

# *Grace Fellowship Strategic Plan*

## **Eighteen Month Strategy**

Below is a strategy based upon available information, projected resources, and the strengths/weaknesses of the church planting team. The strategy will undoubtedly change over time to accommodate the evolving situation. Nonetheless, the following plan provides a blueprint and measurable goals over the first eighteen months.

### **September – November 2000**

The on-site process to start Grace Fellowship Community Church (GFCC) will begin in the fall of 2000. It will begin by gaining a greater overall orientation to the Denver metropolitan area and in particular to the suburb of Aurora.

As mentioned in the introduction, the need to generate a core group will receive the highest priority. Several communicative and relational mediums will be used to accomplish this goal. Intentional relationship cultivation, commercials on local Christian radio stations, and intensive networking and communication through local churches, universities, and seminaries, are just a few of the approaches that will be utilized by the church planting team.

In addition, the church will purchase new mover lists and new parents' lists to aid in these endeavors. After receiving the above listed information, each of those families will be sent a letter targeted to their need (results of ACORN and Percept demographic and psychographic analysis). This contact will be followed up by a phone call to the prospective family. Those families and individuals that respond positively will be visited by a team member, given more specific information about the vision of the church, and assimilated into the core group.

At the end of November 2000, there should be three to four Home Teams (small groups) meeting in various homes being led by members of the church planting team. These teams will have at least one apprentice (preferably two) on each team and will follow the Purpose-Driven-Church (PDC) Small Group model as introduced by Saddleback Church in California. The total number in the core group should be around thirty to forty people. Again, this estimate is based upon the size of the church planting team (4) and their particular strengths and weaknesses.

### **December 2000 – February 2001**

During this time the groups will go through a multiplication increasing the total size of the core group up to sixty to seventy participants. During this time, bi-monthly corporate events will take place for worship, vision casting, and leadership training.

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Within each Home Team, core group participants will be receiving training on relationship evangelism utilizing the Contagious Christianity materials from Willow Creek Church. In addition, training efforts in the area of ministry discovery will continue utilizing the S-H-A-P-E methodology developed by Dr. Warren of Saddleback Church.

The church planting team (primarily the senior pastor) will step up networking efforts within the local and partnering areas. This includes Denver Metro and Colorado Baptist associations and conventions, local churches, and local businesses.

During February of 2001, the church planting team together with Home Team leaders and apprentices will solidify advertising and communication mediums to be used for the “Grand Opening”. These decisions in the arena of advertisements will be based upon previously mentioned psychographic information.

In addition to the on-going activities and training, informal get-acquainted coffees and dessert parties will be hosted for those expressing interest in the new work. The goal is to hold at least one a month through the “Grand Opening” of the church. These events will begin in January of 2001.

The Home Teams will also begin holding a monthly “party with a purpose” designed for inviting unchurched friends, family, co-workers, and neighbors. These events will serve as pre-evangelistic outreach efforts and will provide a front door into the Home Teams.

Administratively, a relational database (Microsoft Access platform) will be designed utilizing the Microsoft Software suite. This database will allow for adequate tracking of all prospects and participants of GFCC. Utilizing the Logos software developed by Lowell Industries, the accounting needs of the church will be satisfied. This software will be purchased at the end of February 2001.

## **March 2001**

The effective continuance of previously mentioned initiatives will be especially critical during this month. This month will see an increase in emphasis on prayer and fasting. Each Home Team will continue training on the importance of prayer and stress it as one of the biblical purposes of the church. Once a week the church planting team will huddle with Team leaders and apprentices collectively as the leadership and pray for God’s blessing upon these efforts.

During this month, formal advertisements will be sent out to the community. This will include letters from the senior pastor to the community, and commercials on the two

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most popular secular radio stations. Increased efforts to reach out to the community will also take place. These efforts will be centered upon the “showing Christ’s love in a tangible way” methodology. These efforts will be conducted in conjunction with an ongoing effort to create a “positive” presence within the community.

