

LOSING THE LOST GENERATION:
EXPLORING THE RELATIONSHIP
BETWEEN MT. ZION BAPTIST CHURCH (MZBC) AND
YOUNG ADULTS AGES 18-30 WITHIN A TWO-MILE RADIUS
SURROUNDING MZBC IN WINSTON-SALEM,
NORTH CAROLINA

A professional project submitted to the Theological school of
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Requirements for the degree,
Doctor of Ministry

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ABSTRACT

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The purpose for this project was to create a young adult missionary group for Mt. Zion Baptist Church in Winston-Salem, North Carolina, for young adults between the ages of 18 and 30. One of the main objectives for the creation of this group was to increase the number of young adults who are actively involved in the Mt. Zion church missions. This group will also will serve as a means to incorporate the ideas, interests, and activities pertaining to those in the aforementioned age-group.

Prior to this research, this age group was mostly underrepresented in the church community prompting the need for intentional outreach with the goal of developing a conversation between young adults and church leadership that could ultimately lead to more

interest from the target population. Over a six month time span, a team of church members was assembled with the goal of developing a plan of action, that included determining the specifics of the plan, executing and reflecting on a plan that could be sustained indefinitely. A significant amount of the research was aimed at understanding why the identified age group was not participating in MZBC with the same intensity as other age-groups. From the onset, the hope of this research was to determine the perceived problem with young adult participation and to implement at least one strategy that would solve, or at least minimize, the problem.

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To Dr. Serenus T. Churn, my pastor and my mentor, who encouraged me to pursue this Project; my mother, Ruth Roberts, who instilled in me my Christian values and ethics; and in loving memory of my father, Bishop Selester Stewart, Sr., who showed me how to be a man and gave me the passion to continue this journey in ministry. And to my wonderful wife, with special thanks for her patience, understanding and dedication to me and all of my ambitions. Had it not been for her support, this project and many of the other endeavors I have embarked upon would not have happened.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Seeing the lack of attendance of young adults between the ages of 18 and 30 in the MZBC, hereafter MZBC led me to investigate and implement this project. As I further observed, I noticed that there was not a particular group focusing on the aforementioned age group in the church or in the surrounding community. Therefore, my main objective for creating this project was to explore and create a missionary group targeting young adults between the ages of 18 and 30 at MZBC. The fear of losing this age group of young adults greatly concerns me as I wonder what would be the effect on future generations if we “lose” this one.

Historically, MZBC has been and still remains as a church that fights for social justice and equality for all. It is located in the heart of an urban city, Winston-Salem, located in central North Carolina. Surrounding MZBC are several neighborhoods comprised of a multitude of varying family types and age groups, with the dominate ethnic group being African-American. Additionally, there are a prevalent number of businesses and two local universities within this community.

Concern for a Lost Generation

Because MZBC is filled with approximately two thousand members who participate in the Saturday evening and/or the Sunday morning worship services, it concerns me that the median age in attendance is 65 years old. As such, less than 15 percent of the members are between the ages of 18-30. This led me to question the reason for the low attendance among the 18-30 age groups, and if a young adult missionary group would help increase the number.

Of course, this is not said to be a criticism, but an observation of some of the wonderful, influential members that comprise a segment of the rich history of our church and its legacy of over 100 years. It is a legacy that I am proud to be a part of and one in which I hope to preserve. However, it is my hope that part of this preservation process would consist of a larger percentage of young adults from the ages of 18 to 30. Therefore, it is my desire to help enhance and continue this great legacy through the formation of a young adult missionary group that would help us achieve the goal.

Scope of Project

Throughout this project, I will explore the expectations of young adults in the 18-30 year age range in our church community within a two-mile radius and what they expect from a church-home, like MZBC. Additionally, I will explore the ideas below as they relate to the targeted audience:

1. the role of the church within the home community;
2. the value of a church within the community as well as within their lives;
3. reasons the targeted audience would consider attending church or not; and

4. why adult worship service outside of the community is a preferred option, if applicable?

The scope of this project will not only seek answers to these questions, but to also implement a young adult missionary group initiative designed to increase awareness of MZBC to young adults within a two-mile radius.

Church Attendance Percentages

Church Membership of the MZBC in Winston-Salem, NC						
Age Group	Ages 65+	Ages 40-64	Ages 29-39	Lost Generation Age -18-30	Ages 12-17	Age 0-16
% Attendance	60%	20%	7%	3%	5%	5%

Figure 1: Chart Illustration of Church Attendance Percentage

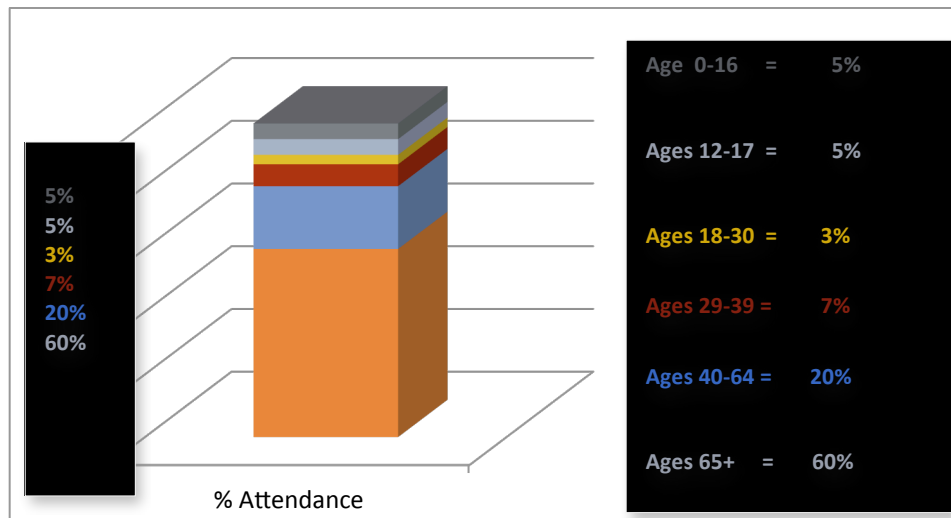


Figure 2: Graph Illustration – MZBC Membership Percentage of Attendance¹

¹ Howard Shaw, Interview by Selester Stewart, Jr., live interview, Winston-Salem, NC, August 30, 2012.

CHAPTER 2

IDEAS AND PHILOSOPHIES THAT SUPPORT HOW NOT TO LOSE A LOST GENERATION

A New Kind of Christianity

While reading Brian D. McLaren's book, *A New Kind of Christianity*¹ my mind began to absorb some of his beliefs as to how the church shifts from some of its traditional dogmas and paradigms. The need for change within the church in an effort to reach the new generation of church-goers became clear. Although, some critics view his book as “provocative”, and “challenging”, I believe that we need to challenge some of the views of today's churches.

‘Modern Christianity should be challenged by asking questions’ is explored within the aforementioned text and consequently, an idea that moved me and ultimately developed as a dominate theme. As I considered this reading, I began to wonder multiple questions that helped define this final project. Questions such as those listed below, continued to mentally appear as I conducted my research.

How can we move into another way of doing things to achieve our desired results?

Why are we losing a lost generation of church-goers?

Where are the young adults age 18-30 on Sunday's, and why is there so little in attendance at my church?

How can we get them to become believers and church attenders?

¹ Brian D. McLaren, *A New Kind of Christianity* (New York: Harper Collins, 2010).

In juxtaposition to my thoughts, McLaren suggests that, “*We don’t need a new set of beliefs, but a new way of believing, not simply new answers to the same old questions, but a new set of questions such as the ones I began to ask.*”²

I do believe that some of McLaren’s questions may seem mentally taxing, but we need to challenge new ways of doing things in the church, because we have a new generation of church-goers and potential church-goers. We have new and diverse cultures we need to include. Question 7 in his book is entitled, “The sex question: Can we find a way to address human sexuality without fighting about it?” Not only is this question thought-provoking, but necessary. Question 3 states: “Is God violent?” Some may view God as violent when he turned over the tables of the money-changers in the temple in Matthew 21:12: “Then **Jesus** entered the temple area and drove out all those who were selling and buying in the temple courts, and **turned over the tables** of the money changers.”³

In his book, *A New Kind of Christianity*, McLaren states that the “*old paradigms and dogma supported and enforced with guns and prisons*, can simply be replaced by a question. To support this belief, McLaren makes reference to Martin Luther’s provocative ninety-five thesis posted on door of the Castle Church in Wittenberg, Germany.⁴ Then he adds this statement in homage to Martin Luther as a ninety-sixth thesis:

It’s time for a new quest, launched by new questions, a quest across denominations around the world, a quest for new ways to believe and new ways to live and serve faithfully in the way of Jesus, a quest for a new kind of Christian faith.⁵

² Ibid., 18.

³ Matt. 21:12 (KJV).

⁴ McLaren, 16-17.

⁵ Ibid.

Although this statement was not directly related to the questions that I began to ask myself concerning, “Losing a Lost Generation” of believers in my church, it was a stepping stone to various ways to get answers to my initial questions. I felt McLaren was on to something; especially when he began to talk about the church losing touch with everyday, “normal people”, and how we, in the church, have forgotten how to speak their language. I wholeheartedly agree because of my past experiences in the church. Also, one of the reasons modern Christianity fails to draw the “un-churched” is because they do not speak their language. For whatever reason, we are not reaching them, or should I say, “we are not reaching out to them?”

For example, at MZBC, the congregation is comprised primarily of educators, professionals, and even those of the elite society such as famous writers and poets who socialize with a different society of people. Then there are those that McLaren terms as the everyday “normal people.” These are the people who live in the community surrounding our church, but do not attend our church. So, McLaren’s statement made me began to wonder if our conservative Christian church members need to ask ourselves, “How can we reach out to the missing links in our community?” Specifically, the missing links are those who have not yet even heard the gospel, or those who have heard, but have become despondent or discouraged because they have not heard anything spoken in their modern-day cultural context.

Like McLaren, I agree that modern Christians should be asking more questions and his usage of the biblical references, for instance, in the first ten questions in *A New Kind of Christianity*, McLaren asks, “What is the overarching story line of The Bible? He goes on to say that The Bible can be written as a narrative, seeking to find what the overall story line is. Therefore, he uses graphic organizers suggesting that it starts with Eden and the original sin and

ends with Hell and damnation. After demonstrating a set of men lined up in a row, placing Jesus at the head, and then rearranging the men by placing Jesus at the end, in the middle, etc., he asserts that “If we locate Jesus primarily in light of the story that has unfolded since his time on earth, we will understand him in one way. But if we see him emerging from within a story that had been unfolding through his ancestors, and if we primarily locate him in that story, we might understand him in a very different way.” Consequently, he implies that this narrative could also be the social and political narrative of the Roman Empire, and calls it a “Greco-Roman narrative.” Therefore, McLaren interprets the Bible through various forms and formats throughout his book.⁶ If we are to draw young adults into the church, should not we know the Word of God, and how to interpret it.

Although I agree that there are a multitude of questions that need to be asked for the emerging church, the closest point that I strongly agree with is the will to speak to the Villages and Camps, referring to the purpose of evangelism or “recruiting people to defect from destructive ways.”⁷ If we are to do this, we must be properly informed ourselves, by rightly dividing the word of God.

One concern of mine, however, for the emerging church is how we should deal with the issues of homosexuals in the church. Although McLaren does ring a true cord when he indicates that one purpose of evangelism is “recruiting people to defect from destructive ways,”⁸ he does not apply that to those in a lifestyle such as homosexuality. This is an area of concern for the

⁶ McLaren, 14-16, 112-113, and 193-194.

⁷ Ibid., 216.

⁸ Ibid.

emerging church and should be unequivocally discussed in the church, since large populations of homosexuals have become open about their rights to marriage and adoption.

The book *A New Kind of Christianity* is thought-provoking and radical; much criticism has arisen from this book among the Christian community. However, I was able to take from it some very important points, such as we need to ask questions about the new emergent church, and our need to evangelize and recruit, but in a language that the new church-goers can understand.

The New Christians

Another book that lends itself to an awakening of the minds of today's emergent church is *The New Christians*, written by Tony Jones. Jones makes this statement: "We are not becoming less religious, as some people argue, we are becoming differently religious."⁹ This statement rings true in my mind and is deemed "profound" because even though people are becoming different, believing differently, and worshipping differently does not mean they are becoming less religious. In Jones' explanation, however, I do not like to use the word "religion" when referring to "Christianity," because they are two different entities; religion is a way of doing something, while Christianity is a way of serving Christ.

One can religiously brush their teeth or read a novel; which proves a dedication to these tasks, but when speaking of the new Christians, Jones discusses how the emergent Christians are different because they are from a different era. They are not the baby boomers; they are not the modern Christians, and they are not the postmodern Christians. They believe differently and they worship differently; and yes, I agree with him on these points. I appreciate how he defines

⁹ Tony Jones, *The New Christians* (San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 2008) 2.

the theological terms he uses to help his readers become familiar with how he uses them in his book; especially terms he uses frequently throughout the book; such as *emergent*, the *emergent church*, and *emergent Christianity*. He defines *emergent* as coming into existence, or a calling for immediate action, and *emergent Christianity* as the new Christian faith arising from the old; Christianity believed and practiced by the Emergents. The term *emergent church* is defined as the specifically new forms of church life rising from the modern American church of the twentieth century, and *the emergent* as specifically referring to the relational network, which formed first in 1997; also known as Emergent Village.¹⁰ This is important because it serves as a point of reference to the readers; therefore, leaving no room for ambiguity or misconceptions.

In *The New Christians*, Jones gives case studies, discusses religious meetings and encounters; describes the views and opinions of others, past and present, profound and not so profound. He analyzes, describes, dissects, and connects these views, in relationship to his own. I agree with Jones in that “Emergent Christianity has taken root, and it’s growing like a weed – a lot of different weeds”, as he suggests, and that “the young evangelicals are forsaking their suburban birthright and moving into America’s toughest cities to found ‘new monastic communities’.” He describes these new Emergents as “pioneers” who are forsaking their homelands and choosing life on the frontier. This new church phenomena is a mix of the old and new, theory and practice, men and women, and of mainline, evangelical, and increasingly, Roman Catholic Christians as he describes. And it is a “rethinking theology and rethinking church. He developed and traced the history of the church and theology from the writings of the Bible, to Martin Luther, John Calvin, Max Weber, C. S. Lewis, pre-modernist thinking, Jerry Farwell, Jim Jones, David Koresh, to postmodernism, Rick Warren, to Emergents on the new

¹⁰ Ibid., XIX, XX.

frontier such as, Bruce McLaren and his controversial writing, *A New Kind of Christianity*,” and many others in between.

