

Grandview Church

Grandview Heights, OH

The following is a strategic plan for a new church in the Grandview Heights area. Grandview Heights is located just outside downtown Columbus, OH. This plan is not exhaustive, but does provide a great deal of information and strategy designed to meet the needs of the people in the community. This plan is designed to assist future endeavors in the target area.

PRE-LAUNCH

Family Preparation

Before the task of starting a new church can even begin, it is important for the church planter and his family to prepare themselves for the journey. This process should begin at least 6 months to 1 year before arrival on the field is planned. The first step in family preparation is to seek God's calling and direction as a family through prayer. It is important that the planter shares the vision that God has given him for a particular community with his wife and family. Spousal cooperation and support can be a great help, or can be a tremendous hindrance to the planting effort. The more a couple prays together about the vision, the more they will experience together what God is calling them to do. The second step in preparing one's family for starting the new church is training. It is important that the planter's wife has available to her as much information as possible about what church planting is and how church planting is done. Therefore, the planter should seek to involve her in as much training as possible. By having her attend conferences and classes along side of him and giving her church planting material to read, she will be better prepared for the tough journey that lies ahead.

Selecting the Churches Name

The name "Grandview Church" was selected for several reasons. First of all, by using the name of the area in the church name, it ties the name of the new church with the specific area it is designed to reach. "Baptist" was left out of the name for the sake of not placing any barriers to those who wouldn't even try a Baptist church. "Community" was also left out because of the connections this name has with a gay church in the Columbus area. The name "Grandview Church" is simple and easy for people to remember.

Understanding the Community

Located just outside of the city of Columbus, OH, Grandview Heights offers a small town feel with access to the big city. As one drives down the streets of Grandview Heights, one will not see large buildings or grand shopping areas. Rather, the community is lined with small businesses, coffee shops, and unique diners/bars. After surveying the target area and studying demographic information about the community, the following is

a summary of the community of Grandview Heights and the impact of this information on the planting of Grandview Church.

Overall Population and Number of Households

Data Summary: The population of Grandview Heights has actually decreased between 1995 and 2000. 2005 projections show that the population will not change much either over the next 5 years. These numbers put Grandview Heights well below the national average for projected growth. However, these numbers can be very misleading because they don't take into account the large number of mobile adults that come in and out of the Grandview Heights area. On the other hand, the number of households in the area has shown a slight increase and is projected to continue this trend over the next 5 years.

Planting Impact: At first glance, the lack of growth may indicate that there is no need for a new church in the Grandview Heights area. However, there are many other factors that must be weighed in order to decide on such an issue. As you will see in later sections, the large transient population along with the lack of churches in the area does indicate the need for a new, vibrant church plant.

Average Household Size

Data Summary: The average household size of the community in the year 2000 was 1.88. This number is expected to change very little by the year 2005. This number puts Grandview Heights below the national average for household size.

Planting Impact: This lower household size would indicate the large number of young couples in the area with no children. These are professional, young adults with different needs than parents with children. Any new church in this area will have to address the needs of this young community.

Race and Ethnicity

Data Summary: Nearly 95% of the target area is comprised of white residents. NO significant change is expected over the next 5 years.

Planting Impact: While any Biblical church should be open to the mixing of races within the church, Grandview Church will be a church that targets

the largest group of people in the community, white residents. This is important because of the vast cultural differences that exist between races and the impact that will have on who attends Grandview Church.

Population By Age

Data Summary: 68.5% of the population of Grandview Heights is comprised of individuals between the ages of 0-44 years old. The largest percentage of adults is those between the ages of 25-34 (22.4 %).

Planting Impact: As already seen before, these numbers show even more how young this community is and the need to target a new church towards the needs of this younger generation.

Household Income

Data Summary: The average household income for the target area in the year 2000 was \$48,844. It is expected that this number will grow to \$55,704 by the year 2005. However, this is lower than the expected national increase in average income.

