

Strategy Plan for Rutledge, Tennessee - Heartland Baptist Church

Community History and Character

Upon crossing the any county line into Grainger County, you are taking a step back in time about 200 years. First settled in 1785, Grainger County came into existence in 1792, basically at the same time the State of Tennessee came into existence. Grainger County was the second county established in the state, and at one time took up one fourth of the land in east Tennessee. It has served as a major trade route and still a major intersection for many headed from North to South or East to West and back again. The town has stayed basically the same with the addition of Hardee's, Subway, Dollar General, a Ford and a Chevy dealership, one intersection with traffic lights, and a handful of other new establishments typical to a small town. It is surprising to find us on the map considering there is not a Walmart in the previous list. Civil War battles have been fought on it's rich farmland and many structures from it's past are major landmarks today. Grainger County has a great claim to fame in America and that is Tomatoes. Grainger County tomatoes are the pride and joy of this farming community. There are more greenhouses holding tomatoes in Grainger County than in any other place in the world. This is why the Grainger County Tomato Festival is so well attended and made popular by the "Tomato Wars" fought on the school grounds each year. Much of the population are farmers, factory workers, or work in the hub of all activity.....the school system. Citizens here are proud of the rich, acidic soil that makes a good tomato and many make their living from. People here are patriotic and still understand what "hometown proud" means. This also brings many people to the area who feel secure in open country. They have a sense of the air being cleaner, the water purer, the grass is greener, the mountains are taller, and people wave to anybody passing by. This is what some would consider the picture of the heart of America. This feeling and image is what the name "Heartland Baptist Church" relays.

The local church has been here as long as any other part of the community with a deep root in Baptist tradition and beliefs. The first recorded church was a baptist church and was established in 1788 and still remains today as orginally named Mouth of Richland (Creek) Baptist Church. There is almost a church on every corner, and in every valley, and on top of every hillside. The problem is that there has been little to no change in these churches since 1796. People here don't have a negative image of the baptist church. They simply have a negative perception of the people, politics, and organization of the baptist church. That can be changed by a "real church for real people". Not just a club with low expectations of it's members, but a church of the body of Christ that holds one another accountable and goes the extra mile to help a neighbor.

The focus of our work rests on the heart of Grainger County known as Rutledge, which rests in the 37861 area code. Out of the 23,000 current residents in Grainger County over 7000 of those reside in Rutledge. From 1990-1999 the population rose 18.3%, whereas the population growth for the state in that same period was 12.4%. People are moving in from Kentucky and other states looking to live in small town

America and work in big city jobs found in Knoxville, Greenville, and the tri-city area of Kingsport. Knox County and Sevier County are spilling over into the lake areas of Rutledge. There are also many Hispanic people settling in this town. Not just coming in and working seasonally, but staying through the winter months and living here permanently. This has created some struggle in Rutledge where acceptance of others beyond racial barriers is very rare. There are strong socio-economic barriers as well, from both ends of the scale.

The ultimate question is "are these people being reached by the local church"? The answer is sadly "not really". Some area churches have programs like Upward Basketball, Judgement House, and other outreach events. However, very few are being added to the church and most churches in the area have not seen any growth. Boasting membership in the Baptist Association alone of 7,999 for the year, which composes and estimated 75% of the church attenders in Grainger County, only an average 2,948 worship attendance for these churches has been reported. With 23,000 citizens only an estimated 4,000 attend church among any and all churches in Grainger County. That leaves 19,000 people at home sleeping. A lot of low expectation churches will not reach these people. We believe we can reach them through a relaxed "come as you are" atmosphere, music which they relate to, meaningful relationships, accountability, messages which relay truth and relevance while combining new ways with small town, historic feeling. In any parade in Grainger County there are more horses than cars or floats or anything else. Imagine pulling up to Heartland Baptist Church and seeing a long open shed containing hay and having a rail in front of it with several horses tied up and being tended to by a couple of church members. Many coming to church in their cars and trucks, but also on horseback and by horsedrawn carriage giving new life to old ways. This would be one of several unique twists given to the church to make people feel comfortable and yet excited about coming to Heartland Baptist Church.

What will also help Heartland reach far into the community is the willingness of these people to travel long distances to get somewhere. In the big city people are close to stores and friends and will not drive across town 15 minutes or more to get to anything unless it is necessary. In Grainger County people live here because they like being "away" from everything. They are accustomed to driving 15 minutes minimum to get anywhere and for most just getting to work or school or a mall takes 30 minutes to an hour. It would be expected for people from Blaine and Bean Station to attend Heartland as they do other churches here in Rutledge, even though though they would initially not be a target area.

Survey

On April 8, 2001 a survey was conducted in Rutledge by the Church Planting Team. The team was divided into three groups to more effectively cover the entire area. While surveying Rutledge they interviewed people from various backgrounds. This area has a strong family atmosphere. Many of the families interviewed had young children.

Some of the questions used in the survey were:

- *How often do you attend church?
- *What ways do you believe the churches can help this area?
- *If you were looking for a church, what would you look for?
- *What do you think is the biggest reason people don't attend church?
- *What radio station do you listen to?