The question becomes, who is “Tony Jones,” and what is the thinking of the new Frontiersman? He describes himself as one of the founding Emergents. This phenomenon began in the late 1990s when he and a group of Christian leaders¹¹ began a conversation about how postmodernism was affecting the faith. Now, members of this new emergent church defied simple explanation and they believe in asking questions they feel are pertinent to today’s Christians. Questions that today seem to be bold, arrogant, and not biblically sound to “normal” standards of the modern church. Questions like, “is the Bible propaganda?” and “what church leader... would dare ask such questions?” are coined as ‘theological questions’ by Jones. He reasons discourse about God, religion, and spirituality. He felt that the methodologies of the church from which they had become disenfranchised were built on a whole host of assumptions, and these underlying assumptions had gone unchallenged for at least a generation. Therefore, he surmised that the way to unmask these assumptions was through theological questions. Although I cringed at the questioning initially; especially the first one, I read further to its explanation. Later, I understood that he simply meant, “Does The Bible have a purpose and a point?” “What is it trying to convince one to do or to see?” I began to see these as valid questions, questions that young inquisitive minds of today might ask. As a young emergent himself, he is simply trying to get into the minds of other twenty-first century thinkers and believers.

Jones expresses how he believes past church leaders read the Bible like it was a science book, looking for clues to establish a truth in order to prove events in the Bible and therefore

¹¹ Ibid., 41.

history. However, today's Christians are asking more questions and are seeking answers. I agree that this is a new day; we are more inquisitive, deeper thinkers, wise innovators, and we just do not take everything at face value. However, there are some things we do not question; we just believe because our faith in God bears witness to it. But those who comprise the "Generation X," need more mental stimulations. They need to know there is nothing wrong with asking questions; but we need to be prepared to provide them with the logical answers; answers that will satisfy their inner curiosities; and allow them to be themselves long enough to take off the masks and to feel free enough to become transparent to ask questions.

Although some of the early emergent leaders developed a reputation as arrogant, angry, or "some foul-mouthed," Jones expresses that a new stream is on the ascend; a stream that is learning how to adapt, and adjust to the changing times; because we are a part of that time. Therefore, this new stream involves us, the new leaders of the church and the present ones who desire a change. As a new Christian leader, I understand that it is imperative that we become an integral part of our communities, and societies, embracing a new generation of thinkers and explorers. As such, Christian leaders should contemplate that they will ask questions and they will need answers¹². Consequently, we must be prepared and equipped to provide them with the answers to those questions.

Like Jones, I believe we must allow them to ask those questions, and listen as they ask. We must not shove our perspectives and beliefs onto them; but gradually (after listening, studying, and praying) provide them with compelling answers; answers that will compel them to come, answers that will compel them to listen, answers that will compel them to stay and become a part of the solution, and not the ills of our society. Nicodemus asked the questions, "What

¹² Ibid.

must I do to be saved?” He was prompted to ask this question because Jesus was compelling in his ministry. Even Jesus asked questions, “Who do men say that I am?” He wanted to know how men perceived his teachings.

In my village, I see a new generation that hungers and thirsts for answers to questions; but they are not coming to the church. They seek answers and resolutions in drugs, gangs, sex, and crime. So, how will we fill that void and satisfy that hunger and thirst? We must open our hearts and the doors of the church to them before we lose them. I propose that we put on the whole amour of God; take off our masks, our robes, shut down the organ if necessary, take down our defenses, roll up our sleeves, and extend our arms. But first, we must pray, and take back our churches, our streets, our schools, and our homes as instructed by God to King Solomon saying: If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land.”¹³ The New Christian are the same type of Christians in Nicodemus’ day; but it is just a new era; with new questions for deeper thinkers and seekers; and the Emergent pioneers are providing answers that are unique to the times.

¹³ 2 Chron. 7:14 (KJV).

CHAPTER 3

FOUNDATION FOR THE PROJECT

Since my call into the ministry in 2007, I joined the MZBC in Winston-Salem, North Carolina, where Dr. Serenus T. Churn is the pastor and overseer and coincidentally a Drew University graduate. My current assignment at MZBC is Associate Minister; however, I initially served as youth minister of the church. During this time, I preached the youth messages on Sunday mornings, organized the annual youth-day carnival, and occasionally preached during Saturday worship services, church anniversaries, organized youth-day celebrations, and served on a youth-day lock-in of a panel discussion with other professionals (consisting of lawyers, doctors, community organizers, dentists, and professors) charged with dialoging with youth about the values and attributes of Christian living.

Currently, as the Associate Minister of MZBC, I am president of the Saint Mark Group, a laymen's missionary group, and host during the summer for VBS (Vacation Bible School) at MZBC. During the past three years at MZBC, my ministry service foundation allowed me to serve in 2010 as the 11:00 a.m. worship speaker for the MZBC Day Fall Fundraiser. In 2011, I served as speaker for the church's 122nd Church Anniversary Banquet, and in 2013, I was honored to preach for the 123rd Church Anniversary worship service.

These ministry services allowed me an even greater opportunity to establish a foundation grounded in the church legacy and to build upon for kingdom building and helped me to see the need to increase attendance for the lost generation of adults 18 and 30 years old.

Expansive History of Mount Zion Baptist Church

The birth of MZBC began as a song in the heart of a group of vocalists from the State of Virginia under the leadership of Reverend G. W. Holland. The group of singers, also the organizing foundation of MZBC in 1889, and were affectionately called, "*The Virginia Singers*" because they were from Virginia. Shortly afterwards, the Reverend George W. Johnson assumed the role as first pastor of the church. During his pastorate, MZBC worshipped at the Third Street location until fire destroyed the structure in 1904. Later, in 1907, Reverend Johnson moved the church in to a new edifice Ninth Street. The following year, Reverend Johnson was called home to be with the Lord after nineteen years of pastoral tenure.

It was in 1909, that Reverend Richard L. File, a native of Rowan County, accepted the call as the second pastor of MZBC. It is said that during his 36 years of ministry that MZBC experienced significant physical and spiritual growth. However, it is my understanding that by 1914, the increasing membership proved to be too much for the existing church quarters; therefore, a new building site was built at Ninth and Maple Streets. Consequently, in January 1916, the first brick for the new structure was laid, with dedication of the completed facility in September 1916. It was then that the hard work and sincere dedication of Reverend File's work was so immensely felt that Shaw University honored him with the Doctor of Divinity degree in 1923. The church members were so moved by Dr. File's works that they dedicated and installed a pipe organ, in his honor, as well as initiated several church programs, services and missions

during pastorate. Although Dr. File died November 3, 1945, his legacy continues to live on through the MZBC members and within its walls and corridors.¹

In 1946, Dr. Kelly Oliver Perry Goodwin became the third pastor of MZBC. A native of Washington, DC, he and his family moved to Winston-Salem to embark upon a new life and ministry at the church. Under his leadership and ministry, the church structure experienced another level of improvement, both internally and externally. It was then that MZBC established a church constitution and by-laws, joined the National Baptist Convention, USA Inc.; adopted a church-wide budget, established the R. L. File Scholarship Fund, established a child day care program; that licensed and trained ministerial students, and established joint worship and fellowship activities with Knollwood Baptist Church. The years of Dr. Goodwin's pastorate also included the purchase of a Lifetime Membership in the NAACP; increased donations to missions, the initiation of the Expansion Fund and the launching and completion of a building and relocation program. When urban renewal displaced the congregation from its' Ninth and Maple Street edifice in 1963, Dr. Goodwin lead the congregation in the land purchase and the erection of the present church edifice. Dr. Goodwin retired December 31, 1977, after thirty-one years of service. He was called home to be with the Lord twenty years later on July 7, 1997.

In 1979, Reverend Gilbert G. Campbell, Jr., a native of Richmond, Virginia, became the fourth pastor of MZBC. Again, the church experienced more growth, enhanced love of church, and program expansion. Under his management by objective leadership style, Reverend Campbell instituted an annual church budget and encouraged members to make more financial

¹Howard Shaw, Interview by Selester Stewart, Jr.; and *The Oral History of Mount Zion Baptist Church*, <http://www.mtzionthejoy.org/history.htm> (accessed August 30, 2012).

investments with its capital holdings. Also under his pastorate, the Inspiration Choir, an audio/video ministry, hand bell choirs, new members' class, Sacred Music Institute and the Athletic Association were enhanced. These efforts prompted the MZBC refrain, "*We Are One in the Spirit.*"

MZBC fifth and current pastor, Dr. Serenus T. Churn, Sr., under whom I serve, became the pastor in 1984. He and his family, including wife, Shirley, and two sons, Serenus T. Jr. and Starling T. Churn, both of whom were licensed and ordained as Baptist Ministers since their arrival at MZBC moved to Winston-Salem, North Carolina from Camden, New Jersey.² Since becoming pastor, Dr. Churn has enhanced the administration and operations of the church and extended the church's Christian Mission to include more community involvement. The building of the File-Goodwin Life Enrichment Center has meant new opportunities for service to the church and community.

Under Dr. Churn's leadership, the Child Development Center was re-instituted in 1989 with a staff of ten persons, providing day care to approximately 60 children. His desire to provide a much-needed service to the elder and their caregivers in the broader community led to the establishment of the Senior Life Enrichment Center. Included in the mission of the Senior Life Enrichment Center is "*Super Tuesday.*" It is designed to meet some of the needs of the seniors in order to learn fellowship, recreate and maintain a healthy lifestyle. Also under his ministry was the establishment of programs designed to reach the youth of the church community. They include the Youth Ensemble, for ages 13-20, the Praise Dancers, and the re-establishment of the Scouting Programs.

² Ibid.

The creation of the No Frills Saturday Sabbath Services (a dress code established to come as you are) began in Spring 1997. It provides the opportunity for those members and others in community to hear the Word of God on a Saturday, in non-conventional Sunday church attire. Other community outreach programs include Narcotics Anonymous, Prison Ministry, a Youth Summer Camp Program, and a Youth Education Enhancement Program. The church has seen expansion of its transportation fleet, expansion of the services provided by the Audio-Video Committee and the creation of a state-of-the-art library with Internet connectivity and the recent addition of a computer lab for training our members and interested members of the community.³ Our motto is: *“The Joy of the Whole Earth is MZBC!”* taken from Psalm 48:2.⁴

Considering the aforementioned, it is evident that our church has a rich history of 125 years of service to God. We have been blessed to worship in a multi-million dollar facility with a seven-days-a-week host of ministries. We strive to strengthen our members and community through:

- weekly Bible Study
- Children’s Message
- on-site Child Development Center to meet our pre-school needs.
- summer camp
- youth educational enhancement after-school programs
- senior citizen and senior adult day care

³ Vera Stepp, Interview by Selester Stewart, Jr. Live interview, Winston-Salem, NC, December 12, 2012; and *The Oral History of Mount Zion Baptist Church*, <http://www.mtzionthejoy.org/history.htm> (accessed December 12, 2012).

⁴ “Beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth, is mount Zion, on the sides of the north, the city of the great King.” Ps 48:2 (KJV).

- Narcotic Anonymous (CAN) Program
- Community Enrichment Center
- library/library resources

However, in spite of all the wonderful ministry opportunities (inclusive of all of those previously mentioned), there is always further opportunity for growth. One of particular interest to me at this time is the formation of a Young Adult Missionary Group for the ages of 18 and 30. This group would help attract not only member of MZBC members, but also attract and encourage members within our church community to become aware of the many opportunities that we, as a church and community family, have to offer.

About My Community

The church community in which I serve is predominantly African American. The members of MZBC consist largely of professionals; educators and retired educators, college professors, community leaders, doctors, dentists, attorneys and judges. It is located near the downtown area of Winston-Salem surrounded by both historic buildings and new constructions. (The study area that we will target is within the 27101 zip code as outlined below in black.)

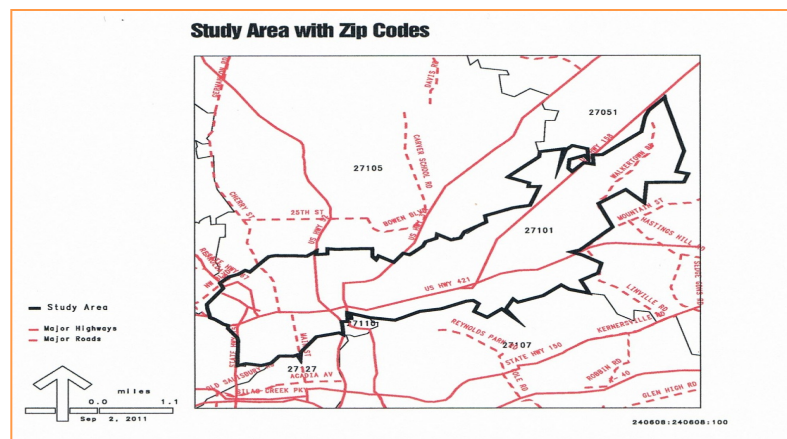


Figure 2: Study Area of our church community

Based on the Census Bureau results for 2010 in this area, there were 20,954 persons residing in the defined study area. This represents an increase of 2,765 or 15.2% since 1990.

However, this area is projected to grow between 2010 and 2015, the population is projected to increase by 4.6 percent or 969 additional persons. Three primary factors will contribute to the aforementioned projected growth. First, within a two-mile radius of the church is primarily low-income housing. As such, with the economy downward spiral, families are going to populate in affordable neighborhoods. Second, Winston-Salem State University, a historically black college/university, is nestled in the same community with less than eight miles driving between the two. In addition to faculty members opting to live relatively close to where they work, entered students will eventually move into apartments, designed for college living, that is also close to the university, and therefore, MZBC. And third, many cities in North Carolina population has increased annually for the last four year, including Winston-Salem. And, the increase in people is expected to continue over the next five years. The lifestyle diversity in the area is very *high* with 26 of the 50 United States' lifestyles segments represented. The top individual segment is *Struggling Black Households* representing 23% of all households. The largest group in terms of numbers represented in this community is Survivors (age 29 to 49), comprising of 6,756 persons or 32% of the total population in the area. Compared to the national average of 29%, survivors are also the most over-represented group in the area.