Planting Impact: Again, the numbers themselves can tend to be misleading when dealing with averages in this community. While \$48,844 may not seem like a lot of money for a single household, when you consider that many of these households are made up of young adults with no kids, this number looks much bigger. These young adults with no children are doing fairly well at this stage in their lives. While this probably eliminates the situation that these families are struggling financially, it presents other challenges to the church in particular to teach these young adults financial management skills.

ACORN People Types

Young Mobile Adults (47.9% of population)

47.9 percent are Twentysomethings

Upscale Households (19.8% of population)

19.8 percent are Urban Professional Couples

City Dwellers (12.6 percent of population)

12.6 percent are Newly Formed Households

Data Summary: The target area is saturated with young, professional couples who are doing very well financially. Also, it is important to make note of the large number of Young Mobile Adults. This group most likely is making it big in the business world, which will most likely lead to transfers and new job opportunities in other parts of the world. This group will have a significant impact on the new church.

Planting Impact: While it is obvious that the new church should target this young, professional population, it must be noted that the mobility of this population will present challenges to sustaining a steady church membership. This also places added significance to discipling young Christians in a timely manner so that if they move, they are stable enough to make the switch to a new church in whatever community they are moving to.

Other Churches in the Area

Data Summary: There are no Southern Baptist Churches in the target area at present time. Also, of the existing churches, there are none considered to be Evangelical in nature.

Planting Impact: This information might be the most compelling argument for starting a new church in the Grandview Heights area. Even while the population is not changing very much, there is no evangelical presence in the existing community. Grandview Church will strive to fill that gap and reach a community that has never been reached.

Grandview “Gary” and “Grace”

With this demographical information in mind, the following is a picture of the “typical” resident couple of Grandview Heights.

Age: Gary and Grace are 27 and 25 respectively. They are very successful and have a grip on life. However, with the birth of their first child, they have to adjust to life with someone else to care for.

Family: Gary and Grace have one, young child. Gary and Grace have most likely move to the area to pursue career opportunities, so it is likely that they have no extended family in the immediate area.

Occupation: It is most likely that Gary and Grace both hold “white collar” jobs. Most of their friends work in executive, management, sales, and specialty positions. Unlike some women, Grace is a professional woman who would rather continue working than be a stay at home mom with their first child.

Education: There is no doubt that Gary and Grace have both completed their college education. At this time, Gary may even be considering going on to pursue his Master’s Degree.

Income: Gary and Grace have a combined income of \$60,000 per year. Life as a young couple without children has led to car payments, as well as other debt. Gary and Grace are now beginning to see that life is a little more difficult with children.

Hobbies: Gary and Grace are very committed to being as successful as possible in their careers. Because of this, they don’t spend a lot of time “playing” around. Gary and Grace do find time to work out and stay in shape. They also enjoy hanging out with other young couples occasionally.

Defining Our Purpose

Grandview Church exists to present **CHRIST** in such a way that lives are transformed, community is strengthened, and God is honored.

Transformed Lives: Evangelism
Discipleship
Missions

Community Strengthened: Fellowship

God Honored: Worship
Prayer

Defining Our Values

At Grandview Church, we value:

Commitment: First and foremost, we value commitment to Jesus Christ. Second, we value commitment to one another as members of the body of Christ. Third, we value commitment to Grandview Church expressed through our participation, financial support, and living out the purposes of Grandview. We believe that Grandview Church is something worth being committed to.

Humans: At Grandview Church, EVERY person, no matter what race, ethnic group, gender, or lifestyle is valued as a creation of God and welcomed into the fellowship of Grandview Church.

Relationships: At Grandview Church, recognizing the need for all persons to have a relationship with Jesus Christ, we value that relationship more than all others. Behind that, we value relationships among families, among friends, and among the world we live in.

Impact: The sole purpose for the existence of Grandview Church is to have an impact on individuals, our community, and ultimately the world we live in.

Scripture: At Grandview Church, we believe that the Bible is the innerant, infallible word of God, which is our final authority on all matters of life.

