

**Revitalizing Your Church
Through
Strategic Community Outreach**

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ISBN: 0989117901

ISBN-13: 978-0-9891179-0

To Jesus Christ who gave his life for us and established his Kingdome here on earth and to every pastor, church leader and Christian committed to advancing his kingdom.

I am providing this book for free.

I hope that it is a benefit to many churches in helping them reach their communities.

If you find the book helpful and would like to make a one dollar donation you can do so with the link below.

<http://community-outreach.com/revitalzing-your-church.htm>

Introduction

Revitalizing Your Church Through Strategic Community Outreach is designed to help both existing churches who are not seeing much growth or who have plateaued as well as for new church plants. Existing churches which are growing can add new avenues of growth as well.

I start the book off with a brief explanation of what strategic community outreach is and then apply it on how to totally change the direction of your church.

I outline the basics of strategic community outreach and how it applies to revitalizing a struggling church. I do not however give solutions to problems or talk about structures. There are different for every church. I also believe you to be smart. You and your leadership team have the tools to do the evaluations and to bring in the people to help you develop the resources to develop your church into a powerful influence in your community. My only purpose in this book is to give you the challenge and a concept to work with. I am sure that even the points I share you will tweak to fit your own situations as it should be.

Please understand that nothing in this book is meant to be judgmental. While I speak frankly to the point it is in now way meant to be insulting. I wish I would have had this during my first two ministries. Since then I as a church planter I have been on both sides of the coin being involved in two very successful church plants and two that ultimately failed. My only purpose in writing this is the hope that it will be an encouragement to you to make what ever changes you need to make for your church to make a powerful impact on its community.

The book does not go into detail about how to run specific outreach programs or provide ideas about outreach programs. It is designed to help plan a back bone strategy for

community outreach. It is designed to be a supplement to my book "Dynamic Community Outreach"

"Dynamic Community Outreach" provides over 250 unique ideas for reaching out to your community. It has nine chapters of ways to reach your community that no other book talks about and the other 18 chapters have 5 to 25 ideas that most outreach oriented books do not mention. Plus the book is full of links to resources to help you develop the different types of outreaches.

While "Dynamic Community Outreach" is not free I have priced it as cheaply as I am willing. It is almost half what the other books that have less one-fourth of the ideas.

You can read the first 10% of "Dynamic Community Outreach" at <http://www.amazon.com/dp/B00C01CBB8>

You can find all of the versions at my website for as low as \$5.49 US Dollars.

<http://community-outreach.com/buy.htm>

Rejuvenating Your Church Through Strategic Community Outreach

Section 1

Chapter 1

What is strategic community outreach?

I developed this concept after years of church planting and researching both church growth and church planting. I was disappointed in lack of outreach into the unchurched community even among the fastest growing churches and church plants. I have participated in both.

Two of the church plants I worked with were by most people very successful. They grew from around 30 people to over 150 people in a little over a year. Sounds successful doesn't it?" I was very disappointed after both. Not that I was sad that the churches had grown but that in both there was not one person from the unchurched community that was reached.

When Jesus left this earth he gave the church a commission to go into the world and make disciples. Should we ever be content with church growth that comes from Christians coming from other churches and not include leading people to Christ and making disciples in the community we live in.

It was after these two experiences that I decided that there had to be a way to actually grow a church by reaching people from the unchurched community.

I have spent years of researching churches that were actually effective at reaching people who were unchurched. What I came up with was a mixture of

lifestyle evangelism, friendship evangelism and strategic involvement of the church in the community.

This is a simple concept yet complex enough that it requires totally restructuring your vision and your church to implement it.

Here is the simplicity of the concept.

Develop a strategic plan to reach the community surrounding your church.

Sounds simple? We are already doing that right? The answer is probably no. If so you would most likely not be reading this book nor would you even need to do so.

The problem comes with the strategic part. It means that the church has a detailed plan on how it will reach its community. This plan requires that the church be built around the plan. This includes the leadership, budget and membership. It requires training planning equipping and implementing.

When it comes to outreach we tend to have a shotgun approach. We point the gun out the church door and pull the trigger and hope some of the shot hits a target. Some one has the idea to set a booth up at a fair, we hold a VBS, pass out flyers, open a daycare or any of the 100 or so things we see on the Internet or the 250 unique things in my book. We do these things with no overall strategy on how each of these fits into our plan to reach our community.

Community outreach starts with community

One of the problems many churches face is their initial outreaches start outside their communities. County fairs, street missions in the city when you are in the suburbs

are not your main mission field. The beginning mission is simple. Grow where your church is planted. The more we spread out the less focused we can become with our outreach.

I have read a couple of different studies that say that the average unchurched person can not name 1 to 3 churches in their area. You cannot have that name recognition for a large area unless you spend major money on advertising. How effective do you think your church can be if your church is the one church that 80 percent of the unchurched people in your community could name? Even better if they would be able to name your church not because they heard it in an advertisement but because they or someone they know had one or more positive experiences with your church.

How well do you think your church would do in your community if your church was the church that non Christians recommended people go to. I remember as a young Christian, I worked at a company that built green houses. There were just 3 of us that worked there the owner, another guy and myself. The subject of church came up and he owner said "I love my drinking too much to go to church but I have met several people from _____ Church and they are wonderful people you ought to try that church" to the other gentleman I worked with.

I break down that strategy into 3 phases and 10 steps

The phases are

1. The conception - This is where the vision is conceived.
2. The pregnancy - This is where the vision grows and develops
3. The birth- This is where the vision comes to live in the church and community.

The 10 steps to Strategic Community Outreach

1. Identify the gifts, visions and dreams of the people of the church.
2. Create an over all vision for how your church is going to reach out to your community.
3. Build upon your vision to start by growing where you are planted.
4. Identify all of the community resources you can take advantage of.
5. Develop a community resource development person or team.
6. Do research into ways you can put this vision into practice.
7. Develop a step by step plan to implement the vision.
8. Prepare your church for visitors,
9. Develop a sound follow-up program.
10. Implement your strategy and start off with a bang.

You should expect that it may take a year to implement this vision. If anything is worth doing it is worth doing right. In church planting we always spent a year on preparation and training during the conception and pregnancy phases before giving birth. Here is a simple explanation of the 10 steps.

Conception Phase

1. Identify the gifts, visions and dreams of the people of the church. Each church is different, made up of different people with different gifts and visions existing in different demographics. All of this makes a difference in how you develop the vision of outreach. Your approach will most likely be different if your church is full of young families than if it is filled with retired adults. Here is a list of some of the passions that groups of people in your church may have that could help shape that vision.

- Passion for reaching children or teens
- Passion for the arts
- Passion for reaching seniors
- Passion for reaching the poor.
- Passion for reaching the abused.
- Passion for reaching people and families affected by drugs and alcohol.
- Passion for people with disabilities.
- Passion for one on one evangelism.
- Maybe you have a lot of people gifted in sports.
- Maybe you have a lot of people gifted in technology.

This is just a sample list. You can see how the passions and gifts of your members can help shape the outreach vision of your church.

2. Create a over all vision for how your church is going to reach out to your community. Once you have determined the make up, gifts and visions of the members of the church it is time to develop the vision of the outreach. First the leaders need to develop the over all vision of the church, really this should come before number one but that should be a given. Ideally I think that it is good if the vision of the church is developed with how the church is going to reach its community in mind when it is developed.

The vision is a little more than we want to reach our community. It states areas where you want to have significant influence. It is not an outreach plan but it is what the plan is based on. It outlines where the main focus that the outreach is going to be based on. You can say that it is a guide so that your outreach strategy is not all over the board with no specific focus in mind.

Like all vision and mission statements it should be developed by the leadership with much prayer. It is important that we are about our Fathers business. The

leading of the Spirit may have you focus on areas not represented by the gifting of your members. It has been my experience that when our Father gives a church a vision you find that the gifts of the church will blend in with the vision.

Pregnancy Phase

3. Building upon your vision to start by growing where you are planted. This is a simple enough concept. It is one that has been batted around about people for a couple of decades. It applies just as well for churches. The long-term strategy may be to have a significant impact on your city. For most churches this is a goal to work up to not one to start off with. It is different if you are in a very small town but in a city it is a different story.

