

## Church Planting in Eastern CCP

TE John Kinyon, reporting

### Background:

- Tasked by Missions Committee (Fall 2016): “to come up with a viable church planting strategy for the region east of Charlotte, NC [hereinafter, the “Eastern CCP”] with the goal, eventually, of forming a new presbytery”;
- The Eastern CCP consists of 10 counties: Anson, Cumberland, Hoke, Lee, Montgomery, Moore, Richmond, Robeson, Scotland, and Stanly (*see attached map*);
- Met 3x with Eastern CCP church leaders (TEs and REs) over lunch at presbytery meetings in 2017 to discuss the above task, assess interest, and receive input (Winter – Summer 2017); and,
- After inviting broad participation, formed sub-committee of interested pastors (consisting of TE Kinyon, TE Layton, TE McAulay, TE Owen, and TE Yoran) and met 3x to conduct a SWOT Analysis and discuss strategies for planting new churches and building healthier churches in Eastern CCP (Summer – Winter 2017). The following is our report:

### Strengths to Planting Churches in Eastern CP:

- Sizeable Region – the 2015 general population within the Eastern CCP is approximately 83% the size of Mecklenberg County (*see attached population chart*), but over 10x the geographical size. Accordingly, there is a great need for more gospel-centered, reformed churches due both to population trends and geographic size.
- Currently, there are only 9 organized PCA congregations and 1 church plant across the 10 counties (5 of them, interestingly, are located in 2 counties). Relative harmony and good will exists among the congregations.
- CCP is a strong, church-planting supportive presbytery.
- Most pastors and churches in Eastern CCP have expressed support for church planting, as well as efforts to promote greater collegiality among the churches and pastors.
- 2 reformed seminaries -- located between 30 minutes to 3 hours away -- provide resources, student support, and prospective future staff and church planters. In addition, the Church Planting Center is located at RTS/Charlotte.

Weaknesses (or Challenges) to Planting Churches in Eastern CCP (the “5 M’s”):

- Men: Prospective Church Planters
  - Few willing to plant in small towns; they want to be in cities;
  - Few willing to plant solo; they want to partner with others (costs more);
  - Few willing to be bi-vocational to make ends meet;
  - Few willing to work hard and persevere for smaller results;
  - Fewer candidates hail from small towns;
  - Many seminary grads have heavy debts; can’t afford small town salaries; and,
  - Southern cultural roots important; hard to “break in” to rural communities
- Money: Financial Resources
  - Smaller communities tend to be poorer and less educated (*see attached demographic report*);
  - Poorer areas tend to be less viable long term;
  - Poorer areas require longer financial commitments, and may not be self-sufficient for many years, if ever; and,
  - There is “less return” for your investment dollars
- Mission Fields: Prospective Locations
  - Small communities are not popular; not on most people’s radar;
  - Small communities offer less cultural/recreational amenities;
  - Small communities are not “strategic”;
  - Small communities are “small” for a reason;
  - Small communities tend to be more homogeneous, reluctant to change, know everybody in town, and distrust “outsiders”; and,
  - Educational demographics are lower than more urban counties, making it harder to plant successful PCA churches
- Mentorship: Supporting, coaching and Inspiring One Another
  - Geographic isolation makes personal mentoring difficult;
  - Lack of qualified mentors;
  - If bi-vocational, little time to mentor/be mentored by others; and,
  - Few resources exist for “how to mentor” in rural contexts
- Momentum: Expanding Gods’ Kingdom
  - More isolated; hard to build momentum (charcoal illustration);
  - Struggling churches lack the ability and resources to participate in church planting;
  - Fewer success stories exist to motivate and inspire;
  - Few care to highlight the small-town church (few cheerleaders);
  - Churches in small towns are slowly dying out and not being replaced; and,
  - Past bad church planting experiences discourage planting in near future