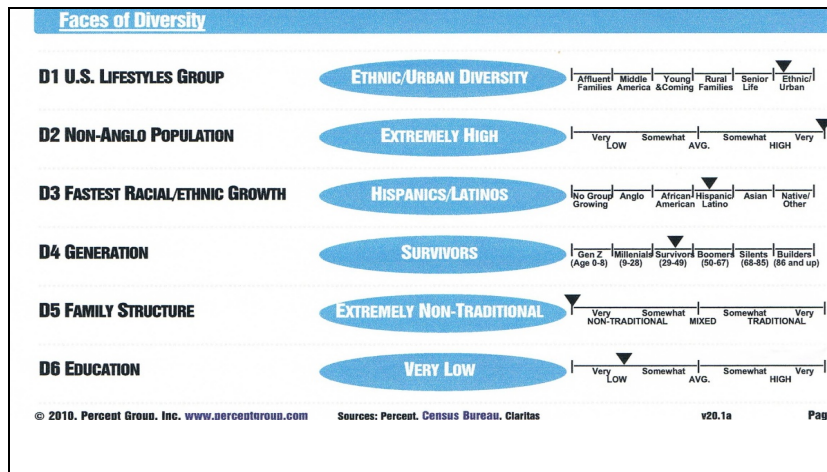


Figure 3: Diversity of the church community

The projected population density is very high, while the projected population change has a low growth potential. The population distribution is highly dispersed, and the diversity level is very high as is illustrated in the figure below.⁵

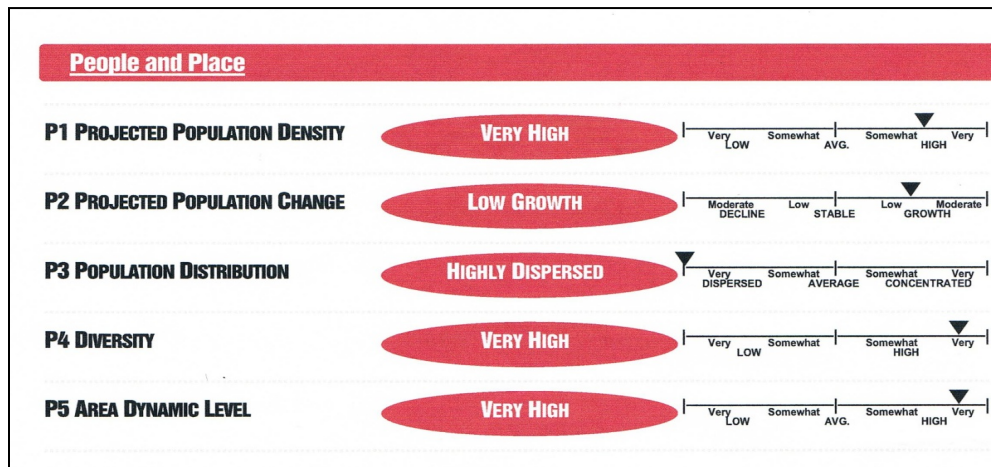


Figure 4: People and Places in our community

⁵ Ibid.

Although there are two universities/colleges (Winston-Salem State University and *Salem College*) in the study area, the educational levels are very low based on the 2010 census Bureau statistics.

This could be due in part to community issues in the area. For example, “The area can be described as extremely non-traditional due to the below average presence of married persons and two-parent families. Based upon the number of years completed and college enrollment, the overall education level in the area is very low. While 73% of the population aged 25 and over have graduated from high school as compared to the national average of 80% college graduates account for 20% of those over twenty-five in the area versus 24% in the U.S.”⁶

Other issues in this community that are likely to exceed the national average that concern me include: *racial/ethnic prejudices, finding spiritual teaching, affordable housing, neighborhood crime and safety, finding a good church and adequate food, adults without a high school diploma, single-mother homes, and the lack of basic necessities such as food, housing and jobs.*⁷

Doctorate of Ministry

Since being called into the ministry, I have been blessed to see so many areas of God’s wonders. I have met some of the most profound and prolific people entrenched in God’s working throughout various areas of the ministry. During this transitory period of my life, one of my greatest mentors has been Dr. Serenus T. Churn, Sr. It was through his guidance and

⁶ Census Bureau, 2010. Claritas, Percept Group, Inc., accessed November 12, 2012, www.perceptgroup.com

⁷ Ibid.

leadership that I felt compelled to apply to Drew University. Moreover, through this Doctor of Ministry Program, Dr. Churn has continued to foster an indescribable foundation of support, guidance and teaching for me, which has continued to empower me through this doctoral journey. Throughout the journey, I have encountered others who have significantly impacted my life and ministry with the profundity of knowledge and depth to further equip me with the tools necessary to empower others through the written and spoken word of God. Specifically, my Drew University professors as well as United States Congressman Mel Watt, North Carolina's 12th District Representative, who recently spoke at our church during the annual father-son banquet are a few of the individuals that further equipped me with a new knowledge ideal.

The purpose for this banquet was to begin to foster a closer relationship and authentic bond between fathers and sons. US Congressman Mel Watt addressed a group of fathers and sons during MZBC's seventh annual Network Fellowship Learn (NFL) Father-Son Breakfast on November 12, 2011. He discussed how to make men better husbands and better fathers, thereby creating better families. This particular event was inspiring to me because I witnessed the coming together of fathers and sons of all ages from various communities, but especially the bond between young fathers and sons, including me and my son.

This was one of the reasons I began to see the need to explore the relationship between MZBC and young adults ages 18 and 30 within a two mile radius surrounding the church in Winston- Salem, North Carolina. I realized the importance of seeking the opportunity to form a young adult missionary group to help strengthen these bonds within our own church community.

CHAPTER 4

THEOLOGICAL FOUNDATION FOR PROJECT

The theological foundation for this project is based on scripture and the mission of the church. One of primary missions of the church is the feed the flock. In order to feed the flock, the church must ensure that it has a flock to feed. Consequently, the mission, or direction of the church directly falls in line with community outreach and church growth. While ensuring that both of the aforementioned are feasible, the growth of the church increases membership in relationship the church's spiritual growth. The spiritual growth of the church involves understanding The Bible and its principles as it relates to the way it should be applied to one's life. In this way, when the church is involved with community outreach it essentially is a way to help identify problems in the community, and how to develop a plan to assist with those issues while keeping in line with the mission of the church based on scriptures.

One of the first scriptures that establish a theological foundation for this project is found in the fourteenth chapter of St. Luke's gospel. It is a parable of a servant is who commanded by his master to go out into the hedges and highways to compel men to come to the house of God so that his house may be filled.

Then the master of the house being angry said to his servant, "Go out quickly into the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in hither the poor, and the maimed, and the halt, and the blind. And the servant said, Lord, it is done as though hast commanded, and yet

there is room. And the lord said unto the servant, “Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in, that my house may be filled.”¹

This scripture indicates that the master did not just want a few people to come in the house, but he wanted the house to be filled with people. He distinctly named those who were sick and lost in some way and insisted that there were more people out in the highway and hedges. Not only did the master want the servant to fill the house just for the purpose of more people in the house, but that there was enough room for everyone to have a sense of fulfillment using their specific gifts and talents do a work in the house.

The scriptural-based reference indicated for this project invariably includes the necessity for family, and community. In accordance, if we are to reach the family, we must also reach the child, who in turn includes the community. To successfully accomplish this task involves establishing a strong family structure that stems from the adults; and, if we are to “train up a child in the way he shall go,” The Bible declares, “When he is old, he will not depart from it.”² If young mothers and fathers deprive their children of this great opportunity by not setting the examples, then the generations to follow will not have a strong basis to emulate; therefore the cycle of a lost generation continues.

Consequently, a community-based reference of this project lies partly as a responsibility of the efforts regarding the church missions. Community-based crime is a daily occurrence, every hour, and in every community. If the church fails to take the initiative, the streets will take over.

It is evident daily as witnessed in media outlets; especially when there is any amount of down-time for this age group (between 18 and 30) that the majority of crimes occur. For

¹ Luke 14: 21-23.

² Prov. 22:6.

example, during the summer when teenagers are out of school and not occupied with structured and positive environments, mischief and crime is apt to happen. While parents are at work, young adults have been known to experiment with drugs, sex, gang activity, and more, which is all the more reason to target this age group to prevent these things from happening. If we do not capture the attention of our young adults and rear them in the way that is productive and positive for society, then what options will exist to rear their children? This cyclical idea is captured in the Bible when stated, “for where there is no vision, the people perish.”³ The Old Testament prophet, Hosea, prophesized that, “My people perish because of lack of knowledge, and because thou hast rejected knowledge, I will also reject thee, that thou shalt be no priest to me: seeing thou hast forgotten the law of thy God, I will also forget thy children...”⁴

It is my belief that the church holds hope where there is no hope! As such, it is my further conviction that we, as a body of baptized, converted believers in Christ, whose Word we trust and believe are responsible for finding ways to seek out the lost and un-churched leading them into an organized, structured bible-based, Christ-centered environment. Consequently, the young adult missionary group that I propose to organize will receive training to further the aforementioned efforts and must have a heart of compassion and understanding for those they wish to draw into the fold. They must believe in this cause and be willing to fully embrace this cause armored with the Word of God. They must be unafraid, unmoved by negative appearances, and possess unconditional love for the lost and for the cause of Christ.

The desire for the members of the Young Adult Missionary Group would be as Paul commissioned the church at Corinth, commanding them saying, “Therefore my beloved brethren,

³ Prov. 29: 18.

⁴ Hos. 4:6.

be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the works of the Lord, forasmuch as you know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord.”⁵

⁵ 1 Cor. 15:58.

CHAPTER 5

PROJECT PREPARATIONS

Prior to starting this project, much thought and consideration went into the planning stages. As ideas came to mind, I began taking mental notes and tangibly writing and reflecting later. As mentioned earlier, I could not help but observe the age range of our membership and how it lacked in the age group in which my wife and I fell into (18-30). Consequently, there were few church and after-church social activities for this age-group, which led us to seek fellowship outside our church home. However, because I enjoyed this church so much, I began to invite young couples within our social circle to visit with us. In my second profession dealing with the criminal justice system, I continued to find opportunities to invite those who were “un-churched” and who had found themselves in unfortunate situations to visit our church, sometimes to merely participate in the fellowship and on some occasions to hear me speak. I witnessed how it impacted their lives, but eventually I noticed that there was not a significant amount of activities for this age group (18-30); hence they were not coming back. Thus, the idea to start a young adult missionary group became the mission and foundation for this project. I could not help but to imagine the positive benefits of a young adult missionary group as I continued to reflect on the positive spectacle at the Father-and-Son Banquet.

The first step was to present the project to my pastor and to ask his permission to implement the plan. During the meeting with Dr. Churn Sr., I explained that I wanted to develop

a young adult missionary group. This would be a part of my Doctor of Ministry (DMin) Project. As an alumnus of Drew University's DMin program, I did not need to go into great detail regarding the project specifications. I only had to tell him what my purpose was in doing it and give him a brief summary of how I would implement the plan. In addition to understanding the DMin process, he also understood the process and for change in the traditional church. We also had a brief discussion about Baptist polity. He stated that he approved of the project only if it does not cause dissention in the church and upon the approval of the missionary board.

After receiving permission, from my pastor, I had to go before the missionary board of the church. I explained my desire to explore the reasons for young adults between the ages of 18 and 30 in the community surrounding MZBC are not attending the church in their community (MZBTC). Therefore, I would like to develop a Young Adult Missionary Group in our church to target this age group. I furthered explained to them that I was working on my doctorate of ministry at Drew University, as a part of the curriculum to receive my doctorate and had to complete a project. I explained to the group that the project's success or failure would not hinder my graduation, therefore, the data and reports would not have any biased or skewed information. I shared that I chose this project, not because I thought it would be easily accomplishable, but because I felt that it is necessary in our church and could positively impact our community. It was important that the missionary board understood that the young adult missionary group was not being formed to replace, challenge, or be in opposition to the values and purpose of the existing missionary board or to challenge their authority, and that in the future, we may look to them for guidance and support. However, our purpose is to be an asset to the overall mission of the church by reaching out to those individuals who had not yet been reached.

Following my presentation to the missionary board, I waited for them to convene to discuss the matter among themselves. Later, I was informed that the committee had approved my project and I was congratulated on the brainstorming of a needed project. With their approval, I proceeded to select a small group of members (between eight and ten) from MZBC to serve on the Lay Advisory Committee (LAC). These members were chosen based on my prior knowledge of their interest and ability to effectively interact and communicate with young adults between the age range of 18 and 30. I was intentional and guarded with my selection. I chose members who were either between the ages of 18 and 30, had children or grandchildren between the ages of 18 and 30, or who were either born members of MZBC or who had been members for a minimum of twenty years. I also chose members who were active in the church, who had worked with young adults, those who had voiced their concern to me about the lack of activities for young adults, those whom I knew were open-minded and not traditionalized, had a good reputation and rapport in the church and the community, charismatic, and those who most importantly, had a fierce and abiding love for MZBC. Also, among them were members who I considered to be dependable based on my prior experiences, those who I perceived to have a good relationship with Christ and a heart for people and ministry.

Finally, I selected nine individuals based on the aforementioned criteria and met with them on a weekly basis, brainstorming effective ways in which to achieve our goal.

LAC (Lay Advisory Committee) Meeting 1

Our first meeting took place outside the church premises at a local sports bar. I was intentional in choosing this meeting place. I wanted to establish a relaxed tone in an uninhibited atmosphere. In this way, I felt it would help those members to feel free to think outside the box or outside the usual church setting because of the generations we were trying to reach. Therefore,

they could subconsciously observe the age range of some of the individuals we were attempting to reach.

During this initial meeting, we established and agreed on the eight governing rules below:

Rule # 1: Everything done was to build up the kingdom of God.

Rule # 2: All conversation in the meeting is confidential and stays in the group.

Rule # 3: We must be pure and honest in all discussion matters.

Rule # 4: We must respect each other's opinions and suggestions, keeping in mind that no question or suggestion is "*stupid*." There is no subject-matter that is off the table, neither is there a "*right*" or "*wrong*" answer.

Rule # 5: Never interrupt when someone is talking; wait until they are finished with their thought or idea. No rude comments at any time directed to or about anyone during the meeting.

Rule # 6: We are meeting with a purpose, and must be respectful of each other's time. No one individual should take up too much time.

Rule # 7: If a member is unable to attend, they must contact me prior to the meeting.

They must arrange a convenient time to give feedback or comments, if necessary.

Rule # 8: Each meeting will begin and end each with prayer.

After discussing and agreeing upon the ground rules, I summarized the purpose of this project, which was to develop a young adult missionary group between the ages of 18 and 30. I

shared the same outline that I had shared with the church missionary board so as to avoid any ambiguity for the purpose(s) of this committee.

In addition to the information that I had shared with the preceding group, I explained to the LAC that the young adult missionary group was not being formed to replace, challenge, or to be in opposition to the values and purposes of the missionary board or any existing boards in our church, nor to challenge their authority, but that our purpose was to be an asset to the overall missions of the church by reaching out to those individuals who have not yet been reached.

Once I presented my opening statement of purpose and intent, I gave each member a copy of my prospectus so that they could have a clear understanding of the project, and to become familiar with the terms used in the project (e.g. LAC) and so that they would be clear on what would be required of them in relationship to the overall project and the meetings. Then, I opened the floor for questions and/or comments before proceeding with introductions. Next, each member introduced his/herself and shared their reasons for accepting the invitation to serve on this committee.

Before adjourning, I requested that each member complete two assignments. Both assignments would either be emailed or texted to me prior to the next meeting. The first assignment was for them to email or text me a picture of what represented church to them. The second assignment was for them to think of three questions each to ask young adults that would help to decide why they would or would not join a young adult missionary group. I intentionally used this method of communication so that the members would have to appropriate their 21st century technology skills because the age group in which we are targeting are “tech-savvy” and a technologically-motivated, multitasking generation.

