teenage discussion groups / programs	4	7.84%	9.30%
	Diversity - race / age	3	5.88%	6.98%
	New Facilitates	3	5.88%	6.98%
	Better parking	2	3.92%	4.65%
	Friendly Pastor	2	3.92%	4.65%
	More relationships / friend	2	3.92%	4.65%
	Unity / Spirit of Love / Family	2	3.92%	4.65%
	Bible Teaching / Sharing Faith / Relationship to God Focal	1	1.96%	2.33%
	Crucifix	1	1.96%	2.33%
	Enthusiasm	1	1.96%	2.33%
	Free samples of food	1	1.96%	2.33%
	More Attendance	1	1.96%	2.33%
	More counseling	1	1.96%	2.33%
	More Ministry	1	1.96%	2.33%
	More young adult involvement	1	1.96%	2.33%
	People active in sharing faith - studying Bible	1	1.96%	2.33%
	See relationship with God as focal point	1	1.96%	2.33%
		43		100.00%
	No Answer	8	15.69%	
		51	100.00%	

## Evangelistic Strategy

Because of the strong presence of young families and singles in our target area, our evangelism efforts will be highly relational. Co-sponsoring church volunteers will be trained to effectively share their faith. The co-sponsoring volunteers will work to develop relationships with individuals with a goal of sharing the gospel within 40 - 60 days of a first time introduction.

We are seeking volunteers who:

- Are motivated to reach people rather than maintain organization
- Seek opportunities for mission outreach
- Have a “Kingdom” view
- Are creative, self-starting, and unafraid of risk
- Have a healthy view of evangelism
- Can communicate with secular people
- Have a sense of calling to personal ministry
- Have a servant spirit and willingness to give
- Have a great love for people
- Have the ability to build deep relationships quickly
- Are willing to cross barriers to reach people
- Are willing to accept and share responsibility

We will share the gospel at the end of our seminar series for newly married couples.

We will share the gospel in our Bible study groups.

As we work in the apartments tutoring children and youth we will share the gospel as relationships develop.

The gospel will be presented in backyard Bible clubs and in our weekday Sunday School class.

When individuals join in our core group, we will prioritize the great commission and encourage core group members to build relationships with lost friends, neighbors, and co-workers. Finally, and perhaps most important, will be the example our pastor sets in modeling soul-winning as a daily focus of ministry. It is our recommendation that our pastor spend 15 hours per week in evangelistic outreach.

# Interviews

**Local Pastors**

Dr. Hassler  
First Baptist Antioch  
Southern Baptist

1. Are you familiar with what a Church Plant is?  
*Yes.*
2. Do you have experience with Church Plant?  
*Yes.*
3. If yes, Please explain.  
San Antonio, Texas – Minister of Outreach
4. Was it a positive experience?  
*Yes.*
5. Do you see the possibility of working with a Church Plant in the future?  
*Yes.*
6. If yes, in what capacity?  
*I see the likelihood of the church I am pasturing now planting a church eventually in the states.*
7. Where specifically?  
*I don't know yet.*
8. Would you consider helping support a church plant outside your congregation?  
*Not sure.*
9. Do you see a need for more churches in your area?  
*Yes.*
10. Would you support a church plant financially?  
*Not sure.*
11. Would you at least support prayer of a church plant in your area?  
*Yes.*
12. Do you see the need to reach the many apartment complexes or multi-housing complexes in your area?  
*Yes.*
13. Would you prayerfully consider helping as God leads you, a church plant focused on multi-housing complexes?  
*Yes.*

Larry Lee, Pastor  
Calvary Baptist Church  
Southern Baptist

1. Are you familiar with what a Church Plant is?  
*Yes.*
2. Do you have experience with Church Plant?  
*No.*
3. If yes, Please explain.  
*Not applicable.*
4. Was it a positive experience?  
*Not applicable.*
5. Do you see the possibility of working with a Church Plant in the future?  
*Yes, definitely.*
6. If yes, in what capacity?  
*Starting our own plant.*
7. Where specifically?  
*Mt. Juliet, TN*  
Why?  
*Core group members already drive from this location.*
8. Would you consider helping support a church plant outside your congregation?  
*Have not considered it; possibly.*
9. Do you see a need for more churches in your area?  
*Yes.*
10. Would you at least support prayer of a church plant in your area?  
*Yes.*
11. Would you support a church plant financially?  
*Not sure.*
12. Do you see the need to reach the many apartment complexes or multi-housing complexes in your area?  
*Yes.*
13. Would you prayerfully consider helping as God leads you, a church plant focused on multi-housing complexes?  
*Yes.*

### Summary Of Pastoral Interviews:

The information received from the pastoral interviews was not as telling as the availability and responsiveness of the pastors that I attempted to reach for the interviews.

I spent a week placing calls and leaving messages all over the Antioch community and even the surrounding areas. Of probably more than fifty calls I had one pastor return my call and he was from the Smyrna area. I was able to speak directly to one pastor out of all the pastors that I called in Antioch.