The first group; Rick and Bruce, surveyed one of the central areas of Rutledge known as Central Point. Many Hispanic families were discovered in this area but communication was poor and not very effective for the survey. This group found that most of those surveyed attended Central Pointe Baptist Church. While a few of those surveyed attended churches of various other denominations or they did not attend church at all. The second group which consisted of Kevin and Dan surveyed the South Rutledge area, which also contained the lake area. This group found similar responses. A large portion of this area attended New Blackwell Baptist Church. With some attending churches of various denominations or not at all. The third group had one member and that was Marty. Marty surveyed the the actual city limits of Rutledge and focused on mobile home parks and small houses. Here many lost people were discovered and many did not attend church at all. They did not like the existing churches due to a contradiction in lifestyle to what these churches claimed to be. Many comments were made about the "arguing and fighting" among the people of the church. Some statements were made about the lack of acceptance because they didn't look like the church people. When it comes to music, the overwhelming response was country and easy listening/light rock. Two specific radio stations were mentioned many times.

Most of the people felt that the churches could help the community financially and through marriage counseling. Some of those interviewed felt the reasons people did not attend a church regularly was because of hypocritical attitudes. When asked what kind of church they would look for the majority of those interviewed wanted a traditional worship service in their church.

The collective findings of this team are that there is already several strong Southern Baptist Churches in the area with well established (but unstable) youth programs for the children. There are several problems with this survey. One is the idea of traditional versus contemporary. Your typical Grainger County resident has no idea what "contemporary" means and anything that is not understood is rejected. Just asking, "would you prefer traditional or contemporary worship style?" without explaining the difference will get you a traditional answer every time. Most people here have never seen anything other than what every traditional baptist church in Grainger County does.

Strategy Plan

April, 2001-Sept, 2001

Marty Shelton will begin sharing the vision of a new church with area pastors and the Director of Missions in search of a sponsoring church. After a local church has committed itself to be the sponsoring church, Marty along with the sponsoring church will begin to raise financial support. In order to raise financial support the church plant team will compile a list of friend and neighbors to receive a letter enlisting support. The sponsoring church will plan a "Live the Dream" Banquet to raise support from individuals from within the sponsoring church.

The church plant team will enlist a prayer team that will commit to pray for the new work for the first year.

The church plant will take care of administrative duties during this time such as acquiring the church EIN number, tax exemption certificate, bulk rate permit, and other items needed to begin the church.

October, 2001-Sept, 2001

The church plant team will develop a letter which clearly outlines the vision of the new church. Included in the letter will be a postage paid response card, inviting people to respond for information about a meeting for people interested in a new church. The response cards which are received will form the basis for a prospect file. The church plant team will begin follow-up by sending a letter (see appendix) with the date, time, and location of the meeting.

The informational meeting will be well planned so that the first impression of those who come will be that this will be a very well organized, "well done" church. During this meeting, the church planting team will present the vision of the church. Because the goal of this meeting is to recruit devoted core group members, high expectation will be clearly communicated.

From this meeting, people will be led to join a cultivative Bible Study. Those new members will be encourage to invite all of their friends and neighbors to attend this Bible study. The church plant team will lead the Bible studies in the beginning. Immediately, however, they will be looking for natural leaders in the group who could be apprentices and eventually lead a small group.

The launch of the first service would take place in the fall of 2002. Service facilities would be acquired at Rutledge Middle School. The possibility of renting our own facility and eventually buying is available in the heart of the Rutledge city limits. Over 3 1/2 acres and a 6500 Sqft building are presently vacant and have been for over 5 years.

Our Vision

Heartland Baptist Church will be a people who continually seek to build new relationships with lost people in the community in order to share the gospel of Jesus Christ. Wherever there are lost people in our community we will seek to send Church members as missionaries.

We will not be confined to any particular building or location in the community, but will be willing to meet anywhere needed in order to reach more people for the Kingdom of God. Our services will be warm, friendly, and inviting places where lost people will feel comfortable coming and hearing the message of hope found only in Jesus Christ

We will be in the world, but not of the world. Members who profess to have been radically changed by a spiritual rebirth will be expected to live a changed life. Our lifestyles characterized by morality and love, will testify to the truth of our message.
Our Core Values

Evangelism: Jesus died for all sinners. Therefore, we must passionately seek to reach every single lost person. No one is insignificant.

Servanthood: All believers have been supernaturally gifted to perform at least one particular type of service in the body of Christ. Therefore, every member must actively pursue the mission of the church.

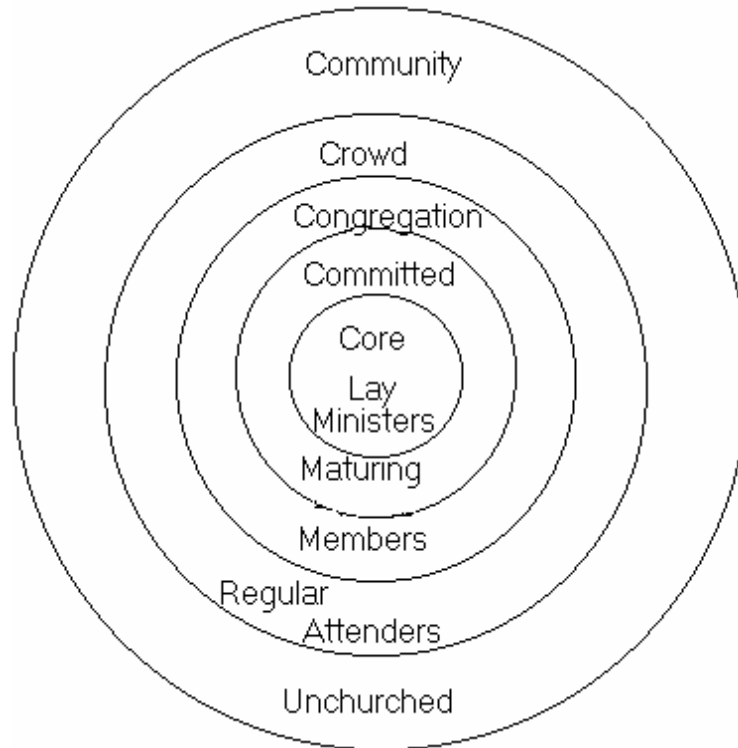
Discipleship: As believers we must nurture other believers, especially new converts in order to help them grow in the faith and not be tempted to revert back to their former way of living.