After clarifying and discussing their assignments, we set up a date, time and meeting place for the next meeting. Afterwards, I said a closing prayer and we adjourned. Most of our meetings lasted between one and two hours, being mindful that many of the members had family and work obligations.

Prior to the next meeting, I received all the requested text messages and email responses to the question, “What church represented to them,” in the form of a picture. I also received their text messages and email responses regarding the three questions they would ask young adults to help them decide on why they would or would not join a young adult missionary group.

LAC Meeting 2

Our second meeting was at a local bowling alley. We opened the meeting with a word of prayer, and I gave a five-minute sermon on the prodigal son.¹ The intent of the short sermon was to give an example that church could be held at any location. Next, we reviewed the pictures from their assignment of what represented church to them. One member showed a picture of a heart, representing that church is in the heart of mankind. Another member showed a picture of her family members, representing that was made of the family. Another member had a picture of a globe, representing the church on a global basis, not being confined to the four walls of just a building. While yet, another member showed a picture of angels, representing the angelic nature of Christians, and others had pictures of an actual church, representing the church as a building.

Ironically, I saw a trend develop from the younger LAC members as them seeing the church as undefined, not using Christian symbols, or seeing the church as a building; while the older members of the LAC saw the church in quite opposite terms, seeing the church as a

¹ Luke 15:11-32.

building or traditional Christian symbols. I brought this fact to the committee's attention and advised them to make sure we remained open-minded and remained focused on our target group.

Next, we reviewed the three questions that each member would ask young adults to help them to decide on why they would or would not join a young adult missionary group. After we presented and agreed upon a set of questions, as a group, we came up with several more questions that we would use to compose a survey. Then, we decided upon a format to create the survey. Keeping in mind our targeted age group, we decided to use a combination of multiple-choice, and the "yes," "no" format. (See Appendix). After developing the survey format, we decided that our next meeting would take place at a local pool hall. Then, we adjourned the meeting with a closing prayer.

LAC Meeting 3

Training

Meeting three was held at a local pool hall and to remain consistent and abide by our rules, I opened it with a word of prayer. This time, I invited a member of the senior missionary board of MZBC to assist us in implementing a training session and setting up some safety measures while distributing the surveys. Following a brief training session, we developed a list of the safety measures that we would use during distribution of the surveys:

Safety Measures

1. Members must travel in pairs (one male/one female).
2. Members will not enter the home; surveys will be taken outside of the home.
3. Members will fill out surveys based on participant responses.

4. Each pair of surveyors must stay in visual proximity at all times of another set of surveyors.
5. Members should always scan the area for safety and be able to recognize the exact street name, and home address.
6. One person will explain the purpose of the survey and perform the survey, while the other person is visually scanning the area for safety.
7. Each survey pair should have a cell phone preset to 911(in case of emergency).
8. Each survey group will be named A, B, C, or D and will be listed that way in their cell phones for immediate emergency access if necessary.
9. While the groups are surveying on foot, I would serve as a motor security monitor by driving around to further monitor and assure their safety.
10. Each member will wear comfortable shoes with ankle support and non-slip-bottoms.
11. Based on the weather, members must dress according to the weather. The weather will be checked the night and morning before the survey distribution.
12. Each member must make sure that they are fully hydrated (carrying a bottle of water is recommended).

Emergency Plan

In the event of an unforeseen emergency (weather related, or non weather emergency), each group is expected to report to the end of the block they are on, notify security, and they will be picked up by van. After the conclusion of this training, we ended the meeting with prayer and adjourned.

LAC Meeting 4

Due to various member's prior commitments (e.g. out of town travel), we held the fourth meeting via webcam using the "Go-to-meeting" technical program". I opened the meeting with prayer; and we held a mini devotional, in which members expressed one thing that the Lord had done for them since our last meeting. While unintentional, facilitating a virtual meeting also served as a reinforcement and reminder that our target population "handled tasks" in ways that some may consider unconventional, while the reality is that it is unconventional to some is a daily occurrence, and therefore, quite conventional to others.

Determining Survey Distribution

After that, we determined the date, time, and location for our survey distribution. We decided that we would start distribution further from the church, and work our way toward the church, starting with fifty surveys on the campus of Winston-Salem State University, twenty-five surveys on the campus of Salem University, fifty surveys between the blocks of First and Fourth Street, twenty-five surveys on Martin Luther King between Fifth Street and New Walkertown Road, fifty surveys on Cleveland Avenue, twenty-five surveys on Tenth Street, and twenty-five surveys inside MZBC. The method of distribution we decided upon for MZBC would consist of setting up tables outside of the sanctuary, and poll adults from our targeted age group in the church lobby.

Survey Instructions and Data Collection Method

Each surveyor was instructed to carry a portfolio containing three ink pens, a note pad, and a MZBC pamphlet to give to anyone interested in knowing more about our church. Also, contained in the portfolio would be the completed and uncompleted surveys.

Also during the meeting, surveyors were instructed to offer the participants the option to read and fill out the survey, or they would fill them out for them. In addition, surveyors were instructed to offer assistance to the participant if there were any survey questions or words that they did not understand. Surveyors were also instructed to make sure participants clearly identified their answer choices, and if any corrections needed to be made to first mark through the incorrect choice, and proceed with the correct choice.

We decided that after the participants had completed the surveys, the surveyors were to review the surveys and securely place them in the portfolio. At the end of the survey process, each surveyor would count their completed surveys, and given them to me to secure until the next meeting. After that, the group decided to meet at my home at a designated time and date. We ended the meeting with prayer and adjourned.

LAC Meeting 5

Planning for the Day before Survey Distribution

The meeting was held at my home and I opened it with a word of prayer. This meeting took place the day before distribution of surveys. During this particular meeting, we went over the final details on what would transpire on the next day during distribution. First, we composed the two-member teams and divided them up into groups composed of each team. Each team was provided with a map of the community that we would be serving, including major landmarks. At that time, we determined the specific areas each group would survey. Each team member was given a list of the names and phone numbers of all the team members. After that, each team was given their materials (the portfolio, surveys, pencils, pens, and MZBC brochures). At that time,

everyone synchronized their watches to ensure that we were all working on an accurate time schedule. It was determined that we would meet the next morning at 7:00 at a centralized Starbucks and have a light, nutritious breakfast. After members received all the information and materials that they would need, the meeting was adjourned with a word of prayer given by one of the group members.

LAC Meeting 6

Morning of Survey

The day of the survey, I arrived at Starbucks at 6:30 a.m. with a 10-passenger van. Upon arriving, I reserved seating for the group. I ordered breakfast for everyone so we could begin our meeting at 7:00 a.m. Members begin arriving around 6:55 a.m., and the last member at 7:01 a.m. We opened the meeting with grace and a prayer, and then ate. At that time, I asked if anyone had questions, and no one had any. So, we used the remainder of the time to relax and fellowship, or use the restroom before dismissing. Prior to loading on the van, I gave a prayer of protection before embarking upon our survey distribution. Then, we made one final check to ensure that everyone was present and had all the necessary materials. (I also ensured that we would have enough materials by making four extra survey packets.)

We left Starbucks at 8:15 a.m. in route to our designated community ready to begin our survey distribution. The traffic had just begun to get heavy, but there were no traffic delays or incidents as we travelled that morning. However, there were mixed emotions of excitement and some of anxiety as I listened to some of the conversations among the members.

CHAPTER 6

THE IMPLEMENTATION STAGE

Distributing the Surveys

We arrived in our church community around 8:35 a.m. on a bright, sunny Saturday morning. However, it was a little cool that morning with the temperature at 70 degrees with a slight (30 percent) chance of rain for late that afternoon. Although we expected to finish before that time, we still came prepared with a light jackets, hoods or caps, dressed comfortably with ankle-supported non-slip bottom shoes prepared for walking. We each also carried a bottle of cold water to stay hydrated, and ready to talk. As the van driver, I also carried extra bottles of water in the cooler, along with umbrella, clean towels, Kleenex, and snacks.

We began our survey distribution further from the church, starting on the campus of Winston-Salem State University with fifty surveys. After I dropped off my first group, I drove the next group of surveyors to the campus of Salem College with twenty-five surveys. The next set of surveyors was dropped off between the blocks of First and Fourth Street to distribute fifty surveys, while another set was dropped off on Martin Luther King, Jr. Drive and Fifth Street to New Walkertown Road to distribute twenty-five surveys. The next two set of surveyors were dropped off on Cleveland Avenue with fifty surveys and on Tenth Street with twenty-five

surveys, leaving the last set to be dropped off inside MZBC to set up booths on the outside lobby of the sanctuary.

As we unloaded the van, members paired up in two's; one female and one male as decided upon earlier, and began walking through the community in their designated pairs. Using their maps, the members ventured off in their various directions, while remaining in visual proximity at all times of the other set of surveyors. Members also scanned the area to ensure their own safety and to be able to recognize the exact street name, and home address in which they were located. Meanwhile, I drove around in the van ensuring the safety of all members as they began knocking on doors in the community.

It was not long until we realized that we did not prepare for the dogs in the neighborhood. Although most members knew not to run from dogs, a few members displayed fear and apprehension when an unleashed dog began to bark and run in their directions. Luckily, the dog was not vicious and the other members who happened to be dog lovers knew how to talk the dog down and away. Fortunately, that was the only encounter of that kind, but there were others to come. For instance, even though members did not enter the homes in the community, some residents did not take kindly to being disturbed at 8:30 a.m. by a knock on their door on a Saturday morning. However, others were quite kind and accommodating, especially in the campus community, offering the members inside the lounge area, and some even offered to fill out the surveys themselves and asked if they had extra surveys for their friends. However, it was quite a different story in some of the housing communities where there was no young adult in our target age group at home.

A few members were turned away abruptly; while on the other hand, some members were offered to come inside for a cup of coffee, or to sit on the porch and enjoy the fresh air while they took the survey.

Regardless of the varying encounters, members remained positive and remembered the purpose of their mission. Some members finished before others, and completed all their surveys, while others were still working and need additional brochures due to overwhelming responses in some communities.

Fortunately, besides the dog encounter, and a few sleepy residents, the survey distribution went well. We encountered no emergencies, dehydrations, or bad weather. The weather remained between 70 and 80 degrees and there was no rain. The last group of surveyors was picked up by noon and we all headed back to the sanctuary of Mt. Zion to deliver all surveys to me, and to set up for church services for the next morning so that the remaining surveys could be distributed among our church members.

LAC Meeting 7

Setting up for Sunday Morning Worship

After I collected all the completed surveys from all the members, they each took a break to refresh and rehydrate. Then, we had a brief meeting in the church sanctuary to discuss how we would set up for Sunday morning worship service. I divided members in three groups to pass out surveys for Sunday morning service. The first group of surveyors was assigned to sit at a table in the front lobby to hand out surveys to members from 10:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m., the next group would take over from 11:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m., while the last group would catch members at the end of the service from 12:30 p.m. until 1:30 p.m. or until everyone had gone. In addition,

we decided to have information about the surveys in the Sunday morning bulletins as well as have it read during the morning announcements as a reminder. While I made arrangements to get the survey information in the church bulletin before printing, and to have it announced in the morning announcements, I had some of the male members in the group to set up the tables and chairs for the following day. Some of the ladies in the group counted the blank surveys, and set them up on the tables along with extra pens. After that, I took the members to lunch, blessed the food and gave a word prayer and thanksgiving for the safety and well-being of all our members.

Sunday Church Services

The next day at church services, we all arrived at church around 10:00 a.m. to ensure that all the members were present, and familiar with their duties for that morning. As planned, members divided themselves into three groups that would pass out surveys for today's morning service. The first group of surveyors promptly took their seats at the designated table in the front lobby.

As church members began to arrive for their various Sunday service duties (e.g. choir members, ushers, audio and video technicians, etc.) the first group of surveyors began to hand out the surveys to from 10:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m. The next group of surveyors promptly took over from 11:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. Near the end of the service, the last group of surveyors was prompt and ready to take over to catch the rest of the members at the end of the service from 12:30 p.m. until 1:30 p.m. or until everyone had gone. The aforementioned arrangement was intentional so that all surveyors would have the opportunity to participate in a Sunday morning worship service. While surveyors were handing out surveys during morning worship in the lobby of the sanctuary, information about the surveys was also available in the Sunday morning bulletins as well as being read during the morning announcements inside the sanctuary. At the

end of the Sunday morning worship service, all surveys were turned in to me to secure until our next meeting.

LAC Meeting 8

Survey Evaluations

The following Friday was the designated time to meet to review, count, discuss the survey findings. Like the previous seven meetings, we opened the meeting with a word of prayer and thanksgiving to God for his blessings. Then, we enjoyed a light snack prepared by my wife prior to our discussions. As we began our order of business for the day, we counted all the completed surveys, and divided them among each group of four members to read and to discuss their survey results among themselves. Out of the 250 surveys that had been designated for distribution, one to each member of the target group, we received an additional ten surveys that were turned in to the church earlier that week, making a total of 260 completed surveys. As group members read and discussed their completed surveys, one out of the three group members was designated to present and discuss some of the pros and cons of their findings during our whole group discussion.

However, based on the questions we asked, there were various responses. Therefore, we purposefully used a multiple-choice list format consisting of a series of yes/no, 1-Agree, 2-Disagree, 3-Strongly Agree, 4-Strongly Disagree, or 5-Neither Strongly Agree or Strongly Disagree.

As members began their discussions, I walked around, to monitor some of the comments and discussions of the group members. Interestingly enough, based on some of the earlier

discussions, I gathered that the first questions on the survey sparked some of the most interesting points.

Included is a sample copy of the survey questions that we decided to use to help us obtain a general idea about how some of the young adults in our church community felt about their knowledge of, or reasons for not attending MZBC: (See Full Survey Sample Questions in Addendum 1). For the purposes of this project, we will look at individual questions as well as cluster questions from different age brackets within the target group. For example, for survey question #1, we asked:

When you think about church missions, what are your thoughts?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Giving money to the less fortunate | <input type="checkbox"/> Witnessing to people outside of the church |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Giving food to the less fortunate | <input type="checkbox"/> Witnessing to people inside of the Church |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> All the above |

Amazingly, nearly all of the survey results for this question in the local residential areas indicated that the mission of the church consists of all of the above: Giving money to the less fortunate, giving food to the less fortunate, witnessing to people outside of the church, and witnessing to people inside of the church.

There was a great deal of discussion among the members in the group about this particular survey question. However, after giving each group sufficient time to complete their discussions, we came together as a larger group to compile our findings. Each group leader had an opportunity to discuss some of their major pros and cons about the surveys, as well as their personal experiences during the distribution process.

