

Chapter 1 : Church Planting, Part 4: Planning the Launch - calendrierdelascience.com

A church planting church is open to God-given growth. Following Godly Leadership "The news about them reached the ears of the church at Jerusalem, and they sent Barnabas off to Antioch.

Learn from those who have gone before you and have experienced the challenges and rewards of launching new congregations. How did you measure the success of your launch? Launching strong is good, but launching strong and then staying strong is even better. One practical idea is to have a flexible floor plan for seating that enables you to make the room feel good on the day. The last thing you want is acres of empty seats because you believed for more people, and make it feel empty for those who actually do come. Remember that few people care about the headcount, but most people care about the atmosphere. If more people showed up than the people volunteering, I thought, Hey, this is going to be a golden success. We did take a big risk. In all seriousness, we were excited if one person came and gave their life to Christ. I think, if I remember correctly, five people gave their life to Christ that day. We just wanted to have a service that represented the heart of God for the community. And then, a hundred people are fine. I want to make sure that we are correctly engaging people in the community to come to the church. We wanted to have more people come back the week after we launched. Slow and steady growth. People are less impressed with numbers in our urban context and more impressed by having genuine relational connection with people and having a church that reflects the diversity of their community. People began to experience the contagious community. Virtually every visitor ended up coming back and then inviting a friend over time. We wanted people to get plugged into community immediately and so having three small groups going already was key to enabling this. We wanted people who came to the launch service to be able to describe in one or two sentences the vision of our church after hearing the first sermon. So we just felt like we want to be above that hundred. With a hundred people, we really feel like we could get momentum rolling. So that matrix has things like attendance, which is obvious; finances, in other words, are we in the black yet? And then how many people are in small groups? How many small groups do we have? So those were all the matrix that we put together a real, easy, obvious system to get people in the journey so we have more than just church attendance to measure our success. I thought, In a community of 17, if we can get near , , that would be great. Our launch service was 55 people. I had probably deemed it not successful. After the service, I was sitting in the back. My cousin William lives here, and he helped plant the church. The average church in Jones County is about 65 people, and these are churches that have been going years and years and years. And here we were, on Sunday No. Our church is a little bit over people now. We did not have a number goal. Did we accomplish our 25 community events? Did we consistently meet with future New City Church members? Could we get and keep our core team in our City Groups? Were all leader and volunteer spots filled in our leadership matrix? By constantly asking and answering these questions, we were able to have a strong launch of people. We had no defining measure of success at launch simply because we knew that there would be so many people from around the country there that day to wish us well. Our measure of success was week two and how well we did that week to connect with the new people that walked through the doors that morning. All of our marketing paid off three months later. That is when we started to see people find out about our church and make the step towards engagement. First, the obvious challenge of limited financial resources, like every planter. Our team had far more ideas than we had the finance to pay for, so we had to really focus on leverageâ€”what did we believe would give us the biggest return for dollars spent? As it happened, our launch date was the coldest day of the winter. We also found that many people in New York City had little to no experience with church at all, but we saw that as our advantageâ€”a clean slate to work with. Getting cynical people to get off the sidelines and into the game is never easy, but we overcame this by not allowing people to complain unless they were going to be part of the solution. We told folks this was their chance to help be and build the church they had always dreamed of. People had felt like they lost their job, lost their homes. And we talked to numbers of people that lost their church. Some churches had closed down. That was one of the challenges. Another challenge was that we were meeting in a school. So we really went the extra mile in making this school. We