### Opportunities to Planting Church in Eastern CCP:

- In November 2017, the subcommittee identified the top 6 “next best places to plant” in Eastern CCP: Fayetteville, Laurens, Lumberton, Sanford, Seven Lakes and Wadesboro based on a variety of factors including, but not limited to, population density and anticipated growth, proximity to other PCA churches, local strategic county hubs, and Holy Spirit leading (see attached “How Church Planting Sites are Selected”).
  - Laurens, Lumberton, Sanford and Wadesboro would put a PCA church in 4 of the 5 counties lacking any PCA church;
  - Fayetteville and Seven Lakes are larger and/or fast-growing areas, with supportive churches nearby, and PCA-friendly demographics.
- Redeemer Church, the 1 church plant, had an MNA-approved summer church planting intern; the church is also seriously considering hiring a full-time Ass’t Pastor/Church Planting apprentice in 2018 to serve for 3 years before planting a daughter church.
- A potential worship site for a church plant in Seven Lakes may be available at no cost;
- Contacts are being made in Lumberton and Sanford with the hope of eventually forming bible studies
- Evangelistic efforts in Richmond County – spearheaded by 1<sup>st</sup> Presbyterian/Elberfe -- are producing conversion fruit, uniting congregations on mission, and encouraging local congregants; and,
- Several pastors may have the interest/availability to lay the groundwork for new churches in nearby small towns, thereby supplementing their income and maximizing their ministry reach

### Threats to Planting Churches in Eastern CCP:

- Many churches in Eastern CCP are older, smaller, financially vulnerable and located in depressed regions of the state;
- There are few churches with the resources to financially support church planting in Eastern CCP; few “mother churches”; and,
- With the increased visibility and emphasis on urban church planting, rural church planting is often neglected or ignored

### 9 Recommendations on How to Promote Church Planting in Eastern CCP:

- Promote, and encourage bi-vocational ministry, thereby reducing financial burdens, and building bridges within local communities;
- Explore ways to plant not one, but two churches with the same church planter;
- Start a CP fund to provide start-up capital for new churches;
- Invite Eastern CCP churches to partner and underwrite minority (African American, Hispanic and Lumbee Indian) church planting;
- Create an Eastern CCP “CP Network” to identify prospects, promote opportunities, and equip and encourage church planters (funded by Antioch Fund grant);
- Encourage RTS and Gordon TS to give greater attention to rural church planting in its CP curriculum;
- Establish a LAMP campus to raise up and train prospective pastors/elders in-house;
- Exegete each of the 6 “Next Best Places to Plant”, draft an attractive prospectus, and disseminate to seminaries, MNA, and interested presbyteries (*see attached samples*); and,
- Persuade the Assessment Center to include at least one rural church planting opportunity in its assessment process at least 2x/year.