Once we were in the larger group, each group leader had between five and seven minutes to share their findings. The group one leader shared with the group that question #1 generated the most amount of discussion from the surveyed members in the residential areas of the community for most of his group members. They seemed to feel that members in the community lacked confidence in the church at large in the area of supporting the less fortunate in giving food, money, or witnessing to the less fortunate. Even more surprising, was that a great deal of the members in that particular part of the community had no knowledge of our church missions or our church's existence to a large extent. When asked why was this so, some of the community members explained that they had limited means of transportation that seldom took them in the direction of the church, while other community members suggests that they felt they would not be accepted in such a large, fancy, facility with expensive cars in the parking lot. Others felt that such a church as Mt. Zion only catered to members of a certain class, and they did not feel that they belonged to that class of people. This gave us a better insight as to how we have been perceived by others, and something to work on as to how we may better present ourselves in the community.

As our discussion continued, other group leaders expressed how grateful some of the respondents were that members from Mt. Zion took out time to recognize them and consider their thoughts and opinions. Some of the young adults we surveyed expressed that they did not feel that they would fit in because they did not have the proper church attire for Sunday worship. That was our opportunity to inform them that maybe they could visit on "No Frills Saturday" service first, so that they would feel comfortable. However, they urged them to come as they are, and not to let that hinder them from a great worship experience. Members said that they encouraged community member to read the church brochure, or call the church office if they had

more questions or concerns. After a few brief discussions to clarify and answer some of the questions, most of the community members we visited concluded that they would be more than happy to visit our facility, and was glad we took out the time to introduce ourselves, have conversations with them, and leave to leave other information about our church with them.

However, some of the responses from the community rushed through the survey, and ended it with “maybe I will visit,” or “O.K, we’ll see.” This of course, did not deter, or discourage surveyors, because they already knew there would be positive and negative feedback, and to stay focused on our goal to help find ways to draw young adults (ages 18 and 30) into the church.

As discussions continued, some of the surveyors expressed that some of our most encouraging and positive responses came from some of the respondents who lived on the surrounding college campuses. These were some of the young adults from the ages of 18 and 22 who were familiar with some of the local churches in the community, who were on their campus during move-in day to assist with students moving in. Those particular churches set up tents on college campuses and provide bottled water, snacks, care packets, and information packets about their churches, as well as provide transportation for students who have no other means of getting to church. This kind of information was very helpful for us to know because Mt. Zion does not have a ministry that provides these services. Consequently, we saw this as an opportunity to assist them in some of the same ways through the young adult missionary group. This was valuable information for us to take back to our leadership council to explore the possibilities for Mt. Zion to provide similar services. However, students were pleased that we had taken the opportunity to present to them information about our church, and the various services that we

offer. It was from this group of young adults, we received very favorable results, especially to questions 1, 2 and 3 when we asked:

1. When you think about church missions, what are your thoughts?

- Giving money to the less fortunate Witnessing to people outside of the church
- Giving Food to the less fortunate Witnessing to people inside of the church
- All the above

Most of these respondents answered that “Witnessing to people outside of the church, and witnessing to people inside of the church” was what they felt important as far as church missions were concerned. It was also interesting to note that most respondents in both the campus or in the residential community answered alike when asked question #2:

2. If you were to join a young adult missionary group, what activities would you like to participate in?

- Young adult night out A social networking fast
- A phone fast Technology fast
- All of the above

Most all of the respondents checked the box labeled “all of the above”. This gave us a general idea that most adults in this age group are avid components of technology. This gave us ideas as to who we can incorporate technology our missions to attract these young adults.

We found that the responses for questions 3 and 4 on the survey varied: For question 3 when asked:

3. Are you aware of MZBC? Do you know the location?

Yes

No

There were at least 65 percent of the respondents who answered “Yes”. The other 35 percent who answered “No” were mostly college students, or other young adults who expressed they had limited means of transportation. However when asked:

4. Are you aware if MZBC has a young adult missionary group from ages 18-30?

Yes

No

Most of them were unaware if MZBC had a young adult missionary group for adults 18 and 30 or not, except for the ones who already attended the church. I think questions 1-4 were great “icebreakers” because it gave us a chance to get into the minds of the respondents about how they viewed the church as a whole and the mission of the church.

Questions 5-7 were basically opinion question about MZBC and how the church views young adults from 18 and 30. For these questions, we used a rating scale that ranged from “poor” to “excellent,” and from “strongly disagree” to “strongly agree.” These questions could only be answered fairly if any of the respondents had visited, or belonged to MZBC. However, we included them because we felt that they were important to ask because we had no other way

of knowing if our respondents had attended before, or visited with a friend. Also, we were interested in knowing how our current member felt about these questions. (See question 5-7 below):

5. On a scale from 1-5, five being the best, what is your opinion of MZBC?

- 1-Poor 3-Very good
 2-Fair 4-Excellent 5-Good

6. On a scale 1-5 do you think the church values young adults 18-30?

- 1-Strongly disagree 4-Agree
 2-Disagree 5-Strongly Agree
 3-Neither agree nor disagree

7. On a scale of 1-5 how do you think the church views young adults ages 18-30?

- 1-Poor 3-good 5-Excellent
 2-Fair 4-Very Good

Questions 8, 9, and 10 were very personal questions and often of a sensitive nature to some of those we surveyed. Several of our group leaders expressed that some of the people they surveyed were a little reluctant to answer them because they felt it was of an intrusive nature. However, they explained to them that they were not asked to judge them, but only for evaluation purposes to get an idea of the type of services that we could offer them. We discovered that most

of them answered “yes” to question 8, Have you given your life to Christ?’ Approximately 10 percent answered “No” Of those who answered number 9, “How frequently do you attend church? Twenty percent responded “never”, 40 percent answered on “holidays” and 20 percent answered “once a month,” and 20 percent answered “twice a month.”

8. Have you given your life to Christ?

Yes No

9. How frequently do you attend church?

Once a month Never
 Twice a month Holidays Weekly

10. Are you currently a member of a church?

Yes

No

For #10, “Are you currently a member of a church?” 75% of those surveyed answered “Yes” and 25% answered “No” What we discussed among ourselves were that most of those we surveyed belonged to church, but were not regular church-goers, and maybe that those who answered “No” were among the ones without transportations, or had no interest in going for one reason or another.

Questions 11-14 were questions that could only be answered by current members of MZBC or those who had visited or attended there in the past. However, we found that many of the others that were surveyed were able to offer some valuable input given hypothetical situations.

Questions 11, 12, and 13 were “Yes” / “No” questions. However, we received some of the most favorable responses for these questions. When asked “Do you think MZBC will be moving in a positive direction by forming a young adult missionary group for ages 18-30?” Almost 100% of the respondents answered “Yes” to this question, and, only 2% wrote in the sidelines of this question, “I don’t know,” or “Maybe”.

11. Do you think MZBC will be moving in a positive direction by forming a young adult missionary group for ages 18-30?

Yes

No

For question 12, when asked:

12. If MZBC formed a young adult missionary group ages for 18-30, would you join?

Yes

No

Ninety percent of the respondents answered “Yes” to this question. Therefore, we felt that we were heading in the right direction based on these responses. And when asked question 13:

13. If MZBC had a young adult missionary group for ages 18-30 that targeted your age group would you attend Sunday Morning Church services and other church activities more frequently?

Yes

No

We also discovered that a large percentage of the respondents answered favorably with almost 85 percent of them answering “Yes.” Although, the response choices for question 14 were worded a little differently than the others, when asked:

14. If you enjoy MZBC young adult missionary group, how likely are you to encourage other young adults to join the young adult missionary group?

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Very Likely | <input type="checkbox"/> Less Likely |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Likely | <input type="checkbox"/> Not at all |

Of the respondents, 45 percent answered “very likely,” while 50 percent of the respondents answered “likely”, and another 3 percent answered “less likely,” while 2 percent answered, “Not at all”.

15. Do you feel that being a part of a young adult missionary group will assist you in becoming closer to GOD?

- Yes
- No

Approximately half of the respondents answered “yes” to question 15 while the other half answered “no”. Overall, we found valuable information contained in our survey evaluations.

Thus, we decided as a whole to go forward with this information and present our findings to the lay council for their input. Therefore, we schedule a time to meet with the lay council as a whole group to seek their input and advice on our survey results. One of the group members suggested that we make our presentations using a PowerPoint presentation, and agreed to work with me to put it together. We all agreed, and ended the meeting with a prayer.

The following day, I called the church to schedule a meeting with the lay committee. The meeting was scheduled for the following week. After gathering the minutes from each meeting, along with the completed surveys, we began the next day preparing our results for the presentation.

In conclusion, we decided from our survey results with a unanimous vote that we should move forward with creating the young adult missionary group. The next meeting will take place with me meeting with the board to present the findings from our survey.

Prior to the meeting, I prepared copies of our survey question, and also decided to create a PowerPoint presentation containing our findings. Upon entering the room to meet with the Trustee Board, the chairman of the Trustee Board invited me to have a seat. However, before I could say a word, he kindly stated, “Rev. Stewart, there is no need to show us your findings.

After our first meeting, the trustee board had already decided among themselves after your presentation that we felt a need to institute a young adult missionary group at MZBC.” He explained that it was my presentation about the idea of creating a young adult missionary group that caused them to begin to reflect on the early existence of our church and its oral history. It was this idea that brought on further discussions among committee members how our church began with young adults from that same 18 and 30 age group. They further explained that it was through the efforts of the youthful vitality of those young adults’ years ago that began the MZBC, and other great movements in history such as the civil rights movements. Therefore, they came to the conclusion that this vital part of our society is needed in the church and in our community, and they felt that it was a privilege to not only consent to, but to thoroughly endorse our idea to start a young adult missionary group at MZBC in Winston-Salem, NC.

Therefore, they presented to me several key conditions that we must abide by:

1. The Young Adult Missionary Group will be a springboard of the Senior Missionary Circle;
2. We must use the same committee structure of all the other missionary groups in the church; and
3. We must have a representative present at all missionary group at-large meeting.

Following the meeting, I schedule another meeting with the LAC members.

LAC Meeting 9

Trustee Board's Decision and Preparation for Interest Meeting

After contacting the LAC members, we decided to meet at my home the following Friday evening to discuss the Trustee Board's decision, and how we would go forward with the implementation of a Young Adult Missionary Group. Of course the meeting was opened with prayer and thanksgiving, and then, I presented the two topics on the agenda for the meeting.

First, I thanked the committee members for their time and dedication towards the project to form a Young Adult Missionary Group, and presented the good news that it had been approved. Next, I discussed how the Trustee Board came to their decision to approve our project before I was even allowed to present our survey findings. Although I did not show the PowerPoint presentation we had prepared, I left each member of the Trustee Board with a copy, along with a copy of the survey questions for their perusal at a later date, and for the record.

After discussing the results of the meeting, I congratulated each individual LAC member and shook their hands for the outstanding volunteer work that they provided. Prior to the

meeting, I had decided to prepare a small surprise celebration to show our appreciation for their sincere support and hard works.

However, before the celebration, we had to discuss the second item on the agenda for this meeting --- Preparing for an interest meeting for members interested in joining the Young Adult Missionary Group. During our discussion, we came up with three ideas that we felt would work.

1. Have it announced in church during our Sunday and Saturday worship services, and during Wednesday Night Bible Study.
2. Have our church secretary make posters to display in our main lobby, men's and woman's restrooms, on each floor of the church, and in our education building inviting members to join.
3. Have inserts placed in church bulletins inviting members to join.

After we agreed upon these three ideas, I asked for volunteers to make sure each idea was put into place for the following Sunday. And as always, they all chose to participate to help to make it happen. Afterwards, I invited them to join me in our dining area to celebrate our success, and I presented each one of them with a small token of my appreciation.

For the next several Sundays, I received numerous contacts from members who were interested in joining the process in hopes of growing the cause. To meet the needs of those interested, I set up an interest meeting after our next church service for those who indicated they were interested in joining the young adult missionary group. Twelve members attended this meeting, including three from the LAC members. At that time, I received the names, and phone numbers of those interested members in order to set up a meeting for the following Sunday to

discuss how the new committee would be organized, and to vote on interested members who would serve as committee officers.

Interest Meeting

The following Sunday after church, we convened for our first meeting. I opened the meeting with a word of prayer and thanked everyone in attendance for his/her interest in participating in the Young Adult Missionary group. After introducing themselves to the group, each member told what made them want to become a part of the group. Then, I asked each member to reflect on his/her greatest skill set, and how they could use it as a committee officer. The positions available would be president, vice-president, secretary, treasurer, and I would serve as the committee's chair. Therefore, they should think about each office carefully and what skill sets they possessed that would be an asset to the office they desired to serve. After that, I gave each member a sheet of paper with three columns, and asked them to write their name on it. The heading for the first column was "Position Desired", the second heading was "Skill Sets", and the third column had "Job titles or Duties" using these skill sets. Each member desiring to serve in a particular office had to complete each column, and turn it in to me.

After reading over the responses, some members indicated that they were already leaders on their jobs and in their communities, and listed how they would fit in to a particular office on the Young Adult Missionary group. I received some very impressive responses in all three categories. Some of the skill sets included leadership, facilitating, organizing, fact-finding, presentation, research, listening, and written and oral communications. Some of the job titles included teacher, principal, bank officer, grant writer, college professor and administrator, editing and writing specialist, president and vice presidents of company organizations.

From these responses, I discovered that each skill set, and job title indicated matched perfectly with the office desired. Therefore, I was able to allow each person who indicated an office to serve in that particular office. After we reached consensus on the terms and assignments for each office, I provided each member an assignment sheet to discuss and implement the following:

1. Meeting dates and time
2. Mission – what is the mission of the Young Adult Missionary Group?
3. Core Beliefs – what is the foundation for establishing this group?
4. Purpose
5. Activities

We concluded the meeting with a word of prayer and a plan for the next meeting. We decided to meet two weeks after on a Saturday in one of the church conference rooms. As chairperson, I wanted to be present for this meeting just to observe and offer any advice or assistance if needed. However, from that point, I would serve as the group’s advisor, and overseer on an “as-needed” basis.

Young Adult Missionary Group

The Young Adult Missionary Group met two Saturdays following the initial meeting. The president opened the meeting with prayer and expressed his gratitude for being allowed to serve in this capacity. He gave thanks to God, and also recognized the other officers and members. Then, gave each one of us an agenda for the meeting, along with a sheet of information proposing the groups meeting times and places, the purpose of the group, the

group's mission, the mission's core beliefs, and a list of proposed activities to be voted upon by the group.

The agenda included: Opening prayer, meeting purpose, proposal, discussion, and closing. At first glance, I was very impressed with information provided. It was evident that a lot of time and effort had been put into the developing a proposal with its purpose, mission, activities, and the Core Beliefs for the Young Adult Missionary Group, as follows:

The Young Adult Missionary Group of MZBC (is):

- a group of young men and women ages 18 and 30, single or married,
- a group that meets every Friday evening at designated times and venues,
- shares uplifting bible-based solutions to problems,
- prays, plays, and enjoys various aspects of the life that God has given us,
- provides a positive social outlet for young adults between the ages of 18 and 30,
- studies God's Word together,
- provides positive and uplifting activities, and
- enhances the spiritual and social growth of young adults in the Christian community.