At the end of this month, the mass mailers (50,000+) will be sent out to the community. The church will also rent two billboards in the community for advertisement purposes. On the Wednesday before the first worship service, the church will take out a medium sized advertisement in The Denver Post and The Rocky Mountain News announcing the “Grand Opening” of the church.

During this time, training will be received in those areas specific to Sunday morning services and pertinent follow-up activities. Among these include greeters and host/hostess training, CARE callers, the children’s ministry, and nursery medical training. Leaders within the core group will provide the day to day oversight in these areas. This emphasis reiterates the GFCC commitment to every member being a minister. The church planting team will serve as the “ad-ministers” or Teaching Pastors for the church.

## **15 April 2001: First Worship Service**

The first worship service will represent the culmination of core group growth, numerous advertisements, and the community-wide mailers. On Easter Sunday 2001, Grace Fellowship Community Church will formally come into existence. Before this service, there will be a weekend prayer retreat and a dress rehearsal service (Palm Sunday). Based upon projected core group size coupled with the marketing strategy, we anticipate over three hundred guests at the first worship service (this includes members of the core group).

The opening service will be an exercise in excellence. It will consist of contemporary worship songs, drama, innovative video and graphic arts usage, and biblical, relevant preaching. We will go overboard in dispelling unchurched opinions about church and Christianity in general. We will specifically concentrate on the areas of cleanliness, childcare, and service flow. We will appropriately model our value to be culturally relevant while remaining doctrinally pure. In addition, the attention paid to the greeters and host/hostess ministries should prove pivotal in putting the guests at ease.

All greeters and childcare workers will wear professional looking name tags with the church logo embossed on them and long sleeved dress shirts made with the church logo on them. Every attendee will be asked to fill out the church

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registration/information insert form so that the prospect list can be appropriately updated.

## **April – August 2001**

Effective follow-up after the first service will be priority one. This will be accomplished via letters from the senior pastor enclosed in a professional looking sports water bottle with the church logo and information on it. In addition, Home Team leaders (according to geographic area) and CARE callers will make follow up calls to the prospects and gather up prayer concerns.

During this time, we will also seek to formalize the prayer ministry and intercessory team within the context of the local body. Again, this is necessary to convey the importance of prayer in every aspect of our lives. This process will be completed and the ministry will be operational by the end of May 2001.

We anticipate starting at least eight new Home Teams during this period. This will include seeker Home Teams, Fellowship Home Teams and Service-oriented Home Teams. We will not advocate a “one size fits all” mentality as it pertains to Home Teams. The immediate goal will be to have these new Home Teams up and running within eight weeks of the opening service.

Directly related to the start up of new Home Teams, will be the recruitment and training of Recovery Team leaders. We want four Recovery Teams ready for the Fall season and teaching series.

In addition to the assimilation activities mentioned above, the New Believers’ ministry will be started. This ministry will be aimed at fostering relationships and accountability while providing critical support for new Christians. The 1-to-1 Mentoring/Discipleship program, appropriate Bible studies, and an introduction to “shallow ministries” (greeters, folding weekly programs, set-up and tear down, etc.) will fall under this dynamic ministry.

During this time, Grace Fellowship Chat (GFC) will be introduced to the church community. This will provide an opportunity for people who are new to the church to get to know the senior pastor and staff better and forge relationships. This will be accomplished in an informal setting and will serve as “familiarization” for the newest additions to Grace. These socials will begin in the latter part of May 2001.

The church will continue its advertising efforts by putting together another mailer for the summer time frame. This mailer will announce the Mother’s Day (May 13<sup>th</sup>) and Father’s Day (June 15<sup>th</sup>) series and special guests. It is important to build up

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momentum going into the summer months as it traditionally brings with it a significant decrease in attendance. Possible special guests include personal friends (Fisher DeBerry - Head coach Air Force Football team in Colorado Springs or one of several close associates who are members of the Denver Bronco football team). During the month of August 2001, the church will also hold a church-wide fellowship for church attendees, their families and friends.

