

# HITCHHIKER'S GUIDE TO MULTI-SITE

## *A Weekend with Community Christian Church*



Chicago Area  
June 7-8, 2008

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An Inside Look at Doing Multi-Site Church

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### Learning about Multi-Site Church

Sixteen members of the Vineyard Church (Urbana, IL) set out at 5:30am on Saturday, June 7, to take in the “Hitchhiker’s Guide to Multi-site.” Seven towns were represented on the team—Bloomington/Normal (Joel Eagles), Champaign (Brian Harvey, Jim Egli), Danville (Dennis Starkey), Farmer City (Russell & Stephanie Davenport), Paxton (DeDe Wood, Joel & Angie Martin), and Rantoul (Mindi Freds).

In the white Vineyard van, learning started on the way up as Mindi Freds shared about the multi-site church that she and her husband attended in Michigan just before moving to Illinois. Their site was began about twenty minutes from the parent site when a group of younger families wanted a more contemporary service. The worship was live and the setting was more informal. The sermon was delivered by video from a recording done at the other site. The church which started with a handful of people had grown to a couple hundred people before Freds moved to Illinois.

### Community Christian Church

Community Christian Church (CCC) was begun by Dave Ferguson and several others in Naperville, IL, in 1988. They now have nine sites in the Chicago area. Some of the sites use live preaching and others use video. CCC is a leader in the multi-site movement and has a passion for helping other churches to implement this strategy. The event that we went to is called a “hitchhiker’s guide” because unlike a normal conference, we were basically just going to their weekend leadership and worship events with a couple of add on question and answer sessions.



*Several CCC Sites*

## Leadership Meeting

As we entered their leadership meeting, I was noticing different things.

1. The crowd has a young feel, very similar to our church, perhaps slightly younger. The worship team at the leadership meeting was particularly young looking. The group was pretty white but there was some racial diversity.
2. The building is attractive and contemporary.
3. The worship was louder than ours. (Or perhaps it was that I was sitting directly in front of a huge speaker!) Instrumentally it struck me as more edgy—more guitar and drum driven.
4. Although a few of their leaders raised their hands and more physically entered into the opening worship songs, group participation was nothing like our own leadership team meetings. (More like our Sunday morning services.)
5. Their leadership meeting was about the same size as ours, even though it was for all of their campuses.

### NEW LEADERS

After 15 minutes of worship, Eric—after making some Cubs/White Sox jokes—started the meeting by introducing new leaders. This was done very enthusiastically. There was lots of laughing, shouting, and clapping. As the new small group interns, small group leaders, and ministry leaders stood up and were introduced, the band played and people went “ape crazy” to welcome them. It was a lot of fun. Besides putting the names of new leaders on the screen, they also asked unnamed new leaders to stand up. They then sang a crazy, wild rock and roll song to welcome the new leaders. Basically, you sensed that they wanted their leadership meeting to be a fun, crazy time and they did a wonderful job of pulling this off. Our own leadership meetings are a wonderful time of encouragement, ministry and worship, but I wouldn’t immediately describe them as a wild, fun time. (Maybe Hank should lead them instead of me.)

### SENIOR LEADER — DAVE FERGUSON

At 25 after, senior leader Dave Ferguson got up. Dave started out by introducing those of us here for our event, the Hitchhiker’s Guide to Multi-site.

Dave began by updating people on what is going. He reported that over the last year the church has grown from having 4218 people involved to 4721, a growth of 503 people. Together with the numbers he shared a moving personal story from a new person who met

God at their Montgomery campus. The story powerfully communicated the reality behind the numbers.

He mentioned that there will not be a leadership meeting in July and that in August people would meet in smaller teams. They were also encouraging everyone to go to Willow Creek's Leadership Summit in August—literature and sign ups were in the foyer for this.

Their four goals for the next year are—ROAD.

- Reproduce Campuses (last year they launched the Plainfield Campus)
- Operation Generosity (giving money away to mission beyond themselves)
- Alternate Communities (Dave said he gave every leader permission to start an alternative church, something to gather unchurched who might never otherwise connect with church. It might be a dart group in a pub or a bikers' group, etc. This is an experiment.)
- Define Spiritual Maturity. They are beginning to define spiritual maturity. They described this in terms of stages: infants that must be fed, becoming adolescents that feed themselves, becoming adults who feed others.