have a pretty extensive setup. We have this really sharp stage. We bring in a portable resource center and hospitality center and just really put all the things in there that we would have if we had a church building. Our biggest challenge was simply letting people know that there was a new church in their neighborhood. We overcame this by consistently being in the neighborhood all the time. When we had a meeting, we met in the neighborhood. When we went to lunch, we ate in our neighborhood. And we did 25 community events in our neighborhood. Getting the word out in an urban environment is one of the more difficult things to figure out. There are so many competing voices and options for a Sunday morning. What do you know now about holding a launch service that you wish you had known before your launch service? Smile and make sure your team does too. On the day a few of my team looked stressed out. I wish that we would have had the opportunity to do mass mailers and these types of things to let people know that we were there, just to have the opportunity to create a bigger buzz around what we were doing. It would be nice to have both. I did not know the toll that planting a church would take on me and my family. I think in our current Christian culture, we glamorize church planting. It is anything but glamorous. It takes a lot out of you. Church planting is an ugly process. The brutality shows the beauty. I would have definitely launched in September rather than October to get a little better momentum going before the holidays because I felt like by the time Thanksgiving and Christmas had got here, our church was still filled with strangers. And it was not a warm, fuzzy feeling of community for the holidays. So I would have definitely launched a month sooner. I went into launch with a great coaching network and advisors that were church planters that allowed me and my team to be completely prepared. We were ready, and nothing happened that we were not prepared for. Make sure everyone on your launch team has a serving role for that morning. Our setup was crazy easy. We rented out a nightclub that did all the work for us, allowing us to simply show up, plug in and play. As a result, we have been severely crippled in our church culture toward serving. We eventually moved out of the space not only for financial reasons we found something much cheaper, but to offer more opportunities for people to serve. However, it has been a challenge to move our community into this new reality. Everyone expects that it will be done for them, and this was only 1. What advice would you give prospective church planters about how to make the launch service successful? Focus on people, not the numbers. How many people come back is more important than just how many people turn out on day one. Also, enjoy the launch day because it goes so fast. They tell you the same thing when you get married. Take the time to celebrate and enjoy the moment because before you know it, the day is over. And one practical thing: There is nothing wrong with planning for a big launch day, but you must have a discipleship plan in place first for the launch to sustain itself. You must be modeling what you are calling people to do before you go public. It is better to design a three-phase launch that allows new people who get involved along the way to feel like they are helping to build the church as well.

Chapter 2 : Reflections on a Church Plant Pt. 3 - Calvary Church Planting Network

As you continue to work through how to fire church plant staff, be sure to keep it a very human process by communicating well. Letting someone go from your church staff isn't going to be easy.

Let me give you an example because you really need to wrestle with your motives. One of my life goals is to own a vacation home. Honestly, that can sound a little extravagant. Is it really necessary? But here is the motivation. We view it as part of our nest egg. And we want to return the favor. We want the house to be a place of ministry. We want to use it to bless others. Let me talk about some of my travel goals. I want to go lots of places and see lots of things. What is the motivation? Part of it is that I love to see new places and experience new things. But I honestly believe that adding stamps to my passport is one way I fulfill the Genesis Commission to fill the earth. The Creator wanted us to experience His creation! Travel is one way I worship God. I worship the Creator by appreciating His creation! But I do have giving goals. When he died, the trust fund was created and every year we give away tens of thousands of dollars to upstart ministries. But two of my other goals are to write 25 books and sell 10 million copies. Those are big, hairy audacious goals. And the primary motivation is influence. I want to help people reach their God-given potential. That is my modus operandi. So check your motives. Here are some of the motives that I think are healthy and holy: You can set a goal to honor You can set a goal to maximize your potential. A lot of my physical goals fall into that category. Most of my influence goals are motivated by the desire to make a difference. That is why I write. That is why I preach. You can set a goal because it will bring you joy. There is nothing wrong with that. The chief end of man is to glorify God and enjoy Him forever!

Chapter 3 : Profile of a Church Planting Church, Part 2 | For The Church

The previous post talked about how there are lots of church planting networks, but many of them are opposed to Free Grace Theology.. The question could be asked why we even need new churches.

Compensation for Church Personnel is usually divided into three categories: Salary, Benefits and Reimbursements. Churches are employers and should administrate a good and fair compensation in these three categories. Ordained ministers will have housing options that are included in this category. Benefits provided by the church are good opportunities to reward and market employees above their salary option. Churches need to see Compensation as a major portion of the church budget, and it must be appropriately planned, administrated and accounted for. There is stewardship required on the part of the employer and the employee. Personnel Administration for a church requires a thoughtful salary plan that describes how it will conduct operations with regard to salary, benefits and reimbursements. A salary plan, establishes the policies and procedures that the congregation wishes to have administered to its employees. According to Robert H. Determine the Mission and Purpose of the church. Create a leadership organization to meet that mission. Write job descriptions for all employee positions. Determine the relative worth of each job description. Determine the categories and limits of a scale of salaries to be paid. Establish policies and procedures relating to the administration of pay. Determine benefits that will be provided. Determine reimbursable business expenses offered. Basically, this writer finds two of the eight points grossly violated in the local church. One “ churches omit their mission and purpose, and two “ churches do not determine the relative worth of the job description to the mission and purpose. Determining the relative worth of each job description is vitally important. These usually fall into four basic ministry areas: Pastoral, Educational, Musical and Support. Relative worth is placed upon a position as it applies to the overall mission and purpose of the church. The value and amount of personnel in a church is not to be based on church wealth, but church purpose. Create the mission of the church and giving will come to support it and the personnel needed to carry out that mission. Determine the worth of a position not by history of a position “ again, focus on the worth of the position based on mission. When a mission or priority is added, add staff; if a mission or priority is changed or omitted, change or omit staff positions. Church Personnel must have worth and purpose, and deserve a fair compensation. Churches need to fund positions that create missions “ not just positions to be filled because the church has always had it.