Transparency: Recognizing that Christians face the same struggles as non-Christians and living in a world that is looking for something “real”, Grandview Church will be a church that strives to be “real” and transparent to the world around us.

Partnership Preparation

It is important to have the proper support from other churches and individuals in order to be successful on the church planting field. Church planting is not an endeavor to attempt on one’s own. In order to obtain support through partnerships, several efforts will be made. First, a letter and brochure telling about the new work will be sent to all of the churches in the local Columbus area. Also, the planter will mail brochures and letters to all of his personal contacts throughout the world or country. The goal of this brochure and letter will be three-fold:

1. To enlist financial supporters for the new work. Church planting can be very expensive and taxing on the family of the planter. One of the last things that a planter should have to worry about is simply providing for his family as he tries to plant a new church. Also, start up funds for the new church can be very high. Financial support from other churches and organizations is a must for any church planter. The brochure will give people an opportunity to commit to financial support for the new work.
2. To enlist mission teams for the new work. As will be seen throughout this strategy, there will be times when mission teams will have to be employed in order to do the things necessary for the new work to succeed. The brochure will ask for churches who may not be able to commit financially to commit to the new work by providing help for such projects. Obviously, churches who can support in both ways are a plus.

3. Finally, and most importantly, the brochure is designed to enlist prayer partners for the new work. Prayer is a must for the success of the new church. There will be those who cannot commit financially or who cannot help physically with the new church, but they can pray daily for the new work.

The goal of these efforts is to have as much support as possible for the new work from all over the country. However, it is important that proper guidelines be laid out for the commitment that people are making. With those who are supporting financially, it is important to set parameters as to how long one is committing for and for how much. It is a good idea to sign a partnership covenant that will lay out these guidelines so that both parties understand what is expected. Along with this support comes the responsibility on the part of the planter to be accountable and keep people up to date with the progress and work in the new church. This can be accomplished through a monthly partnership newsletter to all those who provide support for the new church.

Building a Core

The task of building a core group should begin within one month of arriving in the target community. The strategy will be as follows:

First, we will seek to develop two Bible studies in two strategic locations in the community. These two Bible studies will be led by the planter and his associate (those involved in this strategy plan are firm believers in team ministry, so assume a team of at least two). Ideally, these Bible studies would be conducted in the homes of the church planters who live within the community. By developing relationships with neighbors and local residents, the planters can begin a Bible study in their home. This first set of Bible studies will be a seeker Bible study that introduces non-Christians to the truths of Christ. These studies should be a defined number of weeks which the group commits to finishing. Hopefully, during this study, decisions will have been made for Jesus Christ. At a minimum, it is hoped that those who have attended would at least be more open to the claims of Christianity than they were when the study began. The very last session of these Bible studies will be time for the planters to discuss the plans and vision of the new church. The participants will be asked to join in the effort to plant the new church. Those interested will be the first of the newly formed core group. However, those who may be unsure will be invited to continue the next Bible study that will continue in the community.

At this point, there will need to be time of core development aside from the weekly community Bible studies. The Bible studies will continue to be a funnel for people into the core group. However, a separate time with the core group will be desirable to be more specific about church plans and vision casting. All the while, community Bible studies will continue and seek to multiply in the community as groups grow and as leaders are trained to lead these new groups.

LAUNCH

Securing a Location (3-4 months before launch)

One of the first steps in preparing to launch the new church is to find a location that will be conducive to the activities of the new church. After surveying the community, there are several possible locations that could be used in the heart of “downtown” Grandview. The most desirable location would be a local movie theater located on the main strip of Grandview Heights. The theater would eliminate the need for seating as well as provide a very visible location for the new church. The second choice, a local dance studio, is located on this same road in the heart of Grandview. Again, the visibility of the new church would be a huge plus since it is in a busy area of town and located on the main road. However, it would require much more work to transform this studio into a proper meeting location. Both of these locations would provide a relaxed atmosphere that would match the “coffee house” mentality of the local people.