He told everyone to pat the person on the back next to them and tell them they did a great job in the past year.

### *Leadership Lessons Learned by Dave in the Last Year*

Lesson 1: The first thing I relearned last year was, “leaders must first be followers.” I am the best leader when I am the best follower of Jesus Christ.

If I had one wish for the next year it would be that all our leaders would hear from God every day. Because if that happens everyone will be closely following Jesus.

Lesson 2: Live goes way, way, way to fast. It seems like just yesterday that we had babies and now our oldest daughter just graduated from high school. I want to consistently invest my life in my family. You know that I continue to coach my kids' sports teams and spend time one on one with them. We just recently got new phones and my daughter sent me the text message: “u r amazing!” It just warmed my heart and I then learned that she had meant to send it to her boyfriend.

My dad was a church planter but he always made time for me. (They then recognized Earl Ferguson's presence in the room. He's one of their campus pastors. We sang happy birthday to him. Like our church, and many growing large churches, there were lots of family connections at CCC. I noticed Dave's brother, father, and wife are all on staff.)

Lesson #3: God is close to the broken-hearted. The last 19 years at this church have really been fun and to be honest it has not been hard at all. But last year we got in an awkward situation financially as a church and we had to let staff go. This was agonizing for me. It was the hardest thing for me to go through. Some nights I couldn't sleep. There were hard decisions to make. I wrote this in my journal on March 1<sup>st</sup>. "The Lord is close to the broken-hearted. ...The righteous have many troubles, but the Lord delivers them from them all." I had to get rid of some very good people. But God has been close to us and to those impacted by these decisions.

Maybe you are going through some rough times yourself, but God has promised to go with you. I needed to learn this because really my life has been pretty easy.

Lesson #4: Beyond these walls lesson. Finally, I want to say that people want to give their lives away but we as leaders have to create ways for people to do this. God wants us to impact people around the world. This is not about us here, it's about giving things away.

Dave then asked one of their leaders named Aaron to get up and talk about one of their next church plants which will be in San Francisco.

### *The San Francisco Project*

On Easter Sunday only 2% of San Francisco is in church. It has been called "the black hole of Christianity."

A friend told me of his brother who grew up in a strong Christian family and was consistently involved in Christian ministries in college, but fell away from God when he moved to San Francisco.

When I was recently in SF, I sat near some people at a restaurant who I could easily overhear. One of them was telling his friend how empty he found Buddhism and how he wanted to learn about Jesus but that there was no church he knew of.

We need more than one church in SF, so our goal is to plant a movement of churches, a web of campuses to reach people throughout the city.

Maybe you have grown tired of Chicago weather. Maybe you have wearied of the ridiculous coaching of the Chicago Bulls. Or maybe you know someone else who wants to go with us. We also want prayer partners and financial partners.

My time at CCC in the past year learning all I could about church planting and expanding my vision have been invaluable. It has been a wonderful privilege. I hope you realize that this is a wonderful and amazing church. Together let's change the world one city at a time.

## *Announcements*

The meeting ended with some announcements including another plug for the Willow Creek leadership summit. They also plugged Connect '08, their own small group conference in August which will be for their leaders and leaders from other churches.



*Some Photos of the Yellow Box Campus*

## **Hitchhiker's Breakout Session**

After the larger leadership gathering, that took about 70 minutes, their leaders broke up into teams for the final portion of the morning. While their teams were meeting, those us there for the Hitchhiker's event, moved to room 214.

Eric Metcalf, the small group guy for all their sites, led this session. Eric started the meeting by inviting participants to say where they were from and how many sites they currently have. The 55 people there had come from as far away as California and Canada. Various denominations and streams were represented. Then Eric introduced the team present to answer questions, about eight people.