### 5 Recommendations on How to Promote Church Health in Eastern CCP:

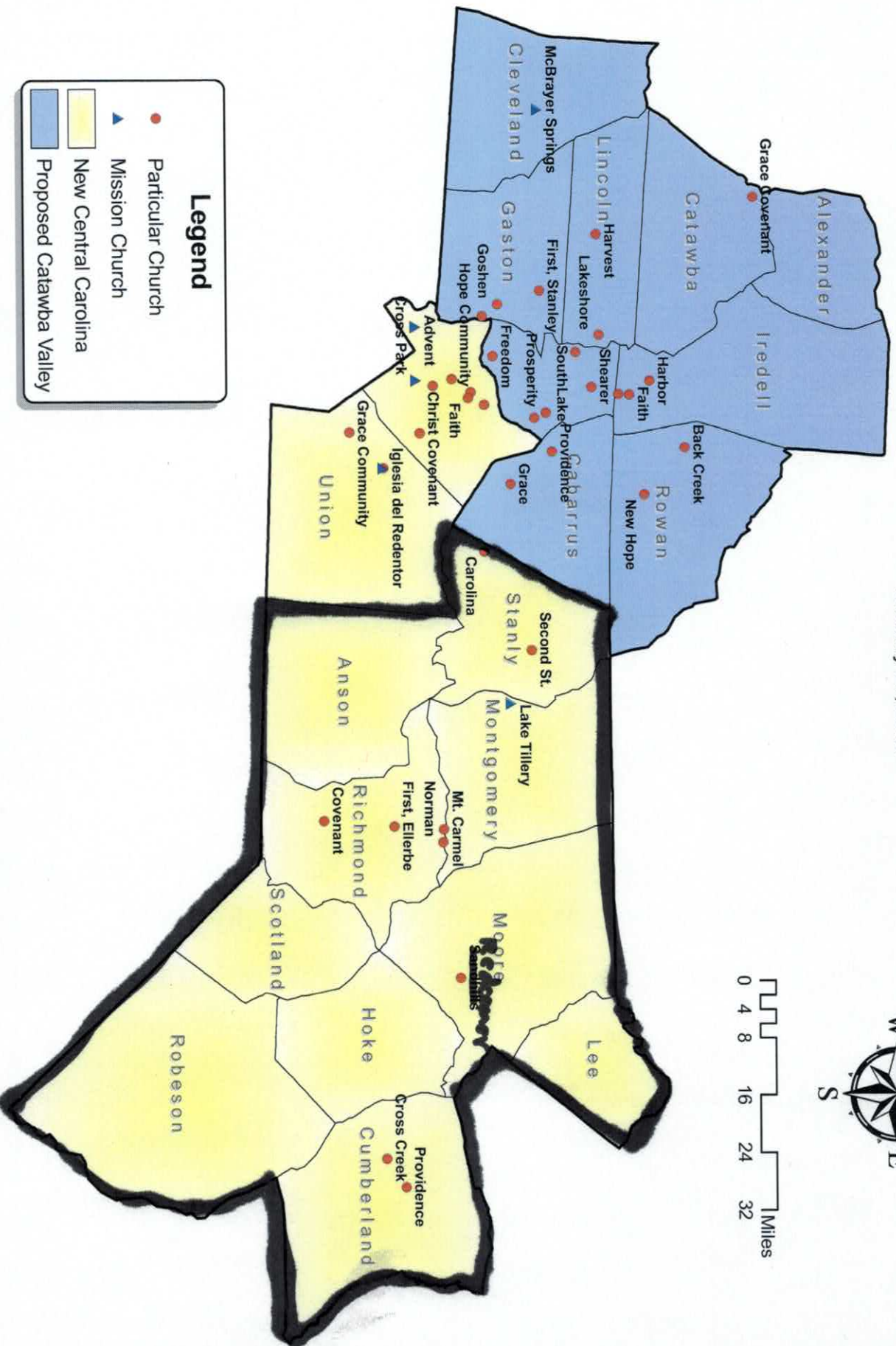
*[It is imperative, that if we desire to form a strong and viable presbytery, that we must promote strong and viable churches. The following are some ideas on promoting healthier churches.]*

- Conduct monthly sub-regional lunches for fellowship and friendship;
- Conduct an annual pastors' retreat for refreshment, deeper fellowship, fun, food, and training;
- Entrust work to committees, reducing work for presbytery at large, thereby leaving more time for presentations, prayer, and “best practices” discussions;
- Offer ½ scholarships to pastors of smaller (financially struggling) churches to get add'l training and to attend workshops/seminars to build healthier pastors and churches; and,
- Encourage more “joint ventures” by and between Eastern CCP churches.



# Proposed Presbytery Multiplication

Central Carolina Presbytery  
January 27, 2011



**North Carolina Counties  
In Eastern Portion of Central Carolina Presbytery  
Past and Projected Population**

	July 2010	2015	2020	2025	2030	2035	2037
Anson	26,853	26,100	25,628	25,627	25,627	25,627	25,627
Cumberland	327,309	328,931	329,709	329,752	329,760	329,761	329,764
Hoke	47,497	51,800	57,978	64,991	70,179	76,776	79,291
Lee	57,857	58,795	59,761	60,317	60,726	61,026	61,124
Montgomery	27,930	27,805	28,144	28,611	29,079	29,547	29,735
Moore	88,589	94,494	102,051	108,921	115,154	120,810	122,925
Richmond	46,608	45,334	44,651	44,244	43,839	43,435	43,271
Robeson	134,461	133,301	130,109	126,926	123,740	120,557	119,283
Scotland	36,077	35,806	35,412	34,952	34,493	34,034	33,849
Stanly	60,555	61,169	64,259	67,226	70,196	73,164	74,352
Total	853,736	863,535	877,702	891,567	902,793	914,737	919,221
Comparative Figures: Mecklenburg	923,328	1,034,524	1,143,547	1,253,958	1,364,367	1,474,777	1,518,941

Note: Population calculations and projections taken from table provided by the North Carolina Office of State Budget and Managements (OSBM).