Publicizing the Launch

There are several factors that will determine the media strategy of the new church. First, is the size of the community. Demographics show that there are only 9,552 housing units in the target area. Second, the people of Grandview are drawn more to personal contact (As seen through community surveys as well as understanding the generation that is being targeted). With this in mind, the following is an overview of the strategy that will be used to publicize the new church.

Rather than use direct mail or phone campaigns, the strategy for Grandview Church will be more personal. Eight weeks before the first service, we will seek to knock on the doors of every home in the target community. This will be done by gathering mission teams from local and out of town churches to assist in this project. The goal of this contact will be to simply find if there is any interest in getting more information about the new church. This visit will simply consist of gathering names that may be interested in more information and leaving a brochure that tells about the new church. After gathering the names of those who showed an interest, a letter will then be sent to all the homes of those on the list. This letter, from the pastor, will be hand addressed and will share the vision of the new church in more detail. This letter will also include the dates of the upcoming launch service. Finally, this list will be used to send out personal, hand addressed invitations to the first service one week before the launch. There are several advantages to this strategy. First, it is personal. Second, it eliminates unnecessary work and money in mailing large mailings to people who may have no interest or who may already be involved in another church. By coming up with a smaller list of interested individuals, the possibilities for hand addressed mail and personal contacts are made much easier.

The Service

The launch service of Grandview Church will be very much like the typical future services of Grandview. Another words, rather than try and do something on launch day that can not be maintained week to week, we will use whatever resources we have available and build from there. Rather than bring in temporary musicians or special guest, the launch service will attempt to give visitors a realistic idea of what the new church will be like. This approach will ring well with the mentality of the target community.

The worship of Grandview Church will be a mixture of traditional hymns with contemporary praise and worship. The contemporary worship will be like that of the Vineyard nature. Contemporary examples of the music that would be used would include Third Day, Passion, and Revival Generation. This music resonates well with the target community in that it comes across as being much more authentic. The worship will be a mix of upbeat praise and contemplative worship. The sermons preached at Grandview Church will be expository messages seeking to answer the every day needs of the community. While the worship service of Grandview will be seeker sensitive, it will also sincerely seek to proclaim the truth of the gospel and all that God's word has to say. Recognizing that not all of the gospel can be made "seeker sensitive", it is left to God to transform the hearts of those who are lost and may be visiting the new church.

POST -LAUNCH

Following up with Visitors

Because Grandview Church focuses on relationships, there will be a systematic approach to following up with those who visit our worship services and other events. The first step in follow-up is more of putting information into the hands of those that visit. As visitors enter our worship service, trained greeters will welcome them and direct them to our information table. Our information table will make available to those interested material on our core values, small group bible studies, and other ministries. In addition, we will gather information about the visitors, which can be done at the information table or during the worship service in the offering.

Once pertinent information is gathered from those that visit the second step of follow-up occurs. On Monday evening, we will gather a group of core members together and call everyone who attended.

During that call, several things will take place:

- we will thank them for visiting
- we will ask if they received information on the church and if they have any questions
- we will ask them if there is anything that our church could pray for
- we will make sure that the visitors get the name of the core group member making the call

All the information that is gathered will be recorded for further follow up from the core group member and the potential small group leader. After the Monday evening call the core group leader will write a handwritten follow-up letter that should be mailed on Tuesday or Wednesday. In the letter, the core group member should state that they look forward to seeing them on Sunday and that they would be glad to meet them in the reception area before service for refreshments. On Sunday when the visitors show up and meet the core group member one of the major tasks will be to introduce the visitors to their potential small group leader. At this time the small group leader will continue with follow up and begin to invite them to their small group. In addition, all of the information that was recorded during the initial phone call and any other information are also passed on to the small group leader. It will be the responsibility of the small group leader to make a visit to home and develop a relationship with the visitors.

