

**March 13, 1999**

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March 13, 1999

Bro. Slaybaugh,

Enclosed is a church starting strategy for Gateway Community Church (tentatively named). It is intended to outline in broad terms the plan for preparation, immediate pre-launch, and launch of the new church. The plan has been prepared by Barry Kornegay, Jeff Walters, and Carl McCarty, interns in the North American Mission Board, SBC's Nehemiah Project. It was written in conjunction with Dr. Ed Stetzer, Assistant Professor of Church Planting at the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary.

This strategy is not proposed as a rigid plan, but rather as a guide for further development. As God leads, we will adjust this blueprint. Also attached are copies of direct mail letters, new homeowner's letter, and visitor contact letters.

We believe that partnership with local denominational agencies, sponsor churches, and the community are vital to planting new churches. We are thankful for those who have committed to support Gateway Community Church.

Blessings,

Barry Kornegay  
Carl McCarty  
Jeff Walters

## **Purpose**

The purpose of Gateway Community Church is to give praise to God (**exalt**), teach people to live the Christian life (**equip**), and reach the multitudes of unchurched people in Louisville (**evangelize**).

## **Mission**

The mission of the church is to seek to provide the tools to reach lost, unchurched people and develop them into fruit bearing disciples in the body of Christ.

The church will accomplish this through church worship services (**celebration**), home groups (**care**), and an in depth study and discipleship program (**content**).

## **Gateway Community Church Starting Plan**

The following is a plan sketch of a church start in the area of Middletown, Anchorage, and Jeffersontown, Kentucky. It is not intended to be a rigid plan, but just an idea of direction. As God blesses and leads, plans will change to follow His desire for Gateway Community Church. We believe that as God's Spirit is present in this process there will be many changes. Some things will go faster, others slower. The purpose of this outline is to provide a place to start and a direction in which to proceed. As He leads, we will follow His direction.

### ***Introduction***

Middletown, Jeffersontown, and Anchorage are adjacent suburbs of the city of Louisville in Northwestern Kentucky. The target area is a five-mile radius, which covers parts of all three communities. The target site has experienced a tremendous increase in population (13.4%) from 1990 to 1998, with the arrival of 8,276 new residents. It is estimated that it will increase by another 3,902 (5.6%) by the year 2003. Currently, an estimated 27,027 families live in the target area, each having approximately 2.56 persons per household. Forty two percent of these families are affluent and the remainder of the area is comprised of Middle Class American and Young and Coming Families. Seventy percent of the families are classified as homeowners with average property values \$100,000 - \$150,000. The average household income in this area is \$75,675 a year as compared to the U.S. average of \$53,198. The average age is 36.4 and is projected to increase to 37.6 by 2003. These people are the target group.

The church start will have no core group and one will need to be developed over the first few months. There are benefits to starting without a core group. Previous experience has

shown that the core group often leaves quickly when the new pastor arrives (particularly if they were there a long time before the pastor). However, when the new pastor gathers around him people who share the vision, they tend to stay.

A core group can be developed using a community wide survey and mailing lists of residents as well as newcomers to the community. This information is available through Dickman and/or Criss-Cross directories as well as Lifeway's Resource Center. Mailing lists will be followed up by personal phone calls and additional mailings. Enclosed is an example letter and brochure that might be used for new homeowners (Appendix).

### ***Partnerships***

Several partners are contributing financial resources, equipment, and manpower to support Gateway. The Nehemiah Project of the North American Mission Board, SBC, will provide interns to staff the initial stages of the plant, for a total of \$23,400 per year, along with equipment. The Kentucky Baptist Convention and the Long Run Baptist Association will contribute \$22,000 to be renewed annually and \$5,000, respectively. Little Flock Baptist Church, the sponsor church, will provide \$5,000 financial support, door-to-door survey teams, mentor relationships for the interns, and prayer walk teams. Saddleback Community Church in Mission Viejo, California, originator of the Purpose Driven Church Model, will contribute \$22,000 to support staff, to be reviewed and renewed annually.

### ***Eighteen Month Strategy***

Below is a strategy based on the available information, projected resources, and strengths/weaknesses of the planting team. The strategy will need to be changed over time to accommodate the evolving situation, but it provides a blueprint and measurable goals over the first 18 months.

### **March 1999 - June 1999 (Preparation)**

During the initial months of preparation, the central focus will be upon developing a core. Direct mail and door-to-door visits, interns, students, and mission teams will build small groups aimed at the target. Based upon research among other churches in the area that used direct mail, we expect a .5%-.75% response. There will be an initial mailing of 10,000 followed by three or four additional mailings as the launch approaches. With a total of 50,000 mailings and three preview services, expected attendance at the first service should be 250-300.

Small group meetings will be an ongoing process throughout the preparation stage. As these grow, new leaders from among the harvest will be trained to lead new groups. The goal is to produce a strong core of leadership. As the core develops, training for childcare, set-up/take-down, and leadership will take place.