Worship: Worship should exalt Jesus Christ. At the same time it must be sensitive to unbelievers which are present. The method and style of worship should be relevant to the culture in which the church ministers.

Fellowship: All believers need fellowship with one another in order to maintain a strong Christian walk.

Missions: We are committed to missions at home and abroad through prayer, financial support, and personal involvement. We are also committed to planting new churches.

5 Levels of Commitment



The goal of Heartland Baptist Church is to bring people from the outer level of being a part of the community to the inner level of being a part of the core of the church, ministering to others.

We plan to accomplish this with the HEART of Christ through the great commission from where our purpose statement is created:

Heartland Baptist Church exists to:

- Honor God through worship**
- Engage God and one another through fellowship**
- Amplify spiritual gifts through ministry**
- Reach others through evangelism**
- Teach believers through discipleship**



PRAYER is the foundation empowering these four points. The cross is the central focus of our strategy because without the cross there would be nothing. There would not be WORSHIP, MEMBERSHIP, MATURITY, MINISTRY, or MISSIONS. The cross validates and gives meaning to our Vision Development Strategy. This system of balance connects to the cross and gives clear emphasis to each area.

Evangelism

We are committed to sharing the gospel of Jesus Christ with the community by whatever means we have available.

Personal Witnessing

We will create opportunities to share one on one about the gospel by initiating new relationships with lost people, visiting homes, and attending events in the community where lost people are.

Public Services and Events

We will conduct services and events which clearly present the gospel message in terms which the unchurched can understand and which will offer an opportunity for the unchurched to respond.

Lifestyle

We will live our lives in a manner worthy of the calling we have received. So that everywhere we go and everywhere we live, we will spread the light of Jesus Christ to those around us.

Media & Technology

We will utilize newspaper ads, radio spots, web pages, and any other means of media or technology to spread the message of the gospel to unbelievers.

Worship

Worship is essential for the spiritual growth of believers. However, it can also be a tool to introduce the lost to Christ.

Celebration of Jesus

Worship services should exalt our Savior Jesus Christ. The worship service is a time to celebrate who He is and what He has done for us.

Seeker Sensitive Services

We will conduct services weekly which are designed for people to bring their lost friends to. During these services we will strive to provide a warm, friendly atmosphere in which unchurched people will feel welcome.

Contemporary Music

We will sing lyrics which glorify the Savior and communicate the gospel. These lyrics will be set to tunes, rhythms, and styles familiar and enjoyable to the unchurched in our community. The two radio stations that were noted in the surveys the most were a country station and an easy listening/light rock station. We will incorporate a sound which relays these styles in contemporary, biblically based, God centered worship. It will definitely be a challenge to include some country sounds and styles. But if it reaches the unchurched and aids others in their worship, then it is what Heartland needs to do.

Youth in Rutledge have little to nothing to do. We will provide an atmosphere which promotes young people to grow and worship God. Cutting edge music relevant to their generation will be used in special youth services offered on a weekly basis with messages which speak to them right where they are at in life.

Messages Directed to a Target Audience

During seeker services we will preach messages which address the overlapping needs and concerns of both unchurched and church people. During believers services we will preach messages which address the needs and concerns of believers.

Discipleship

We will nurture the faith of the believers, so as to help them grow closer to Christ and to remain faithful to their commitment to Him.

Weekly Small Groups\Sunday School

Members will be expected to attend a Small Group weekly. By meeting together these groups can encourage one another and hold each other accountable for staying in the

Word. When the church approaches launch the small groups will be developed into a formal Sunday School Program.

Discipleship Training Classes

We will offer different discipleship training classes at various times. These classes will focus upon the spiritual disciplines which lead to a mature Christian life. We will use classes based on the Saddleback model of the class 101 (Membership), 201(Maturity), 301(Ministry), and 401(Missions) to develop and plug in new believers.

Fellowship

Fellowship with God:

This will be accomplished by worship (individual and corporate) and will include worship services, bible study, and prayer.

Fellowship with others:

This will be accomplished through church functions, services, individual relationships, small groups, and any means by which members can gather to encourage one another, build relationships, and honor God.

Ministry

Spiritual gifts are most important to finding a place for ministry. Through classes focused on these gifts, each member will be placed on a ministry team, or in a ministry suited for their gifts.