Chapter 4 : Church Planning Part 2: Elements of a Strategic Plan | OnStrategy Resources

What does it take to plant churches in an urban setting? In this series of three short videos, North American Mission Board President Kevin Ezell talks with two Atlanta pastors about the.

That missionary impetus has dissipated; in , TEC planted only three new congregations. The first part of this essay considered the demographic and theological imperatives for planting new churches and two impediments TEC must overcome. This second and concluding installment outlines practical steps that the TEC can take to recover its missionary momentum. Instead, we should adapt an idea from Harvard professor Sara Lawrence-Lightfoot, who suggests that persons needing to downsize because of financial, health, or other reasons envision the change as a generative opportunity *How to Think About Downsizing Your Life*, Wall Street Journal, June 23, On a congregational level, small congregations might envision their demise generatively by: Front-line ministry mostly occurs in the parish, yet most bishops tend to spend a disproportionate amount of time with their staff and rarely interact directly with the majority of their parish clergy. How many bishops regularly attend deanery meetings to be available to their clergy? Like most of us, bishops are busy. Bishops, therefore, need to re-focus by intentionally minimizing the time spent on problem clergy, vacancies, etc. Effective bishops are chief pastors who become the wind that provides the lift clergy need to soar like eagles. To some significant degree, a diocesan bishop as chief pastor must shoulder responsibility when a congregation well situated for growth either stagnates or declines. Concurrently, bishops and dioceses will seek to identify people whom TEC and the larger church! Where we find those people is where we want “need” to plant new churches or to attempt to revitalize dying congregations. Adapting a regenerative focus, with the accompanying changes in priorities, effort, and spending, will provide the resources these efforts will require. Critically, revitalizing and new starts both require expertise as well as adequate financial support. On a national level, a generative focus will seek to reduce national staff and budget to free resources for dioceses and congregations. Legacy programs continued primarily out of inertia and programs that are minimally effective, regardless of how vocal their constituency may be, need to give way to developing and sharing expertise on church planting. Unlike numerical decline, ending those programs will not pose an existential threat for TEC. The list recording the percentage that each diocese contributes to TEC is revealing. Some dioceses pledge little, probably reflecting a lingering history of conflict between the diocese or its parishes and TEC e. And some dioceses are simply poor: In short, the declining few increasingly carry the heavy burden of denominational support. TEC will have dwindled into an irrelevancy that no amount of heroic life-support efforts can resuscitate. New branches on the vine that is Christ will have replaced the dead and useless branch that TEC will have then become. He retired from the Navy after serving as a chaplain for twenty-four years, has written *Charting a Theological Confluence*:

Chapter 5 : Church Planting in The Episcopal Church: Part 1 –“ Episcopal Cafe

Dynamic Church Planting International is committed to training and equipping church planters around the globe, planting reproducing churches and establishing national partnerships. Learn about them at their website, calendrierdelascience.com