This gives me great insight in the willingness of the pastors in the area to work with, support, or possibly even help to sponsor a church plant. While the two pastors that I spoke with did see a need and were familiar and interested in working with a church plant in the future, they were not receptive to the idea of sponsoring a church outside of their fellowship or helping in any monetary form.

## **Director of Missions**

### **Jim Freedman, DOM Nashville Baptist Association**

#### **Summary:**

Jim Freedman, the Director of Missions of the Nashville Baptist Association (NBA), has had a great deal of experience with church planting. He firmly believes that church planting is the key evangelistic strategy to reaching the Nashville area. His strategy for church planting in the Association is closely linked to the development of the 840 loop that is being built around the Greater Nashville perimeter. State strategists predict 1 million people will move to Nashville around this corridor. Add that million with the current 2.1 million people and the need is immense. The Tennessee Baptist Convention strategy is for 500 new churches in this 840 corridor. The Nashville Baptist Association bears the brunt of that strategy according to Jim Freedman.

This DOM is highly supportive of church planting but he knows the challenges are immense. “The biggest barrier is convincing our established churches to get involved with church planting,” said Freedman in the interview. He went on to describe how the last two plants have been sponsored by the association itself. He continued to explain that he believes the answer to church planting is to start churches that start churches.

When asked about the Antioch community, Freedman commented on its vast racial diversity. He commented that there is a need for ethnic plants in Antioch as well as partnerships among the church plants with other plants of different ethnicity. Several plants have been attempted in Antioch and are doing fairly well, but some have closed their doors early in the process due to frustration.

**New Believer**  
Jason Barrett, 20

**1) Are you familiar with church planting?**

*Yes.*

**2) What is your experience in church planting?**

*I have been a believer now for a year and a half. I was saved at New Life Community Church which is a church plant in Antioch. Since my salvation, I became part of the core group and now the bass player in the praise band and a LIFE Group leader for a young single's group.*

**3) Do you believe more churches are needed?**

*Absolutely! There are so many different kinds of people in the world so we need various kinds of churches that preach the Gospel of Christ.*

**4) Would you be willing to be a temporary or permanent part of a new plant in the area?**

*I would need to pray about that, but if God leads me to do that, absolutely because I've seen what an impact a new church can have in people's lives.*

**5) What do you believe are the three greatest needs in this community that a new church needs to meet?**

*1. The people need to be real. People are looking for authenticity, at least, that is what I was looking for.*

*2. The pastor's sermons need to be relevant to life and to show why Christianity is the one true way.*

*3. Relationships. People need relationships. What I've learned is 'you are who you hang with.' Once I started hanging around believers, I became one.*

### **Long Term Resident Believer**

- I. Provide the interviewee background information
  - A. Church Planting class
  - B. Integration with Antioch Church plant with Chris Jackson
  - C. Cast vision – multi-cultural / age 25-44
  
- II. General information about the individual being interviewed
  - A. Name – Daniel Crews
  - B. Address – 5825 Crossings Blvd., Apt 711  
Antioch, TN 37013
  - C. How long have you been a resident in Antioch? – grew up in Antioch for more than 10 years. Daniel moved back to the Antioch community about 1.5 years ago and has been living in various Apartment complexes.
  - D. Telephone number – 941-8226
  - E. Gender - male
  - F. Age or age range? 24
  - G. Do you mind if I include your race in my narrative of the interview? - White
  - H. Marital Status – Single / engaged
  
- III. Confirm that the individual being interviewed is a believer
  - A. Have you received Christ as your Lord and Savior? Yes
  - B. How long have you been a Christian (or when did you receive Christ as your Lord and Savior)? Daniel was brought up in church and made a personal decision to accept Christ when he was 16 years old.
  - C. Do you have a church home? No
  - D. If so, where is your church home? N/A
  - E. Are you currently active in a local church? Not at the present time. I followed this question by asking Daniel, “What is the primary reason you are not active in or attend church?” Daniel stated that he didn’t believe attending church impacted his salvation but primarily that he had several bad experiences in a traditional church setting. He much preferred the cell group structure for Bible study.
  
- IV. Specific questions
  - A. Do you believe Antioch has a need for a new multi-cultural church to serve the Antioch? Daniel felt there is a need but he is not sure what the demand for this would be.
  
  - B. What do you believe are the 3 greatest needs that the new church should attempt to address for the multi-cultural community in Antioch? (i.e. practical – how-to instruction, recreational activities / child care / counseling / language courses / etc...)