Ministry will play an important role to our church given the needs of the area. It has been said "they don't care how much you know, until they know how much you care". This is very true in Rutledge. There are a number of ways we will attempt to reach out and minister in Rutledge. With over 20% of the population below poverty level, a food pantry and construction team (repair and help build) would be effective. Financial management, parenting classes, "mother's night out" events, and marital counseling would benefit members as well as those outside the church.

A special emphasis to family will be given at Heartland. We will provide events that focus on youth and children as well as family events. We will create a place where people will be able to just hang out during the week and play or study God's word. A place that is active all week, not just on Sundays and Wednesday nights.

Church Covenant

Heartland Baptist Church will adopt the following covenant in order to lead people to a high level of commitment both to the Lord and to the church.

Having received Christ as my Lord and Savior and been baptized, and being in agreement with Heartland's statements, strategy, and structure, I now feel led by the Holy Spirit to unite with the Heartland Church Family. In doing so, I commit myself to God and to the other members to do the following:

1. I will protect the unity of my Church
 - ...by acting in love toward other members
 - ...by refusing to gossip
 - ...by following the leaders

“So let us concentrate on the things which make for harmony, and on the growth of our fellowship together” (Romans 14:19 PHILLIPS).

“Have a sincere love for other believers, love one another earnestly with all your heart” (1 Peter 1:22 TEV)

“Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs” (Ephesians 4:29).

“Obey your leaders and submit to their authority. They keep watch over you as men who must give an account. Obey them so that their work will be a joy, not a burden, for that would be no advantage to you” (Hebrews 13:17).

2. I will share the responsibility of my Church
 - ...by praying for its growth
 - ...by inviting the unchurched to attend
 - ...by warmly welcoming those who visit

“To the Church--... We always thank God for you and pray for you constantly” (1 Thess. 1:1-2 LB).

“The Master said to the servant, ‘Go out to the roads and country lanes, and urge the people there to come so my house will be full’ (Luke 14:23 NCV)

“So, warmly welcome each other into the Church, just as Christ has warmly welcomed you; then God will be glorified” (Rom. 15:7 LB).

3. I will serve the ministry of my Church
 - ...by discovering gifts and talents
 - ...by being equipped to serve by my pastors
 - ...by developing a servant’s heart

“Serve one another with the particular gifts God has given each of you” (1 Peter 4:10).

“[God] gave...some to be pastors and teachers, to prepare God’s people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up” (Eph. 4:11-12).

“Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others. Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus: Who...[took on] the very nature of a servant” (Phil. 2:3-4, 7).

4. I will support the testimony of my Church
 - ...by attending faithfully
 - ...by living a godly life
 - ...by giving regularly

“Let us not give up meeting together...but let us encourage one another” (Heb. 10:25).
“Whatever happens, make sure that your everyday life is worthy of the gospel of Christ”
(Phil. 1:27 PHILLIPS).

“Each one of you, on the first day of each week, should set aside a specific sum of money
in proportion to what you have earned and use it for the offering” (I Cor. 16:2 LB).

“A tenth of [all your] produce...is the Lord’s, and is holy” (Lev. 27:30 NCV).

Letters and Brochures

Heartland Baptist Church Door Hanger

Dear Neighbor,

We dropped by while doing a one-minute “door-step” survey.

Most likely---- we share some common beliefs:

Communities grow stronger as individuals and families grow stronger...

Individuals and families grow stronger when solid spiritual values and principles
are adopted and followed.

Strong churches make stronger communities.

We are beginning a new church to strengthen our lives, families, and community. Are
you interested in one or both of the following:

Informal small group Bible Studies (now meeting)

Knowing the church start-up schedule

If yes, call #828-5706!

Also check www.HeartlandChurch.org

Hope to hear from you,

Marty Shelton, Pastor of Heartland Baptist Church

11049 Foothills Lane (at the corner of Dale Ave, ½ block off Rutledge Pike, behind
Hardee's)

Letter to Daughter Church Prospects

Marty Shelton, Senior Pastor

Kevin Maples, Pastor

Bruce Templin, Student Ministries Pastor
Dan Evans, Outreach Pastor
Rick Rogers, Praise & Worship Pastor

Monday April 9, 2001

Hello again! As you know, you recently responded to a survey done by our church. The purpose of this survey is to find people who might be interested in a new church in Rutledge.

Perhaps you would like to find a church that let's you...

discover God and the Christian life in a non-threatening and encouraging manner.
enjoy contemporary music and meaningful messages.
trust your children to dedicated child care workers.
relax and learn about God.

That is what we are trying to do- to create a new church like that in Rutledge. Now, you probably noticed that the letterhead says "Millcreek Community Church." The reason for this is simple - this new church is being sponsored by M.C.C. M.C.C. is a new church itself. After slightly under two years, over 350 people consider Millcreek Community Church their new church home. Why? Because they have found a church that encourages them to live up to all God has called them to be. M.C.C. started just as this new Heartland Baptist church is - with an informal survey, followed by a home Bible study, followed by a large first service several months down the road.

My name is Marty Shelton and I am the pastor. Please call if you have any questions. We have placed you on our Pine View mailing and contact list to provide ongoing information. You should receive some more information soon.

I hope that you will decide to be a part of this new congregation. It will be exciting to see as this church grows rapidly like Millcreek Community Church, but does so right here in of Rutledge.