One of the problems many small to medium sized churches have is they start their outreach efforts on too large a focus area. If you do a good job of reaching out to your community then you will see growth beyond your community. I like to look at it this way. The church starts by growing where it is planted. It teaches its people to grow where they are planted and then it grows where the seeds fall.

In this process you will start by concentrating on the neighborhoods around your church and training your people you will see that by naturally your church will expand across your town or city. New people will reach family and friends outside the community. Teaching your members how to live lives of love and take the gospel to the workplace and among their friends and family your influence will begin spreading beyond your own community.

Here are some of the places to begin. Some ideas about how will come later.

- Adopt the closest elementary, middle or junior high and high school

- Adopt the closest large apartment complex or multiple small complexes. This could also be trailer parks.
- Identify all the natural places that outreach events can happen within a mile around the church building or its location. Such as parks, recreation centers. as well as a list of events that already happen in your community.
- Do demographic research of the neighborhoods within a mile of your church. This needs to be extensive not just the population and income breakdown. Try to discover the needs of the community as well so you can determine how to best meet its needs.

Here is an example of a church I am associated with. They adopted the closest elementary school several years ago and a very large low income apartment complex both within a half a mile from the church building. They have become so involved in the school that there is most likely no family that is not familiar with the church as well as the apartment complex. The school represents over 400 families and the apartments over 300. Because of how close they are together many of the same families are represented. Three years later there are many families from these two places now involved in the church.

4. Identify all of the community resources you can take advantage of.

- Have someone from your church join the local schools PTA or PTO. Most schools have a shortage of parents participating.
- Have at least one church leader belong to each of the civic clubs such as the Lions, Kiwanis et cetera
- Ask the local fire and police departments how you can help with local fundraisers or community programs.

- See next section

5. Develop a community resource development person or team. Have a person or team that knows all of the community resources that families or individuals can need that the church cannot fill. You can read this section of Dynamic Community Outreach for free at http://www.amazon.com/Dynamic-Community-Outreach-unique-community/dp/0989117901/ref=tmm_pap_title_0

When you are participating in outreaches of any kind you will meet people with needs that your church will not be able to meet. This could be anything from child abuse to housing shelters. This should not be an excuse not to meet the needs that you can. You should also stay in touch with the individuals if possible as to continue the relationship with them.

6. Do research into ways you can put this vision into practice. (Shameless plug: My book *Dynamic Community Outreach* is a good place to start). You can also do research on the internet to see what other churches are doing or just for ideas. You can also look to other churches in your denomination or fellowship of churches to see what they are doing.

7. Develop a step by step plan to implement the vision. Now that you pretty much have the who and what this is where you add the when where and how your are going to put this into practice. Picking the events you are going to participate in and creating outreaches that you are going to put on and who is going to be involved in them.

8. Prepare your church for visitors. This seems to be obvious and you probably think you have already done this but you need to spend a great amount of time evaluating what you are doing and if you can do it better. I will talk more about this in the next section.

9. Develop a sound follow up program. This is where I see most churches fail. I see very few churches with a good follow up program. A lack of church growth can almost always be summed up in two things a failure to keep members and a failure to keep visitors.

If you are failing at either of the either two things above then you need to find a way to correct them before you consider any type of outreach. Either one shows that there is something wrong in your church that needs fixing and no amount of blame shifting will fix the problem. This is most likely a leadership problem. Even if it is a problem inside the membership it is a problem that developed because of a weak leadership.

Birth Phase

10. Implement your strategy and start off with a bang. You have spent months getting ready and everything is in place. You most likely have a few things in motion already. It is time for a sort of grand opening, a really huge event that will bring in a lot of people. Here are few ideas of events you can do. Of course these are just some samples. You can read about these in *Dynamic Community Outreach* or do your own research. Of course you are not limited to just one you can spread out multiple over a month or a couple of months.

- Have an old home coming days type of celebration such as an anniversary for your church or community. If for your church invite everyone who has ever been a part of your church.
- A benefit concert. (For a sick child or for your local school or to fix up a local park.)
- Community arts fair
- Community music festival

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- In a small town or city invite a symphony to come and have a concert
- Have a disability fair
- Do a community-wide mailer
- Community BBQ
- Community leader recognition
- Community resource fair
- Community Carnival
- A battle of the bands (school bands, senior citizens bands, community bands, Christian bands or any other type you can think of.)

Chapter 2

Budgeting for Outreach

One of the major problems I see with churches and outreach is budgeting. One of the major reasons that many churches spend so little time reaching out to their communities is they do not have the money. One of the reasons for this is that it is not important enough to put in the budget. It is not important enough to put in the budget because it is not a significant part of the vision and strategic mission of the church for its community. We budget for children's ministry, men's and women's ministry, missions and of course building costs and salaries. I find it interesting that I have seen many a budget that includes foreign missions and not a penny for local missions. Even more interesting is seeing money for local missions for groups outside the communities outside the area the church is located in and not any for local outreach.

**It is as simple as this
If it is not part of the budget it is not important.**

If reaching your community is going to be a central mission of your church then it is going to have to be part of your budget. Having the excuse that you budget for it because the money you spend on children's, men's, women's and other ministries is budgeting for outreach just does not do it. Outreach is what you do outside your church building to reach people. Yes you do need to have effective ministry available for people when they come but that really is a different budget item.

I have always been a supporter of foreign missions. It is time for us to realize that the United States, Canada and Western Europe have become mission fields. While we have always had a mission field in our own back yards in the last two

decades church attendance has dropped almost in half. Drug and alcohol abuse is rampant and around 20% of our children are being sexually abused 50% are growing up in broken homes. I could write all day about statistics we all know. We have been commissioned to bring love and healing to the broken and hurting in our communities. It is time we put our money where our mouths are and make outreach a central part of our budget as we do any other ministry of the church.

I know this is difficult. In many churches you already have every penny budgeted for and it is only by faith that you are able to make your budget most years. Since I suggest that it takes up to a year to put everything in place for the strategic outreach plan then you have some time work some things out. Remember the concept is centered on restructuring your church around reaching out to your community instead of sitting and waiting for them to come to you so you have to plan to fund your efforts to reach them.

There are other ways of funding outreach besides putting it in the budget. Here are some ideas to start the ball rolling as the leadership of the church prays and discusses this.

- Just put it in the budget and have faith that God will be faithful. This does not have to be a large percentage at first but you have to start somewhere.
- Help your people catch the vision. As they catch the vision for the types of outreach ask them to help fund it. This can come from special offerings or fundraisers.
- Fifth Sundays. There are 4 months a year with 5 Sundays. Plan your budget on 4 Sunday months and let the 5th Sunday offering go toward community outreach.
- In my book *Dynamic Community Outreach* many of the outreaches can pay for themselves. Find some of

these that fit some of these that fit the vision of your community outreach plan.

- I also have listed some that actually make a profit. If you do any community outreach that does so dedicate this money to community outreach.
- Grants: for some types of outreaches there may be private or public grant money available.
- For outreaches that really touch people where they are at, such as feeding people, shelters, ministry to the disabled or wounded vets, ask your congregation and community for donations and have fundraising events for these ministries.

Chapter 3

Helping Your Church Catch the Vision

It is very important that the members of your church catch the vision for outreach. They really need to understand and become passionate about the need for the world to know Christ. They need to have a passion to bring healing to the broken hearted the poor, the abused and the lost.

If the church body is apathetic it does not matter if you develop a plan and budget it, it simply will not happen.

Church growth researcher, Win Arn surveyed the members of nearly 1000 churches asking the question, "Why does the church exist?" Eighty-nine per cent said the church exists "to meet the needs of me and my family." He then surveyed the pastors of the same churches and their responses were the exact opposite - 90% said the church exists "to win the world for Jesus Christ".