During the summer period, the church will seek to help sponsor (contribute enough funds to have church name and logo represented on all event advertising) one of the popular community events such as the Rocky Mountain three-on-three tournament, community running events, or another community opportunity. We feel this is a valuable opportunity for increased community presence that is often times overlooked.

The church will also have a Summer Spectacular (VBS) at the end of the month of July 2001. This weeklong event will utilize the *Son Castle* theme approach. The week will conclude with a "Summer Spectacular Bash" for all of the kids, their parents, and friends. The church will begin promotion of the Summer Spectacular on Mother's Day.

Evangelistic outreach will continue to be a priority and will primarily be accomplished through the Home Teams. This will focus the evangelistic efforts during the summer months and provide for more concentrated effectiveness than what could be accomplished with high visibility church-wide events during this travel intensive period.

Lastly, the Membership Class (following PDC as *baseline* model) will be implemented. This class will represent the next legitimate step for New Christians after they have been in the New Believer's class, 1-to-1 ministry, and/or Seeker Home Teams. In this class we will go over the salvation plan, the vision, mission, and beliefs of the church. We will discuss the organization and polity of the church, and we will discuss opportunities for involvement within the local body of Christ. At the conclusion of the class, the attendees will be given the opportunity to accept Christ, sign up for baptism, or sign the membership covenant and become a member of the church. This class will be implemented as soon as possible in the weeks following the first public service.

## **September – December 2001**

GFCC will concentrate on maximizing the Fall growth potential by holding at least two major events during the Fall season. The Fall Festival will be planned around "Friend's Day" at the church. It will include games and prizes for the kids (including an inflatable castle), a Fall concert by a professional musician or group, and plenty of desserts and Starbucks coffee. GFCC will also host a "Halloween alternative" event

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for the entire family. Things such as hay rides, a bonfire, a barn dance, and a dinner will be provided. Again, these activities will be used to introduce the community to the church, show them the excellence by which the church operates, and build necessary momentum going into the Christmas community services. Consistent with the church's commitment to excellence, the leadership will continue to evaluate all areas of ministry. There will be no sacred cows. We will continue to seek out innovative ways to facilitate life change through the power of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

During this time we will begin offering our Maturity class (utilize PDC model as *baseline*). This class will discuss stewardship, Bible study, scripture memorization, prayer, and quiet times. At the end of this class, church members will have an opportunity to sign the maturity covenant and commit to spiritual maturity. The goal is to have this class in place by the end of September 2001. In addition, the Life Development Process within the church will become more formalized. Specialized classes on prayer, tithing, faith, and others will be offered periodically. In-depth Bible studies will be offered during this time frame on a quarterly basis. Each study will last from five to seven weeks. These efforts will be completed in November of 2001.

## **January – April 2002**

The continuance of all previously mentioned initiatives is assumed.

The leaders and resources necessary to support the Life Development Process will be put in place during this time frame. A vast portion of these resources will be focused on the development of a more effective and efficient Home Team structure, the implementation of church wide classes on Ministry discovery (Ministry class), and relationship evangelism (Mission class – Contagious Christianity).

Grace Leadership Advancement and Support Seminars (G.L.A.S.S.) will become monthly events beginning in November of 2001. These seminars will be mandatory for all core leaders within the church. These meetings will represent a time for rejuvenation, vision casting, celebration of new ministries, and encouragement for the “heartbeat” of GFCC.

GFCC will begin another rigorous advertisement campaign during these months. We will advertise our 1<sup>st</sup> Anniversary services and any upcoming special events. These efforts will include direct mailers, invitation cards for members to pass out, radio spots, and a local TV commercial.

The church will form research groups to aid in the continuance of excellence and innovation in ministry. They will be responsible for performing various trend analyses

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on the community and general environments. They will be the “keepers of the pulse” for GFCC and influencing agents. Within these groups will also come creative ideas for sermon series, illustrations, and current event applications. These support groups will be in place by the end of April 2002.

It is by God’s grace that this plan has been put to paper. For His glory do we commit ourselves to this endeavor holding tightly to His promise that reads: “Upon this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell will not prevail against it” (Matt. 16:18).