Sincerely,
Marty Shelton

Letter to Information Requests

Marty Shelton, Senior Pastor
Kevin Maples, Pastor
Bruce Templin, Student Ministries Pastor
Dan Evans, Outreach Pastor
Rick Rogers, Praise & Worship Pastor

Friday, August 18, 2000

Joe Farmer
1259 Dead End
Rutledge, TN 37861

Dear Joe,

Thanks for calling this past week. I apologize for the delay in getting back to you with information about Heartland Baptist Church. I am enclosing a few things with the letter to give you just that. I've enclosed:

Our general church brochure. This gives some generic information about church.
A New Testament of the Bible. Since our church is a Bible-based church, we consider the Bible to be the central part of all we do.
A book by Billy Graham called Living in Christ. This book explains what living the Christian life is all about.
A "Statement of Faith." This is an explanation of what our church believes. It might be a little more than you wanted, but I was not sure so I sent it anyway.

Of course, I want to extend to you an invitation to visit one of our Sunday services. This Sunday would be a great time to visit. We are starting a new series about who God is - "The Attributes of God."

Our church services let you:

Discover God and the Christian life in a non-threatening and encouraging manner.
Enjoy contemporary music and meaningful messages.
Trust your children to dedicated child care workers.
Relax and learn about God.

We currently have one morning worship service, which starts at 11:00 a.m. This service features upbeat, meaningful music. Child care is provided during the service, as well as Sunday School, which starts at 9:45 a.m.

My name is Marty Shelton and I am the pastor. Please call if you have any questions. We have placed you on our mailing list to provide ongoing information.

Sincerely,
Marty Shelton, Pastor

Enclosures

Letter to New Movers

March 29, 2001

Dear friend,

Perhaps your move is a reminder to you of the importance of new beginnings. The Bible teaches us that God can give us a new beginning as we commit our lives to Him. We invite you to celebrate the joy of living the Christian life with us this (and every) Sunday at 11:00 a.m. or 6:00 p.m. for one of our Celebration Services.

Perhaps you would like to find a church that let's you...

- * discover God and the Christian life in a non-threatening and encouraging manner.
- * enjoy quality music and meaningful messages.
- * trust your children to dedicated child care workers.
- * relax and learn about God.

If so, Heartland Baptist Church may be the church that you are looking for.

Childcare is provided for both services through age five. During the morning service, Sunday School is also provided for children through grade 6. We invite you to join with your friends and neighbors at Heartland Baptist Church. We hope to see you Sunday!

God Bless,

Marty Shelton

Enclosed: Brochure

Letter to New Parents

Marty Shelton, Senior Pastor

Kevin Maples, Pastor

Bruce Templin, Director of Student Ministries

Dan Evans, Outreach Pastor

Rick Rogers, Pastor of Praise & Worship

Friday, August 18, 2000

Dear new parents,

Congratulations on the birth of your new baby. For many people, a birth is a deeply spiritual event that causes people to look to God. We want to encourage you in your spiritual journey in any way we can.

Let me introduce you to Heartland Baptist Church and myself. We are a new church in Rutledge at an easy-to-find location. The church is located at 11049 Foothills Lane, which is a half block behind Hardee's, just off of Rutledge Pike.

Heartland Baptist Church has grown to hundreds of people seeking to know God better. The church is primarily made up of young families like yours. As such, we emphasize quality child care during our services. For example, we provided a nursery with trained and uniformed workers. Also, when you leave your child in our quality nursery, you will receive a vibrating pager that we can use to contact you in the service at any time. We care about kids and that commitment will be obvious to you.

My name is Marty Shelton and I am the pastor. I hope you will take this invitation to be our guest for a Sunday service. If you are not yet a church attendee, this may be a good time to find a church. Perhaps this is a perfect time for you to become a part of a church you can call "home". I have enclosed a flyer and 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 specific information, please give us a call at 828-HOPE (4673). God Bless.

Sincerely,
Marty Shelton

Enclosed: Church Brochure

Letter to Reply Cards

Marty Shelton, Senior Pastor
Kevin Maples, Pastor
Bruce Templin, Student Ministries Pastor
Dan Evans, Outreach Pastor
Rick Rogers, Pastor of Praise & Worship

Monday, April, 09, 2001

Joe Farmer
1259 W. Dead End
Rutledge, TN 37861

Dear Joe,

Hello again from Heartland Baptist Church! As you know, you recently sent in a card to our church requesting more information about our church. We are engaging in a mass distribution of these flyers to help us tell the neighborhood about our new congregation.

We want to extend an invitation to you to attend an informational meeting about this new church which will be beginning in your community soon. Perhaps you would like to find a church that let's you...

...discover God and the Christian live in a non-threatening and encouraging manner.

...enjoy upbeat, meaningful music and relevant messages.

...trust your children to dedicated child care workers.

...relax and learn about God.

If so you need to come and hear about this new church. This could be what you have been looking for.

My name is Marty Shelton and I am the pastor. Please call me if you have any questions. We have placed you on our mailing and contact list to provide ongoing information. You should receive some more information soon.