CCC started with a vision to be a multiplying church. They wanted to have impact in their community and to be a reproducing church. They also wanted to be a catalyst church that moved other churches into impact and reproduction. The multi-site move started in 1988 in Dave Ferguson's own small group. (They encourage all staff to lead small groups.) One man who found Christ through Dave's small group was a real estate developer and he wanted to build community into the new neighborhoods that they were developing. There was no more land to develop in Naperville, but they were creating new neighborhoods in Romeoville. Because Romeoville was so far away (35 minutes from Naperville) they could not move their campus there so they made it a second campus. The multi-site movement all started with some people who found Christ through small groups.

Then someone in Carillon, a retirement community south of Naperville, wanted them to do a sight there. Initially they could not interest the church, but eventually they wore the CCC leadership down.

The fourth site came about when a struggling church in Montgomery, west of Naperville, asked them to make them a CCC site. One of the CCC staff had a dream where they saw an older lady pointing to a sign that said “Montgomery.” They understood this as a sign from God.

## RESOURCES

Pat Masek explained various resources in our packets. Some of the handouts outlined their Big Idea planning process that allows them to keep all their sites, services, small groups, teens, and children’s ministries in sync with one another. The packet included a wealth of valuable worksheets, budgets, organizational charts, job descriptions, and small group curriculum.

## QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

### *Children’s Ministry Questions answered by Tammy*

*What mistakes did you make and what would you do differently?*

We realized that there are two very different skill sets that you need. Some people are very good with children and can do a great kids service. Other people are great leaders who can recruit volunteers and align team members and oversee a ministry. Very seldom do you get both skills sets in the same person. Initially, the people that come forward are those that are good with kids, but those people cannot normally lead adults. So we made a lot of mistakes in this area. Now we have a bias toward those with leadership gifts because these people are directing large ministries.

*How do you keep the main campus related to and in tune with the other campuses?*

First of all, we do not call one of the campuses the “main campus.” All are important and on an equal footing. The key thing is relational connection. We get together once a month and I also personally meet with each campus kids director monthly.

*Are all campuses doing the same thing?*

Yes, everything is together both in terms of campuses and across different ages—everyone is following our “big idea.” There is some variation because demographics vary considerably depending on our campus location. But culturally children differ less than adults, so there is not much modification.

*Do you hire a children's person right at the start?*

Normally we are starting a campus with a full-time campus pastor (who is also the small group pastor), a half-time children's pastor, and a half-time arts pastor. We also draw workers from the existing campuses. Most of the time we launch a site with 250-350 people.

### *Arts Questions answered by Sean Bublitz*

*Do you do the same worship at every campus?*

We used to do the same worship at every campus. We did this for years, but in April we changed this. The catalyst team now gives us 35 minutes of content based around the Big Idea which is perhaps a message and drama. But then we do 25 minutes of our own that we can design ourselves. Each campus does communion and an offering every week. (Their background is nondenominational Christian Church.) Some plan for months ahead and others weeks ahead.

The major shift happened because we down-sized the Catalyst team due to our budget short-fall last year, so we are now producing less centralized content. But the second driver was to let campuses become more individualized based on their demographic makeup.

*How do you oversee these worship teams?*

It is similar to our small group system where we have teams overseen by coaches. It is like Tammy said related to children's ministry. The leadership skills are more important than the musical skills when we look for team leaders and staff members.

*Do you ever transport pieces like drama or special music by video?*

We might do this occasionally for drama. But overall, I would say "no," because we want things to be reproducible. We have nine sights and three teaching pastors, so most of our sights are using the recording of the Saturday night message done in the Yellow Box.

### *Financing New Sights by Julie Bullock*

It is crucial that things are reproducible. For example, we are not going to use technology at a big campus if the small campuses cannot do the same thing. There may be some variation based on individual facilities but as much as possible we want things to be the same and transferrable.

You need to be very upfront in asking people for their financial commitment when they are part of a launch team. They need and appreciate this challenge. For example, we got a



\$150,000 commitment from our Plainfield launch team to start our most recent new campus. We have some wonderful people that have given sacrificially time and time again.

## *Fielding Questions*

*When and why do you centralize things?*

We don't always do centralized events here at the yellow box, we also sometimes do things at Romeoville. The big advantage of doing things like our leadership team meetings together is that we then have a centralized vision and direction coming from the same person.

Of course there is localized training also.