This is one of the main reasons that the plan requires starting from the beginning. It is why the first chapter of section 2 talks about letting your church die and creating a new one out of the ashes. This is why you do not just add on to what you have been doing all along. You spend a year training and inspiring everyone in you church to have a passion for the lost and a desire to see their community reached for Christ. You build a vision and spend the year getting everything in place. Of course you begin reaching out during that time but you are developing the church to be centered around reaching out to your community.

Think about it Jesus spent three years letting the twelve see his compassion for the people. Letting them watch him minister to them day by day. Listening to him teach them day by day. Letting them participate with him in ministry.

And in the end he gave them this command. Go into all the world and make disciples. What did they do? They went into the world and made disciples. They took the ministry they saw Jesus do and did it themselves. It is our job to inspire our leaders and people. Provide them with opportunities to reach out and love the people in our communities. Go with them and love the people with them. 'And when they are comfortable send them out with others to do the same.

It started with twelve and turned the world upside down. It can start with your church and turn your community upside down.

Chapter 4

Marketing Your Outreach

I have mentioned different marketing ideas for different ideas throughout the book. Here I will consolidate the ideas in one place plus add some others.

Marketing Director

The key to marketing any outreach or any organization is to have someone in the organization that is responsible to see that it happens. This can be an individual or committee (if it is a committee, then it needs to have a specific person in charge to make sure that things happen.)

The first thing that the marketing director needs to do is develop a list of every place in the community where different events are held. Once this list is compiled then it is their job to assess which of these would be suitable for different events and to make sure that a marketing plan is put into place for each event. This plan may be put into affect by the director, by people appointed to specific tasks from the committee, or to work with the coordinator of an event so that they have a plan to market the event.

Developing a Media List

A media list is a list of every type of publication, organization, website that can be used to market an event in your specific community. Your community does not have to be that large for your list to become fairly large. There are many ways of marketing an event but not all apply to all events. For example you probably would not want to promote a children's event in a senior magazine.

Every place on your list should include up to date contact information. This should be the specific person you need to talk to. Here are some of the places that should be on your list:

- Every regional, local and community newspaper or newsletter you can find. This includes local college newspapers and even high school newspapers
- Regional publications that have event calendars
- Age or ethnic publications, such as area senior or children's magazines. These usually have a place to list events
- Local radio and news stations. Many times they have a place on their websites to list events. Some events such as benefit concerts, they may mention on the air for free
- Local organizations such as the Chamber of Commerce will list events on their website
- Every website or blog devoted to your community
- Every civic group in your area. It is good to have every member of your team to be a member of a civic organization. This provides a natural way of communication about your events
- A separate email contact list for every community leader in your area
- Local business leaders who may want to sponsor an event
- Local business that may be willing to sell your tickets as a way of sponsoring the event, such as a grocery store or retail market.

Other Ways of Promoting

- Things to think about with newspapers.
 - Most newspapers have event calendars that are free

- Most newspapers have a free classified section for free stuff. This is good for free garage sales, signing up for free reconditioned bikes or anything else that can fit into this category
- The best free use is to get them to write about you and your events. Local papers are looking for community things to write about. Learn how to send them press releases and get to know the editor or a reporter
- Most areas have coupon mailing companies. These are companies that let you buy advertising in the form of an 8.5 X 3.5 inch coupon. In our area we have Valpack and Money Mailers. There are usually twenty to thirty of these in every mailing and are mailed by zip code. While there is no way to use this service for free, it costs a fraction of what direct mail costs
- Have a webpage for the event on your website. Ask all you members to post a link on the Facebook page
- Have the webpage link on all advertising, on the tickets or any advertising you do
- Have an information booth at a farmers, fair or flea market
- Have information available for anything you do at a farmers market, fair or other type of show
- Craigslist.com
- Up Coming at Yahoo.com. List your event here. A growing number of people are using this to find events in their area. <http://upcoming.yahoo.com/>

Building an eMail List

If you build an event email list you will advance your promotion abilities with every event you have. This provides you the opportunity to contact people that have been at previous events and tell them about your next event. You

can even provide discount coupons in the email as an incentive to buy tickets to the next event.

- Capture contact information at events. Provide the opportunity to sign up to receive updates about upcoming events at all of your events
- Have a sign up on every webpage you make for different events on your website
- Ask for email invitation for every ticket you sell
- Get Sponsorship
- Discount tickets at a local shopping place
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Chapter 5

Debriefing

I do not talk in the book about how to set up or run an outreach or program. That is the subject for a book all by itself. I would, however, like to share something that will help you immensely in making your outreaches and programs more successful. It is called debriefing. The goal is to make sure the event gets larger, better and more effective every time you have it.

Debriefing is when everyone who had a major part in an event gets together within two weeks of an event to talk about the good, bad and the ugly. The purpose is to brainstorm while the event and planning leading up to it is still fresh in your mind.

There are three questions that are asked during a debriefing:

- What did we do well? This is the first question because it is important to list the good stuff before the others
- What things were okay but could have been improved on?
- What things were less than okay and what changes can we make so they will not happen again?

These questions are applied to every aspect of the event including planning, marketing and the running of the event itself. I know of some groups that have a meeting for each of these areas. I also know of some that have a debriefing separately with the people involved with each of these areas then they have a meeting with all of them together.

Section 2

This section of the book is designed to help an existing church that is not growing. There are three basic types of churches that fit into this category.

1. Churches that once were growing but have stopped and remained at the same level for several years
2. Churches that have never seen growth
3. Churches that are reducing in size.

Things may seem hopeless at times especially if your church has had over a decade of non growth. Do not be discouraged, I have seen all kinds of churches in all sizes and denominations, locations and demographics turn themselves around and make a dynamic impact on their community. All you need is a pastor and leadership with the commitment to make the changes needed and the passion to reach out into their communities.

Chapter 1

A New Beginning Starting from Scratch

Time to die and time for new birth

Very truly I tell you, unless a kernel of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains only a single seed. But if it dies, it produces many seeds.

John 12:24

This book is about revitalizing a church that is not growing, stopped growing, never grown or is reducing in size. Many times the best way to change the direction is to let the church die and replant it. This does not mean you close the doors and give it to someone else. It does mean that the leadership forgets everything that has been done in the past and treats the church as a strategic church plant. You stop what you are doing and start over from the beginning.

This may sound extreme but it really is easier in both the short and long run to do so. The simple truth is you are probably reading this book because you realize that what you have been doing is not working and you are smart enough to realize that to change the direction things will have to be done differently. You most likely already realize that they will have to be done drastically different.

When you build your church from the ground up to equip your members, reach your community, disciple and equip all the new people you reach you will be glad you did.

There are 3 basic ways of going about this.

1. Have another church from your denomination or fellowship of churches come and plant a church at your facility.
2. Have another church from your denomination or fellowship of churches come and help provide leadership and a few key people to help give you a kick start.
3. Do it on your own.

The first thing you need to do is decide if you can do this on your own or if you need outside help. There is nothing wrong with asking another church in your denomination or fellowship of churches for help in this process. In fact for many smaller churches this may not only be the best option it may be the only option.

This is something to pray hard about. It is natural for everyone to automatically assume that number 3 is right for them or wants it to be anyway. I know I would. Anything else would suggest that I had been a failure or so it would seem. That however is not necessarily the case. But even if it is the bottom line is you want your church to have an impact on its community and you need to make the right choice. Many a successful man has had to back up and start from the beginning. Many times it is just a matter of resources. Sometimes a small church just does not have the resources to make a go of it and can use out side help to help give it a jump start.

1. A new church plant

When a church is too small it just does not have the resources to restart again. This is especially true if the church has been small for a long time, if it dwindled down to a very small size or it just never got off of the ground.

Before I moved to the Seattle area I was an interim pastor at a small church south of Little Rock Arkansas. The church

had about 20 people in attendance each Sunday all of which were well over 60 except the granddaughter of one of the members and her daughter. They ask me to stay on as pastor and rebuild the church with young families. That sounded great but what were they planning to do it with. They had no one there for a young family to relate to. They had no one willing to teach a class. They had no one to run a nursery. The piano player was nearly deaf and could barely remember how to play the piano and the list goes on.