**Largest Metropolitan Areas** of each of the 10 counties which make up the eastern part of the Central Carolina Presbytery (“red” indicates “top 6 next best places to plant”):

#### Anson County

- **Wadesboro** (5,500, up from 3,500;<sup>1</sup> 61% black, 36% white;<sup>2</sup> 15.1% of adults have a bachelor’s degree or higher)<sup>3</sup>
  - 2 PC(USA) churches (First Pres, Camden Pres)
- Polkton (3,400, up from 1,200; 61% black, 34% white, 8% Hispanic; 2.3% of adults have a bachelor’s degree or higher)

#### Cumberland County

- **Fayetteville** (205,000, up from 121,000; 46% white, 42% black, 10% Hispanic; 25.1% of adults have a bachelor’s degree or higher)
  - 2 PCA churches (Cross Creek and Providence)
  - 1 Acts 29 and Gospel Coalition church (Veritas Church)
  - 1 ARP church (Korean Bethel Pres)
  - 15 PC(USA) churches
- Hope Mills (16,000, up from 11,000; 62% white, 27% black, 10% Hispanic; 19.7% of adults have a bachelor’s degree or higher)
  - 4 PC(USA) churches (Hope Mills Pres, Big Rockfish Pres, Southview Pres, Mars Hill Pres)
- Spring Lake (13,000, up from 8,000; 47% white, 36% black, 15% Hispanic; 20.9% of adults have a bachelor’s degree or higher)
  - 2 PC(USA) churches (First Pres, Church of the Covenant Pres)
- Eastover (3,700, steady population; 75% white, 19% black; 17.3% of adults have a bachelor’s degree or higher)

#### Hoke County

- Raeford (4,500, up from 3,400; 44% white, 41% black, 10% Hispanic; 21% of adults have a bachelor’s degree or higher)
  - 3 PC(USA) churches (Raeford Pres, Shiloh Pres, Philippi Pres)
- Rockfish (3,800, up from 2,300; 68% white, 20% black, 11% Hispanic; 25.8% of adults have a bachelor’s degree or higher)
- Silver City (900, down from 1,100; 90% black; 6.2% of adults have a bachelor’s degree or higher)

<sup>1</sup> All population information is from 2016 estimates (where available) compared to information from 2000 census

<sup>2</sup> All racial demographic information taken from 2010 census, showing all races that compose 5% or more of the total population. Percentages may add up to more than 100% due to the way the Hispanic population is counted.

<sup>3</sup> Educational attainment is taken from 2015 community surveys.



### Lee County

- **Sanford** (29,000, up from 23,000; 55% white, 28% black, 24% Hispanic; 22.3% of adults have a bachelor's degree or higher)
  - 14 PC(USA) churches
- **Broadway** (1,200, up from 1,000; 79% white, 10% black, 10% Hispanic; 21.7% of adults have a bachelor's degree or higher)
  - 3 PC(USA) churches (Broadway Pres, Leaflet Pres, Mt. Pisgah Pres)

### Montgomery County

- **Troy** (3,400, steady population; 59% white, 32% black, 10% Hispanic; 18.5% of adults have a bachelor's degree or higher)
  - 1 EPC church (Troy Pres)
- **Biscoe** (1,700, steady population; 51% white, 35% Hispanic, 20% black; 7% of adults have a bachelor's degree or higher)
  - 1 PC(USA) church (Biscoe Pres)
- **Mount Gilead** (1,200, down from 1,400; 56% black, 41% white; 14.9% of adults have a bachelor's degree or higher)
  - 1 PCA church (Lake Tillery)
  - 2 PC(USA) churches (First Pres, Pee Dee Pres)
- **Candor** (2,400, up from 2,200; 55% white, 38% Hispanic, 10% black; 17.2% of adults have a bachelor's degree or higher)
  - 2 PC(USA) churches (Candor Pres, Macedonia Pres)