*How key is the Big Idea concept in doing multi-site?*

Planning twelve weeks out is pivotal. It's the only way that we can get kids, teens and small groups together. For example, we are completing the small group helps four weeks ahead of time.

*Do you ever get everyone from all campuses together for worship?*

We used to but that is no longer viable. We might do it for our 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary but we don't do this, for example, for Christmas or anything like that.

*You have mentioned half-time people? Do they combine those roles with other positions to make it full time?*

It's kind of nice to not just have one role at one campus. If we want to fill a new part-time role, we often look to existing staff to take that role instead of folding in a new person.

*How does eldership and finances work across campuses?*

We have one team of elders for all campuses. We also have only one centralized budget. But we have pushed things out last year so that each campus has its own giving goals and more financial accountability.

We have moved to a 70/20/10 plan. We got this concept from another multi-site church and it have been very helpful. 70% of the offering from a campus goes back to its local budget. 20% goes to the Catalyst team. 10% goes to new ventures. In the past it was 60/40/0. So in effect, the Catalyst team had it's budget cut in half. We aren't quite there yet, but we are moving there.

We also found we needed to set aside 10% for the new sites, otherwise we were not going to fulfill our goals of continual reproduction.

*How do you keep multiple sites from becoming multiple churches?*

We are not about multi-site. We are about reproduction. We are also very much into church planting. But we see multi-site as a better path for faster and more effective reproduction.

We want to reproduce as effectively as we can. We think we can grow in a more cost effective way by doing multi-site. We get the biggest bang for the bucks and effort this way. If we had nine different teams we would expend a lot of more energy.

*Would you plant locally or only do multi-site locally?*

It depend on the person and vision. We are doing church planting in the Chicago area. We would not do multi-site outside of this area however because it does not fit how we do things. Other multi-site churches are doing this but it does not fit us.

*What about giving beyond this church?*

Campus pastors can do whatever they want in their local communities but that comes out of their local budgets. This is the same if they are giving locally or in Africa, it is up to them what they do with their portion of the budget.

We also have a centralized benevolence fund. This works together with our financial counseling ministry. The benevolence funding comes from a second offering that is taken when there is a fifth Sunday in a month.

*What is the percentage of payroll in your overall budget?*

We try to have one full-time pastor or staff for every 100 people. In the budget, payroll is now a little less than 50%. (One of the elders, however, checked on this to give us a more exact number and told the person that asked this question—Brian Harvey—that the percentage going to payroll is currently 58% of unrestricted funds.)

*I know you are very big on small groups. How do you mobilize people to gather people in new locations?*

We often do community outreaches to raise our visibility in that new location. We also do a six piece mailer that fits the demographics of that area. We do that mailing to 50,000 people in that community. We want 500-600 in that new location the first Sunday. We might, in a more rural area, just get 300-400. We also do door-to-door, just going out and inviting people. About half of those who come the week will return the following week.

Even when you are given a struggling church and it's building, it is still costly. You have to invest in the building. You also need to do the same advertising to build visibility.

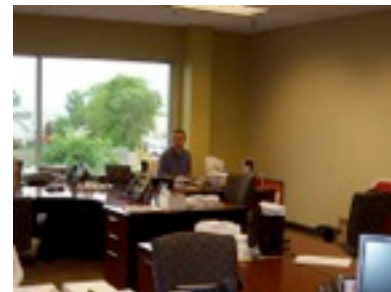
## Afternoon Free Time

We had four hours of free time between the morning events and the late afternoon Yellow Box facility tour. After a tasty lunch at Applebee's, our group headed three different directions. Cliff Schrock and I played disc golf at Naperville's beautiful nine basket course. The other two groups headed to the Naperville Zoo and the Naperville River Walk.

## Building Tour

The building tour was very instructive. Here's a few key things I learned.