- 1) Social activities / build sense of community – provide an outlet for meeting new friends and having fellowship.
  - 2) Suggested a focus on cell groups for Bible study.
  - 3) Indicated there was a large group of Spanish speaking people in Antioch. Daniel suggested classes should be offered to teach English to the Spanish community. Also, he suggested there should be special training sessions for the core Bible group related to Catholicism and for the Spanish community in understanding Catholicism and its relation to evangelical Christianity.
- C. What kind of music / worship service do you believe would be most beneficial to reach the multi-cultural community in Antioch (traditional, contemporary, or blended)? Contemporary to reach younger people and a more traditional or blended style of worship if there is primarily an older audience.
- D. Would you be willing to support a multi-cultural church plant in Antioch to reach the community for Christ in any of the following manners?
- 1) Prayer – Yes.
  - 2) Short term (temporary) assignment to fill a special need to help start church – Probably not other than placing flyers and word of mouth promotion of the Bible studies / worship service.
  - 3) Seek God’s direction related to a permanent movement of church membership as part of Core group – Yes, he would pray and seek God’s direction.
  - 4) Lead Bible studies in your home / apartment – Daniel is a full time employee for the state of Tennessee and also a part time student at MTSU. He indicated that he would not be willing to lead Bible studies at the present time because of his schedule but might in the future depending on his schedule.
  - 5) Financial support – He could not at the present time.
  - 6) Other –
- E. Other Comments - Daniel suggested alternative time schedules for effective meeting times such as Sunday night for cell groups and Wednesday night for worship.

### **Long Term Resident Believer**

- I. Provide the interviewee background information
  - A. Church Planting class
  - B. Integration with Antioch Church plant with Chris
  - C. Cast vision – multi-cultural / age 25-44
  
- II. General information about the individual being interviewed
  - A. Name - Shalanda McMurry
  - B. Address – 1606 Brentridge Circle, Antioch, TN 37013
  - C. How long have you been a resident in Antioch? 3.5 years in apartment community in Antioch
  - D. Telephone number - 333-3100
  - E. Gender - female
  - F. Age or age range? 29
  - G. Do you mind if I include your race in my narrative of the interview? – African American
  - H. Marital Status – Single
  
- III. Confirm that the individual being interviewed is a believer
  - A. Have you received Christ as your Lord and Savior? Yes
  - B. How long have you been a Christian (or when did you receive Christ as your Lord and Savior)? Church of Christ – baptized in 1987.
  - C. Do you have a church home? Yes
  - D. If so, where is your church home? West Eastland Church of Christ in Gallatin (where she primarily attends with her family). She also attends Heart Street Church of Christ.
  - E. Are you currently active in a local church? Yes
  
- IV. Specific questions
  - A. Do you believe Antioch has a need for a new multi-cultural church to serve the Antioch? Never given any thought to need for a new church or small group Bible study in Antioch area. She sees a lot of churches in the area already.
  
  - B. What do you believe are the 3 greatest needs that the new church should attempt to address for the multi-cultural community in Antioch? (i.e. practical – how-to instruction, recreational activities / child care / counseling / language courses / etc...)
    - 1) Focus on communication / language issues such as Spanish.
    - 2) Could not suggest any other needs even with several suggestions from above.

- C. What kind of music / worship service do you believe would be most beneficial to reach the multi-cultural community in Antioch (traditional, contemporary, or blended)? She said she could not respond to this since there was only singing in Church of Christ.
- D. Would you be willing to support a multi-cultural church plant in Antioch to reach the community for Christ in any of the following manners? (Based on the responses above, I asked Shalanda to assume the church plant was a Church of Christ plant.)
- 1) Prayer – Yes.
  - 2) Short term (temporary) assignment to fill a special need to help start church – Yes, if Church of Christ.
  - 3) Seek God’s direction related to a permanent movement of church membership as part of Core group – Yes she is willing to seek God’s leadership.
  - 4) Lead Bible studies in your home / apartment – Not at this time.
  - 5) Financial support – not able to at this time.
  - 6) Other- willing to attend services and try to be involved as much as she could.

### **Long Term Resident Believer**

- I. Provide the interviewee background information
  - A. Church Planting class
  - B. Integration with Antioch Church plant with Chris Jackson
  - C. Cast vision – multi-cultural / age 25-44
  
- II. General information about the individual being interviewed
  - A. Name – Clarice Dixon
  - B. Address – 2518 Sleepy Hollow Drive, Antioch, TN 37013
  - C. How long have you been a resident in Antioch? 22 Years
  - D. Telephone number – 365-9820
  - E. Gender - Female
  - F. Age or age range? 40-50
  - G. Do you mind if I include your race in my narrative of the interview? – African American
  - H. Marital Status – single
  
- III. Confirm that the individual being interviewed is a believer
  - A. Have you receive Christ as your Lord and Savior? Yes
  - B. How long have you been a Christian (or when did you receive Christ as your Lord and Savior)? Since age 13.
  - C. Do you have a church home? Yes.
  - D. If so, where is your church home? Simeon Baptist Church
  - E. Are you currently active in a local church? Yes.
  
- IV. Specific questions
  - A. Do you believe Antioch has a need for a new multi-cultural church to serve the Antioch? Need a new church started in Antioch to reach all kinds of communities. Need to show people that how they dress or where they work does not matter.
  