This approach to follow up is very involved and requires that we train those that follow up with our visitors. The system will also have to be monitored by a ministry leader. Hopefully, this system will show to both our core group and our visitors that Grandview is focused on building relationships with the unchurched so that their lives can be transformed by Jesus Christ.

Assimilation at Grandview (Discipleship Classes)

The following diagrams represent the assimilation process at Grandview Church. This assimilation process seeks to develop unchurched people from the community into mature Christians who become part of the core (figure 1). This is done by following the process that is represented by the heart and the cross (figure 2).

Crowd to Congregation

The crowd represents those who have come to the new church and are regular attendees. Being part of the crowd does not mean that a person is a Christian nor does it mean that they are members of Grandview Church. Therefore, the first step will be to present Christ to the unbeliever so that their life can be transformed as they put their faith in Jesus Christ. Another part of this first step is to prepare the crowd for membership into Grandview Church. Our membership class does this. In our membership class, individuals will gain an understanding of:

- What it means to be a Christian
- The purposes and vision of Grandview Church
- The advantages of being a member at Grandview Church
- The responsibilities of being a member at Grandview Church

After completing this class, interested participants can sign up for a membership interview with a person on the leadership team. More about this interview is discussed in the section on membership.

Congregation to Committed

The next step in assimilation is to take the members in the congregation and begin to develop them into mature Christians. This course is only the beginning place for discipleship. At Grandview, we believe discipleship is a lifelong endeavor. Therefore, our discipleship class will teach a Christian:

- The importance of prayer
- The importance of a daily quiet time
- The importance of scripture memory
- The importance of supporting the church financially

Remember, this course is only a beginning place for discipleship. Once a member completes this class, they will not be fully mature Christians. However, they will have in their hands tools that will help them in that endeavor.

Committed to Core

The final step in this assimilation process is to help maturing Christians find a place of ministry that fits with their SHAPE. In our Missions class, growing members will find out how God has made each of them unique. They will also find out how they have been

equipped for some type of ministry. During the class, we will seek for every participant to discover five things about themselves. These five things make up the acronym SHAPE.

Spiritual Gifts

Heart

Abilities

Personality

Experiences

After completing this class, participants will be able to sign up for ministry interviews with ministry leaders or they can work at developing a ministry that fits their shape and serves the community. At Grandview we do not want to fill positions with “warm bodies.” Rather, we want people to live out God’s call in their life through the ministry of Grandview Church.

Membership at Grandview

At Grandview Church, we seek to have a membership that is committed in both words and actions to the vision and purpose of the church. This can only be done by having high expectations and accountability. In the appendix of this paper you can find our membership covenant and other information on church membership that would be put into our articles of faith.

At the beginning of our assimilation process, we want to set a firm foundation for further steps and a healthy church body. To help ensure that this happens the process will require that each person who wishes to be considered for membership take the membership class and be willing to sign our membership covenant. However, this alone does not qualify a person for membership. After completing the class, each person can schedule a “chat session” with one of the pastors. In this chat session, the pastor will interview each candidate for evidence of personal faith in Christ, a public profession of faith through baptism, and an understanding of the purpose and vision of Grandview Church. This is done for a couple of reasons. First, we do not want just attendance; we want understanding and a commitment. It is easy to just attend a class. Second, it gives people a chance to meet with a pastor one on one. This will allow every member to see and hear the heart of the leadership in an intimate setting. Once a person finishes with the chat session, they can then sign the membership covenant and become full members of Grandview Church.

Closing Remarks

The key to the success of Grandview Church will be to make this church as personal and relational as possible. As you can tell, our entire strategy centers around these concepts. Grandview Church is not a church to be planted with large numbers in mind. There are single churches in North America that have membership roles as large as the entire

population of Grandview Heights. The strategy for this new church will be to work within the local community, expanding our borders as we are able to do so. Our desire is to spread the gospel of Jesus Christ all over Grandview, Columbus, the state of Ohio, and the world.