## Checklist for Preparation Stage

### *Personal Preparation*

\_\_\_\_\_ Assessment complete and conditions accomplished

### *Family Preparation*

\_\_\_\_\_ Spouse on board with Planting Strategy

\_\_\_\_\_ Spouse Role Determined

### *Strategic Preparation*

#### *Pre-Launch strategies designed for.....*

\_\_\_\_\_ Personal Evangelism

\_\_\_\_\_ Understanding the target

\_\_\_\_\_ Neighborhood bridge events

\_\_\_\_\_ Personal follow-up

\_\_\_\_\_ Pioneer family worship and teaching meetings

\_\_\_\_\_ Construction Crew recruiting

\_\_\_\_\_ Construction Crew training workshops

\_\_\_\_\_ Construction Crew planning meetings

\_\_\_\_\_ Construction Crew retreat

## July 1999-September 1999 (Pre-Launch/Preview)

In mid-July, the church will hold a preview worship service, preceded by a 10,000 piece mailing. Small groups will continue to meet, and training will be held for ushers and greeters. Two months prior to launch there will be a second preview worship service preceded by a 20,000-piece mailing. During the final month before launch, a high quality 30,000-piece mailing will be sent to the target group.

## Checklist for Pre-Launch/Preview Stage

### *Evangelism*

\_\_\_\_\_ System for meeting people

\_\_\_\_\_ Listening survey system

\_\_\_\_\_ Bridge events

\_\_\_\_\_ Contextualized method for sharing the gospel

### *Fellowship*

- \_\_\_\_\_ Church social events
- \_\_\_\_\_ Pioneer Family
- \_\_\_\_\_ Crew membership processes designed

***Discipleship***

- \_\_\_\_\_ New Christian follow-up system installed

***Service***

- \_\_\_\_\_ Personalized training process

***Worship***

- \_\_\_\_\_ Enlistment and training system for worship related teams
- \_\_\_\_\_ Advertising strategy designed
- \_\_\_\_\_ Place for preview secured
- \_\_\_\_\_ Date for previews set

**October 1999-December 1999 (Launch)**

The Grand Opening (Launch) will be held on October 3, 1999. It will be a seeker-oriented service led by a worship team. Contemporary music, professionalism, and an atmosphere that is friendly, while preserving the anonymity desired by the target group, will be key emphases. Every active small group member will be involved in the service, dividing between children's programs, usher/greeter, assimilation, financial, and worship. Every attender will fill out a registration form so that the prospect list can be updated.

**Checklist for Launch**

***Worship***

- \_\_\_\_\_ Seeker service previews
- \_\_\_\_\_ Seeker service

***Evangelism***

- \_\_\_\_\_ Seeker service previews
- \_\_\_\_\_ Seeker service
- \_\_\_\_\_ Holiday Services

***Fellowship***

- \_\_\_\_\_ Membership processes
- \_\_\_\_\_ 101

\_\_\_\_ Small Group Incubator  
\_\_\_\_ Communication System

***Discipleship***

\_\_\_\_ 201  
\_\_\_\_ Children's Classes

***Service***

\_\_\_\_ Pre-301 training  
\_\_\_\_ Leadership community

**January 2000 - April 2000 (Crowd to Core)**

Follow-up will begin immediately after the first service. All guests will be contacted by letter, phone, or personal visit. During this time the assimilation processes will begin to operate and will be based upon the “baseball diamond” assimilation plan including “101,” “201,” “301,” and “401” classes aimed at moving people from the crowd to the core. This process will be ongoing as the church continues to reach out to the community. The initial members class, "101," will be required for membership and is intended to help the crowd discover church membership, including beginning a relationship with Christ. Following 101, members move on to deeper areas of commitment, including spiritual maturity, ministry, and mission.

**Checklist for Crowd to Core**

***Evangelism***

\_\_\_\_ Friend day  
\_\_\_\_ Holiday services  
\_\_\_\_ Bringers equipping  
\_\_\_\_ Life plan process  
\_\_\_\_ Church Planting Strategy

***Fellowship***

\_\_\_\_ Small Groups  
\_\_\_\_ Group leader training  
\_\_\_\_ Group leader coaching  
\_\_\_\_ Group multiplication process

***Discipleship***

\_\_\_\_\_ Additional 200 level classes designed

***Service***

\_\_\_\_\_ 301  
\_\_\_\_\_ SHAPE interview process

***Worship***

\_\_\_\_\_ Second service plan

**May 2000 - August 2000 (Evangelism and Growth)**

This will be a recognized time of evangelistic outreach and spiritual maturity. A detailed strategy for this time is underway.

## New Homeowners Letter

Date

Mr. and Mrs. Homeowner  
101 Gateway Lane  
Louisville, KY 40000

Dear Mary and Joseph,

Each month we obtain the names of all the people who have moved into the Middletown, Anchorage and Jeffersontown area. Our church does this to invite new residents to our activities in case they do not already have a church "home". Obviously, you are on that list and we hope you will come and visit one our church activities or home groups.

We are a new church (we have not even started Sunday church services yet!). We have plans to meet in Crosby Middle School in the heart of Middletown. Until then, we are meeting in homes to provide an informal environment for studying the Bible. It is our desire to help meet the needs of this growing community. Our church is an active, caring group and I know you will feel welcome!