Church Planting in The Episcopal Church: Part 1 November 4, Part 1: This has been the consistent refrain from church planters I have interviewed. A simple Google search tells us a good deal about the position of church planting in the Episcopal Church. Why is this the case? Why is it peculiarly difficult to start new communities of faith in our tradition? Is there a particularly Anglican way to engage in church planting? There are three reasons why church planting is particularly challenging in the Episcopal Church: This essay will outline these three challenges and offer a path forward to address them. We will consider what can be learned from the history of church planting, churches being planted currently, the Diocese of London, and role of baptismal ecclesiology in this missional work. This missional inclination is expressed as the church is embedded in a particular context within a community. The first challenging facing the Episcopal Church is the paradox of authority that undermines our efforts to engage strategically in launching new missional churches. The General Convention budget of the triennium was increased to support the work of evangelism and church planting. At the time of his writing, the proposed budget for the next triennium, , is set to continue this funding. But this has been a contentious process. According to the Episcopal News Service, the originally proposed budget in the fall of would have drastically reduced funds for church planting. If the church at large cuts funding for church planting then either church planting will be curtailed or the burden will fall even more squarely on dioceses. The primary point of authority for church planting resides in the diocesan bishop. But herein lies the paradox. Diocesan bishops have the authority for planting new churches under their purview, but many lack, or perceive they lack, the financial resources to invest in the uncertain future inherent in church planting. Likewise, diocesan bishops are often beset by administrative and pastoral demands. The tyranny of the urgent and the accumulated maintenance of a diffuse organization leave little time for envisioning and prospecting into the future. The result is that bishops and diocesan staffs are overwhelmed with increasing demands –“ parishes in conflict, hospice care for dying congregations, clergy misconduct, training new clergy, discerning aspirants for ordination, and shrinking budgets. In a related sense, most individual parishes do not have the resources to launch a new church. And more to the point, under our current canons they do not have the authority to plant a church in full. In fact, local churches are actively encouraged not to transgress their locales to start new ministries within the bounds of other parishes. In a conversation with the Rev. Tom Brackett, Manager for Church Planting and Redevelopment for the Episcopal Church, reflecting on the challenges of church planting, commented that even if we were never the official established church of the US we have adopted this mentality. And, that unlike other Christian traditions, we do not have missional roots. The real issue is authority. Who has the authority, or the permission, to start something new? Who possesses the resources to support the new initiative and who is willing to take the risk to embrace the opportunity? Second, as an established, mainline church we are too often risk-averse. And even with all that support there is no guarantee that these church plants will succeed. The risk is not merely financial, though it is often expressed in those terms. The rampant assumption is that the Episcopal Church does not have the money to spend on new ventures when we are barely keeping the doors open at many congregations. In , as the Rev. What we have is a failure to use the ample resources we have in a strategic way. But closing and merging parishes requires a bishop to spend a lot of political capital, so I can understand why many avoid doing so. The third challenge of church planting in the Episcopal Church is, perhaps, the root cause of both confused and paradoxical authority and pervasive risk aversion. That is, the fear of evangelism and discipleship. Gortner goes on to explain that there have been a great many efforts to inculcate evangelism throughout the leadership of the Episcopal Church. Unfortunately, this top-down approach has yielded very few results and no appreciable change in culture. The evangelism efforts that have been tried have been generally institutional and corporate; the emphasis is on visiting or attending church, not on personal spiritual practice born of

mutual humanity and relationship motivated by the Holy Spirit. The aversion to evangelism is rooted more deeply in a lack of discipleship. In fact, the resistance to evangelism may be more properly a symptom of our failure to engage in lifelong Christian transformation. Rock Higgins, Priest in Charge at St. In many of the Episcopal churches of which I have been a part that education program was light at best. Their enthusiasm is for EfM. What if people were actually excited about their faith, seeing that it had made a real difference in their lives? Any impetus for evangelism will be thwarted by a lack of discipleship. This is not limited to evangelism or church planting, but it certainly includes them both. The lack of discipleship has direct implications for church planters in the field. Kelly Steele, church planter at Church of the Epiphany in Savannah, Georgia, needed to recruit Episcopalians to help with the startup work of forming a new congregation she found that many were unwilling to take the necessary risks to help. Add these self-reinforcing positions to the complexity of Episcopal polity and the church has a potent and toxic cocktail that precludes serious engagement with the renewing work of church planting. Church planting is hard enough as an innovative practice. It is made all the more challenging, if not impossible, when our authority structures are poorly designed for innovation and new missional engagement. If we, as a church, have embraced a culture of scarcity and risk aversion we will be reluctant to try new things and start new communities. Both of these factors are fueled and exacerbated by a lack of discipleship and evangelism. Can these factors be overcome? Is it possible to counter these forces to foster a culture of innovation and church planting in the Episcopal Church? I believe that it is. In Part 2 Why is Church Planting Important, we look at how church Planting generates benefits for the whole church and not just for the new congregation. He also is a postulant from the Diocese of Southern Ohio. But most of the time you can find him driving his kids around in a minivan.