Sincerely,

Marty Shelton
Pastor

Enclosed: Invitation and map

Interviews

1. Tommy Smith - Established Pastor of New Blackwell Baptist - Rutledge, TN

- Q. What ministries is your church currently involved in to reach the unchurched?
A. Van ministry, hispanic service and teaching "English as a Second Language" courses, campground services, and youth activities.
- Q. What are the strengths of your congregation?
A. There is a small but solid core group who is committed and spiritually mature.
- Q. What are the weaknesses of your congregation?
A. There is a lack of desire as a whole to have a presence in the community. They are only active through the Pastor. There is a lack of communication as well.
- Q. What do you know about the outreach ministries and growth of other churches in your area?
A. No growth to speak of.
- Q. What areas of town are growing the fastest and are most in need of ministry?
A. The lake area as well as the Hispanic community. There is a definite need for more youth ministry county wide.
- Q. What type of people reside in the area?
A. The lake area consists of middle to upper class residents flooding in from the north around Kentucky up through Michigan. Then there are the local lower-to middle class farmers and factory workers as well as farm employed Hispanics.
- Q. How receptive are the are the people to someone from the church or whom they perceive to be a minister or pastor?
A. Very receptive. Small town atmosphere is very friendly. I have never had a door shut in my face. They are very willing to listen.
- Q. How do you assess the need for new work in the area?

- A. There is definitely a need for a different work from the traditional SBC church in east Tennessee.
- Q. Where would you start a new ministry in the area and what would you do specifically to reach the residents.
- A. Location would be in the lake area with an aggressive outreach ministry presence.

2. Darrell Walker - Established Pastor of Sunrise Baptist Church - Rutledge, TN

- Q. What ministries is your church currently involved in to reach the unchurched?
- A. WMU visitation and caring for food needs in the community. The youth also have a visitation program as well as a nursing home ministry.
- Q. What are the strengths of your congregation?
- A. The middle age group who have a deeper vision and are more committed and spiritually motivated. Prayer has become a major strength. We have a prayer room that people volunteer to go into a pray between Sunday School and Worship Service. Many people have been baptized since this started.
- Q. What are the weaknesses of your congregation?
- A. Some leaders of the church need to be spiritually grounded. There is a contradiction between lifestyles and the Word of God in the church. The worship (song service) needs more participation. Would love to see a youth choir. There is also a problem with traditions.
- Q. What do you know about the outreach ministries and growth of other churches in your area?
- A. I don't know of any real growth. However, the Brotherhood groups in the area are very active and reaching out. Indian Ridge Baptist Church has a very active Brotherhood group.
- Q. What areas of town are growing the fastest and are most in need of ministry?
- A. The Indian Ridge area is growing rapidly. Farms are being sold and divided into neighborhoods. Also the lake area is growing.
- Q. What type of people reside in the area?
- A. Most homes are double wide mobile homes or \$80,000-\$100,000 homes. They are coming from many different states as well as Tennessee.
- Q. How receptive are the people to someone from the church or whom they perceive to be a minister or pastor?
- A. Very receptive. I have never had a door shut in my face. They are very friendly and invite you in or to sit and talk most of the time.
- Q. How do you assess the need for new work in the area?
- A. No need to start something new. We need to get people motivated in the churches we got. We have churches on every corner, we don't need new buildings.

3. Dennis Cagle - Director of Missions - Grainger Baptist Association

- Q. What areas in Grainger County are seeing growth?
 A. The lake area is growing as well as the Hispanic community. We will continue to see large Hispanic influx to this area.
- Q. How are churches in the growing areas responding to the influx and growth?
 A. New Blackwell Baptist is serving the Hispanics well. Blue Springs has an excellent recreation (youth) ministry and is reaching out to the needy. Oakland has shown excellent missions support.
- Q. What areas/groups not being reached have the greatest need for ministry?
 A. Need community ministers. There is recreational ministry need especially to the poor and needy kids. There are a lot of financial needs. Elderly with fixed income.
- Q. How well-served are the new communities in these areas by the established churches?
 A. Small amount of churches not doing anything. Some have turmoil within the church.
- Q. Are any church plants/potential church plants in your area presently?
 A. Rockhaven is the only plant. No others are known.
- Q. What, if any, areas are in need of a new church?
 A. Puncheon Camp and Powder Springs area. Thorn Hill does not have any SBC churches there. There is obviously a need for an "alternative work" (with SBC doctrine would be a real plus) in Rutledge. What will be hard is getting local support.
- Q. If you could start a ministry to reach lost people in your association, what would it be?
 A. Church Community Minister - multiracial.
- Q. What are some of the felt needs of the people of this area?
 A. Clothes closet, food pantry, socio-economic ministry, marital and financial counseling, home repair assistance.
- Q. How many people live in Grainger County? How many attend church? How many are association churches?
 A. There are over 23,000 residents in Grainger County and 34 churches are association churches. We make up 75% of the church goers in the county and attendance is right at 3,000. So that gives you about 4,000 attending church in the county.
- Q. So how many of the 23,000 do you think are lost?
 A. Hard to say.....I would guess about 80-85%.

4. Interview With Bill George - Tennessee State Church Extension Coordinator
 February 28, 2001

From the standpoint of the Convention: What is the first step our team should take in planning for a new church in Rutledge?
 Contact the Director of Missions, the Association needs to see themselves as a partner in this new church plant in order to develop a good relationship. Eventually, the Association will have to sign off on any funding the new work receives from the Convention. Therefore, it is important to establish a good working relationship from the beginning. Second, Do a probe in the area.