The proposal reads as follows:

YAM PROPOSAL

The Young Adult Missionary Group of MZBC

We, the members of the MZBC do hereby and agree upon the following proposal to be incorporated in this newly formed Young Adult Missionary Group as a set of standards and beliefs in which to govern ourselves by.

OUR PURPOSE

The purpose of the MZBC Missionary Group is to be a social group for positive influence, providing guidance, and direction towards purpose and self-discovery, to help each other recognize and acknowledge our gifts, abilities, and talents by using them for God's purpose and good, and to share these gifts to find solutions to problems by incorporating them into our everyday lives.

OUR MISSION

The mission of the Young Adult Missionary Group of MZBC is to be a strong social group of positive influence while gaining an understanding of God's word as it relates to our individual lives as young Christian men and women, to provide a positive forum where young adults can meet regularly to discuss spiritual issues our age group faces; to provide support, fellowship, guidance, and direction through God's Word while also learning to enjoy other aspects of our lives while maintaining our spiritual walk.

CORE BELIEFS

Our core beliefs are scriptural-based. We believe that:

➡ *“All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness.”*

➡ *“That the word of God is a lamp unto our feet, and a light unto our path.”¹*

¹ 2 Timothy 3:1-16 and Psalms 119:105.

PROPOSED ACTIVITIES

Parents Night Out - This activity is help on designated weekend nights, in which parents (single or married) will have at least one night out, once a month without having to pay for a babysitter. We will provide babysitters from a pool of volunteers from our church. This will give some of older members a chance to spend time with the children, allowing them to play games, along other activities in the comfort of our own child-care learning facility.

Movie with a friend – This activity will give some of our single mothers and fathers a change to meet at the movies one night a month, or to invite a group over to watch a movie on the big-screen television.

Bible Study– AIM (Adults Interested in Missions) - this is not your ordinary bible study group. These are young adults on a mission to study the word to help fulfill God promises. After studying God’s word, each week they will make a difference by doing something in the bible for someone else. For example, they may want to invite someone over for dinner, give away clothes no longer needed, and take someone to the grocery store. They may also take an elderly person to a doctor’s appointment; buy groceries for someone in need, read scriptures to an elderly person, or wash someone’s car. These are just a few of the suggestions we discussed and agreed upon.

PARTNER –An acronym for Pairing Adult Relationships That Nurture, Empower, and Recover. It involves pairing adults with others to form relationships with them that can help nurture, empower, and help them recover from negative situations or relationships.

COMMITMENT

We, the officers of the Young Adult Missionary Group do hereby, agree upon the above said proposal realize that it can be revised as deemed necessary and agreed upon by said officers this ____ day of _____.

<u>Signature of Officers</u>	<u>Date</u>
Vera Stepp, President	
Alvin Atkinson, Vice President	
Howard Shaw, Secretary, Historian	
Jan Atkinson, Treasurer	
Rev. Selester Stewart, Jr., Chairman	

It was also decided that the Young Adult Missionary group would henceforth; be known as the YAM Group (an acronym for Young Adult Missionary) Group. This proposal was presented as a PowerPoint presentation along with a hardcopy to be agreed upon and signed by the officer of the Young Adult Missionary group and myself.

After this most favorable presentation by the president and members of the Young Adult Missionary group, I was not only impressed, but I was filled with joy in my spirit for the excellence and hard work that had gone into this presentation of spirit-led collaboration of creative ideas. They had persuaded me that my idea to form this group was the right one, but

that the right people were chosen for the job, and that my dream of starting the YAM group had already come into fruition.

After I commended the group for such a well-put-together proposal and presentation of ideas for the Young Adult Missionary Group, I signed the proposal with jubilation, and we ended the meeting with a word of prayer and dismissed.

A copy of the proposal was placed on file for our records, and a copy was forwarded to the church Missionary Board for their records. At this point, the Young Adult Missionary Group has regularly occurring meeting and continues to reflect on, refine and implement the proposed mission. I was periodically informed and kept abreast of the group's progress, and occasionally asked for advice and recommendations.

Church Growth

Several months after the YAM Group was implemented, the church began to experience slight growth among its targeted group of young adults age 18 and 30. This growth increased the church's attendance, and the YAM Group increased in numbers also. Eventually, an annual event stemmed from this group that included all age groups. After the YAM begin working with a group of youth and included the elderly in their missions, they started an annual gala that included all age groups in the church. This gala started out in our church facilities in the month of January, considered as the "New Beginnings". It was decided to celebrate the coming of a new year. It was divided into four groups: youth ages-10-17, young adult-ages 18 and 30, adults ages 31 and 65, and seniors, ages 66 and up. This "New Beginnings" Gala was an opportunity for each age-group to dress up, feel good about themselves, listen to age-appropriate music, and celebrate in a Christian environment among their peers. It was such a great turnout, that the

celebration was moved to the convention center. Attendees were so excited about this event that they were willing to pay a small fee once a year to celebrate the beginning of a new year. This event was also open to family and friends of members of MZBC. Consequently, this was another way to bring in members of all ages who wish to join the church.

I was happy to see how one idea stemmed from a previous one and has provided the group an opportunity to continue its growth; thereby, increasing our church attendance in the areas in which much growth was needed. Over the past year, our church attendance increased by 20 percent; and 15 percent of that growth was among the age-group of young adults between 18 and 30.

CHAPTER 7

PROJECT REFLECTION AND CRITICISMS

The reflection portion of this paper consists of four categories:

1. Description of the Experience
2. The Project's Beginning – Describing the Problem
3. Finding a Solution
4. Criticisms

Description of the Experience

I would describe my experience as a learning experience as well as one of success. The goal of this project was for a LAC (Lay Advisory Committee) to meet on a regular basis to help establish a Young Adult Missionary Group for ages 18 to 30. This group would ultimately be formed to help draw young adults from our surrounding church community into the MZBC. After forming a group of dedicated and committed members of the church, we brainstormed several ways in which to accomplish our goal. The tool that we agreed to use in order to get this accomplished was a survey of fifteen multiple-choice questions. After distributing and retrieving the surveys, we used the results of this survey to form a group of interested persons to serve as the members of the newly formed Young Adult Missionary Group (ages 18-30) of MZBC.

The Project's Beginning – Describing the Problem

As I reflect back over the development of this project, I am amazed at the extent of its progress in such a short time span. This project began as an idea I had based on the need to increase the attendance of young adults among the age group of 18-30 in our church. As a new member among that age group at the time, I felt that the church could benefit from the vigor and fresh ideas of those in that particular age group. I also wondered why there were so few in attendance; especially due to the close proximity of some of the local colleges, and communities surrounding the church.

Being such a conservative church, I wondered how my idea would be perceived. As I thought about the powerful messages that I gained from my pastor, I often thought about how others in my age group could benefit from them as well. As a young minister and man in today's society, I knew the importance of establishing positive relationships and activities in the community. However, I did not see many young adults among my age group in attendance at MZBC; even though, I knew they existed in our church community.

Finding a Solution

After pondering this situation, I knew I had to find a way to solve this dilemma in our church. Even though some never even realized that it was a dilemma because they grew up from a youth in this church. I knew something was missing, and felt that it was my responsibility to make it known. However, after careful consideration, I brought it to the attention of our church officials, who allowed me to go forth with this idea.

I began to wonder what things or reasons would hinder some young adults from attending church. My first thought was the need for transportation. Then I thought about the demographics of the community. This included the average age, income, and education of most of the people in the community of MZBC. Understandably, collecting and analyzing the aforementioned information could take considerable time, however, I was committed to the process as it was essential for the project. But first, I would need a group of dedicated team players willing to work with me towards that goal, and as I look back, I realize that I could not have had a greater group of team players to meet the challenges ahead.

My choice to select a variety of members from among our church congregation turned out to be the best solution to meet the challenges ahead of us. The committee was comprised of dedicated, motivated, and committed current member of MZBC who saw the project from its beginning to the end, and never wavered in their commitment.

Criticisms

As I continue to reflect on the mission of bringing this endeavor to pass, I can honestly say that I did not realize all the time and attention that this project would entail. Actually, at first, all I could see was the desired outcome of this project, and the difference that it would make in the lives of so many others.

At the beginning of this project, I could not have imagined all the time and effort that we would have to spend upfront in order to obtain the desired results. However, looking back in retrospect, we spent a lot of time meeting and planning. It is only now that I can see some of the things we failed to consider. For instance, during the survey stage, we really had no idea how long the actual survey process would take, or some of the many possibilities that could have

occurred. Although we did consider the possibility of rain and the heat, which allowed us to prepare for the weather, we really did not discuss the possibility of pets or unstrained animals. But, it was in our favor that only one incident occurred and was satisfactory handled. I now realize that the threat could have been worse, especially since it was the first time that some of us had ever visited the communities surrounding our church.

In retrospect, I think we could have sent letters with the surveys attached to them explaining our mission, and to alert the community that representatives from MZBC would be in the community knocking on doors to take a brief survey. In that way, we would only have to be there to pick up completed surveys and to also help with questions about the survey. This could have been another solution so that members in the communities would at least be aware that a representative may be coming.

Although using the survey distribution method was successful, we could have created an easier process that was less intrusive and some time could have been saved by just picking up the already completed surveys, or having a self-addressed, stamped envelope to return the survey in. However, completing the process as we did likely ensured a higher rate of participation as people often feel a greater pressure to complete a task while someone waits rather than opting to make time to complete a task that will later be mailed – and without accountability.

Now that the survey process has ended, I have thought of other ways that we could have accomplished the desired results through a different means. For example, we could have distributed the surveys through the postal system using the bulk mail process. But “Would it have been too expensive?” or “Would we have received enough surveys back to make a difference?”

Although developing and distributing the surveys were a time-consuming process, I am certainly satisfied with the results we accomplished, and for the great learning experience we achieved. “Would I do this project again?” The answer is “Certainly!” However, I may go about it a slightly different way, or I may weigh my options a little differently, by brainstorming to find the most efficient, and effective way.

CHAPTER 8

HOW DOES THE FUTURE LOOK FOR THE YAM GROUP?

Based on what has already developed as a result of forming this group, the future looks promising for our newly-formed Young Adult Missionary (YAM) group. The group has proposed a plan that is far beyond what I initially imagined our group would accomplish. Although the proposal is in its planning stages, I already see it as an instrument for positive change, not only for the young adults of our church, but for the entire church body and surrounding communities.

A Vision for our Future

Since the inception of the Young Adult Missionary (YAM) group in MZBC, I see gifts and talents of many of members of the YAM group emerging in various aspects in our church (e.g. ministry gifts, leadership gifts, helping gifts, gifts of exhortation, interpretation and music, dance, arts, and many others). In addition, this group will also provide opportunities for:

1. Bible Study – to study God’s Word together, and share uplifting bible-based solutions to problems that young adults may have in common.
2. Positive Social Outlet – to provide positive and uplifting activities for young adults where they can pray, play and enjoy various aspects of life.

3. Fellowship with Church Community – to draw young adults from our church community to fellowship with us and to enhance their spiritual and social growth.

I envision vast possibilities among every age group in the church and our community. Because of their youthful and energetic drive and loyalty towards positive change, in our church and community, the young adults in the YAM group will be able to use their God-given gifts and talents to empower, exhort, and uplift others. They will serve as positive role models for the youth, and the elderly, in productive and caring ways. Through their guidance, and spiritual beliefs, the members of the YAM Group will provide purpose, empowerment, and promise, to motivate others to make positive changes, and life-choices.

Through spiritual and positive collaborations of the church and the community, we will build and renew positive relationships, friendships, and partnership based upon love, trust, respect, and honesty. Some of the key elements that the future of this project plans to target include, but is not limited to the following:

1. *Relationships* – husband/wife, family, church & community, friendships, mentorship, support systems, achieving goals teamwork, and partnerships
2. *Goal Setting and Outcomes* – including relationships, family, work/job, church and community
3. *Children* – ages K-12, responsibilities, respect for self and others, mentoring, childcare, suitable activities (e.g. TV monitoring, age-appropriate movies, and activities, support system (within family, and outside the family), crime prevention, how to handle conflicts/resolutions, relationships among pre-teens and teens, individuality, homework,

proper attention, health and hygiene, safety, honesty, goal setting, positive influences, confidence and self-esteem, safety and how to identify and handle bullying.

4. *Young Adults 18-20* – education, employment, housing, career and goal setting, positive images, proper dress, mentoring others, helping the elderly, honesty, community service and outreach, dating and marriage helps, staying on track, not compromising your principles or goals based on the opinions of others
5. *Church* – gaining spiritual knowledge through adult Bible classes and church services, devotion and loyalty to God and service, spreading the Word of God with purpose and passion, how to be a good servant in and out of the church, holding fast to positive principles and spiritual insight, and becoming a faithful missionary.
6. *Community* – volunteering and finding ways to enhance the spiritual and social growth of other young adults in the Christian in community, learning appropriate ways to witness to and serve others in the community, helping the elderly and handicapped (provide food, clothes, and transportation, through food drives, yard sales, etc.), taking a person to the doctor, or grocery store.
7. *Partnerships* – Members will partner with other community service venues to assist those in our church and community through our PARTNER services (acronym for *Pairing Adult Relationships That Nurture Empower and Recover*). This service serves to nurture, empower, and help those needing to recover from a negative situations or relationship.
8. *Social Outlets and Activities* – Among others, we plan to provide two social outlets that include:
 - *Parents Night Out* - This activity is designed to provide babysitting services from among a pool of volunteers from our church. It will be held on designated

weekends for parents (single or married) so that will have at least one night out, once a month without having to pay for babysitting services. It will also a way to provide company for our older members while allowing them all to enjoy activities and games in the comfort of our church's child-care learning facility. It give parents (single or married) at least a night out once a month without having to pay for childcare expenses.

- *Movie with a friend* – This activity will give church members a chance to go to the movies, or meet a friend at the movies one night a month, or to invite a group over to watch a movie on the big-screen television.

The proposed plan is a continuous process in which the Young Adult Missionary Group of MZBC in Winston-Salem, North Carolina, will use their gifts, talents, resources and knowledge to initiate change in the lives of others.

CONCLUSION

Young Adults Initiating Change

During the onset of this project, because I realized that there were only a few young adults between the ages of 18 and 30 attending MZBC in Winston-Salem, North Carolina, who lived in the surrounding community, I began a quest to explore the reasons for the lack of attendance among this age group. As I examined ways to interest the church in organizing a young adult missionary group that specifically targeted young adults, ages 18 and 30, I came up with an idea to survey members of our church community for their input. As a result of the ideas gleaned from these surveys, I was able to interest our pastor and missionary board into approving my idea to form a young adult missionary group, now called the YAM Group.

