

# PRESBYTERY OF SOUTHWEST FLORIDA

## MISSION TO NORTH AMERICA COMMITTEE REPORT NOVEMBER 11, 2014

### INFORMATION:

#### **1. Committee Roster**

The MNA committee is looking for both TEs and REs to fill out its committee roster.

#### **2. SWFL church planting projects (see reports below)**

#### **3. SWFL potential church planting projects**

Westtown PCA has issued a call to Justin Woodall as an Assistant Pastor for Evangelism with plans to plant a church in downtown St. Petersburg. Justin is currently spending  $\frac{3}{4}$  of his time working as an Assistant Pastor at Westtown and  $\frac{1}{4}$  of his time in R&D work in the downtown St. Pete area.

### REPORTS FROM CHURCH PLANTERS:

#### **Steve Light (Sojourner- Tampa)**

##### **1. Moved Into our new space in June**

What a blessing to be here at 10915 N 56th St. We have two storefronts - one for classes and offices, the other for worship space - a tidy facility at a visible location on a well traveled road. A stone's-throw away from USF, it is not fancy, but it is truly ideal for our needs. Sunday night Bible study is held here along with Wednesday night *Christianity Explored* for new Christians or those exploring the claims of Christ. This is where our morning worship will be held starting October 5.

##### **2. Saturdays full of outreach**

We have had an army of Campus Outreach students here in Tampa on Summer project. For six Saturdays during June and July, these students have been out in the neighborhoods (30 or more on any given Saturday) sharing the love of Christ and inviting people to Sojourner events. What an answer to prayer these laborers have been! Would you pray for conversions to Christ and our faithful discipling of new believers?

##### **3. Putting together teams, preparing the space, and more**

As we approach public worship starting in October, we have spent much time and energy making schedules for nursery, children's worship, ushering, greeting, etc, holding donation drives for items for the nursery; preparing the worship space, moving things in storage to the new space...and on and on. We also are hosting a Vacation Bible School August 11-14. Would you please pray that everything would come together?

#### **Ben Turner (Strong Tower- Lakeland)**

In September, we held our first church-wide prayer walk. I was encouraged that we had about 35 people come out despite the potential rainy weather! It was an incredible time of walking through our neighborhood praying for the people we ran into, the houses and businesses, and the overall renewal of our community. Not only do we believe God hears our prayers, but we also believe there's something powerful about "seeing." Jesus almost always "looked" at those in need and then loved them according to their real needs that were exposed. We want our people to love this neighborhood the way Jesus does and so these prayer walks are a tangible way to do that. Our hope is to do them once a month.

On another note, praise God we have moved into our new home! It has been a mighty long journey to this point in which God has taught us much about patience. Unfortunately, patience can't be learned quickly—it takes time. And we know, God loves to take his time. Nevertheless, we are pleased to finally have a place to call

home and be settled once again. The location is perfect as we are literally two blocks from where our church meets for worship. At the moment, we are renting the home until we can close on the mortgage—hopefully by the end of October. Please pray that everything goes smoothly and quickly with closing.

Please pray for us:

1. Pray that God continues to grow our church as he brings new people who need the hope of the gospel of Jesus.
2. Pray for our leaders as we all continue to adjust to the new responsibilities of leading a church.
3. Pray for the closing of our house to go smoothly and quickly.
4. Pray for our church to finish the year strong financially as we trust God to provide.
5. Pray that our people would continue to share the gospel with their friends and family.

### **Geoff Henderson (Harbor-West Bradenton)**

We have completed our preview worship services. We began with our core group in the backyard of a member, branched off to worshipping at several parks and have finally made our to the YMCA. Our first official worship service took place at the Bradenton Branch YMCA at 10 am on Easter Sunday. We had a good turnout as we were praying for a 100 but ended up not too far short of that. Of course we did experience, as most churches did, the post-Easter hangover. Still, we had new faces show, and a few couples return from the previous service. The gym is turning out to be a great worship space for us.

We've split into two fairly large community groups, with the hopes of multiplying them before too long. In addition to building relationships and looking into God's Word, we spend time praying by name for our friends and contacts who don't know Christ or who aren't connected to His church. Both of our groups are going through the Gospel Centered Life study. There are a number of YMCA workers who seem amenable to us having a church there, yet don't know Christ or have no connection with any church. Since there are now 3 of us from Harbor who are part of the advisory board at the branch, I'm hoping to reach a number of those employees, as well as members who frequent the YMCA.

#### Prayer Requests:

- **Music Leader:** Pray the Lord would send us a music leader within our congregation. We've been having different people fill in, but I would love to see a guitarist of our own skilled enough to lead. Or that I would have wisdom in hiring one who would desire to be part of our church.
- **Multiplying:** So far people are really enjoying our community groups. But they know our vision is to multiply. Pray that the Lord would allow us to multiply these groups before too long. We're only a few people east of us away from starting a new group in Palmetto.
- **Mass:** Our people have been incredibly encouraged and excited about the church. They are loving each other as well as reaching out. But we do need to grow to reach a more sustainable mass, particularly as summer approaches and the vacations hit. Obviously we desire to see conversions comprise this critical mass. That's who we are trying to reach. Pray we see fruit from our prayers, invitations, and parties of people who will one day believe.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS FROM COMMITTEE- M/S/P:**

1. **The MNA committee recommends that the SWFL presbytery overture the 2015 General Assembly to restructure the boundary of Presbytery of Southwest Florida so that all churches and mission works in the counties of Manatee, Sarasota, that portion of Charlotte North of the Peace River, and Glades join the Florid Suncoast Presbytery, effective January 1, 2016.**

Respectfully submitted,



Barry A. "Drew" Bennett, Chairman