The probe would consist of the following:

- Talk with local officials, such as planning commission and local politicians. Ask them to give you as much information about future plans for the area as they possibly can. Try to find out about new roads, sewer lines, Electrical lines, schools, etc...
- Talk with a Real Estate Agent in the area. Ask about any new subdivisions or land developments in the area that they may be aware of. Ask who are buying homes in the area.
- Include Demographics of the area.
- Do a windshield survey. Drive through the community and record what you see.
- Third, Do a community assessment. Talk with people who live in the community. Ask some key questions such as:
We are considering starting a new church in this area...
 - What are some needs you think this church should meet?
 - What do you think the church should be like?
 - What do you think the name should be? (Give them some options and ask which they like best)
 - If you were ever to attend a new church, what one thing could they do to draw your attendance?

After these initial steps have been completed, what criteria determines the need for a new church in the area?

- There may be a high ratio of unchurched to churching people.
- There may be unreached people groups:
 - Socio-economic groups
 - lifestyle groups
 - Ethnic groups

Does the new work need a sponsoring church?

You must have a sponsoring church to receive funding.

What is involved in getting a sponsoring church?

- Involve the Director of Missions (DOM) and Key leaders in the probe. This will place the DOM in a position to recommend potential sponsoring churches.
- Things get done through relationships. If the relationships are bypassed things won't get done. The DOM already has the relationships built with local churches. You do not. It is important to involve the DOM to get a sponsoring church. If you bypass this it will weaken the process.

What are the requirements of a Sponsoring church?

The minimum:

- Sign off on all funding.
- Be responsible for all loans

The Ideal:

- The above plus the following

- Have a mission development council to work with the new work pastor
- New Work pastor serve on staff under leadership of pastor of sponsoring church.
- Covenant agreement between all parties involved.
- Sponsoring church needs to decide how they will be involved.
- Sponsoring church needs to have a strategy for how to take care of the pastor of the new work: include them in the social activities of the church, plan for them to have days off, and getaways, marriage retreats.

What Resources are available from the TBC?

Funding:

- Salary Supplement, \$9,000/1st year; \$6,000/2nd year; \$3,000/3rd year
- Rental Assistance, \$5,000
- Start-Up Funds, \$1,500
- Church Planter's Toolkit, Tape and Study guide resource
- Reading Materials: Purpose Driven Church, Value Driven Leadership, Nuts & Bolts
- Field Consultation
- New Work Pastor & Wives Retreat
- Church Management System Training
- Natural Church Development Consultant
- State Probe Consultant
- Nehemiah Project Consultant
- Networking of church planters
- Assessments, Planter must pass to receive funding

5. Interview With Daniel Carr, Church Planter and Founding Pastor of New Life Community Church

Q: Tell me about how your church began.

A: On May 15, 1999 Daniel and his wife moved to the area began to prepare for the church plant. They began their first Cell group on June 8th 1999. The second cell group began in July 1999. The third group began in August that same year.

On September 1999 they had their first preview service. They Launched the church Easter 2000.

Q: Where did you get the people to start your first cell group?

A: My wife and I began by surveying the neighborhood. As we surveyed we began to meet responsive people. As we met these people we shared the vision of how the church would start and what it would be. These people attended our first cell group.

Q: What was the most effective thing you did to start the church?

A: Direct Mail. People keep the mailer and will attend sometimes weeks later for the first time.

Q: What were some things you did that were not as effective?

A: We did phone surveys and received only marginal results. We also did TV commercials, which were the least effective thing that we did.

Q: What advice would you give a new church planter?

A: Don't launch before you are ready. Don't be calendar driven, be event driven.

6. Church Planter: Kevin Maples, Pastor of Kodak Community Baptist Church

Kevin is the pastor of Kodak Community Baptist Church. The church just had its grand opening inauguration service on Easter Sunday, 2001. The path to this point has been long and hard. Kevin describes the many hours as the hardest thing he has ever done. It started with a vision. He and his wife both prayed for a year, asking God to clarify His direction in leading them to start a new church. Kevin got confirmation when he took the Ridley Assessment test and aced it.

Once he made the decision to start a church, Kevin began by sharing his vision with others around him. He started a Bible study in someone's house home. After only six months, He had thirty people attending the Bible study. He then had the first worship service two weeks after Easter, 2000. On Easter 2001, there were one hundred and four people in attendance. His plan is to continue with Sunday morning services until sometime next Fall, when he will go to two worship services. His goal for then is to have one hundred and fifty people in attendance.

Kevin feels the most effective tool he had was the small group concept. The small group is where the most meaningful Bible studies and personal evangelizing happened. He feels the least effective tool is visitation. He personally visited over one hundred people last week. None of the people he visited showed up at the worship service. He relates that they were all polite, and some even interested, but none showed up. On the opposite end of the spectrum, Kevin says he has not lost anyone from the small group studies. They are all still active, even though one family has not joined yet. At least they are still coming.

The churches' vision statement can be stated in three statements:

1. Continually build relationships with lost people to share the Gospel of Christ.
2. Services will be warm, friendly and inviting places.
3. People who live changed lives will testify what they believe by the lifestyle they lead.

Kevin's advice for anyone contemplating planting a church would be to wait until you are absolutely certain God has called you to plant a church in a specific place. He said there were times during the last year that his vision is the only thing that kept him going. When everyone was saying "no," when there was no money and when nobody else was helping him, it was his vision that he was able to hold onto.