Since this church already had a building it would have been very feasible for the leaders to contact another church within the denomination about planting a church there. This way the church could remain and be successful and the few people left could hold on to some of their history.

The first church plant I worked with was in this situation. I was doing an internship at Overlake Christian Church. A small church about 30 miles away contacted them about helping them. They had been in existence for about 20 years and had reached around a hundred members at one time but for the last 10 they had hovered between 25 and 35. The leaders at Overlake met with them and later offered to plant a church through them. The church was between pastors. Overlake recruited a new pastor sent several families down and provided training. Within a year the church was averaging 150 and now is averaging around 1500.

Through out the years I have seen this done several times by different churches in different denominations. They have all be successful. I am sure if I looked hard enough I would find some that were not. But if you blend this with having a strategic plan for reaching your community you should not only have a church plant that succeeds but ones that reaches the unchurched as well. .

2. Have another church from your denomination or fellowship of churches come and help provide leadership and a few key people and leadership training. This is another option for those churches that have been stagnant in their growth for a long period of time or have seen their church attendance dropping for a period of time. I know it is hard to ask for help from the outside but often what we need is an outside perspective. As you read on the following chapters it will become clear why an outside perspective can be beneficial.

Unlike the previous option this congregation is more likely to have a greater number of resources available for reaching out to their community and meeting the needs of their church but may be weak in some areas. They may not have quality musicians, leaders, teachers or they may be a congregation of older members in a community growing with young professionals. Teaming up with a larger church of your fellowship and restructuring your church with an influx of families from the other church can re-ignite your church to become a powerful force in your community.

3. Do it on your own. This is the option most of you will naturally want to take. I suggest that you pray about it hard before taking it. Even if you do I would suggest that you bring in some pastoral leaders you respect to meet with you during the process of building from scratch. No matter how hard you try it is hard to be totally objective about your weaknesses as leaders of your church.

Chapter 2

Preparing Your Church for Growth and outreach

Preparing for growth

It takes nine months for a baby to develop in the womb before it is born. It is the same with the pregnancy stage of this plan. It takes time to develop and put every thing in place. Besides restructuring leadership and the church around a vision of reaching your community this time is also spent preparing you congregation for growth. Remember that part of the process of dying and replanting so our Father can create something new and fresh means not carrying any assumption from the past. One of these is that the church is ready for growth.

What does being ready for growth mean? For the purpose of this of this strategy I will focus on

1. Is the leadership ready for growth?
2. Are the members ready for growth?
3. Is the church healthy enough for growth?
4. Is the church organized for growth?

These things may sound obvious to some but really is an assumption that most churches that are not growing make that is simply not a reality. I have spent much time in my retirement reflecting on my past ministries and those of many close friends. In that reflection I can tell you that in ever case that churches that were not growing were lacking in one or more of the three things listed above.

1) Is the leadership ready for growth? If this is really going to work then you need a leadership that is truly on board.

Whatever your leadership structure is if someone does not support your new vision of reaching your community or is not excited and committed to it they should not be on your leadership team. Part of the starting all over should include selecting new leadership based on the new vision. This includes everyone including elders, deacons, teachers, Bible study leaders and any other person that could be considered a leader. The goal of course is to get everyone on board during the early development stage. Many times you find some leaders are committed to doing things the way they have always done things and are not open to new ideas and need to be replaced with people who are committed to the new vision of the church. (I started to say may need to be replaced but in reality it should read must be replaced).

In a very small church you may find you just do not have enough qualified people for leadership positions you need. This is where options 1 and 2 in chapter 1 come into play.

2. Are the members ready for growth? By this I mean do they really want the church to grow? I find many times that the pastor wants the church to grow but the people are happy the way it is. It is comfortable for them. They know everybody. They like the small church feel. Some may have left a previous church because it was too large and they felt left out. If your members have not caught the new vision for the church then you will find yourself bumping your head against a brick wall.

3. Is the church healthy enough for growth? This is another question that many do not want to face but it is necessary. Unhealthy churches can take on many forms. They can have toxic leaders. They can have people bitter over decisions made. It can be a congregation that is so inwardly focused that new people never feel part of the church even if they stay for months. It can be a couple of abusive people or an abusive leader that no one wants to confront. The list can go on and on.

The simple truth is you need to know for certain that when people leave your church they are leaving for healthy reasons. You are always going to have people come and go. No church can meet every ones needs. Here is a link on my website about doing exit interviews. It is a tool you can use to evaluate how you are doing. Do not get hung up on the title as used in business you can tweak it to fit your ministry.

<http://community-outreach.com/church-exit-survey.html>

Of course there are many tools for evaluating the health of a church. Your denomination or fellowship of churches probably has some great tools or resources available.

I would like to recap this section by re-emphasizing that how important this is with some examples.

First is the most toxic pastor I have ever known was convinced that he was the kindest most giving person. I tried to talk with him several times about mutual friends that he had hurt deeply but he just could not see that he had done anything wrong, even when leader after leader in the church began to leave because of the lies and destructive things he did. He was a very charismatic man and there were always new people coming in but for every new person who came in there was one hurt person who left.

Second is I have spent too much time in my ministry working in healing people who were legitimately hurt in their previous church or churches.

The last example is myself, I worked with a pastor in a church plant that was manipulative. He had this way of manipulating words to lead you to believe he agreed with you on something when he actually believed the opposite. He did not believe he lied or deceived the person because he did not actually say he did. I began to be influenced by this

without even realizing it until a friend pointed it out. It was like a slap in the face. Because a friend loved me enough to point this out I was saved from going down a path that could have hurt many brothers and sisters.

4. Is the church organized for growth? Hopefully during this development stage you develop a plan that will bring a steady flow of visitors in from the community. So the natural question is what are you going to do with them when they get there?

Your vision plan should have identified the demographic groups of the people around your church you want to reach. You need to make sure that you are ready to meet the needs of that or those groups. There is not one size fits all plan for a church. It makes a huge difference who you plan to minister too. Here are some examples.

- Your church is centered in a community of young families.
- Your church is centered in a retirement community
- Your church is centered in a college community.
- Your church is centered in urban community.
- Your church is centered in a broad demographic but you chose to emphasize on one special group
- Your church is centered in a low income area.
- You feel called to reach a specific group such as victims of drug and alcohol abuse, low income families, homeless or some other demographic.

You can see from this small list of examples how you would need to have different programming in place to meet the needs of the people from these different demographic groups.

Preparing for outreach

There are a two more things that need to be in place before you begin your major outreach efforts.

First is to make sure point 5 of the strategic community outreach plan is in effect. Develop a community resource development person or team in place. If you have not read it yet you can read this chapter free from my book at

http://www.amazon.com/Dynamic-Community-Outreach-unique-community/dp/0989117901/ref=tmm_pap_title_0

You will need a good church website in place. I am shocked at the number of churches that do not have websites. I did a search for churches in my city. I could not find websites or Facebook pages but for 1 in 4 of the churches. I have talked with many people who do not visit a church with out visiting their website first unless personally brought by a friend. If possible this needs to be a very good website. Later I will mention some resources for those who do not have qualified people to build a website. I wish I had room in this book to cover this subject thoroughly. I have an informative chapter on this and electronic outreach in my book on community outreach and you can find good information on the internet. I would like to mention few that make a good website.

- Easy to find contact information
- Directions to your church
- Times and locations of meetings
- Pictures: It is important to have many pictures of the people of the church in action. This gives a personal feel to the webpage and connection to your church.
- A separate page for every ministry of the church.
- News highlights of good things your church is currently doing in the community
- A list of everything that is done in your church and outside of church service. Things such as tutoring, ESL classes, support groups, social groups, parent and children groups. You get the picture. You want

to communicate that your church is about much more than Sunday morning and **communicates that you really care about the community you live in**

- Provide a link on every page where people can sign up for your newsletter.
- Have pages that people go to sign up for programs.

Chapter 3

Follow Up

I have talked about developing a vision for reaching your community and preparing your church for growth. Next chapter I will discuss preparing your church for outreach and finally the reaching out phase. Before you begin reaching out you need a solid follow-up plan in place. I know this is part of preparing your church for ministry but it deserves its own chapter. I cannot overemphasize the importance of this. This is one of the biggest failures I see in churches especially church plants.