1. There are junior high small groups meeting on their campus during each of their four weekend services.
2. There are no high school offerings at any of the weekend services. Instead they encourage high schoolers to contribute by serving in kids, or junior high or other weekend ministries. (They use the word "contribute" a lot. It is one of their three C's—Celebrate, Connect, Contribute.) High schoolers have their own small groups in neighborhoods similar to the adults.
3. There are also Wednesday evening ministries for the junior high and high schoolers at their campus.
4. The four "Experience" service times offered at the Yellow Box are Saturday at 5:00pm and 6:30pm and Sundays at 9:30am and 11:00am. During the 11:00 service there is also an "Icon" service offered in their theater. That venue seats 230 people and the service runs about 70 adults. The Icon service is more contemplative and has some more traditional elements such as responsive readings. It draws people from more liturgical backgrounds that may connect with things from their childhood church experiences.
5. Their office arrangement is a very open design. Almost all their staff, including the senior pastor, are in one very large room with different clusters of desks according to various teams. They said that they have found this fosters a lot of collaboration and is very effective for productivity. When we were there the one person at their desk in corner of this large room was the senior pastor. His desk was no different than anyone else's though it was one of the desks near the large outside wall of windows.
6. Their building was built in two phases. The first portion was erected in 2001 and the second portion was completed in 2007.



7. Their main service called “Experience” is held in an attractive “Gymnasium” which seats up to 750 people.

## Saturday Evening Yellow Box

We all attended the 5:00pm service at the Yellow Box service. There were about 350 people there. I missed the first part of the service because I was talking to Amy Watt who works part-time on their First Impressions Team. She helpfully explained great detail their assimilation system and gave me one of their welcome packets. The contents are two the right



There was no program. As you entered the auditorium you were handed one thing—a card that on the front side gave that weeks Big Idea in one sentence—“Forgiveness is essential for healthy family relationships”—and then gave suggestions on how to personally apply this. The bottom portion of the card is a tear off section for visitors. (At the yellow box service you were asked to take it to the Welcome Table to get a guest bag. At the Montgomery service on Sunday morning, people were asked to drop it in the offering.) On the back of the card there were three other things: “Start Here” information, an explanation of the three C’s, and a little budget summary. (The weekly budget for all campuses is \$90,000. The previous week’s attendance was 4,323 and giving was \$77,846.)

The service started with two worship songs. The musicians were very talented, but the PA system and acoustics of the room could not do them justice. Dave then gave a great message about reconciliation based on the story of Jacob and Esau. As part of the message he used a powerful video clip from the movie *The Straight Story*. After the message there was a substantial time for personal reflection as people were asked to consider relationships where they needed to seek reconciliation. This time ended with communion. They then sang one worship song, “Grace Like Rain,” by Chris Tomlin. This was followed by one live announcement—an appeal for people to serve in Kid’s City ministry this summer as a way to try out serving or to show their appreciation to their long-term workers by giving them a summer break. To close the service people were dismissed and told that they could come forward to receive prayer if they would like. The service in all was an hour and fifteen minutes long.

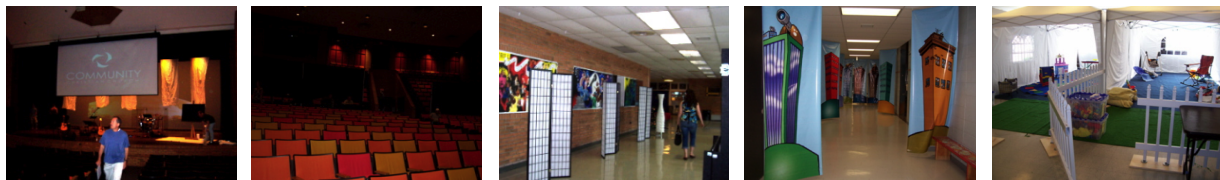
There's not a lot of difference but I would say that their stage people (worship team, speakers, announcement persons) present a more casual appearance than us—if you can believe that! Basically almost everyone had on jeans and some were tattered.

## Sunday Morning “Downtown” Naperville Site Visit

After a hearty breakfast at the Country Inn & Suites we checked out and got back to the Yellow Box at 7:30am. We split into two groups there. I put some of our team in both groups so that we could see as many sights as possible. I went with the group that visit the Downtown Naperville and Montgomery sites.

The vision of the Downtown Naperville sight is to be a presence in downtown Naperville. However, they are still working hard to get a downtown site. Right now they are meeting at the North Naperville High School auditorium. We watched their set up process and several of their team spoke to us and answered our questions. Here are some helpful things I learned.