Henceforth, I have accomplished my goal to develop and implement a Young Adult Missionary group at MZBC in Winston-Salem, North Carolina, now known as the Young Adult Missionary Group. It is a group that is about initiating change in our church and our community and group that I am proud to say is exerting their energetic passion for Christ to make a difference in the lives of others through His Word.

Discovering Solutions

Through this project, I discovered a series of reasons for the lack of church attendance in our church's surrounding communities among young adults in the age range of 18 and 30.

Through our survey process, I found a lack of knowledge in our surrounding communities about

the ministries and services that our church has to offer. In addition, we also discovered that there was a false perception of our church's reputation. It was deemed as a high society church with roots of high standards of living, and academic achievements. It was deemed as a church in which some of the community residents felt they did not belong. Although transportation was an issue for some in the community, what I determined through the survey process was a lack of proper communication and church outreach on our part, but also some preconceived ideas among the church and the community.

Therefore, I concede that the church and its surrounding communities are now in a place to tear down walls of misconceptions, and go forward with the business of working together in unity through the YAM Group. However, from this point, we will confer with church and community officials before taking on any of our proposed plans to make sure that we do not overlap or interfere with the mission of other ministries, but enhance each other in our ultimate mission to win souls for Christ.

Consequently, the YAM Group is now a work in progress, birthed from the desire to join a church and community of young adults together to serve others and save a lost generation, as seen through the eyes of Reverend Selester Stewart, Jr.

APPENDIX A

Original Survey Questions for the Young Adult Missionary Group

Mount Zion Baptist Church

950 File St. • Winston-Salem, NC 27101 • Church Office: (336) 722-2325 • Fax Number:
(336)722-3359

Young Adult Missionary Group – (Ages 18-30)

Survey

1. When you think about church missions, what are your thoughts?

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Giving money to the less fortunate | <input type="checkbox"/> Witnessing to people
outside of the church |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Giving Food to the less fortunate | <input type="checkbox"/> Witnessing to people
inside of the church |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> All the above |

2. If you were to join a young adult missionary group, what activities would you like to participate in?

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Young adult night out | <input type="checkbox"/> A social networking
fast |
| <input type="checkbox"/> A phone fast | <input type="checkbox"/> Technology fast |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> All of the above |

3. Are you aware of MZBC? Do you know the location?

- Yes
- No

4. Are you aware if MZBC has a young adult missionary group from ages 18-30?

Yes

No

5. On a scale from 1-5, five being the best, what is your opinion of MZBC?

1-Poor

4-Very good

2-Fair

5-Excellent

3-Good

6. On a scale 1-5 do you think the church values young adults 18-30?

1-Strongly disagree

4-Agree

2-Disagree

5-Strongly Agree

3-Neither agree nor disagree

7. On a scale of 1-5 how do you think the church views young adults ages 18-30?

1-Poor

4-Very good

2-Fair

5-Excellent

3-Good

8. Have you given your life to Christ?

Yes

No

9. How frequently do you attend church?

Once a month

Never

Twice a month

Holidays

Weekly

10. Are you currently a member of a church?

Yes

No

11. Do you think MZBC will be moving in a positive direction by forming a young adult missionary group for ages 18-30?

Yes

No

12. If MZBC formed a young adult missionary group ages for 18-30, would you join?

Yes

No

13. If MZBC had a young adult missionary group for ages 18-30 that targeted your age group would you attend Sunday Morning Church services and other church activities more frequently?

Yes

No

14. If you enjoy MZBC young adult missionary group, how likely are you to encourage other young adults to join the young adult missionary group?

Very Likely

Less Likely

Likely

Not at all

15. Do you feel that being a part of a young adult missionary group will assist you in becoming closer to GOD?

Yes

No

APPENDIX B

PowerPoint Presentation of Survey Results



“Exploring the relationship between MZBC
and Young Adults ages 18-30 within a two mile radius surrounding
the MZBC community in Winston- Salem, North Carolina”

Mount Zion Baptist Church ● 950 File Street ● Winston-Salem, NC 27101 ● (336) 722-2325

Presented by: Rev. Selester Stewart, Jr.

Reasons for exploring this project

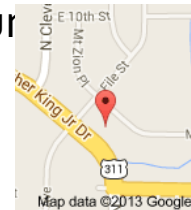


We observed that

so few young adults between the ages of 18-30 attending Mt. Zion Baptist Church in Winston-Salem, North

Carolina who lived in the surrounding commur

Therefore, we wanted to explore the reasons for the lack of attendance among this age group.



Church Attendance Percentage

The chart below indicates that only 3% of our current church attendance is in the 18-30 year old age group.

Church Membership of the Mount Zion Baptist Church in Winston-Salem, NC						
Age Group	Ages 65+	Ages 40-64	Ages 29-39	Lost Generation Age -18-30	Ages 12-17	Age 0-16
% Attendance	60%	20%	7%	3%	5%	5%

This is the age-group we chose to target

Our Goal

- Therefore, we decided to examine ways to interest this age group by organizing a young adult missionary group that specifically targets young adults ages 18-30.



*"For I was a stranger and you welcomed me."
Matthew 25:35*

Develop a Survey

MT. ZION BAPTIST CHURCH

SURVEY

Young Adults Missionary Group
Ages 18-30

- We developed a survey to use as a tool to gauge and examine interest among our targeted age group of 18-30
- Out of the 250 surveys that had been designated for distribution, we received an additional 10 surveys that were turned in to the church earlier that week, making a total of 260 completed surveys.

MT. ZION BAPTIST CHURCH

SURVEY

Young Adults Missionary Group
Ages 18-30

ENGAGE.
CONNECT.
GROW

1. When you think about church missions, what are your thoughts?

Giving food to the hungry

Giving money to the needy

Witnessing to the lost

All of the above

Survey Approved by Laymen's Council

After the Laymen's Council viewed and approved the survey project, we went forward with the survey distribution process.

Sample Survey →
(Each member of the Laymen's council received a copy of this survey)

Mt. Zion Baptist Church

Young Adult Missionary Group – (Ages 18-30)

Survey Sample

1. When you think about church missions, what are your thoughts?
 - Giving money to the less fortunate
 - Giving Food to the less fortunate
 - Witnessing to people outside of the church
 - Witnessing to people inside of the church
 - All the above
2. If you were to join a young adult missionary group, what activities would you like to participate in?
 - Young adult night out
 - A phone fast
 - A social networking fast
 - Technology fast
 - All of the above
3. Are you aware of Mt. Zion Baptist church? Do you know the location?
 - Yes
 - No
4. Are you aware if Mt. Zion Baptist Church has a young adult missionary group from ages 18-30?
 - Yes
 - No

Survey Results

Question # 1:

When you think about church missions, what are your thoughts?

- Question#1 generated the most amount of discussion from the surveyed members in the residential areas of the community
- Giving money to the less fortunate
- *Witnessing to people outside of the church*
- Giving Food to the less fortunate
- *Witnessing to people inside of the church*
- All the above

Most of the respondents answered that:

- *“Witnessing to people outside of the church, and witnessing to people inside of the church” was what they felt important as far as church missions were concerned.*



Survey Results

Question # 2



If you were to join a young adult missionary group, what activities would you like to participate in?

- A social networking fast
- Young adult night out
- A phone fast
- Technology fast
- All of the above**



- Mostly all of the respondents checked the box labelled "all of the above".
- This gave us a general idea that most adults in this age group are avid components of technology. This gave us ideas as to who we can incorporate technology our missions to attract these young adults.



Questions # 3

Are you aware of Mt. Zion Baptist church? Do you know the location?

- Yes**
- No



- There were at least **65%** of the respondents who answered "**Yes**". The other 35% who answered "No" were mostly college students, or other young adults who expressed they had limited means of transportation. However when asked:

Survey Results

Question # 4

Are you aware if Mt. Zion Baptist Church has a young adult missionary group from ages 18-30?

- Yes
- NO**



- Most of them were unaware if Mt. Zion Baptist Church had a young adult missionary group for adults 18-30 or not, except for the ones who already attended the church.

Question # 5 - 7

- Questions 5-7 were basically opinion question about Mt. Zion Baptist Church and how the church views young adults from 18-30.
- They could only be answered fairly if any of the respondents had visited, or belonged to Mt. Zion Baptist Church.
- Also, we were interested in knowing how our current member felt about these questions. (See question 5-7)

Survey Results

Question # 8

Have you given your life to Christ?

- Yes
- No

- > 90% answered "Yes."
- > Only 10% answered "No."

Question #9

How frequently do you attend church

- 20% answered "Never"
- 40% answered "On Holidays"
- 20% answered "Once a month, and
- 20% answered "Twice a month"

Question # 10

Are you currently a member of a church?

- Yes = 75%
- No = 25%

Questions #11-12

- > We received some of the most favorable responses for these questions.

Question # 11

Do you think Mt. Zion Baptist Church will be moving in a positive direction by forming a young adult missionary group for ages 18-30?"

- Yes = 98% answered "Yes"
- No = 2% wrote in the side lines "I don't Know," or "Maybe"

Question #12

Mt. Zion Baptist Church formed young adult missionary group ages for 18-30, would you join?

- Yes – 90 answered "Yes"
- No – 10 answered "No"

Survey Results

Question #13

If Mt. Zion Baptist Church had a young adult missionary group for ages 18-30 that targeted your age group would you attend Sunday Morning Church services and other church activities more frequently?



- Yes – 85 answered “Yes”
- No – 15 answered “No”

Question #14

If you enjoy Mt. Zion Baptist Church young adult missionary group, how likely are you to encourage other young adults to join the young adult missionary group?

- Very Likely - 45%
- Less Likely - 3%
- Likely - 50%
- Not at all - 2%

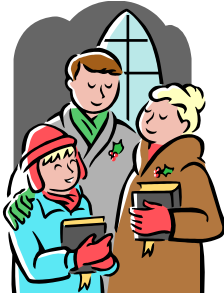


Survey Results

Question #15

Do you feel that being a part of a young adult missionary group will assist you in becoming closer to GOD?

- Yes - 50%
- No - 50%



LAC Evaluation

- ❖ After careful discussion and evaluation, the group decided that they had enough positive results to go forward with starting a young adult missionary group.



APPENDIX C

Ministry Area Profile and 2010 Census Bureau Information



Mt. Zion Baptist Church

Study Area Definition:
Zip Code 27101



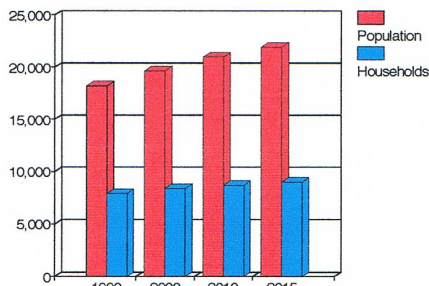
ID# 240607-240607

Date: 9/2/2011

Prepared For:
Mt. Zion Baptist Church
152 Arnold Palmer Dr.
Advance, NC 27006

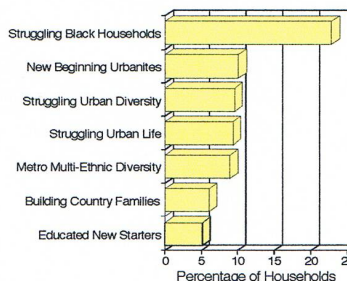
Study Area Definition:
Zip Code 27101

Population and Households

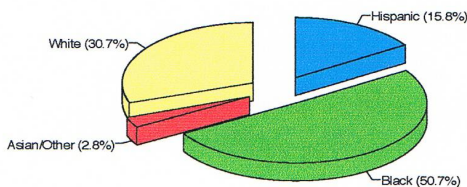


The population in the study area has increased by 1310 persons, or 6.7% since 2000 and is projected to increase by 969 persons, or 4.6% between 2010 and 2015. The number of households has increased by 313, or 3.7% since 2000 and is projected to increase by 329, or 3.8% between 2010 and 2015.

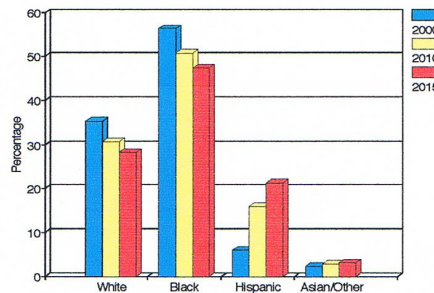
Primary U.S. Lifestyles Segments-2010



Population By Race/Ethnicity-2010

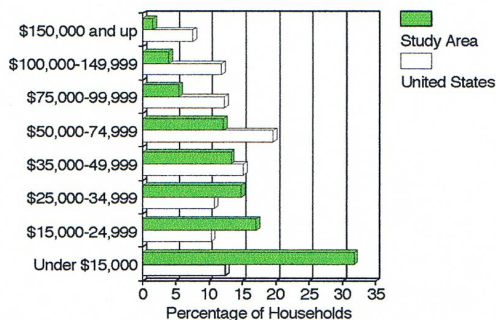


Population By Race/Ethnicity Trend

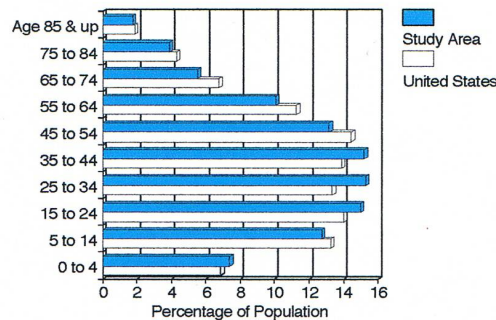


Between 2010 and 2015, the White population is projected to decrease by 224 persons and to decrease from 30.7% to 28.3% of the total population. The Black population is projected to decrease by 251 persons and to decrease from 50.7% to 47.3% of the total. The Hispanic/Latino population is projected to increase by 1356 persons and to increase from 15.8% to 21.3% of the total. The Asian/Other population is projected to increase by 88 persons and to increase from 2.8% to 3.1% of the total population.

Households By Income-2010



Population by Age-2010



The average household income in the study area is \$36882 a year as compared to the U.S. average of \$69376. The average age in the study area is 36.2 and is projected to increase to 36.8 by 2015. The average age in the U.S. is 37.6 and is projected to increase to 38.4 by 2015.