All things considered in church planting I think this is one of the most important things to have in place for success. I have seen many church plants successful with average preaching, below average music, weak leadership, no children's ministry or youth ministry but hardly any without a follow up ministry.

A couple of months ago I visited a new church plant. The people were nice, the worship was nice and the sermon was nice. The problem was they had nothing in place to follow up on me in any way. They did not even have anything to send home with me.

I was discussing this with a pastor who said that in their church the only thing that counted was that people who stayed were those who made at least two friends in the church. So I ask him how many visiting families the church had over the last year. After thinking about it he said around thirty. Then I ask how many of those made two friends and stayed. His answer was one. The final question was what if good follow up could have kept three more of those families there long enough to make two friends and become active in the church.

It is important to understand that follow up begins when they walk in the door. First impressions are very important. Having dedicated greeters who not only say hello but show them where kid's classes are and introduce them to the teachers or helping them with any other need they may have such as accessibility issues if they have a disability. Making sure that signage is good so that they have an easy time getting around. Make sure that the entry way is comfortable and relaxing and inviting.

Some churches are training welcome people to be inside the auditorium. Their job is to identify new people and make them feel welcome. It can be very lonely sitting in a church the first time and not have a single person speak to you.

Have a monthly get to know you dessert. I mentioned the two very successful church plants. Both of them did this. At this meeting we would have the staff, home group leaders and Sunday school teachers. We found that around 75 percent of the people who attended these desserts stayed at the church. You can understand why we made it an effort to get the visitors to come to this dessert.

Many churches ask for an address when a visitor comes and sends a thank you letter. Consider sending four one page newsletters with an encouraging or inspirational article from the pastor, testimonies and information about ministries at your church. There is more information about newspaper and newsletter evangelism on my website

<http://community-outreach.com/newsletter-outreach.htm>

There are just a few ideas. It would be good to do some research to see what would be the best things for you to do to make sure you find the best follow-up for your congregation.

Chapter 4

Preparing and Beginning Outreach

Finally here is the section many of you wanted to get to when you started reading the book. This is the step where you begin not only planning your outreach strategy and outreaches for the next years but where you begin to implement some of them.

Your church is ready and this next year should be filled with events and activities where members of your church are reaching out into your community in a variety of different ways. For that to happen there are things you need to do during the last 6 months of your pregnancy period to be ready.

Here are steps

1. Start your community adoption process.
2. Plan your outreach schedule
3. Bringing them home
4. Alternative bringing them home.
5. Planning your kickoff event or events.

1. If you are going to grow where you are planted and you want to reach families in the area around your church then adopting schools and apartment buildings is a good place to start. It takes some time to develop a relationship with a school so it is a good idea to get started well before the new birth. Here are a few ideas from my book on community outreach about getting in the door to help you get started.

- Most churches start by contacting the principal and asking what they can do to help and what are the greatest needs of the school?

- Some schools and/or school districts have an adopt-a-school program already in place. When this is the case, contact the district or school and ask them to be part of that program.
- Sponsoring a teacher appreciation lunch. This is how our church got in the door. Providing a nice meal for teachers once or twice a year tells the teachers you care. At the meal ask if there is anything the church can do to help them specifically in their classroom.
- Help the school with fundraisers. All schools have fundraisers. You can help the school a lot by participating and helping any way you can. Helping them raise money will quickly open the door for you.
- Have your own fundraiser for the school. The fundraiser can be to buy school supplies for kids, to fund supplies for the teacher's classrooms or just for the school itself. This is an excellent place for a benefit concert with local talent and to even use the school choirs and singing groups.

Apartment complexes provide a lot of people in a small amount of space. The good thing for outreach is there are many ways to successfully reach into these communities. The first thing is to get in the door. It starts off with working with the managers, asking them what you can do to help. You can start off by offering to print the complex newsletter for them and helping with a clean up day I have listed over 30 other things in my book that you can do to reach out to those who live in an apartment complex or trailer park.

2. Plan your outreach schedule. It is time to decide how you are go reach out to your community. There many types of outreaches you can plan.

- There are friendship outreach events and activities.
- There are events such as working side by side with someone in the community that allows you to develop relationship.

- There are outreaches into the community that show your compassion for the community such as free meals for the low income and the homeless to free memorial services.
- There are events such as fundraisers for people with illness that can not afford treatment (these can not usually be planned far in advance).
- There are events that bring exposure to the church such as fairs and flea markets. (I would suggest doing some research about how to do these effectively.)
- There are all kinds of social outreaches.
- There are all kinds of ministry outreaches

My book lists over 250 unique outreach ideas and there are over 200 common ideas that are floating across the internet so there is no limit to what you can come up with.

You will need to research your community to see what events it has that you may want to participate in and decide what the most productive way you can participate is.

3. Bringing them home. This is where you survey everyone who has have gone to your church for at least 6 months over the last 5 to 10 years. (Either of these numbers are flexible and are determined by you.) I think that this is best done by an anonymous survey by mail with a postage paid return envelope with the church's address as the return address. You want people to be completely honest. Then near the time of your kickoff event you send a letter to everyone telling them what you learned and what you are doing to address the concerns. You also share some of the exciting things that are beginning to happen and invite them to the kickoff event and one or more other events.

The survey should be short and should include at least these questions.

- What are some of the things you think the church did well?
- What are some areas where you think that the church needs to improve?
- We are in the process reviewing everything we do as a church, what are the most important changes you feel we can make?
- We have decided that we want to be a church that is deeply involved in helping our community. Thinking about the community the church is in. what do you feel the best way we can do this?

At the end of the survey thank them for their insights. Let them know that if they have a dream of how a church should reach out to the community that they can call the church and discuss it. It just may be that it can become part of the new mission of the church. Also mention at the end that included is a postcard they can fill out if they want to be informed of the types of involvement in the community you decide to be involved with that they can participate in as member or not.

If you are a new pastor to a church doing this on a personal basis is an effective way to get old members back.. In this case you call everyone one over the last 5 years and ask for their help. You explain that you are new and that you want an honest opinion of what they thought was both good about the church and where it could use improvement. Also ask is there anything that the church can do to support them in any way now. It is amazing how effective this can be at bringing families back into the church and kick starting a new ministry.

4. Bringing them home alternative. If you are a smaller church and having another church in your denomination or fellowship of churches coming in to help you restructure and rebuild there is a different route you can follow. Assuming that since you are a small church you are close to the people

who have left and know the reasons they left you can contact them near the end of the first year and let them know the new vision and the changes and opportunities that are taking place. The survey is still nice. Many people like to feel their opinions count. In this case it could be done with friendly phone call.

Many small churches lose people simply because they are not able to meet the needs of families. Such as there are no children or teens for the children to associate with or people their age at the church. Sometimes there are people who want to be involved in something where they feel they are making a difference in people's lives outside the church and did not find the opportunity in a small church. As the new leadership team forms and you see the strengths and the holes in ministry that are filled it is easy to contact previous members and invite them back.

There is an old saying that it is easiest to pick the low hanging fruit first. Many of these people had friends at the church and really did not want to leave however they felt they had to put the needs of their families first.

The first church I ever participated with this type in averaged 25 people before asking for help. I was part of the team from the sponsoring church that came. I started the children's ministry and trained the teachers. We brought 30 people with us. We spent about six months in the planning stage. We met for a month with the original church for two months getting everything set up and organized before the official kickoff Sunday. During those two months we contacted most of the people who had gone to the church over the last 5 years.

Our kickoff Sunday had 120 people and we settled in at about 80. The church gained about 30 people mostly from previous members because the church was now in a place to

meet their needs. Then we grew in 6 months to an average of 100 and 150 with in the first year.

This sounds exciting and it was, but while the church continued to grow it was ultimately disappointing to me as we never began to reach the unchurched community. This is why I advocate building the new plan with a vision around outreach. It is great to grab the low hanging fruit. It is great to have an exciting church that other Christians want to go to. However the bottom line is we need to inspire and train and provide them with opportunities to reach out into our communities and make disciples.