Chapter 6 : What is Church Planting? (part 2) – The International Mentoring Network

In the nineteenth century and first half of the twentieth century, The Episcopal Church (TEC) grew both in numbers of members and of congregations. That missionary impetus has dissipated; in , TEC planted only three new congregations. The first part of this essay considered the demographic and.

This is Part 2 of a 3-part blog series as Pastor Ed looks back on church planting. This is the final of three posts with a total of 10 points I passed off to the pastor that has taken over the church plant that has become Calvary Chapel Githurai. My hope in sharing some of our challenges is not only for future church planters to learn from them, but also for planters in progress to reflect and make course corrections. Pastor your Family Githurai was the second church plant we have been honored to be part of from the ground up. The only thing that compares to walking into a community and beginning a church is walking up to a large mountain and climbing it, except planting churches is harder and lasts longer. Unless you are very careful, both can destroy families, wipe out finances and leave you gasping for oxygen. Your family is more important than the church. Much has been said and written on this subject, but if your family is not in order, neither will be the church. Be proactive in your care for them, be accountable to others in how your wife and children are doing. Persevere in Your Preaching I sat under and downloaded great Bible teachers. I read classic commentaries. In the early days all of this knowledge mattered little except for my personal edification. I learned I could thoroughly understand the text, and yet present it in a way that did not matter. Podcasts, blogs and books have helped immensely, but nothing has been better than working a message through with others before presenting it, and then asking for honest criticism after. Work at preaching, not more than the text itself, but you can not present the former without doing the later. Lives hang in the balance. Promote Joy Missiologist C. Peter Wagner suggests that a new church is the single most effective tool of evangelism. This is probably why Jesus suggests what you desire to plant, or are planting, is the focus of the wrath of Satan. Church planting is serious business, but it is also serious fun. As more people come to God through a new church we should rejoice as He receives more glory, but we can also say it is fun and full of joy for us! There is nothing greater. Enjoy and celebrate it and go help others do the same. Our vantage point will produce many tears of sorrow, but overall there is great great rejoicing in seeing a community of God worshippers come up from where there was none.

Chapter 7 : Growing Churches Part 2 | The Network

Don't forget these as you create a church plant budget! Or if you're thinking about signing up for another service after you've already made your budget, stop & consider whether it fits into that budget.

Part 2 In a previous Monthly Missiological Reflection I described the apostolic nature of missionary ministry. Church Planting Movements do not result merely because churches are being planted either by effective cross-cultural missionaries or by national leaders. They occur because the typical convert understands the meaning of lostness and accepts the call to evangelize their friends, relatives, and work mates and organize them into new congregations. Laity involvement provides the necessary personnel and momentum to create Church Planting Movements. Missionaries frequently are too dominant and overt in their work and do not adequately empower local leaders, especially lay leaders, in ministry. Garrison describes in some detail Church Planting Movements in four areas of the world. For example, Southern Baptists began missionary work in a certain Latin American country over a century ago. For the first 75 years missionaries planted churches, trained leaders, and organized a Baptist union consisting of about members. Soon after a military coup, however, all missionaries were imprisoned and then expelled, and almost all the national church leaders and half the church fled the country. Church members were persecuted, tortured and imprisoned, but in the midst of opposition the church flourished. Since the Baptist church in this country has grown from to 1, churches in the Southern Union and from 96 to 1, in the Northern Union. These real-life illustrations demonstrate ten universal elements for developing Church Planting Movements: Of special interest is his perception toward the indispensability of lay leadership. Hierarchical church structures hinder grass-roots decision-making and thus impede the development of a missionary movement. Thus most Church Planting Movements occur when churches are organized in small groups or cells. The vast majority of rapidly growing movements is member cell or house churches. He differentiates between cell churches and house churches. House churches, on the other hand, are self-contained units lacking any type of unifying structure and are ideal when there is hostile government suppression. When reproduction rates slow down, the Church Planting Movement falters. Rapid reproduction communicates the urgency and importance of coming to faith in Christ. Church Planting Movements, according to Garrison, also share ten common but not universal factors: Opposition by the dominant culture is seen in a number of these factors. Persecution serves the double purpose of ensuring a dedicated leadership and screening out the uncommitted , Finally, missionaries serve significant functions of training and nurturing but work behind the scenes , Ten practical handles to developing Church Planting Movements are also given. An effective strategy coordinator is a pragmatist. The POUCH methodology, used among the Yanyin people of China contains elements that, according to Garrison, are applicable to every church-planting context. This concisely written, sixty-page book, because it expresses a broadening vision of the task of missions, is indispensable for mission teachers and practitioners. It can be ordered through the International Missions Board of the Southern Baptist Convention by telephone , email resource. Recently I received a comment on this missiological reflection that I thought was incisive. The author critiqued my evaluation of Church Planting Movements by saying, From your other missiological reflections it is obvious that mission strategy must be built upon theology. Yet you seem to have no critique of Dr. It fits well into every category as outlined in your chart under that head. That would be fine if it were an anthropological or sociological or even historical study or report. However, this has become a strategy textbook. I think that this is an incisive critique. Like most Church Growth literature, Church Planting Movements assumes theology and focuses on strategy as if the two are unrelated. Sources Cited Bridges, Erich.