### Moore County

- **Pinehurst** (16,000, up from 9,800; 93% white; 56% of adults have a bachelor's degree or higher)
  - 1 PC(USA) (Community Pres)
- **Southern Pines** (13,800, up from 11,000; 72% white, 24% black; 41.8% of adults have a bachelor's degree or higher)
  - 1 PCA church (Redeemer Church)
  - 1 EPC church (Christ Fellowship)
  - Sandhills Pres (Independent)
  - 2 PC(USA) churches (Bronson Memorial Pres and Manly Pres)
- **Aberdeen** (7,500, up from 3,400; 68% white, 25% black, 5% Hispanic; 29.9% of adults have a bachelor's degree or higher)
  - 2 PC(USA) church (Bethesda Pres and McDonalds Chapel Pres)
- **Seven Lakes** (4,900, up from 3,200; 95% white; 46.2% of adults have a bachelor's degree or higher)
  - 3 PC(USA) churches in West End (West End Pres, Ingram Branch Pres, Culdee Pres)
- **Whispering Pines** (3,200, up from 2,000; 96% white; 42.7% of adults have a bachelor's degree or higher)
- **Carthage** (2,400, up from 1,900; 71% white, 24% black; 22.3% of adults have a bachelor's degree or higher)



- 4 PC(USA) churches (First Pres, Eureka Pres, Priest Hill Pres, John Hall Pres)
- Vass (750, steady population; 79.6% white, 13.1% black, 9.6% Hispanic; 14.8% of adults have a bachelor's degree or higher)

#### Richmond County

- Rockingham/East Rockingham (9,000/3,700, down from 9,700/3,900; 57% white, 34% black, 5% Hispanic/70% white, 17% black, 10% Hispanic; 18% of adults have a bachelor's degree or higher)
  - 1 PCA church (Covenant)
  - 1 EPC church (Park Avenue Pres)
  - 3 PC(USA) churches (First Pres, Wilson Chapel Pres, Cameronian Pres, Marks Creek Pres)
- Hamlet (6,400, up from 6,000; 55% white, 37% black, 6% Hispanic; 12.3% of adults have a bachelor's degree or higher)
  - 1 PC(USA) church (First Pres)
- Cordova (1,800, steady population; 83% white, 12% black; 10% of adults have a bachelor's degree or higher)
- Ellerbe (1,000, steady population; 49% white, 39% black, 11% Hispanic; 8.5% of adults have a bachelor's degree or higher)
  - 3 PCA churches (First Pres [in town] and Mount Carmel [6 miles from town], and Norman Pres [in Norman, 8 miles from Ellerbe])
  - 2 EPC churches (Rourk Pres and McLean Pres)

#### Robeson County

- **Lumberton** (21,500, steady population [at least before the flood]; 41% white, 37% black, 13% American Indian, 6% Hispanic; 18.2% of adults have a bachelor's degree or higher)
  - 2 PC(USA) churches (First Pres, Bethany Pres)
- Red Springs (3,400, down from 3,500; 49% black, 32% white, 13% American Indian, 6% Hispanic; 18.6% of adults have a bachelor's degree or higher)
  - 4 PC(USA) churches (Red Springs Pres, Panthersford Pres, Antioch Pres, Philadelphus Pres)
- Pembroke (3,000, up from 2,400; 66% American Indian, 16% white, 12% black; 18% of adults have a bachelor's degree or higher)
  - 1 Gospel Coalition church (CrossWay of Pembroke)

#### Scotland County

- **Laurinburg** (15,500, down from 15,900; 47% black, 43% white, 6% American Indian; 20.8% of adults have a bachelor's degree or higher)
  - 6 PC(USA) churches (Laurinburg Pres, Westminster Pres, Pleasant View Pres, Faith Pres, Trinity Pres, Laurel Hill Pres [technically in Laurinburg])
- Laurel Hill (1,000; 65% white, 21% black, 11% American Indian; 10.2% of adults have a bachelor's degree or higher)
  - 1 PC(USA) church (Church in the Pines Pres)

