

Unified by Compassion Marc Bigelow, President



One of the most gratifying developments of our day has to be the growing cooperation between our acappella brothers and the independent Christian Churches. This year, Stadia has already participated in church planting training events with several Church of Christ groups, and we have more planned for the future.

We were able to share some of our Stadia training materials and models at a two-day church planting event at Cascade College in

Portland, Oregon. As a result, Stan and Gina Granberg have recruited three couples, and – using the Stadia model – are planning to begin a multiplication movement in the Northwest.

In October, Stadia was invited to lead a workshop at the ZOE Worship Conference at Woodmont Hills Church of Christ in Nashville. Several attendees at that event also expressed interest in seeing how Stadia could partner with them in planting churches. Early in 2004, Larry Winger (CEO, Church Development Fund) and I will be traveling to San Antonio to share in the Hope Reunion meeting at Oak Hills Church, where ministers from Christian Churches and Churches of Christ will be working to develop an effective network for coaching, mentoring and equipping future leaders.

It has long been my conviction that we will unify faster when we unite around compassion for the lost rather than trying to iron out our differences. It is my prayer that a church planting movement will spring up not only in the Christian Churches but also in the Churches of Christ. Moreover, it is my prayer that through this planting we will see a new spirit of unity and cooperation as we reach out to those who need Jesus.



**Stadia:
New Church Strategies**

Marcus W. Bigelow

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Dan Scates

Northern California Regional Director



**Life Journey
Christian Church
(Bakersfield, California)**

Labor began around 5:30 am on October 5 when the set-up team arrived in the dark of the cool California morning. The air was filled with anticipation. After six short months of physical development, the time had finally come to see what faces would make up Life Journey Christian Church. At 9:00 am, 325 people stepped through the doors of the Edwards Theater to take their next step toward God, and a new church was born!

The day was full of joy and excitement as we watched God's plan unfold! Everything went as smoothly as we could possibly have hoped for. People left inspired and eager to bring their friends back next week.

We are confident that God, who began this good work (here in Bakersfield), will continue his work until it is finally finished on that day when Jesus comes back again. No matter where each person is on their spiritual journey when they first come to Life Journey Christian Church, they will always be encouraged to continue walking...to keep taking the next step toward God.

David and Jan Limiero

www.lifejourneychurch.com

Outlook Christian Church (Northwest Reno, Nevada)



At Outlook Christian Church the greatest story to date is the way God has provided for all the church's needs: from a great sound system and a brother in town who is an audio/visual expert to set it up and run it and train our people...to a wonderful launch team of highly motivated, gifted and mature servants including a few long-time teachers and elders.

The facility we are using is ideal for our target group and area. We don't need a stage, chairs or a trailer - they have given us storage space in the facility - so set-up only takes an hour, and tear down about 30 minutes (or less). Our offerings exceed our weekly needs and we have no great outstanding obligations. I believe those provisions are the biggest proof of God's fingerprint to date; they tell us that God must have big plans for us and that he is pleased with us for seeking to reach the lost here in Northwest Reno.

Dan and Tammy Dix

www.outlookcc.org

Brazos Christian Church (Burlleson, Texas)



Brazos Christian Church - which takes its name from a nearby river "Los Brazos de Dios" ("The Arms of God") - exists to be the arms of God: arms reaching out to make disciples of Jesus Christ; arms helping to mature those who want to know Christ; arms working to mobilize God's people for worship, witness and works of service.

On September 28, about 300 people came together for the first service at Brazos. Our launch team provided quality children's ministry, a warm and inviting greeting ministry, and vibrant worship. Over 120 new visitors attended! On October 5th, during a three-inch torrential rain, most of these visitors returned, and four different people shared that they would like to know how to accept Christ. Attendance is now running over 200 per week, offerings were \$14,300 for the first month, and over a dozen people have signed up to take the introductory class. How exciting to see God at work in Texas!

Jim and Lori Word

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STADIA

Planting at Harvest Time

The fall is traditionally a time of great prayer and harvest. *This* fall the Northern California Region is launching seven new church plants! Some of these new plants are outside of Northern California and are being launched in partnership with local churches and planting organizations. Others are located in Northern California and are being planted in partnership with churches and leaders here. The planters are excited and are ready to launch with great anticipation of what God might do.

Please be in prayer for the following church planters and the cities they will be reaching: Glenn Dibley (Santa Rosa, California), Chris Canclini (Nipomo, California), Matt King (Spokane, Washington), Jim Word (Burlleson, Texas), Scott Mathews (Natomas, California), Dan Dix (Reno, Nevada), David Limiero (Bakersfield, California).