Kevin has received various means of support from the Tennessee Baptist Convention. He has also received support from Chilhowee Hills Baptist Church. Kevin states that if he had to do it over again, he would have asked more from Chilhowee Hills. They provided everything he asked for and they agreed to provide, but looking back, he feels he should have asked for more.

7. Church Planter: Tim Parker, Church Planter Eastwind Church, Knoxville, TN

Q. What prompted you to plant this church?

A. I was building a house in the community and began to realize the need for a church that would be different in philosophy and style from those present in the area.

Q. Did you have a sponsoring church?

A. I was the worship leader at Cornerstone Church which was about eight miles away and they agreed to sponsor the church plant for three years.

Q. How would you describe your church?

A. We have a contemporary style of worship. We are cell-based, with our morning service consisting of children's church and a time of praise and worship. Our leadership consists of two co-pastors and one elder. We have no deacons.

Q. What do you consider the key to your success?

A. Legitimacy -- we are normal, real people who are here to help people know Christ. We are open and honest with people. We have a commitment to excellence. We won't do something unless we can do it well.

Q. Why did you not use Baptist in the church name?

A. We wanted to reach new people moving into the area from other states and those who were not attending church. We found that many in our target group had a negative image of Baptists, and we didn't want the name to be a stumbling block to them. We are very open and honest about what we believe, and are members of the local Baptist association.

Q. Have other churches in the area been receptive to your work?

A. Most of our opposition has come from other Baptist churches. They seem to think we have compromised the message, but our message is the same, we just use different methods to convey the message. Methodist and nondenominational churches have been most supportive and we have worked with them on some programs.

Q. What felt-needs are you addressing in the community?

A. We have conducted parenting and financial seminars through the local PTA and have reached out through servanthood evangelism in the community.

Q. What type of marketing did you do?

A. We went door to door in new subdivisions, and did mass mailings to four zip codes. We began radio advertising once the church was launched.

Q. How long did your core group meet before the church was launched?

A. We met for four months and had about twenty people in the core group when we launched. I realized this is contrary to most church planting models, but some of our core had come from Cornerstone Church and they were quite knowledgeable about what we were doing and how to do it. We had 135 at our launch service and most of them stayed. We later lost several of them because of problems with finding a suitable meeting location. We are now meeting in an elementary school and the church is growing.

8. Mickey Shelton - Resident - Rutledge

34 year old - married - father of 2 children (4 and 6)

Q. Why have you chose not to attend church?

A. I don't really know. I just have no desire and see no reason to go.

Q. If you were to attend church what would you look for in a church?

A. Genuine interest in me and not my money right off. Where they don't push me on spiritual matters and where they talk about the bible and various topics (there is a lot of other stuff in there) and don't just push one thing and eventually let me make a decision on my own. Donate money and get saved is all I hear.

Q. If you attended church would you prefer a traditional worship style or contemporary?

A. Traditional...it just seems like it would be the right thing to do.

Q. What could a church do to help the community and families like yours?

A. Just being there to help in times of need. Could play a more active role in the development of the community and sports programs.

Q. How do you spend most of your spare time? What radio station do you listen to?

A. Watching TV and playing on computer. I listen to WIVK. (country station)

9. Aaron Harold - New Believer - Sunrise Baptist Church in Rutledge

23 year old - single - Believer as of October of 2000

Q. When and why did you start going to church?

A. I was raised in church up until I was 15. I got into all kinds of stuff and saw church as a way to get out of how I been living. I thought it would be good for me. I probably would never have went if a few of the people I worked with weren't there.

Q. What could the church your attending do to reach more people?

A. More attendance. Seems like if they are really saved they would be there to support the church even on Wednesday nights. Basically they are not living what they say they are. People are not committed. People need to see sincere faith. I wonder about some members salvation.

Q. Do you like the traditional style of worship or would you prefer contemporary?

A. I would love something more contemporary. Something with better music. I don't like all the structure to the traditional services. It has to be a certain way and nothing changes. I would definitely be in favor of a contemporary service.

Q. What kind of music do you like?

A. Alternative, any kind of rock music, and some bluegrass.

10. Sondra Helm - Long Resident New Believer - Blue Springs Baptist - Rutledge

47 Years old - married - 2 children - 16 1/2 years resident - Believer on January 2001.

Q. When and why did you begin to attend church?

A. After losing my son Joseph 14 years ago, my mother-in law invited me to Blue Springs Baptist Church. I never had any real peace all this time and conviction really set in. I realized my need for Christ and got down on my knees at home and was saved in January.

Q. What advice would you give a new church to reach more people?

A. More programs that focus on the youth. Outings for the middle-age group. Different classes for different levels and help plug them into a group. Be out in the community ministering. Music is very important. Our previous pastor brought new style of worship that I had not experienced before. I like worship to be more expressive. Mentoring and guiding people is important as well.

Q. Why do people in the community chose not to go to church?

A. It is time consuming and they work all week and Sunday is a rest day before going back to work on Monday. It is their only real day off.

Q. What advice would you give a new pastor?

A. Visit and minister hands on, be in the field as much as possible.

Q. What could be done to meet your needs as a new believer?

A. Just need to grow and gain knowledge of Christ. Keep on track and get involved in anything to help me better my life with Christ. I really could use a parenting class to help with my strong willed teenager. He needs help handling peer pressure. I really am concerned about the music he listens to and stuff he watches.