  - B. What do you believe are the 3 greatest needs that the new church should attempt to address for the multi-cultural community in Antioch? (i.e. practical – how-to instruction, recreational activities / child care / counseling / language courses / etc... )
    - 1) Need programs to reach youth / children. Minister to their needs and then reach their parents.
    - 2) Provide recreational activities to generate interest.
    - 3) Meet people’s personal needs. Meet people at the point of their needs which may be financial or providing food. Focus on building trust and a relationship and encourage them to get involved in the community.

- C. What kind of music / worship service do you believe would be most beneficial to reach the multi-cultural community in Antioch (traditional, contemporary, or blended)? Contemporary.
- D. Would you be willing to support a multi-cultural church plant in Antioch to reach the community for Christ in any of the following manners?
- 1) Prayer – Yes.
  - 2) Short term (temporary) assignment to fill a special need to help start church – Yes.
  - 3) Seek God’s direction related to a permanent movement of church membership as part of Core group – Yes.
  - 4) Lead Bible studies in your home / apartment - Yes
  - 5) Financial support – not able to financially at this time
  - 6) Other

**Tennessee Baptist Convention Representative**

Bill George

Church Planting Specialist

Q. We are targeting a complex of several apartments. What is your advise in reaching out to people living in a multi-housing environment?

A. You must first consider the demographics of the people in the area. More than likely the people are highly transient. You need to know that starting a self-sufficient church in a multi-housing area is a big task. It is not impossible, but the work will be a great challenge.

Q. Do you know any individuals in Middle Tennessee who have effectively reached African American families in multi-housing areas?

A. Yes, Bryan Williams is doing a great work in downtown Nashville reaching African Americans.

Q. What have been keys to his effectiveness?

A. Bryan focused on ministering to meet the real needs of the community. His first goal was building relationships with the people of the community. After establishing trustworthy relationships, he then began to cast the vision of growing a church.

Q. How would you recommend we discover the needs of the area we are targeting?

A. Spend time talking with the manager of the housing complex. They will have an abundance of information about the residents. Ask permission to conduct a needs assessment in the apartment complex. Find out if the people need help with childcare, financial planning, tutoring. How many of the residents are single parents? You need to know all of this information.

Q. Where would you recommend we begin this process?

A. After you have a good idea of your area needs and demographics, begin with a ministry team. Your team should have a passion to meet the needs of the people in that multi-housing area. Minister to the people. Love them, get to know them, build meaningful relationships as God allows you to. As you minister, look for individuals that might potentially be a part of your core group.

Q. Would you recommend we focus on sub-divisions in the area as well as the apartment complexes?

A. No. Don't ever split your target area that way. It is highly unlikely that you would effectively reach people from both areas under the same ministry. The needs of the

multi-housing families will be very different from those in the sub-division. Target one or the other but don't try to target both of them.

Q. How important is enlisting a sponsoring or co-sponsoring church?

A. Given the challenges of planting a new church in a multi-housing area and the challenges involved in planting an African American church, it would be wise to have a co-sponsoring church. The co-sponsoring church can help with resources, ministry team members, teachers, tutors, financial needs, etc. An established co-sponsoring church would be a tremendous asset for your targeted new church start.

Q. Any final thoughts?

A. Tell Stetzer that Tennessee needs more money for church starts and more quality men to start the churches!

## Church Planters

The church planters interviewed for this project are examples of diversity, both in church planting experience and in geographical location. At the same time, each planter has things in common with any church planter who would establish a new work in the Antioch, Tennessee area. So, the project team was able to identify issues similar to those faced in the project target and, to a degree, gain a greater understanding of broader church planting issues.

Of the three church planters interviewed, one is a veteran church planter who now works with a denominational agency of the Southern Baptist Convention. He has experience in rural areas of the West and Midwest, and church planting was his primary pastoral role before joining LifeWay Christian Resources in 1999.

The second planter is just beginning to get his feet on the ground as a planter. He is in his first church planting opportunity after serving as pastor of a traditional church for several years. His current work is focused in the South, but in an area that has displayed a strong level of resistance to the gospel because it is highly transitional.

The third has been working to build his church for approximately four years and has experience in Antioch. He was able to provide some insight into this highly transient community and served as a “midpoint” between the highly-experienced planter and the relative newcomer.

**David Crim:** During his time as a church planter, David Crim established three churches—one in Missouri and two in Wyoming—between 1988-99. In each situation, his experience was different, but he admitted that some principles were universal, making them applicable to the Antioch team. For example, in each setting, his greatest difficulty is related to the securing and maintaining of a strong financial support base. In reality, this concern was echoed by all three planters involved in the interview and would be an obstacle for any church planter working in the target area.

One area that was not as “set in stone” as the need for finances was the availability and the viability of his core groups. In Wyoming, he began churches with rather small groups, between seven and 10 people. Even though this number seems low, Crim said it was fairly common for church starts in the Wyoming since it is such a pioneer area for Southern Baptist outreach. He reported that, even with the small core, both churches remain strong and growing in their communities.

On the other hand, he began the church in Missouri with a larger core group—around 20 people. Yet, while this core was larger than those in Wyoming, it proved to be too small for the region. Within a short time of his departure, the congregation disbanded.