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Stanly County

- Albemarle (16,000, up from 15,700; 70% white, 22% black, 5% Hispanic; 18.7% of adults have a bachelor's degree or higher)
    - 1 PCA church (Second Street)
    - 1 ARP church (Westminster Pres)
    - 1 PC(USA) church (First Pres)
  - Locust (3,000, up from 2,400; 93% white, 6% Hispanic; 14.4% of adults have a bachelor's degree or higher)
    - 1 PCA church (Carolina)
    - 1 EPC church (Ridgecrest Pres)
    - 1 PC(USA) church (Locust Pres)
  - Norwood (2,400, up from 2,200; 72% white, 22% black, 5% Hispanic; 14.7% of adults have a bachelor's degree or higher)
    - 1 PC(USA) church (First Pres)
  - Badin (2,000, up from 1,200; 55% white, 39% black, 6% Hispanic; 13.4% of adults have a bachelor's degree or higher)
    - 1 PC(USA) church (First Pres)
  - Oakboro ???
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I have checked PCA, ECO, EPC, OPC, ARP, RCA, URCNA, PC(USA), Acts 29 network, Ecclesia network, Sovereign Grace network, and The Gospel Coalition, and have listed all the churches from those denominations or organizations under their respective cities. This report was prepared by David Ehmke, a CTS student.



# How Church Planting Sites are Selected

## 1. Population Density

At the height of the church's influence on American society (1900) there were approximately 27 churches for every 10,000 residents. Therefore, it is a reasonable goal to have one PCA Church for every 50,000 to 60,000 people in a city, town or community.

## 2. Community-Based Ministry

Are the existing churches in the community effectively targeting and reaching the people of the community? It is not enough for a congregation to say, "We have people in our church who come from that community." They should show an intentional and effective commitment to the people who live there.

## 3. Ministry Style

Churches with significantly different styles of ministry can coexist and prosper in the same community, even when their theology is identical. Different styles and emphases reach different kinds of people. For example, it should be possible to start a Mercy/Fellowship style church in the same community as a Worship/Teaching Style church.

## 4. Ethnicity & Culture

The ethnic and cultural diversity of Eastern Carolina compels us to think differently about church planting. Many people must be reached within their ethnic and cultural group before they can be incorporated into the larger Body of Christ.

## 5. Percent of Unchurched

George Barna has estimated that there are between 180 to 190 million unchurched people in America, and this number is trending upward every year. Even in the Southeast. For example, recent data reports that 49.3% of residents of Moore County report having no religious preference. What percentage of the population of a given community/neighborhood are attending church on any given Sunday?

## 6. Distance to sister PCA/OPC churches

Linear miles should be considered, but this is not the first or only factor to weigh in site selection. Other significant physical factors include lakes, rivers, railroads, parks, major highways, interstates, traffic patterns and, city/township/state lines.

## 7. Partnerships with Parenting Churches

We should work with churches who desire to reproduce, including their desires in our plans.

## 8. Projected Growth in Area

New residents in growing communities are more open to attending a new church than an established church.

## 9. Strategic Centers of Influence

City centers, edge city centers, universities and college towns should receive special consideration.

## 10. Leading of the Holy Spirit

The Apostle Paul remained open to the prompting of the Spirit in church planting. So, must we.

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# Church Planting in Sanford, NC

## Picture this...

2000 US Census population: 23,220  
 2010 US Census population: 28,094  
 2016 estimated population: 29,128

Average household size: 2.6  
 Median home value: \$135,200  
 (NC: \$154,900; US: \$178,600)

Median family income  
 Sanford: \$41,638  
 North Carolina: \$47,830  
 United States: \$55,775



Pictured is the historic Railroad House Museum and steam locomotive in downtown Sanford



### Racial Demographics

White.....48.1%  
 Black.....25.4%  
 Hispanic or Latino.....22.9%

### Language Spoken at Home

English.....77.1%  
 Spanish.....21.5%

### Age Demographics

Median age: 35.1  
 Under 15.....23.3%  
 15-24.....13.2%  
 25-34.....13.4%  
 35-44.....12.8%  
 45-54.....14.1%  
 55-64.....10.9%  
 Over 64.....12.3%

Sanford is the largest city and the seat of government for Lee County, North Carolina. It is situated directly in the geographic center of the state, on the fall line dividing the Piedmont and the Coastal Plain. As such, both mountains and beach are only a short afternoon's drive away.