1. They use Portable Church systems which provides resources for church plants and other churches that must set up everything from scratch every week—backdrops, tables, sound systems, partitions, etc. An entire portable system could cost in the neighborhood of \$90,000. (Interestingly, as we traveled from one site to another, one of the pastors in our group who is doing multi-site church in the Minneapolis area, said that they were able to build their own portable systems for a fraction of the cost of Portable Church systems costs.)



*Setting Up a Church in at the Downtown Naperville Site*

2. The Downtown site is just five minutes from the Yellow Box site. It was started to draw people away from the 11:00am service at the Yellow Box. It currently has one service at 10:10. The school auditorium that they use can seat 800 people. They curtain off the back so that it seems the right size for their crowd that averages 270 people. Judging from the quality look of the auditorium and the poor sound quality that I heard in the Gymnasium on Saturday evening, I asked the site pastor Brian if the sound quality is better in the downtown church. He said “yes.”

3. They used to rent some of the upstairs high school class rooms, but found that it was better to create classroom space using tents and fences in the Commons area that they were already paying for that space. This made their kids area more accessible and also saves them about \$17,000 a year in rent.
4. Bill, the worship/arts pastor for the downtown site and the overall Catalyst worship/arts pastor, told us that when they are launching a new site they put the new site pastor on staff full-time nine months previous to the launch and then bring on the half-time worship and children's pastors six months before the launch. He works with the new worship pastor intensely for four months before and following the launch.
5. The site worship pastors used to plan their worship set together and all use the same songs. They did this for years and only quit a year ago. Each site now determines its own set now. They have four worship teams that rotate at the downtown site. The worship team the morning we were there was a high school team that sounded great and actually seemed to be using more Vineyard type music than the Yellow Box—by which I mean more God-directed worship songs.
6. There is a very strong emphasis on raising up new leaders throughout CCC. We heard this repeatedly throughout the weekend. Words like “reproduce” and “reproducible” were used continually. It's permeates their culture. Bill said that on every worship team each week you will see an apprentice who will lead one song during the service.
7. Bill said that they have no worship element in their small group meetings.

## Montgomery 9:30am Sunday Morning Service

The Montgomery sight is the only location in a traditional church building. On Saturday evening this sight has live teaching from one of the CCC teaching staff. On Sunday morning, however, the two services at 9:30 and 11:00 are done using a video of the Saturday evening teaching given at the Yellow Box. The sanctuary seats 200. There was just a handful of people there when the service started but when things were under way I counted 67. (The 11:00 service is most likely considerably larger.) The crowd was a mix of ages, overall not as young as that of the Yellow Box. It was almost all white but there was a little color there.



*Some Photos Taken at the Montgomery Campus*



The service started with an opening song performed by the worship team. It was followed by an invitation to join together singing a David Crowder song. This was followed by a TV-game show type video related to the “Family Challenge” theme. After this one announcement was made—a new women’s small group starting at the building that week. Then the offering was taken. Just as at the Yellow Box on Saturday evening, video from the *The Straight Story* movie was shown during the offering. Interestingly, since the offering was taken before the message at Montgomery, the video footage was not a reminder of the message. Perhaps instead it created curiosity or simply puzzled people.

After the offering the message was given via video, the site pastor got up and gave the final appeal of the message, asking people to apply the message—to choose to reconcile and to bring the relationship where they need reconciliation to God. There was simple, live instrumental background played during this time. This was followed by the worship team singing a Chris Tomlin song, “This is Our God,” as communion was served. A few people sang with this. Then everyone was invited to stand and sing together and the worship leader introduced a young (20?) woman named Alison who led us in the song “Whatever Thing.” The worship leader then took over and led a final song, Matt Redman’s “Blessed be Your Name.” The service was just over 60 minutes long.

## Plainfield Campus

Group 2 went to the Plainfield and Romeoville Campuses. I cannot give a detailed report on them but here are some photos that the team took.