God has a dream - people from every people group, too numerous to count, singing the worthiness of a Savior whose blood has purchased them for God. These planters are helping to fulfill this dream of God, and many new people will be added to the Kingdom by their efforts. Your partnership with us is not only greatly appreciated, but is measured in Heaven by those who gather to sing. Thanks for what you do.

Dan Scates
Northern California Regional Director

Multiple States, Multiple Cultures, Multiplication

Stadia's Southwest region is busy preparing for five new church plants throughout Southern California and Arizona. Steve Gilbertson is the lead planter in the Cave Creek area of Phoenix. We are also planning a new work in the Litchfield area of Arizona with Troy Gardner as the lead planter.

In Southern California, we are partnering with Eastside Christian Church (Fullerton) on the

Murrieta project, now called Venture Christian Church. Guy Fox has been on board with that project since July. Eastside Christian is also partnering with us on our new Hispanic work in Fullerton - Enrique Gonzalez has been hired as the lead planter for that church. And in San Clemente, Scott Julian is our lead planter for the SeaPointe Christian Church. First Christian Church of Huntington Beach is providing financial assistance (and provided the planter!) for SeaPointe.

Please pray that God will provide even more planters for Arizona and Southern California for the near future. Our desire is to plant at least eight more churches in the next eighteen months, and we need your prayers and support! We give God the praise for what He has already done.

Mac McElroy
Southwest Regional Director

The heart of a church planter's wife

One very short year ago I envisioned church planting as some poor young guy and his wife holding weekly meetings in their living room, so when my husband mentioned he was interested in becoming a church planter, I nodded agreeably and prayed continually that God would change his heart.

Four months went by and Jim talked more and more about planting a church. Before I

knew it, we were flying to California from our home in Indiana. It was at this Stadia Assessment LAB that my eyes were opened to my own ignorance and to the truth about church planting. God had not changed Jim's heart, but oh how he changed mine!

In January of 2003, Jim and I along with our two children moved to the great state of Texas. We moved to a town called Burlleson where we didn't know a single person. We were excited about the possibilities, but I was also terrified. Would my kids adjust OK? Could we build a church? My mind was flooded with questions.

Our family has lived in Burlleson for more than six months now. We cannot build a church here, but God is showing us almost daily how He can and I am thrilled that He is allowing me to be a small part of it. Our children have adjusted wonderfully. We have met lots of people and had the great opportunity to talk with them about Jesus and His church.

While I know the road ahead is long and filled with the unknown, I also know that the God who holds the future will walk it with me. How could I hide my excitement about that? I love sharing it with people!

One year ago I was praying that my husband's heart would be changed; that he would not desire to become a church planter. Now I pray thanking God that I too can be a part of this adventure.

Lori Word
Brazos Christian Church (Burlleson, Texas)



Assessment LAB news

We have conducted two Assessment LABs in recent months: one in August (in conjunction with CPAC) and one in late November. Fifteen couples were assessed during those sessions, and while not all of them will be hired to plant churches, many of them will.

We have hired five couples to plant churches that will open in March of 2004 and we are currently looking for four or five church planters to be hired in April of next year. In addition, we are receiving inquiries and applications from people who want to plant churches in many states where Stadia is not currently involved.

Upcoming Assessment LABs (scheduled for January, March and May of 2004) will assess potential church planters for the Southeast, Southwest, Northern California and other areas as needed. We are excited about the opportunities we have to expand our ministry into new areas - please pray for wisdom and discernment as we seek to choose Godly leaders for new churches across the United States.

For more information on the Assessment LAB, including detailed schedule information, please contact Roger Gibson, Director of Recruitment and Assessment, at (707) 446-6232.



Are You Ready for Some... Church Plants?

When autumn rolls in, football reigns supreme in the Southeast. This fall Stadia is giving the Southeast something even more exciting than football to cheer about: we are planning thirteen new churches that we pray will thrive in cities across our region over the next year. We've targeted influential cities with emerging communities - from capital cities to influential areas of commerce to academic strongholds.

WellSpring Christian Church kicked off this season of church planting in the Southeast on October 19. Andy Hudelson leads this new work just outside of Nashville. Dan Garrett and his team plan to launch Buckhead Christian Church on Super Bowl Sunday! Eleven more churches will follow. Six church planters have already been hired and three more have passed Assessment.

Like football, church planting is a team sport. It requires an almighty owner, a planter to call the plays, a launch team to carry the ball, and a coach and mentor to keep the team effective. But there's one more critical component to any good team: the fans. Unlike football, church planting needs more than people in the stands. These thirteen plants need people who are a literal extension of the team - church planting partners who pray faithfully and give generously. After all, it's much more than a game!

Greg Marksberry
Southeast Regional Director

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