*(Part 1 of these thoughts on "What is Church Planting?" touches on church planting as a disciple-making process)
Church planting is disciple-making process that anticipates and creates new communities of faith. In other words, church planters work to create future communities of faith with future new disciples of Jesus.*

Sorry I missed your comment. I see it now. God participates in creating this better future in many ways. One way is that God downloads himself to operate within human history in Christ. Again, anyone who also drives history towards the more human path is creating a better future—but none of that ever happens without God who is in Christ reconciling the world to himself. Every human whose heart is open, who is aware of his own brokenness, who forgives and loves will one day discover Christ who labors with him. Alex McManus Thanks for your thoughts, Jon. Every word we speak and even every sound we make is a symbol. It may be then that with every sound we struggle to understand that towards which our symbols point. It is the modest attempt to bridge the colossal gap that separates the heaven from the earth; making gods immanent and thus reduced them as our own, walking among us. As in theoretical knowledge, artistic representations of the divine in the same manner are also contextual. Their emergence belongs too to a particular occasion that inspired its creation to facilitate this contact between the divine and the profane. It is about meaning; what the symbol diffuses so as to goad its believers to keep the struggle alive, whatever it might be. The symbol or a memorial however is a fixation of the occasion, fossilizing the event into particular epoch in the past, making it as property of history. Meaning however is always alive and fresh within the memory of those who went through the event, and always belong to the present. Memorials turn to become public properties, but the memories die with its owner, so as their meaning. What we have in the end were symbols deprived of their significance. Faith is a struggle. One might not agree with this but it is about pushing your way up and trying to make a modicum slide in spite of a more imposing evil. So faith is not about yesterday. It is about today as you try to slither out of debacle this life has offered and emerge still victorious tomorrow. With symbols devoid of their meanings I wonder therefore how they could assist our faith in this struggle in search for better existence. A lady suddenly interrupted the silence and asked all the people in the room for the meaning of certain religious ritual she herself was faithfully doing —“ no one was able to grope for answer; not even me was able to help her. Faith then was disconnected to its own memory; it was left in the present with no trace of its own history of struggle. It was armed with plethora of symbols, memorials, rituals, but meanings were not able to escape the fossilization of the historical. Faith in the present without the memory of its past is a faith abandoned; an orphan left in the benighted generation. What the past has to do with the present is how it relives the struggle that was fought before and making it alive and active in every coming generation. Our faith commitment to justice, righteousness, and love is crafting ourselves into the living symbol of the Galilean Lord. This challenges the church to not just hollow on religious symbol, but to become an authentic memory of Jesus. We should in many occasions, thru both word and deed point to Jesus. But symbol that is fraught of meaning, symbol that impresses meaning, symbol that evokes meaning. But we need to recognize that we live in a tension. Jesus as both Alpha and Omega. Beginning and the End. While we relive and be inspired by the past to be in the present, we are also called to drag into the present the future. The Kingdom of God is both in the now and the not yet.

Chapter 9 : CA Fair Wage - Part Two | The South Carolina Baptist Convention

Graham: With urban church planting in our context, people do not seem to get excited about a big launch service. Many believe church is part of the problem with our society, so having a cool church with a cool tagline is not going to address their fundamental questions.