Crim places a great deal of emphasis on knowing your area and how your geography influences the core group. Obviously, a large start would be much more difficult in Wyoming or other sparsely populated, pioneer areas; but he affirms the

development of larger core groups in areas (like the target area) where such development is possible. In fact, he said he would focus on building a larger core and would emphasize leadership development within the core if he were to return to his church planting work today. This is similar to the plan adopted by the project group in its assimilation strategy.

In each of his churches, Crim followed a purpose-driven philosophy, including his approach to assimilation. Again, this reflects the desire of the project group for the work in Antioch. Completing a class on the meaning of salvation and the purposes of the church was a requirement for church membership. From there, members of the leadership team worked to help people identify their gifts and to move them into ministry. Among the emphases for his churches were informal, contemporary worship as a means to reach the unchurched and relational evangelism. He pointed to his congregation's ability to minister to members of the gay and lesbian community as an indication of the people's success to touch those outside the walls of traditional church life.

**Bill Denning:** After several years of pastoral service in traditional congregations in both North Carolina and northern Virginia, Bill Denning felt God calling him into a new challenge: church planting. While he had experienced a certain degree of success as a pastor, he was frustrated by his congregation's unwillingness to leave its comfort zone and reach the world around it. So, instead of fighting with his church, Denning resigned and came to the Raleigh–Durham area of North Carolina to plant a church.

In many ways, Raleigh serves as a mirror image to the Antioch area. Both regions are southern, but with a large population being drawn from other areas of the country. Both Raleigh and Antioch are home to several academic institutions, which hold implications for church planting. Reaching this community will require special commitment to both solid theology and relational evangelism. In addition, both areas are extremely transitional.

Like David Crim, Denning cited finances as a continuing struggle in his church planting efforts. However, he believes the experience to this point has taught him to trust God with the planting and persevere through difficult circumstances.

He spent the first several months of his work assisting another church planter in the area, learning from both his failures and his successes. Currently, Denning is building his core group and has begun planning for an October 2002 launch. To this point, three families (including his own) have committed to become part of the core and to develop as part of the leadership group. Several other families have expressed interest, so he expects the core to grow well over the course of the next 12 months. In the meantime, he continues to cast his vision for those currently in his core and to train them for leadership.

Raleigh-Durham offers a wide variety of challenges for Denning as a church planter. For instance, struggles within the Southern Baptist Convention (and nearby Southeastern Seminary) have left scars both within the Southern Baptist community and the general population. As a result, he has chosen to name his plant North Raleigh

Fellowship in an effort to avoid any negative connotations regarding Baptists. The theological conflicts also have had an impact on the funding issue mentioned earlier.

Another challenge relates to the transitional nature of Raleigh-Durham. Two decades ago, the population of the area leaned heavily toward “churched” individuals who had some working knowledge of the gospel message. However, since then, the area has undergone a tremendous shift spurred by rapid growth of business interests in the area. Citing, the resulting influx of workers from all over the nation, Denning quoted a recent study that indicated the churched population in his area now stands in the neighborhood of 35 percent, while the unchurched make up roughly 65 percent of the general population. Those numbers represent a complete reversal from 20 years ago.

Denning’s philosophy regarding assimilation resembles Rick Warren’s purpose-driven model. Because he considers himself a visual person, Denning appreciates the baseball diamond and envisions his people moving around the bases from membership to ministry. While he includes some elements he has developed on his own during his time as a pastor in other churches, Denning wants to see the members of his new church make that transition from point to point.

**Mark Jackson:** While serving as a youth minister in Nashville, Mark Jackson began to realize that he might be spending too much time turning teens into good Baptists and not enough time leading them toward Christ likeness. And, like the other planters interviewed, he also came to the realization that the established church might be a difficult place to begin making major changes. So, he began to investigate the idea of planting a new church.

Jackson considered building a “church within a church,” which is common in the Nashville area. However, he feared that the church would never receive full recognition as an entity of its own. At that point, he began to examine the possibility of beginning a new church in the fast-growing area of Antioch—the target area for this project. And, with that, the vision of the Church at Hickory Hollow was born.

That was four years ago, so Jackson has had plenty of time to make mistakes, reflect on them, and try to improve his chances of reaching an ever-changing community in Antioch. While he has received some support from the Tennessee Baptist Convention, his congregation still struggles with finances; and the transient nature of the community has made it difficult to establish much growth in his core group.

Among his other challenges has been the difficulty of promotion and what he calls the “demolition/rebuilding work” necessary to help people in the Bible Belt come to terms with a new way of doing church. As an example of promotion problems, he confessed that he underestimated the work required to put his church’s name out for people to see—and, again, limited finances added to the problem. At the same time, the Church at Hickory Hollow has exerted a lot of time and energy tearing down stereotypes held by unchurched people in Antioch and casting a vision for the church’s work.

