



Trend: The Coming of the Multisite Movement

By Topper Reid

Change continues to morph across our country at mach speed, affecting yet another foundational pillar of the traditional church. Emerging over the horizon is a new way of doing church that some call the *multisite* movement.

A Technological Movement

The multisite church is one church in several different locations. A church may reproduce itself again on its own campus, at another location in its community, at another place across town, in another place in a different city, or any place in the world. Basically, a church now has no boundaries to keep it from growing and reaching people. Lack of space at its current property is now not as much of an issue. The church can now acquire space in another location and use technology to “staff” the church.

One can blame the constant advancement of technology for this new phenomenon that seems to be sweeping across America. The younger generation attracted to these new worship venues have fed on technology since they were children and are quite comfortable with it. Older, more traditional churchgoers run the reaction spectrum from, “It’s okay,” to, “No way!” Regardless of what one might think, people are responding to this new way of doing church.

Outside the Box

What makes these churches so unique? Most meet in locations away from the mother church, start out as worship churches with preschool and children’s ministries, and provide a “live” worship service with everything (core leaders and staff) but live preaching. Herein lies the big difference.

Most of these churches provide the preaching/teaching time via recorded video or simulcast TV. Some churches are simulcasting using the latest technology such as HDTV and life-size screens that produce almost a life-like appearance. The HDTV presentation is almost like being there live!

well and reaching people at its home campus. Rather than build more space on the main campus, the church elects to spread to other locations (like a high school auditorium) using the same successful formula that brought the growth to the existing campus.

Just look around and one will see churches using the following terms to describe themselves: multiple campuses, video café, digital church, the franchise church, and satellite church.

It doesn’t take one long to surf up some interesting information on the churches that are employing this new approach to doing church. Just look around and one will see churches using the following terms to describe themselves: multiple campuses, video café, digital church, the franchise church, and satellite church. Regardless of what it is called, these churches are meeting at different locations at different times and, in many cases, with different music venues offered.

This new trend may be connected to the trend mentioned in our last article, “new niches.” These new multisite churches can now target a group of people in a particular area and focus on reaching them.

Common Characteristics

The multisite churches usually have the following in common. The church is doing

Additionally, it has a church staff that is willing to try new ways to reach people. The pastor is a very good communicator. The staff and congregation are not afraid of risk. Its success is based on the fact that it has a plan that works. It has a philosophy of how to do church that the staff wants to reproduce at other locations. The church would rather start a new church from scratch with no traditional boundaries to hold it back.

Unique Approaches

Why are churches doing this? It seems that most see the multisite option as an answer to space problems. Why build bigger rooms when we can strategically locate a new church in a spot where the people are located and possibly build there? Secondly, we can maximize the giftedness of the

Continues on page 25

DAVIS PLUMBING COMPANY, INC.

Since 1983

Design/Build projects involve hours of planning to get from start to close out, and require the dedication and hard work of architects, owners and sub-contractors. Davis Plumbing Company, Inc. consistently receives a high level of excellence from the design/build team at Myrick, Gurosky & Associates that is equalled by no other. We are therefore proud to be part of the mg&a design/build team and would like to express our thanks to them for making us part of the team. We highly recommend that you interview mg&a and experience the same high quality work that the following owners did by using them for their design/build construction partner.

- Worldsong Women's Missionary Camp
Cook Springs, AL
- Hunter Street Baptist Church
Hoover, AL
- Westwood Baptist Church
Alabaster, AL
- Shades Valley Lutheran
Birmingham, AL
- Southside Baptist Church
Greenville, AL
- First Baptist Church
Guntersville, AL
- Grayson Valley Assembly of God
Birmingham, AL
- Shades Valley Presbyterian
Birmingham, AL
- Shades Mountain Baptist Church
Vestavia, AL
- Valleydale Baptist Church
Birmingham, AL
- Union Hill Baptist Church
Bessemer, AL
- North Highland Baptist Church
Hueytown, AL
- Riverchase United Methodist Church
Hoover, AL
- Kingwood Assembly of God
Alabaster, AL

5600 Cahaba Valley Road , Birmingham, AL 35242

205-991-2022

205-991-2482 fax

E-mail: owdavisplumbing@aol.com

Trend: The Coming of the Multisite Movement

Continued from page 17

church staff by using them in multiple locations. Thirdly, the church is happy with its plan to reach people and wants to franchise this concept and use it over and over. And finally, additional staff is hired with the pre-expectation of working in one of the multisites and implementing the church's strategy there.

So who are some of the churches out there doing this? North Coast Church in Vista, California, Willow Creek in Chicago, Seacoast Church outside Charleston, South Carolina, North Point Church in Atlanta, Georgia, Community Christian Church in Naperville, Illinois, and Coastal Community Church in Virginia Beach, Virginia. All of these churches have had success using the multisite model to do church.

Yes, this is a different approach to doing church, which might make most of us uncomfortable. But it is an approach that is seeing much success in reaching the lost and unchurched segments of the population in today's culture. So, what's next? ♦

mg&a
DEVELOPMENT DESIGN CONSTRUCTION

Developing Churches

In our next issue:

An interview with multiple Grammy and Dove Award winner David Phelps