And each community has a unique culture and atmosphere that must be considered as planters begin their churches. Here is how eight church planters from across the country tackled those issues. How did you decide on the location for your launch service? She started telling me some things going on. How can we do that? Would you mind setting up, tearing down, serving cake? So we did a teachers lounge makeover. In our previews, we were meeting in a location that was a venue in Atlanta, and it was very expensive. So we had to figure out something else. So we thought of calling churches. We found a church that was actually on the campus for Clark Atlanta University. The school built up around it. So it was a God moment; it was a God opportunity for us to be exactly where we needed to be. It is the most educated city in the country but has some of the lowest performing public schools. Improving the public schools has become a great opportunity to bridge the two D. Half of our launch team were public school teachers committed to doing exactly that. We found a great school that was only a block away from the subway that was a former church! I think we felt a bit like this was an opportunity for God to not only rebuild His church in our lives, but also rebuild a church in this location. Being in a school is important to us because it feels like our rent money is like mission dollars because its helping fund more teachers for this urban school that serves low-income families. We kind of followed a little bit and learned a lot from Church of the Highlands in Alabama. We first started meeting in a movie theater, but one of the things we did not like for us was before church would be done, movies would start. So I went and visited how they were doing church in schools, how they would set up, and the technology that was needed and all that. I saw that model being very successful. And I was wanting to keep our overhead as low as possible without any debt. We did the Cameron Center, the local community center here in Laurel, Miss. We chose it because we could afford it, and it met our needs. They gave us a sweet deal: It was pretty centrally located. A cross-section of people knew what it was. New City was on track to meet in a local middle school. But we came across a permanent 14,000-square-foot space. The space was an abandoned three-screen movie theater. The theater was in a mess and needed some serious renovations. The people who own the shopping center paid the bill and allowed New City to design it! The major factor that allowed us to make this permanent move is that we had committed funds that would allow us to make this move and not be in a financial bind. And the rent is dirt cheap. New York City is a different setting for church planting than many other parts of the country, and some of our strategies reflect those differences. For example, we did not do a mailer as many of our friends in other places do, partly due to higher costs there, but more so because the likely target audience for that approach is small. So instead, we emphasized creating a sense of family and community and used tools like social media to amplify the relational ways in which people typically connect with the church. We set out to keep our ministry simple and streamlined in a city where people have even less margin in their time. To walk onto the high school campus because the guys that I coach football with knew me as a football player. With urban church planting in our context, people do not seem to get excited about a big launch service. Many believe church is part of the problem with our society, so having a cool church with a cool tagline is not going to address their fundamental questions. Our strategy was to launch in three phases and to make it highly relational but to have enough specific timelines to help us discipline ourselves around some specific objectives and deadlines. Our first phase was meeting in our home with the core launch team. Our second phase was our soft launch where we became public and invited people we did not know for the first time, but without a big push. Our third phase was going to be a much bigger launch where we did promotion, bought a sound system, and had our kids city ministry up and running. But our church began to grow so quickly that we did not have a need for a big launch. We did everything more gradually. In hindsight our third phase felt like when we went to a second service a year after we did our soft launch. In many ways I feel like we are always in launch mode given our vision to start more services, campuses and churches

throughout our city. Detroit and the suburbs over the last four years have been hit hard. A lot of people were hardened in the fact that there was a season that we were the No. People have lost jobs, lost their homes. A number of churches have closed up. We have a growing Hispanic population. We are one of two interracial churches. And that does not quickly go away. We started being around. They could see us. We were very visible. We sounded so much different than anybody else. There was a little bit of a novelty in that we were not having southern accents. And then we just stayed very approachable. We just had these moments of just talking with people, of just connecting with people. We were not just supposed to be a church that had a bunch of different colored or aged faces. We were supposed to be a church that looked like heaven. And what did that mean? That meant not just different colored faces and different aged faces, but a church where people genuinely loved one another, where that was the standard. And so that was what we built. The inroads were just you were there for people. When something happened, you just showed up and you were intentional about that. Our team looked like what we wanted our church to look like, so they saw us. This was normal life. Although New City Church is in a very white and wealthy county Johnson County , our neighborhood is very diverse. Our next-door neighbor, Shawanoe Elementary, is made up of 17 spoken languages and 46 percent of the children are Hispanic. There are over 4, apartment units in our neighborhood as well. However, travel two blocks in any direction, and the demographic completely changes to white, upper middle class. These opportunities led us to being the only to my knowledge church that offers live Spanish translation during our service. Our city eventually gained a greater sense of awareness because of what we were doing as a community instead of through advertisements. Rather it was about what we had become.