Jackson said that one of his biggest mistakes over the past several years has been his willingness to assume his people understand his vision. As one might expect, this has led to a certain degree of instability among members. He began with a core group of seven (rather small for a traditionally Baptist area) and saw spikes in the 70s during the second and third year of the church's existence. In recent days, the Church at Hickory Hollow has been running between 30-40 in its Sunday morning service and between 20-25 in its small group Bible studies. Some of those in the Bible studies remain hesitant to attend the Sunday service, while some Sunday regulars have yet to "plug into" a small group.

The assimilation process for Jackson's church includes a two-step process. One is the small group structure. As soon as a person attends the church and voluntarily provides information for the leadership team, he or she is encouraged to join a small group. Jackson sees this as the key to the church's success.

From there, the second step involves membership. But, while membership is voluntary, those seeking to become members are required to complete the membership class and undergo a screening of sorts by someone of the leadership team. Jackson believes such an interview process will help the church "weed out" those who hold different beliefs and will help the individuals determine if the Church at Hickory Hollow is truly a good fit for them.

# **Practical Applications**

## **What will be our church name and why?**

### **True Life Baptist Church.**

This name was unanimous. Initially we were going to exclude the name Baptist. We were operating under the assumption that with the word Baptist in our name that it would overwhelmingly carry with it a negative influence. We went so far with this idea that in our rough draft turned in to the Professor that Baptist was excluded.

All of this changed after our community survey that took place at Hickory Hollow Mall in Antioch on the evening of Nov. 15<sup>th</sup>. Upon completion of the survey we discovered some information that none of us expected to find. The findings are as follows:

We offered three possible church names to those interviewed.

1. True Life Baptist Church
2. True Life Church
3. True Life House of Prayer.

We asked two questions referring to these three names.

1. Which would you most likely attend?
2. Which would you least likely attend?

Our findings surprised us.

1. The most popular name according to question #1 was Name #1, True Life Baptist Church, at (43.14%). The second most popular was Name #2, True Life Church, at (27.45%) and Name #3, True Life House of Prayer, at (21.57%)
2. The Church name that was the least likely name to be attended was Name #1, True Life Baptist Church, at (39.22%) followed by name #3, True Life House of Prayer, at 33.33% and #2, True Life Church, at (19.61%).

With these findings in our survey, we came to the conclusion that the name most people preferred for the church included Baptist in the title. We have concluded that we would incorporate Baptist in the name of our church plant.

As for the rest of the name, we agreed that the name “True Life Baptist” sounded good and brought with it the idea that the reason for the assembling together is the truth, and that we have to offer what the world is looking for, “True Life”.

### **What will be our music style and why?**

Our music style will be contemporary. However, it will not be contemporary to the exclusion of Hymns. The style however will be more upbeat and relative to the age group that is dominant within the community of Antioch. The majority of the age group falls under the age of forty-five years old.

There has also been support for this style of music from a survey amongst our target age group that was taken only two years ago that showed the most popular music station was the classic rock station in the Nashville area. Just recently, our community survey revealed the most popular radio stations is Rhythm & Blues.

A contemporary praise team with bass, drums, guitar, and keyboard will be familiar to our target group. We believe that this style will be the best for communicating a message through song. A contemporary style will definitely be more relevant to our target group.

### **How will we connect with the lost?**

We will connect with the lost through our ministry strategy to the local community and apartment complex. As we seek to minister to adults, youth, and children, our focus will be on reaching out to unchurched and lost individuals. Most of the ministries we will launch are outlined in the “how to build a core group” strategy that is included in this report.

Additional strategies that will help us connect with the lost include:

- Become familiar with the community and its leaders and schools.

- Identify key leaders in the target area.

- Develop relationships with local media outlets.

- Always consider the importance of a great personal attitude.

  - Be positive

  - Be cooperative

  - Have a servant attitude

  - Demonstrate the love of God

- Become an authority on the needs, demographics, and characteristics of the area.

## **How will we build a core group?**

Because of the uniqueness of planting a church in a multi-cultural community, our desire is to first focus on ministry in the immediate area. It is our desire to partner with a co-sponsoring church for six months of intentional ministry and relationship building. We will recruit and train volunteers, secure resources needed for ministry, effectively promote the ministry, and follow through with our ministry task.

We believe that God will provide our core group from ministry within the target area of homes as well as from apartments in the area. These ministries will include but not be limited to:

### Adult

Bible Study in homes, and apartments  
 Seminar for newly married couples  
 Seminar on resume development  
 Parent's night out (childcare for children while parents do Christmas shopping)

### Youth

Three-on-three basketball tournament  
 Tutoring in apartment complex

### Children

Tutoring in apartment complex  
 Backyard Bible club  
 Weekday Sunday School

Minister available for chaplainry, counseling, referral, and conflict management to all age groups of people in the area.

### **What is our assimilation strategy?**

Because Antioch stands out as such a diverse and mobile community, assimilation into the life of the new church will be difficult. Therefore, the foundations of the assimilation process will need to be strong and well planned before the actual launch takes place. In fact, assimilation should be taking place in many ways during the pre-launch period.