5. Planning your kickoff event or events. You have conceived your new vision, been through the pregnancy stage preparing your leaders and people for reaching out to your community and a growing church. It is now time to give birth to the vision. Just like in a natural pregnancy there has been growth happening all along. Your leaders and members have been growing and you have probably started some reaching out in your community and some increase in attendance. It is now time for to give it a specific birth. This is a definable event.

In preparing for this often a church will rebrand itself at this point especially if another church is helping and it is being treating as or is a new church plant. This reasonable since this is what you have done. You let the old church die and have let our Father place a new vision in your hearts and have built on that vision therefore it make since that you reflect that in the image you show the community.

One of the ways is with a name change. A name change always suggests something new. I have mentioned the first church I worked with that went through this process. They changed their name from a denominational name to Christ's Church. I think in most cases it is a good thing to reflect publicly the changes that have happened inwardly.

If you have your own building then the same applies here as well. If you are changing your church on the inside then it is good to reflect it on the outside. Money is always an issue, if you can find a way to afford it new paint on the outside with a fresh color scheme it says new to the community. If you can do the inside as well that is great. At a minimum everything needs to be cleaned up and made as attractive as possible before your official opening event.

The event itself can take on many forms. It can be as simple as a Sunday service that is promoted well to inviting a big name speaker to come and speak at the church. I personally think the big name speaker is better for a later event. I think it is best for people coming to see who you are

In general I think it is best to keep it simple. Plan a real nice service. Invite everyone who has come to the church over the past 10 years. Print up nice invitations for members to give friends and family. Look again at chapter 4 of section 1 to get more marketing ideas for your kickoff service.

A question that may be asked at this point is if there is a specific time of year to plan on work up to this event. It is a question often asked in church planting. I do not believe there is a better time of year while some may be better avoided. The Christmas holiday season is not a good time. Some say summer is not a good time. I think is a great time to lead up to late summer start (September). There are many inexpensive and easy outreach things you can do in the summer to bring attention to your church.

All in all I think the best time is when you are ready. You conceive the vision, you prepare and when you are ready you give birth. It does not matter when it is you just do it. You do not want to lose momentum. Doing it before you are ready can have negative consequences and by waiting to long you can lose excitement.

Chapter 5

Executing the Strategic Plan

Now that the birth of the new church has happened you have to grow the new vision into your community. You have outlined the demographics of your immediate community and decided how you are going to begin your outreach. It is time to begin implementing it. Hopefully you have already put some of it in motion.

Every church is different so I can not presume what your plan may be so for example purpose I will create an example church and place it in a location in a city close to me.

Remember I listed three paths you can take

1. Have another church from your denomination or fellowship of churches come and plant a church at your facility.
2. Have another church from your denomination or fellowship of churches come and help provide leadership and a few key people to help give you a kick start.
3. Do it on your own.

For the purpose of this book I am choosing to use path number two. I know that most who read this book will be choosing to do it on their own. I am choosing to use the second path because it is easier to read about doing it this way and applying it to path number three than the other way around.

I will describe church and the demographics of the immediate community and show a basic plan based on some of the work we have done in the past. This will include

1. The information about the church, its history and its decision to change its direction..
2. How the new plan started to develop.
3. The demographics
4. Where they saw the basis of their outreach
5. Identifying outreach resources near the church.
6. Outreach preparations before the kickoff.
7. Things the church did during the pregnancy period to get ready for the new birth
8. What was the initial outreach into their two primary areas of emphasis?

1. Information about the church. The church is over 65 years old. When the church began there was no city here not even a suburb it was just a bump on the highway. The interstate was built the metropolitan areas north and south met and the area grown from around a thousand into a city of 90,000. Early it saw some real growth and built a beautiful building. Its location was close to the interstate and the area changed rapidly and became a combination of commercial, retail and high density housing. As the city grew rapidly and the nature of the community changed from a relaxed easy going community to a bustling twenty something suburbia the aging members and leaders just did not relate to and membership started dropping. This happened slowly over a thirty year time. The church dropped from 150 to about 35 where it stayed for about 8 years. Note: this could be just as easily be over a 15, 10 or 5 year period.

The pastor had been at the church for about a year working hard to change this direction and wants to reach the unchurched and hurting in his city. Then he read this book (Sorry I could not resist). As he looked at the make up of his church he and the leadership thought it may be a good idea to ask another church for some help. First they met with the district leader of their denomination. Together they approached one of the large congregations in the

denomination. After several meetings and much prayer they decided to partner together to restart the church.

The support church agreed to loan 10 families for one year and each of the families at that time could decide if they wanted to stay. (Usually the support church is father away and the families who volunteer live closer to the community your church is in. I have noticed that most of the time at least half will stay). Since this is about executing the plan I will not go into how they worked out the details of working together.

I used the example of a church that was small enough to need outside help. With the addition of the new families they brought the attendance at the beginning of the new work to around 70 not a bad place to begin. Note: The new families do not come until 3 months before the starting Sunday. If your attendance is already above 50 you are most likely in a position to do it without outside help. If you are much below 50 then you may find that your people resources are limited in starting fresh. Much will depend on the gifts that those people bring to the table and their ability and willingness to participate in the new vision.

2. How the plan started to develop. First was developing the new leadership team. Since it was decided that together with the supporting church that they would be treating this as a new church start as opposed to new church plant. The distinction is between the supporting church planting a church in the location and the two churches working together to start a new church. It is the difference between plan one and plan two of chapter one of this section. In plan one the supporting church is planting a church and provides the entire leadership team and pastor. In plan two they work together in developing the leadership team.

This meant that there was to be a transfer of leadership. In a real sense the existing church closed its doors and a new

leadership took over. (This is the most difficult part of the process. It is much easier if the leadership understands that this is part of the process from the beginning). It was decided that each of the pastors of the two churches would identify 3 leaders each who were excited about the vision to take the initial leadership roles.

I mentioned earlier how important the new leadership team is. I felt it import to re-emphasize the importance of leadership that is totally on board even if you are large enough to do it all your self. Also it is important to understand that any supporting church is going to want to make sure that a strong leadership team with vision is in place if they are going to invest time and resources to help.

3. The demographics. Most of the housing anywhere close to the church is high density housing. There are several large apartment complexes, 2 large condo complexes, 4 large low income senior housing buildings, a nice senior manufactured home park on a nine hole golf course and out past these there are some small neighborhood communities. The apartments have mostly young couples and single parents and singles; the condos and neighborhoods are mixed.

The demographics of the church are: are mostly older and the people coming in from the supporting church are mostly younger families with young children.

There were some negatives they found that had to face because of their location. While they were on the busiest road in town with in a quarter of a mile of the interstate they were also in the center of town. They were on the outer edge of town by the interstate with the main retail district and commercial areas between them and the main residential areas. While you could see the building from the main road it was sandwiched in between two hotels and a park and ride. It was also two blocks from a transit center that was known for regular out breaks of violence.

I mention the negatives because it played a role in planning their outreach. In the early days of the church before the area grew it was central to the community. There were few churches and it was in the heart of every thing. As the residential areas grew away from it and the commercial built around it new churches were built in the heart of the residential areas. This is where children of members started going to church and some of the older members as well. So it cemented the conviction that they needed to grow where they were planted.

4. Where they saw the basis of their outreach. Based on the make up of the congregation and the local demographics they decided that they should concentrate their efforts on families with young children and seniors. They also saw that a major part of the outreach would be to lower income families and seniors because of the great numbers of this group near the church.

As with most churches they had a vision of having an impact across their whole city. They also realized that you have to move step by step and that this focus was step one. They also realized that by reaching those close to them it opened doors to reaching out their friends and families expanding their outreach naturally across their city and beyond.

5. Identifying the outreach resources near the church. Part of the demographic research is to discover what is near your church that you can take advantage of to reach out to your community. Here is what they found; you will see how these played a role in their outreach planning.

- Within a half a mile of the church was a park on a small lake which was one of the busiest in a 20 mile area.
- They were within a quarter-mile of the farmers market.