Even with its continued growth, Sanford retains a low cost of living and a small-town feel, which can be easily experienced by taking a walk through its revitalized downtown area. Yet it also boasts quick, easy access to the more metropolitan area of Raleigh as well as the golf courses of the Sandhills.

Sanford has a rich history in the manufacturing industry. From 1959 until the housing market crash in 2008, Sanford owned the title of "Brick Capital of the USA." While manufacturing growth slowed during the recession, it has picked up where it left off as companies are once again investing in Sanford.



#### Schools:

Lee County Public Schools	No. of Schools	School Performance Grades	Students per class
High School	3	1 A, 2 C's	--
Middle School	3	3 C's	21.3
Elementary School	6	1 B, 5 C's	18.8

Starting teacher salary (7/16): \$35,000

Average teacher salary (7/16): \$49,837

Other Schools: Pre-K to 5<sup>th</sup> Montessori school

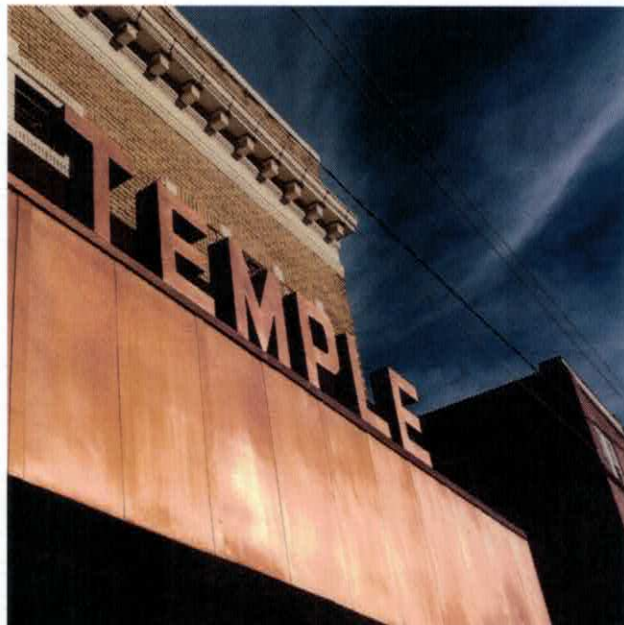
Two Pre-K to 12<sup>th</sup> Private schools

#### Commerce/Employment:

- Sanford's unemployment rate has dropped from over 13% in 2010 to 5.3% in 2017, with future job growth over the next 10 years predicted at 44%.
- Manufacturing is the largest industry, and it is poised to grow even more with the development of Central Carolina Enterprise Park and its close proximity ( $\approx 7$  miles) to the Moncure Megasite.
- Top employers: Caterpillar, Coty, Duke LifePoint, Lee County PS, Moen, Pfizer, Tyson, and more.
- About 30 miles southeast of Sanford sits Fort Bragg, the highest populated US Army base.
- About 40 miles from companies/opportunities in Raleigh and the Research Triangle

#### Places of Worship/Religion:

- There are 100+ places of worship in Sanford, many of which are older congregations that have been in steady decline for some time.
- Nearly half of the population of Lee County does not even claim any religious affiliation.
- There is little to no Reformed presence in Sanford.



Pictured is the marquee of the Temple Theatre in downtown Sanford

- Sanford is a working class, manufacturing community with a large population of laborers, both skilled and unskilled. Yet with this, educational attainment is below the nation's average.
- Sanford is a racially diverse community, with three races comprising more than 20% of the population each. But with the diversity, there is often more segregation than integration.
- While Sanford is moving in the right direction and has a positive outlook with regards to commerce and employment, there are a lot of people in need, with around 20% of the population living in poverty.