2010 Census Bureau Results of the Study Area

Page 1



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Study Area Definition:
Zip Code 27101



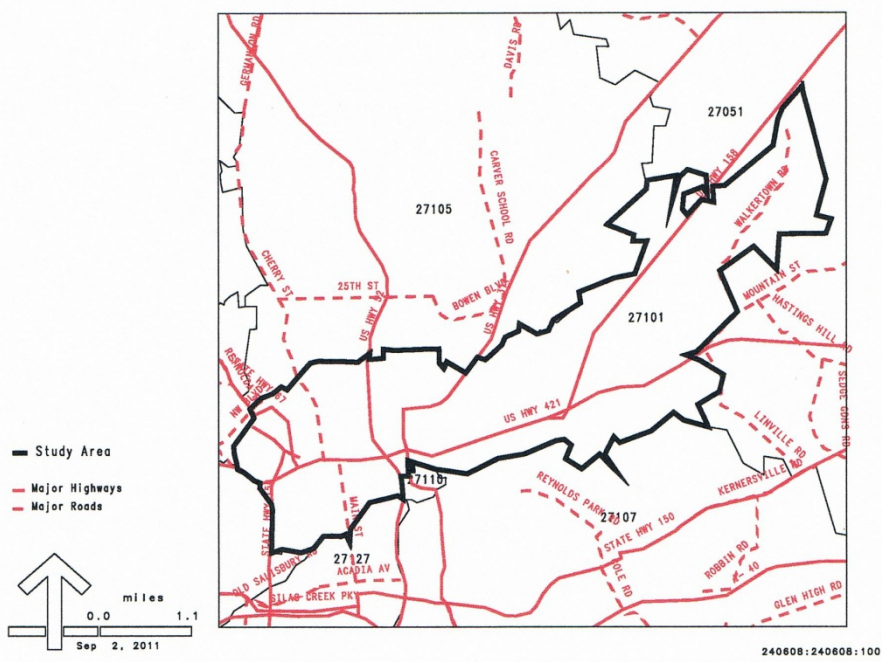
People and Place ... pgs 2 & 4

Community Issues ... pgs 3 & 5

Faces of Diversity ... pgs 2 & 4

Faith Preferences ... pgs 3 & 6

Study Area with Zip Codes



2010 Census Bureau Results of the Study Area

Page 2 – People and Places & Faces of Diversity

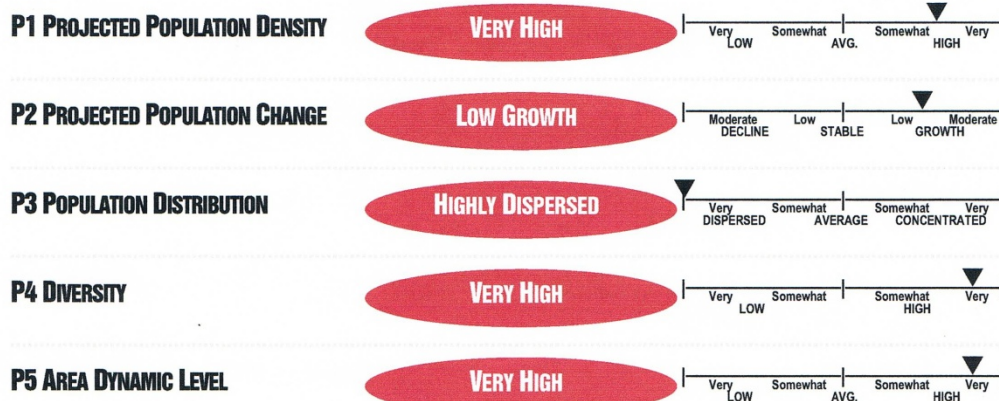


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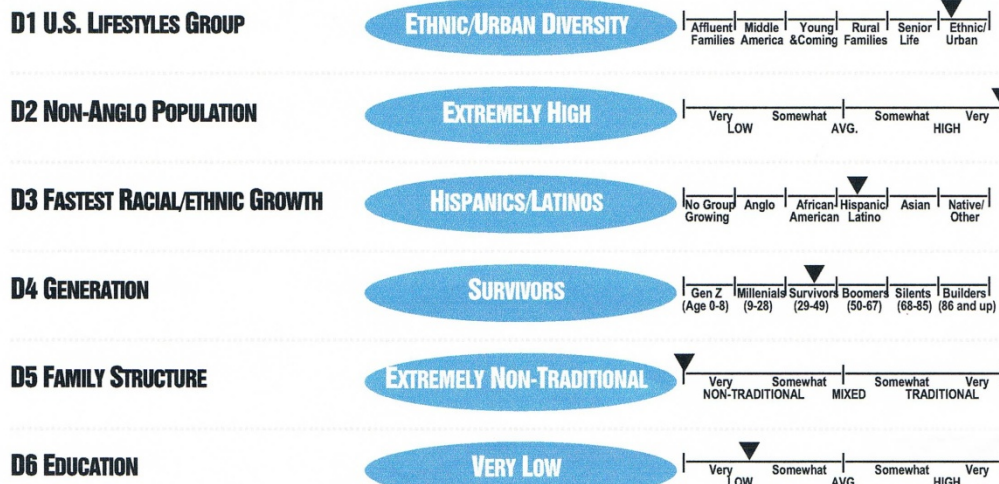
Study Area Definition:
 Zip Code 27101



People and Place



Faces of Diversity



2010 Census Bureau Results of the Study Area

Page 3 – Community Issues & Faith Preferences



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Study Area Definition:
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Community Issues

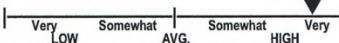
C1 PRIMARY CONCERNS

COMMUNITY PROBLEMS



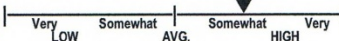
C2 RISC LEVEL (Stress Conditions)

VERY HIGH



C3 POTENTIAL RESISTANCE TO CHANGE

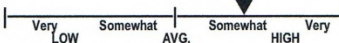
SOMEWHAT HIGH



Faith Preferences

F1 FAITH RECEPTIVITY

SOMEWHAT HIGH



F2 FINANCIAL SUPPORT POTENTIAL

VERY LOW



F3 CHURCH STYLE

BOTH



F4 CHURCH PROGRAM PREFERENCE

SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT



F5 HAVE A RELIGIOUS PREFERENCE

SOMEWHAT HIGH



2010 Census Bureau Results of the Study Area

Page 4 – People and Place Detail & Faces of Diversity Detail



152 Arnold Palmer Dr.
Advance, NC 27006

Study Area Definition:
Zip Code 27101



People and Place Detail

P1: How many people live in the defined study area?

Currently, there are 20,954 persons residing in the defined study area. This represents an increase of 2,765 or 15.2% since 1990. During the same period of time, the U.S. as a whole grew by 23.3%. (see MAP page 4)

Population History & Projection	1990 Census	2000 Census	2010 Update	2015 Projection
Study Area	18,189	19,644	20,954	21,923

P2: Is the population in this area projected to grow?

Yes, between 2010 and 2015, the population is projected to increase by 4.6% or 969 additional persons. During the same period, the U.S. population is projected to grow by 5.1%. (see MAP page 4)

Population Change	Actual Change From 1990 to 2000	Actual Change From 2000 to 2010	PROJECTED Change From 2010 to 2015
Study Area	8%	7%	5%
U.S. AVERAGE	13%	9%	5%

P3: How spread out is the population in the study area?

In the study area, the top three quarters of the population resides in approximately 100% of the geographical area. In the U.S. as a whole and in the average community, the top 75% of the population resides in just 25% of the populated geographical area. In comparison, the study area population is *highly dispersed* within the overall area.

P4: What is the overall level of diversity in the area?

Based upon the number of different lifestyle and racial/ethnic groups in the area, the overall diversity in the study area can be described as *very high*. See D1 and D2 below.

P5: How dynamic is the study area?

As the population density and overall diversity in an area increase, the environment becomes more complex and challenging. Given these factors, the study area dynamic level can be described as *very high*.

Faces of Diversity Detail

D1: How much lifestyle diversity is represented?

The lifestyle diversity in the area is *very high* with 26 of the 50 U.S. Lifestyles segments represented. Of the six major segment groupings, the largest is referred to as *Ethnic and Urban Diversity* which accounts for 59.6% of the households in the area. The top individual segment is *Struggling Black Households* representing 22.8% of all households. (see MAP pages 13 and 14)

Households By U.S. Lifestyles Group	Affluent Families	Middle American Families	Young and Coming	Rural Families	Senior Life	Ethnic & Urban Diversity
Study Area	2%	15%	17%	5%	2%	60%
U.S. AVERAGE	15%	31%	15%	13%	7%	18%

D2 & D3: How do racial or ethnic groups contribute to diversity in this area?

Based upon the total number of different groups present, the racial/ethnic diversity in the area is *extremely high*. Among individual groups, *Anglos* represent 30.7% of the population and all other racial/ethnic groups make up a substantial 69.3% which is well above the national average of 35%. The largest of these groups, *African-Americans*, accounts for 50.7% of the total population. *Hispanics/Latinos* are projected to be the fastest growing group increasing by 40.8% between 2010 and 2015. (see MAP pages 4 and 7)

Population By Race/Ethnicity	Anglo	African-American	Hispanic	Asian	Native Am. and Other
Study Area	31%	51%	16%	1%	2%
U.S. AVERAGE	65%	12%	16%	4%	3%

D4: What are the major generational groups represented?

The most significant group in terms of numbers and comparison to national averages is *Survivors* (age 29 to 49) who make up 32.2% of the total population in the area compared to 29.2% of the U.S. population as a whole. (see MAP page 4)

Population By Generation	Gen Z 0 to 8	Millennials 9 to 28	Survivors 29 to 49	Boomers 50 to 67	Silents 68 to 85	Builders 86 & up
Study Area	13%	28%	32%	18%	8%	2%
U.S. AVERAGE	12%	27%	29%	21%	9%	2%

2010 Census Bureau Results of the Study Area

Page 5 – Faces of Diversity Detail, cont. and Community Issues Detail



152 Arnold Palmer Dr.
Advance, NC 27006

Study Area Definition:
Zip Code 27101



Faces of Diversity Detail (cont.)

D5: Overall, how traditional are the family structures?

The area can be described as *extremely non-traditional* due to the below average presence of married persons and two-parent families. (see MAP page 6)

Population By Marital Status (15 and older)	Single (never married)	Divorced or Widowed	Married
Study Area	36%	21%	43%
U.S. AVERAGE	27%	16%	57%

D6: How educated are the adults?

Based upon the number of years completed and college enrollment, the overall education level in the area is *very low*. While 73.0% of the population aged 25 and over have graduated from high school as compared to the national average of 80.4%, college graduates account for 20.1% of those over 25 in the area versus 24.4% in the U.S. (see MAP page 8)

Households with Children by Marital Status	Single Mothers	Single Fathers	Married Couples
Study Area	51%	8%	39%
U.S. AVERAGE	23%	7%	69%

Adult Population By Education Completed	Less than High School	High School	Some College	College Graduate	Post Graduate
Study Area	27%	30%	23%	13%	7%
U.S. AVERAGE	20%	29%	27%	16%	9%

Community Issues Detail

C1: Which household concerns are unusually high in the area?

Concerns which are likely to exceed the national average include: *Racial/Ethnic Prejudice, Finding Spiritual Teaching, Affordable Housing, Neighborhood Crime and Safety, Finding A Good Church and Adequate Food*. As an overall category, concerns related to *Community Problems* are the most significant based upon the total number of households and comparison to national averages. (see MAP page 16)

Households By Primary Concerns Group	The Basics	Family Problems	Community Problems	Hopes and Dreams	Spiritual/ Personal
Study Area	25%	11%	18%	25%	16%
U.S. AVERAGE	24%	11%	16%	30%	15%

C2: What is the overall community stress level in the area?

Conditions which can contribute to placing an area at risk (particularly, the children) are at an overall *very high* level. This is evidenced by noting that on the whole the area is significantly above average in the characteristics known to contribute to community problems such as households below poverty line, adults without a high school diploma, households with a single mother and unusually high concern about issues such as community problems, family problems, and/or basic necessities such as food, housing and jobs. (see MAP pages 5, 6, 8, 9 and 16)

Regionally Indexed Stress Conditions (RISC)	Households Below Poverty (\$15,000)	Households with Children: Single Mothers	Adult Pop.: High School Dropouts	Primary Concerns: The Basics	Primary Concerns: Family Problems	Primary Concerns: Community Problems
Study Area	32%	51%	27%	25%	11%	18%
U.S. AVERAGE	12%	23%	20%	24%	11%	16%

C3: How much overall resistance to change is likely in the area?

Based upon the assumption that as a group of people become older and more diverse the potential for resistance to change becomes more significant, the area's potential resistance is likely to be *somewhat high*. (see MAP pages 4-5, 13-14)

Population By Age and Diversity	Average Age	Overall Lifestyle and Racial/Ethnic Diversity
Study Area	36.2	9
U.S. AVERAGE	37.6	5

2010 Census Bureau Results of the Study Area

Page 6 – Faith Preferences Detail



152 Arnold Palmer Dr.
Advance, NC 27006

Study Area Definition:
Zip Code 27101



Faith Preferences Detail

F1: What is the likely faith receptivity?

Overall, the likely faith involvement level and preference for historic Christian religious affiliations is *somewhat high* when compared to national averages. (see MAP page 15)

Households By Faith Involvement Level	Not Involved	Somewhat Involved	Strongly Involved
Study Area	26%	29%	45%
U.S. AVERAGE	35%	30%	35%

F2: What is the likely giving potential in the area?

Based upon the average household income of \$36,882 per year and the likely contribution behavior in the area, the overall religious giving potential can be described as *very low*. (see MAP page 4 and 17)

Households By Religious Giving Potential	Average Annual Household Income	Households Contributing More Than \$500 per Year to Churches
Study Area	\$36,882	29%
U.S. AVERAGE	\$69,376	31%

F3: Do households prefer an overall church style which is more traditional or contemporary?

Based upon likely worship, music and architectural style preferences in the area, the overall church style preference can be described as *both traditional and contemporary*. (see COMPASS pages 3 and 4)

Households By Church Styles Preferences	Traditional		Contemporary		Contemporary	
	Worship	Music	Architecture	Worship	Music	Architecture
Study Area	18%	23%	27%	25%	17%	15%
U.S. AVERAGE	20%	24%	27%	26%	20%	16%

F4: Which general church programs or services are most likely to be preferred in the area?

Church program preferences which are likely to exceed the national average include: *Bible Study and Prayer Groups, Spiritual Retreats, Food Pantry/Clothing Resources and Personal or Family Counseling*. As an overall category, programs related to *Spiritual Development* are the most significant based upon total number of households and comparison to national averages. (see COMPASS page 2)

Households By Church Program Preference Category	Spiritual Development	Personal Development	Community/Social Services	Recreation
Study Area	32%	8%	22%	33%
U.S. AVERAGE	25%	10%	20%	38%

F5: How likely are people to have some religious preference?

In the study area, 88.3% of the households are likely to express a preference for some particular religious tradition or affiliation, somewhat above the national average of 85.1%. (see MAP page 15)

Households By Religious Preference	No Preference	Non-"Historic Christian" Groups	"Historic Christian" Groups
Study Area	12%	4%	85%
U.S. AVERAGE	15%	8%	77%

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