- The closest elementary school was struggling academically with above average single parent and low income families.
- The cities DART services (Dial a Ride Transit)
- Three of the low income senior housing buildings had activity rooms that were open to outside activities. The World Championship of Sand Sculpting event was held with in a quarter of a mile of the church the last three weeks of August.
- One of the best resources was their facility with its location, full kitchen and large fellowship hall.

6. Outreach preparations before the kickoff. While the bulk of the outreach will begin after the restart of the church there are some efforts that need to begin before then and some preparations that need to be made. Here are some of the things they did.

- Knowing that they would be working with many low income families they developed a community resource coordinator and a community resource manual for the church.
- They made connections with the school and the school's PTA. They started the relationship building process that was going to play a big part of the outreach during the first year.
- They identified someone to head up the children's ministry and the senior adult ministry.
- Either the pastor or one of the leaders joined each of the civic groups in the community. The church joined the chamber.
- They made contact with the managers of the low-income senior housing complexes and started developing relationships.

7. Things the church did during the pregnancy period to get ready for the new birth. It was a busy time getting ready. For many years there was not much more than

Sunday morning services with no children's or youth ministry to speak of. Besides planning most of the work happened during the three months before the new birth because that is when the families from the sponsoring church came.

Here are some of the steps

- A full children's ministry was developed with teachers for all the classes. Even though there were only a couple of teens a couple of youth leaders were developed and worked in conjunction with the supporting church. They taught classes on Sunday and participated in other youth events with the supporting church. This changed as they grew and developed their own youth group.
- A follow up program was developed. This included a four issue follow up newsletter.
- They developed a four issue new to the community newsletter and signed up with a mailing list broker to be notified when new people moved into the community. You can read about this on my website at <http://community-outreach.com/newsletter-outreach.htm>
- They built a website for the church and a Facebook page. They did not have tech savvy people in their church so they used a hosting company with website building software built in. They looked at Christian companies but they were all too expensive. The two biggest names in hosting have great plans and are less than \$100 dollars a year. Intuit <http://websitebuilder.intuit.com/build-a-website>
Godaddy <http://www.godaddy.com/hosting/website-builder-new.aspx>
- They had training classes in lifestyle evangelism and using social networking as an outreach tool for the church.

- They did the previous member survey. They were surprised to see that this comprised over 50 families over the last 7 years.

8. The initial outreaches. This is what many of you have been waiting for. Finally what did they do to reach out to their community? They planned big which was a little stretch for the size of the church. Their hope was that several previous families would come back and several new families would join with the initial outreach to the community and family and friends of new members. They had the main things there were going to do and things they would add later if the initial growth they hoped for happened

There were costs involved. They were blessed in that they had some savings to tap into. Much of their summer outreach was based on fundraising for children's groups with some of the money coming back to the church to help restore the savings and pay for future outreach. They had also put money in the budget for outreach and had nine months to save before the new birth started.

The new birth of the church happened in the early spring which worked well in the outreach to families and to the community.

The outreach was broken down into multiple categories.

1. Outreach to families
2. Outreach to seniors
3. Outreach to the community.

1. Outreach to families. Here are the things that they planned. Many of the things that are in this section can be also outreaches to the community. Here is what they did.

They bought 1 toys such as trikes, cars, mini bouncy houses and toys, slides as well as balls and other play equipment and started two groups for parents and children at the church.

- Mommy and Me. This is a one to two hour time for moms to bring their children and to socially interact with other parents and children. It is centered on preschool children. The play is structured and designed to develop interaction between parent and child. Some places have dad and me groups as well and some have parent and me groups.
- Preschool Play. It is similar to Mommy and Me but centered on open play.

These were a central part of all the marketing outreach. They were mentioned in the new visitor follow up newsletters and the new to the community newsletter and the first general mailing.

- For after the new school year started they started a Confident Kids support group. Confident Kids is a Christian support group for children. It helps vulnerable children to develop life skills based on a Christian foundation. <http://www.confidentkids.com>
- It was their goal that by the second half of the year or the second year to start a DivorceCare for Kids group. DivorceCare for Kids is a Christian based support group to help children deal with the issues of divorce. <http://www.dc4k.org/>

They would have liked to have started both at the same time but the support groups are volunteer intensive. They promoted Confident Kids in the apartment complexes, at the play groups, and in their newsletters.

- Adopted Elementary School. There were two elementary schools near by almost the same distance from the church. They hoped in a couple of years to adopt them both. They chose the one in which the

children from the apartments and condo's close to them went to.

- There were many things they did with the school over the year. They hosted teacher appreciation lunches each semester, raised money for teachers supplies, many of the seniors volunteered at the school as well a couple of parents and helped with after school tutoring.

Here are a couple of things they in their adopted apartment complex.

- They had a couple of guys who liked to bike. They held a bike repair day where they showed parents and kids how to repair and maintain bikes.
- They collected bikes and cleaned them up and did any repair needed and give them to kids whose family could not afford one. They found many free bikes with a regular ad on craigslist telling what they were doing and with Facebook posts.
- There was a run down play area at the complex. They sponsored a clean up and repair day.

2. Outreach to seniors. As mentioned above the appointed to be over senior ministries. The senior outreach the first year was directed at the three low income senior outreach buildings a quarter of a mile from the church. These buildings are for 55 and over and are not assisted living but are filled with people with a lot of live to live and a lot to give back to their community and played a big part in the overall outreach of the church. The vibrant senior ministry was promoted in the general mailings, the follow up and new mover newsletters.

Like many churches they found that those over 60 preferred a more rational worship service while those under 35 wanted a more contemporary style. (This is changing rapidly as baby boomers are heading into retirement.) They started two

services a couple of months before the new birth. The first was a traditional and the second was a more contemporary yet still reflected the historical values of the church. While the majority of the seniors went to the first service (traditional) there were many who preferred the style of the second.

Here are some of the things they did for outreach. It sounds like a lot but most of it was done by the seniors them selves.

- I mentioned the DART (Dial a Ride Transit) the city had. They arranged with the transit system to pick up people at the three low income buildings for the morning service and pick them up again. They had a continental breakfast at the church before the first service.
- They already had two members with apartments in two of the buildings who agreed to host a video Bible study in their homes. Before the year was out they had several of these.
- They offered basic computer training at the church.
- They had a monthly tea at each of the buildings. The women loved getting dressed up and coming to a social. They had a formal high tea at the church where the ladies from the complexes invited daughters and granddaughters.
- They had a member who was part of a large choral group. She started a choral group at the housing building centered on Christian music. It was designed from the beginning to be a serious musical chorus group who travel to churches and local events.
- The church building was so close they had a coffee and pastry time every morning at the church. Being in a very short walking distance this became popular among the seniors who always were looking for something free especially a meal. This was something they were planning on building into a major outreach to the entire community.

- Several of the seniors got together and organized a Seniors Prom at the church. Most of the people that lived in the complex were single. It was promoted as a couples event. Bring your spouse, a friend or one of your children. If you did not have someone the church would provide you with an escort for the evening.

3. Outreach to the community. There were several little friendship evangelism events such as passing out water at a 10k race and a couple of other things you can read about on the internet under friendship evangelism. There were two major things they did. These both were strong community events that brought a lot of exposure to the church and were a strong outreach to families.

1. Weekly fundraising at the farmers market for children's and youth groups.
2. Fundraising for their adopted school and its families at The World Championship of Sand Sculpting.

Since they started in the spring they had to gear up for the summer outreaches. Both were centered on providing soft drinks and refreshments and both the farmers market and the sand sculpting event. For the fundraisers they decided to serve coffee and donuts in the morning and bottled water and fruit juice and soda along with specifically ice cream confection they got from a local distributor. They also rented two spots so they could provide a relaxation station (a place to sit down in the shade).

This required some initial expense. They had to buy a nice 20 by 10 awning. They needed two by the end of the summer but their portions of the fundraising bought the second one used for the sand sculpting event. They bought a used glass-topped ice cream cooler for the ice cream and a

used generator because there was no electricity available at the farmers market.