The first step in this church's assimilation process will revolve around the small group opportunities. As individuals begin to express interest in the church plant, they will be encouraged to participate in the small group life of the church. Initially, members of the leadership team will teach these groups, but the team will be responsible for identifying and training new small group leaders so multiplication can take place.

Another part of this first step includes the large group meetings. Since not everyone who expresses an interest in the new plant will be interested in small groups at first, regular large group meetings will provide them with an opportunity to build relationships within the new church. In addition, large group activities will set the stage for "middle" events.

These "middle" events will serve as transition points for members moving either from large group to small group or from small group to large group. They will represent target-specific events (such as singles meetings or seminars for young marrieds) and will provide another assimilation point. The middle events will encourage folks to transition from involvement in only one aspect of the church's life into complete participation in the fellowship.

As express an interest in church membership—whether through the large groups, the small groups, or the middle events—they will be asked to take part in a new members' class. This class—which will be required for all new members, including those with strong church backgrounds—will emphasize the message and meaning of salvation. This step is vital for any potential ministry success in the format planned for this church. Because Antioch is such a transitional community, those coming to the church for ministry must hear the message often and have a chance to respond—or to receive assurance.

The class also will introduce participants to concepts of spiritual giftedness and to the five major functions of the church: evangelism, discipleship, fellowship, ministry, and worship. Since the key focus of the new members' class will be on salvation, these topics will be covered more in a survey fashion, preparing individuals for the next phase of the assimilation process.

Soon after completing the new members' class, individuals will be ask to meet with a member of the leadership team for a special emphasis on spiritual gifts and ministry potential. In this time, the member will be reminded of the introduction to spiritual gifts provided in the new members' class and will be given a spiritual gift

survey. As the survey is evaluated by both the member and the leadership representative, special attention will be given to the indicated gifts and other key areas (such as personality style, passion, and life experiences) also will be discussed in relation to ministry possibilities.

At that time, the leadership representative will remind the individual of the five functions of the church discussed in the new members' class, as well as some specific ministries that fall under each of those functions. The individual and the leadership representative will commit to pray through what has been identified and to meet again at a set time for further discussion. Again, due to the fast-moving nature of the community, a reasonable amount of time should be agreed upon for the follow-up meeting. Any unnecessary delay could short-circuit the church's ability to mentor and place the new member into service.

The third phase involves moving the individual from simple membership to ministry within the church. At the second meeting, the leadership representative will encourage the individual to identify various areas of potential ministry. From this information, a "ministry plan" will be developed for the individual. A standard part of each ministry plan should include the completion of some evangelistic training program, such as FAITH or *Share Jesus Without Fear*. If possible, a representative from the specific ministry chosen should be assigned to mentor the individual. This step would provide training, fellowship, and a sense of accountability.

A "final" phase in the assimilation process would include the regular recognition of individuals who have faithfully served in their respective ministries. This could be done annually, possibly as part of a banquet dinner or "award" ceremony. In this ceremony, faithful members of the congregation would receive affirmation, encouraging them toward continued service. Such action also could challenge those who have not plugged into a ministry position to consider more active involvement.

An additional element to this event could be the "commissioning" of those who are leaving the congregation for various reasons. Because transition rates are high in this community, the church could take it upon itself to send out those who have been mentored and who have matured as "missionaries" when a transition forces them to leave the area. Again, this would serve as an affirmation of faithful service, but it also may encourage the individual to continue ministering in a church body in their new context.

### **What kind of small groups will we have?**

True Life Church will contain several types of strategic and intentional small groups. The first will be the primary ‘crowd’ attractor in the early stages of the life of the church. These will be seminars focused in multi-housing communities as well as subdivisions. Topics of these seminars will include marriage and the family, parenting, financial issues, and the single life. These small groups will be used as a catalyst to reaching people through relational evangelism and then incorporating them into the core group. These groups will continue after the establishment of the core group and the launch of True Life in order to continue to add to the ‘crowd.’

The second, and most critical, small group is the LIFE Group. These intentional cell groups are key to the entire strategy of True Life Church. The acrostic LIFE stands for:

**L** – oving God and People  
**I** – ntentional Prayer  
**F** – riends  
**E** – vangelism and Equipping

The overall goals for the LIFE Groups are community and multiplication. Acts 2:42-47 discusses the church went from ‘house to house daily.’ The believers in the early church simply lived life together. This is a major component of the biblical concept of community. Believers achieve community when they achieve a level of intimacy and trust where they can share victories and failures and receive encouragement and rebuke. This is an essential element of a healthy church and a believer’s life.

The second goal of the LIFE Groups is multiplication. There will exist three doors into True Life Baptist Church. The first one, and most common, will be the celebration service. These will be held primarily on Sunday mornings and will be the large gathering for worship and the teaching of the Word. The LIFE Groups will be essential here for the assimilation of the attendees who come to the celebration services. A second door for True Life will be the specialty small groups as already discussed. Once again, LIFE Groups will be key for assimilation of these new prospects. Finally, the LIFE Group itself will exist as a door into the church. As people are becoming a part of community, they will invite their friends and neighbors to come. Also, the LIFE Groups will be strategic in the sense they will be in neighborhoods and multi-housing communities specifically for the purpose of reaching the people living in that proximity.