*Setting Up at Plainfield*



*The Plainfield Site*

## Romeoville Campus

Romeoville was the second campus of CCC. They use two building there, the community center and their own building which is perhaps a hundred yards away. The children's ministry meets in their own building. This is their second largest site with an average attendance of about 700. It is more racially diverse than the Yellow Box.



*The Romeoville Campus*

## Personal Time with Dave Ferguson

The closing session was a question and answer time over lunch broken down by different areas: Lead Pastors, Small Group Ministry, Logistics & Administration, Teaching Team, and Student Ministry.

I went to the senior leader session with Dave Ferguson. There were just four of us at the table with him. We were joined by one of his elders. People fielded different questions. I asked him what to look for in campus pastors.

He said: “If your church is really serious about multi-site and really wants this to work as part of your long term strategy, you should take one of your best current pastors and have him move to the place you want to start that first church. That will set your course and communicate that this is a really important. We have found that it is important to have the pastor live in the community where the site is. This would be especially true if you are working in a more rural setting.”

Jim Egli: “What is the career path for a site pastor? Is there formal training besides on the job training—things like theological or biblical training?”

Dave Ferguson: “People start as small group interns and then become small group leaders. In time they become small group coaches and then a director of coaches or a ministry. This is our training track. We don’t have formal classes or other academic requirements. We look for proven leadership.”

Someone else asked: “I noticed that there is a great attitude among your staff. I asked one of them how they would rate working here on a scale of one to ten and they said that it was very high, a nine, that they love working here. How have you created that positive atmos-



phere or culture?” Dave replied: “We have a great atmosphere of trust here. We don’t even have a employee policy manual or written guidelines. We hire people from within who are sold out about our mission. So we trust them and they come with a great work ethic so we don’t need to really monitor them or motivate them.”

A black Canadian pastor asked, “What other churches do training and resourcing related to multi-site?” Dave replied: “Northcoast church in California and Leadership Network is now doing a conference called Multi-site Exposed that is helpful.”

## The Culture of CCC

The leadership of CCC has done a fantastic job of infusing a consistent culture throughout their church. It did not matter who you were talking to—pastors, staff, or contributors—or what site you were at, the same values and terms were expressed over and over again. Here are some that stood out to me.

1. “Helping people find their way back to God.” This phrase was expressed repeatedly. It is the mission of the church and everyone knows it. Methodology was all just a means to this end.
2. Reproducible – people consistently talked about reproducing leadership and keeping methods and technology simple so that things could be easily reproduced across campuses.
3. CCC – “Celebrate, Connect, Contribute” are repeated emphasized in all their literature and their language. They want people not only coming to worship but connecting in small groups and contributing. Besides involving adults they proactively engage teens and even children in ministry roles. The three C’s are what make up their circular logo. They want to create 3C Christians.
4. Small groups are highly valued. All staff are encouraged to lead one. Small group leading and coaching are seen as the primary channels for developing leaders for new campuses and new churches.
5. Fun – The church has an upbeat, positive, fun atmosphere.

## Jim’s Take Away

The weekend was extremely valuable and our team had a wonderful time.

I learned a LOT about how multi-site actually works. Here are some key conclusions.

1. Multi-site does not mean adding some other sites by simply recording your message on video and sending it out to some other locations. It is an entire reproduction mind set that means mobilizing leaders and teams in new communities to reach an expanding number of people. I know you may be thinking, “Duh! Of course, Jim!” But really, this is an entirely different and exciting mindset that means expanding the kingdom and reproducing leaders and disciples in exponential ways. It is not so much an add on to what a church is doing but a new way of thinking and working.
2. Multi-site is one of the best ways to reproduce healthy growth in a cost effective way—the most bang for the buck when it comes to time, energy, leadership, and money. At the same time it is costly. CCC wants to start new campuses strong so they give them energy, paid staff, equipment, and advertising. Launching a new sight in the Chicago area might cost from \$150,000 to \$250,000. That might be different here in rural Illinois but it is not necessarily cheaper than church planting.
3. Multi-site complements and does not replace church planting. As Happy—our senior pastor—has said, we need to do both.
4. We need to clarify our vision and develop an overall strategy. Part of this should be sending a team to the Multi-site Practicum in Atlanta, GA, November 3-4 of this year.