My name is \_\_\_\_\_ and I am the pastor. I hope you will take this invitation to be our guest. We have many other programs and activities that we would like to tell you about. If you have been a regular church attender in your former community, we would love to be your new church. If you've never been an attender in the past, this may be a good time to find a church. Perhaps, this is the perfect time to become a part of a church you can call "home".

I have enclosed a flyer with a reply card. If you would like a free New Testament and more information about our church, please just drop the card in the mail. We have prepaid the postage. For more information, please give us a call at \_\_\_\_\_. God Bless.

Sincerely,

**Pastor**

## Direct Mail Letter

Date

Dear Friend,

I believe new beginnings are coming to eastern Louisville. When people are drawn into a vital relationship with God, stronger lives, families, and communities result. **Gateway** is a *new* Church designed to meet complex needs of today's fast paced society. We are a *diverse* group with a *common* commitment to growing in the Christian faith.

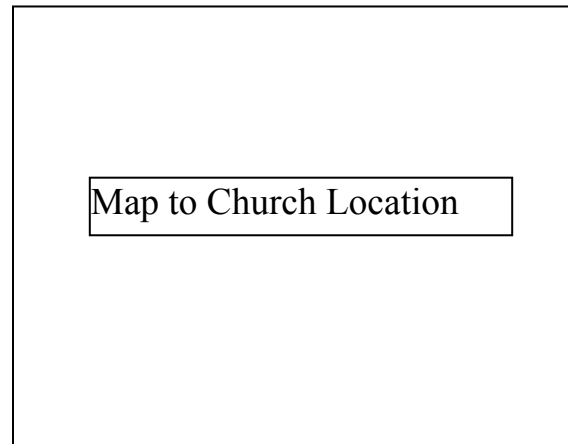
At **Gateway Community Church** you can

- Find programs targeted to the needs of each family member
- Enjoy celebrative worship with a contemporary flavor
- Hear understandable and practical messages from the Bible
- Express a genuine faith through Church and community service
- Trust your children to the care of dedicated nursery and childcare workers

On behalf of the new congregation, let me personally invite you to our grand opening service on Sunday, October 3, 1999 at 10:00 a.m. The church will meet at Crosby Middle School located at in the heart of Middletown at 100 Gatehouse Road.

Sincerely,

**Pastor**



## First Time Visitor Letter

**Date**

Name of Visitor

Street

City State

Zip

It was great to have you be a part of our service last Sunday. I hope you enjoyed it and felt welcomed. I only wish I had been able to personally spend time with you and get to know you better.

We want to help you in any way we can. We believe every person is important. As you looked around you probably noticed that our church family is made up of people just like yourself. I hope you sensed the warmth and acceptance of those around you. We're glad you chose to attend our Gateway.

Once a month we have a "church chat". The casual get-together is an opportunity for us to get to know each other on a personal basis and allow you to find out more about our church. We'd love to have you as our quest at the next one, so please check the worship program for details.

Thanks again for attending our church. We look forward to seeing you again. We want you to feel welcome and to be a part of our family. This coming Sunday my message will be \_\_\_\_\_ .

Warmly

**Pastor**

P.S. Would you do me a favor? We are always trying to improve our worship services. I'd like your candid first impression (good or bad) of our church. Just mail back the enclosed response card with your view. You don't need to sign your name. The card so you don't need to put a stamp on it. Just drop it in the mail. Thanks!

## Second Time Visitor Letter

### Date

Name of Visitor  
Street  
City State  
Zip

It was great to see you in our service last Sunday. We are always happy to see new friends return after their first visit.

If you have any questions, or if one of our pastors can assist you in any way, feel free to call our church office. We're excited about your interest in our church family.

Thanks again for coming back! We want you to feel welcome anytime. I hope you can be with us again this Sunday. My message this Sunday is entitled \_\_\_\_\_.

Warmly,

### Pastor

P.S. Did you know we have an information center in the foyer where you can learn more about our programs and events our church offers, after the service. Come and check it out. God Bless You!

## Third Time Visitor Letter

### Date

Name of Visitor  
Street  
City State  
Zip

Just a note to let you know how pleased we are that you are continuing to worship with us. I hope by now you are feeling comfortable and at home with us, and will consider yourselves a part of our church family. We want you to feel like you belong.

I'm writing you to let you know about the Membership Information Class that I teach. Since we have people attending our church from every type of church background, we have established an on-going class, which provides basic information about our church.

You don't have to become a member to attend this class—it's just for your information. In part of the class we will explain all about what we believe, how we operate, our vision and a little of the background of our church. In the other half of the class we will answer any questions you may have and share information on our church's future plans and how you may become a member. Please watch the bulletin for the date, time and location of the next membership class. Sign up at the information table on Sunday or call the church office, \_\_\_\_\_ to make reservations if you plan to attend.

Again, we want you to know that you are welcome at Gateway. If I or any of our staff can help you in any way, just let us know. God Bless You!

My message this Sunday is entitled \_\_\_\_\_ .

Warmly,

**Pastor**