LIFE Groups will be where relationships are built, believers are mentored, leaders are developed, and Christ is shared.

# Letters

**Visitors/Prospects**

**True Life Baptist Church  
P.O. Box 1234  
Antioch, TN. 37013**

(Date)

Dear \_\_,

Thank you for visiting with us at True Life Baptist Church. We hope you experienced the excitement of our worship service and that you felt the presence of the Lord. Also, we hope you found the service uplifting and the message a practical one that you can apply to your daily life.

True Life is a warm and friendly church and would be a wonderful place for you to make new friends and experience a new life in Christ or strengthen your relationship with God. We believe God has commissioned our fellowship to touch the hearts of the people in Antioch with His love.

We want to invite you to visit with us each opportunity that you have. Please refer to the enclosed sheet about upcoming events and the brochure for additional information about True Life.

Please contact me at 555-9876 if you have any questions, or if there is any thing we can assist you with. We hope to see you again soon.

May the Lord bless you,

Name

## Newcomers

**True Life Baptist Church  
P.O. Box 1234  
Antioch, TN. 37013**

Date

Dear \_\_\_\_\_,

Welcome to Antioch. Moving into a new home is an exciting time. We are still experiencing the excitement of starting our new church at True Life Baptist Church.

It would give us great pleasure if you would visit True Life and worship with us. True Life is a warm and friendly church and would be a wonderful place for you to meet new friends and experience a new life in Christ or strengthen your relationship with God.

Our worship service offers contemporary music in a casual setting with a message that provides practical guidance in dealing with issues that impact daily life. Our worship services are on Sunday mornings at 10:15 AM at (address to be determined). Refreshments are provided. Please refer to the enclosed sheet about upcoming events and the brochure for additional information about True Life.

Please contact me at 555-9876 if you have any questions, or if there is any thing we can assist you with. We hope to see you soon.

May the Lord bless you,

Name

## Partners

**True Life Baptist Church**  
**P.O. Box 1234**  
**Antioch, TN. 37013**

### Address

Dear \_\_\_\_\_, (or Brother or Sister in Christ)

As a fellow believer and servant of Christ, we understand and share the burden of seeing our nation becoming so 'non-Christian.' Where it once was 'normal' to be an evangelical Christian, it is now severely abnormal in our society. Believers must unite in our efforts to penetrate the darkness in which our nation lives.

We, at True Life, believe God has called us to plant a new church in the Antioch community on the southeast side of Nashville. We are not attempting to draw anyone out of an already existing church, but feel led to reach new sheep for the Lord Jesus Christ. We plan on doing this by using intentional small group seminars that deal with felt needs in the community and then use that opportunity to share Christ and the vision for True Life Church. We have enclosed a brochure that explains True Life's strategy and our core values.

We are sending you this letter and brochure because we need your help. In Acts, it was the Church at Antioch that sent Paul and Barnabas on their missionary journey and then Antioch proceeded to send others out. The biblical model for evangelism is church planting. The biblical model for church planting is cooperation. We ask you to prayerfully consider cooperating with us for one or more of the following:

Praying for us as a(n)

- Email Prayer Partner
- True Life Prayer Team

Donation of any...

- Sound Equipment
- Nursery/Preschool equipment
- Computer Equipment
- Bibles or Study Materials

Financial Support

- Monthly
  - \$25
  - \$50
  - \$100
  - \$200
- One time gift of \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Please tear off the attached portion of the brochure and return it back to True Life Baptist Church, P.O. Box 1234, Antioch, TN 37013.

Thank you for your prayers and consideration.

In Christ,  
Pastor, True Life Baptist Church

## Unchurched

**True Life Baptist Church  
P.O. Box 1234  
Antioch, TN. 37013**

### Address

Dear \_\_\_\_\_,

We would like to extend to you a warm greeting and a sincere invitation to be our guest on Sunday morning at True Life Baptist Church. True Life is a warm and friendly church and would be a wonderful place for you to meet new friends and build quality relationships.

We also offer many opportunities for you and your family to get to know more about Jesus Christ in a friendly and safe environment.

Our worship service offers contemporary music (live band) in a casual setting with a message from the Bible that provides practical guidance in dealing with issues of daily life. Our worship services are Sunday mornings at 10:15 am at JFK Middle School on Hobson Pike.

We also offer several small group seminars in the Antioch area that may interest you. Such seminars include topics such as financial management, marital enhancement, parenting, resume preparation, etc.

If you have any questions, do not hesitate to call the church office at 555-9876. We have also included a brochure provides you with more information. We pray that you have a great week, and we hope to see you soon!

God Bless,

Pastor, True Life Baptist Church

# Brochures





# **Multimedia Presentation of Project**