The fundraising part was set up so that the children's group or the school got the larger part of the funds raised. They worked on a 75-25 split. This was after the cost of the space rental and the cost of food and supplies. This provided the 250 to 500 dollars for the groups. Also if the group was selling cookies or popcorn or anything else they were allowed to sell it at the event.

1. Fundraising for children's and youth programs. This provided a ton of exposure for the church and an opportunity to develop relationship with many parents and community leaders. The local farmers market was open for 14 weeks on Saturdays. The church contacted the Cub Scouts, Boy Scouts, Brownie Scouts, Girl Scouts, Campfire Boys and Girls clubs and other such youth organizations. They worked to sponsor one group each week at the farmers market. Kids and parents from the group helped with the event. Signage on the awning identified the Church and other signage identified who the fundraiser was for.

This provided the church the opportunity to work with the leaders of 14 different children's and youth organizations. The leaders and parents of each of the groups all knew that the church was investing in helping them out. Hundreds of people each week saw the church involved with helping with children in the community.

14 weeks in a row sounds like a lot for a young church. They found seven teams of two people (mostly couples) who took two Saturdays each. The new birth was in the spring just five weeks before the first Saturday of the farmers market so they had their leadership team for this in place three months before that.

2. Fundraising for their adopted school. The sand sculpting event was a little more difficult because it was open for three weeks straight and vendors were expected to be there every day. They had only planned on adopting one of the two elementary schools close to them but decided that there would be enough money and they would need enough manpower to include both in the event.

This is one of the places that having someone from the staff belonging to the civic clubs paid off. They were able to team up with one of the civic clubs, to help run the event. They contacted the two fire departments that were closest to both schools which jumped right in since they already did fundraisers for the schools. They put together a team with the principals, a club member someone from each fire department and members of each PTA.

They got a lot of involvement from the civic club, members of the PTAs, teachers and a few parents from the school. The church provided the awning with its name on it and signage showed that the church, civic club and fire department were raising funds for the two schools. They provided the same things as at the farmers market with the civic club providing hot dogs and hamburgers on the weekend.

Other things they did in outreach to the general community.

- Weddings: They had a beautiful historic building. They made a special page about weddings on their website. They hired someone from the church who was really interested in weddings to be the wedding coordinator. This person had a booth at the major wedding show about the building rental. She booked the weddings and monitored the weddings. There was a fee for her service included in the cost of each wedding..

You may not think of weddings as an outreach. But there are many ways that you can reach out to people who are not members of your church through weddings. I talk about some of these ways in my book on community outreach. Not only can you have direct outreach to the couples and their families you can get a lot of exposure from hundreds of people coming into your building to notices in newspapers and invitations.

- They had a free hot chocolate stand at the annual Christmas tree lighting.
- New Year's cancer patient celebration of life. They contacted cancer support groups and families for a celebration of one more year.

Chapter 6

Where they went from there

Since the church was now built around the vision of reaching out to its community this was only the beginning. Since they had their own building with easy access from town and the interstate they invited support groups to use their facility.

Being located between two park and rides they coordinated with other churches in developing a morning coffee house that met from 6 am till 10 am. They had a couple of paid baristas and volunteers to help. Different groups had Bible studies and discussion groups. They had affordable prices so it became a popular place for the public.

Of course they did more and more with the school. They adopted both elementary schools. They also adopted the closest middle school and began training the middle schoolers in how to reach out to the kids in their school. As the youth group grew they became very involved in outreach to the high school.

They developed a computer lab that they used for tutoring, GED training and job training program to list a few things. They also used it with the Home School Association and the States free online high school.

Conclusion

I have walked you through the model as applied to a church that is small and ask for help from another church in its denomination or fellowship of churches. The basic principle is basically the same if you do it all yourself or if another church plants a church through you.

I would like to re-emphasize that it is imperative that all leadership be on board. The vision also needs to be spread through the body of the church. It is time we see that the western world has become one of the greatest mission fields on the planet and take the great commission seriously.

This book will be ever evolving. If you have something you think would be of benefit in the book or a community outreach idea that you think may not be listed in my other book on out reach you can find my email address at website <http://community-outreach.com/index.htm>

Types and Areas of Outreach

There are many ways and groups of people you can reach out to many that you may have never thought of. To end the book I am including a list of chapters of my book "Dynamic Community Outreach. Ok I admit it is a final plug for the book but it also will provide you with many ideas about areas of outreach that you may have not thought about and if you do not want to buy the book you can research those areas yourself.

Section 1

Chapter 1 - Developing Community Resource Ministry

This chapter describes how to develop a community resource coordinator to help meet the needs of the people you meet in any outreach or church ministry you participate in.

Chapter 2 - Newspaper and Newsletter Evangelism

This chapter gives 5 different ways to use newspapers and newsletters to evangelize and reach your community. It contains many resources to help you out.

Chapter 3 - Adopt an Apartment Complex

This chapter shows you how to adopt an apartment complex and includes over 30 ways to reach out to the people who live there.

Chapter 4 - Adopt a School

This chapter shows you how to adopt a school and over 25 things you can do in the school to reach out to staff and families.

Chapter 5 - Fairs, Farmers Markets and Swap Meets and Community Events

This chapter includes many unique ways to reach out at fairs and over 40 ideas for community events.

Chapter 6 - Mall Outreach

Chapter 6 provides information on 6 unique ways of reaching your community through a shopping mall.

Chapter 7 - Out Reach to Community Leaders

Here are over 10 ways to reach out to community and civic leaders.

Chapter 8 - Sports Outreach

In this chapter you will find powerful ways to use sports to reach out and evangelize your community. It includes many resources to help you get started.

Chapter 9 - Follow up Outreach

Seven unique ideas on how to follow up on people you contact at outreaches and also those who visit your church.

Section 2 - Using Your Building for Outreach

Section 2 starts off discussing the basics in using your building for outreach. It also includes several basic ways you can use it for outreach.

Chapter 1 - Using your building as a Community Center

Discusses how to work through the parks department in getting programming into your building it also has over 10 ideas for using your building for outreach.

Chapter 2 - Social Outreach for Parents and Children

Shows you how to develop outreach ministries to parents and children it has 5 powerful ideas for reaching this group.

Chapter 3 - Senior outreach and Programming for Seniors.

This is one of the most powerful chapters in the book. An entire church could be built around this chapter. It has twenty ideas plus resources for reaching this community.

Chapter 4 - Educational Outreach For children

Here is another chapter that you could build a church on. It includes 15 powerful ways of reaching children and their families. It includes many resources to get you started.

Chapter 5 - Educational Programming for Adults

Here are three major ways you can reach adults with educational programming and includes many resources to help you get started.

Chapter 6 - Using technology to reach your community

Here are some powerful way of using technology to reach your community.

Chapter 7 - Community support

If you really want to reach your community then this chapter can help. It shows power ways to change the lives of people in your community. It has many resources to help you get started.

Chapter 8 - Outreach through the arts

Thirteen ways you can use the arts to reach your community. It includes dozens of resources to get you started.

Chapter 9 - Reaching into the Disability Community

Here is another chapter that you can build an entire church with. Over a dozen ways you can reach people with disabilities and their families.

Chapter 10 - Weddings

Ten powerful ways to reach people who are planning a wedding.

Chapter 11 - Graduation Outreach

Six ways you may never have thought of to reach people who are graduating.

Chapter 12 - Prom Outreach

Here you will find ten unique ways to reach people through proms.

Chapter 13 - Prisoner Re-entry Programs

Five ways to reach people leaving prison and their families

Chapter 14 - A church Inside a Church

This chapter shows a very powerful way to reach your community

Chapter 15 - Helping with the Death of a Loved One

Five ideas to reach people during this difficult time in their lives

Chapter 16 - Coffee Ministry

This is a great chapter for church planters and people who want to evangelize their communities.

Chapter 17 - Alcohol Free Clubs

Five ways that you can reach many people for Christ

Chapter 18 - Children's Outreach

Seven unique ways to reach children that are not already mentioned in the book.

Appendixes

Included are 5 appendixes to help apply these ideas.