Interested?  
Contact:

TE John Kinyon  
[john@redeemerchurchpca.org](mailto:john@redeemerchurchpca.org)  
(910) 528-7349

## Now picture THIS...

- Picture God actively calling a people to himself throughout Lee County.
- Picture a church plant freely offering God's grace and making disciples by baptizing them and teaching them to observe what Christ commanded.
- Picture a church plant where the gospel is reconciling people to God and reconciling neighbors and races to one another.
- Picture a church plant that is meeting spiritual needs, and its covenant community that is serving one another and meeting physical needs.
- Picture a gospel saturated, missional church plant in Sanford, NC.

Can you see it?



# Church Planting in Lumberton, NC

## Picture this...

2010 US Census population: 21,542

2016 estimated population: 21,499

Average household size: 2.4

Median home value: \$102,500

(NC: \$154,900; US: \$178,600)

Median family income:

Lumberton: \$37,682

North Carolina: \$47,830

United States: \$55,775

Unemployment: 7.6%

Poverty Rate: 34.8%



Pictured is the City Hall building in downtown Lumberton



### Racial Demographics (City/County)

White.....38.5%/26.6%

Black.....33.3%/24%

American Indian.....11.2%/37.6%

Hispanic or Latino.....12.2%/8.2%

### Age Demographics

Median age: 33.7

Under 15.....21.9%

15-24.....13.7%

25-34.....16.0%

35-44.....11.4%

45-54.....11.1%

55-64.....11.7%

Over 64.....14.2%

Robeson County is the most ethnically diverse and largest geographic county in North Carolina.

Lumberton is its largest city and the seat of government. It is located in the Coastal Plains region of North Carolina, on the Lumber River. Lumberton is named for the role it originally played as a shipping point for lumber used by the Navy, and is now billed as the halfway point between New York and Miami on I-95. It is about 20 miles north of the South Carolina border and 75 miles from the Atlantic coast.

Part of the ethnic diversity in Robeson County comes from the high proportion of Lumbee, a Native American tribe that has been recognized by the state of North Carolina, but not by the federal government. This is especially true in Pembroke, where more than 50% of the population is Lumbee. In October of 2016, Hurricane Matthew flooded several areas of Lumberton, forcing over 1,000 families from their homes and causing millions of dollars in damage to an area already struggling financially.



## Schools:

Robeson Public Schools	No. of Schools	School Performance Grades	Students per class
High School	2	1 A (Early College), 1 D	--
Middle School	3	2 D's, 1 F	19
Elementary School	10	2 B's, 3 C's, 3 D's 2 F's	20

Starting teacher salary (7/16): \$35,000

Average teacher salary (7/16): \$49,837

## Commerce/Employment:

- The unemployment rate has decreased by half in the last six years, from 15% in 2011 to around 7.5% in 2017.
- Top employers: Robeson County (including schools), Southeastern Regional Medical Center, UNC-Pembroke, and several large food manufacturers.
- About 40 miles north sits Fort Bragg, the highest populated US Army base.

Pictured is Zion Hill Baptist Church



## Places of Worship/Religion:

- There are 80+ places of worship in Lumberton
- Over 55% of the population of Robeson County does not even claim any religious affiliation.
- There is little to no Reformed presence in Lumberton.
- Unfortunately, Lumberton ranks highest for both violent and property crimes in North Carolina. With its high levels of crime and poverty, Lumberton is an area that has a lot of physical needs. While those should not be neglected, there is also a significant spiritual need. There is a need for the gospel of grace; a gospel that can truly change a community.
- Lumberton is a racially diverse community, with two races comprising more than 30% of the population each and two more comprising more than 10% each. But with the diversity, there is often more segregation than integration.

Interested?  
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- Picture a church plant freely offering God's grace and making disciples by baptizing them and teaching them to observe what Christ commanded.
- Picture a church plant where the gospel is reconciling people to God and reconciling neighbors and races to one another.
- Picture a church plant that is meeting spiritual needs, and its covenant community that is serving one another and meeting physical needs.
- Picture a gospel saturated, missional church plant in Lumberton, NC.

Can you see it?