

GPS

GOD'S PLAN FOR SHARING

ACROSS MISSOURI

EVERY BELIEVER SHARING, EVERY PERSON HEARING

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

MISSOURI BAPTIST CONVENTION

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WHAT IS GPS ACROSS MISSOURI?

GPS (GOD'S PLAN FOR SHARING) ACROSS MISSOURI is a major evangelistic campaign to deliver the Gospel to 2.3 million households across Missouri in the weeks leading up to Easter Sunday 2010. We are participating in the National Evangelism Initiative of the North American Mission Board (NAMB) aimed at fulfilling the Great Commission in the United States and Canada by 2020. Similar campaigns will be taking place in other state conventions as well.

WHY IS IT NEEDED?

PEOPLE NEED THE LORD! While Missouri is blessed with many thriving Churches and growing Christians, so many of our neighbors have yet to discover a vital relationship with Christ. Consider the larger context: 7 out of 10 in America are without a personal relationship with Christ¹. One person dies every 11 seconds². Three out of four die without Christ as Savior and Lord³. Less than 20% in any community attend Church on a regular basis⁴. The sheer size of the lost population in America makes it the 4th largest mission field in the world⁵. 2.7 million Missourians do not claim a religious affiliation⁶. A few months ago, one of our MBC pastors led his congregation to survey a portion of their community. They visited 100 homes, asking where residents attended church. He reported they discovered only one person who indicated they attended Church on a regular basis. That may not be typical of Missouri, but it is not unusual. GPS is designed to be a means whereby Missouri Baptist Churches obey our Lord's command to "Go...to every creature." (Mark 16:15).

¹ Message by Dr. Geoff Hammond, Summer State Leadership Meeting, July 2008

² Center for Missional Research, North American Mission Board. (www.namb.net/cmr)

³ Center for Missional Research, North American Mission Board. (www.namb.net/cmr)

⁴ David T. Olson, The American Church in Crises (Zondervan, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 2008), p. 28

⁵ Center for Missional Research, North American Mission Board. (www.namb.net/cmr)

⁶ The Association of Religious Data Archives, (www.thearda.com)

HOW WILL IT WORK?

Through GPS ACROSS MISSOURI, Missouri Baptists will seek to distribute a printed Gospel presentation to every Missouri household between March 6 and April 3, 2010. The Gospel presentation will be made by hand-delivering a plastic bag containing two items: A specially designed brochure that contains a Gospel message, and, an invitation from that church to attend Easter services.

The brochure with the Gospel message will direct the reader to the findithere.com website where they will hear believers telling their story of how they came to know Jesus Christ and learn more about Jesus' love.

Churches will be supported in the Gospel distribution through a national media campaign. The MBC and interested MBC Churches and/or Associations will be purchasing radio and TV time, as well as billboards to reinforce the message of the brochure. The spots will encourage individuals to visit the findithere.com website or to call a toll-free number to NAMB's Evangelism Response Center where they will receive spiritual counseling. Missouri Covenant churches will receive information of responders in their area so that they can follow-up.

WHAT IS A COVENANT CHURCH?

Covenant Churches are a network of local Churches that agree to provide immediate follow-up and encouragement to people who have made salvation decisions with Telephone Encouragers (TE's) and Internet Encouragers (IE's). The new converts contact information is sent to the nearest Covenant Church. The Covenant Church agrees to contact them within 3 days. Assimilation into a local Church is crucial for the Spiritual growth of new Christians. Caring Covenant Churches can make a world of difference in changing lives and transforming communities.

WHAT IS A TELEPHONE AND INTERNET ENCOURAGER?

Telephone (TEs) and Internet Encouragers (IEs) are members of MBC Churches who have been trained to share the Good News of Christ from their own homes, through the Telephone and Internet. They will commit two and one-half hours per month (more, if they so desire), and send in a report after each session. Through an innovative technological system, seekers calls/contacts are routed directly and anonymously to the homes of encouragers who log on to receive calls or Internet contacts. TEs and IEs will be prepared by attending a two hour training session.

HOW IS THE CAMPAIGN STRUCTURED?

“GPS ACROSS MISSOURI” HAS FOUR PHASES:

- 1. Preparation***
- 2. Prayer Walking/Driving***
- 3. Gospel Distribution and Media Campaign***
- 4. Follow-up***

- 1. Preparation –** In the Preparation phase, which runs January and February, 2010, churches will work with their Director of Missions or nearby MBC churches to select a geographic area to cover. Preparation activities may include taking steps to improve “first impressions” of church facilities, training members to do Prayer Walking/Driving, training members to be witnesses, training members to become Telephone or Internet Encouragers, and, agreeing to become a Covenant church. During this phase, churches will also order the number of bags and brochures they will need to cover their selected area and may choose to design and print a supplemental brochure about their church to include in the bag with the Gospel presentation. The bags and brochures can be ordered

through Association offices in most cases, or, from the MBC Evangelism office. Churches will need to pick up their materials and insert the brochure into the bags for distribution. A church Preparation Guide, available for download at www.mobaptist.org/mogps, has been prepared to help churches in this phase.

2. **Prayer Walking/Driving** – March 6 and 13 are suggested Saturdays for Prayer Walking/Driving. Each Church can decide what best fits its calendar and community. Some Churches have used Sunday afternoons and evenings to Prayer Walk/Drive, and other days of the week as well.
3. **Gospel Distribution and Media Campaign** – The Gospel Distribution is suggested to take place March 20 & 27, 2010, when church volunteers will distribute the bags and brochures by placing them on every door in their area. At the same time, the MBC, and interested MBC Churches/Associations will be airing a 30-second TV spot and a 60-second radio spot, as well as utilizing billboards, supporting the GPS campaign. The suggested 4 Saturdays in March to Prayer Walk/Drive and distribute the Gospel laden bags, was selected because it leads to Easter Sunday, April 4, 2010. Research shows that unchurched individuals are most likely to be willing to attend a church at Easter or Christmas.
4. **Follow-up** – Follow-up is a crucial part of the “GPS ACROSS MISSOURI” campaign. Effective follow-up will include personal visits, letters and cards as well as phone contacts with the Easter guests. The intensive time of follow-up will be conducted from the week after Easter to Mother’s Day (April 5-May 9).

HOW CAN “GPS ACROSS MISSOURI” HELP MY CHURCH?

Although its primary purpose is to sow the seed of the Gospel among the lost, “GPS” can also be a tremendous benefit to your church. First, the campaign is an easy way for all of your church members to get involved in evangelism. Whether

through praying at home, Prayer Walking/Driving, sprucing up Church facilities, working as a Telephone or Internet Encourager, hanging bags on doors, or volunteering to serve in new units to minister to new comers, there's an important job that fits within every member's abilities. "GPS" also gives your Church a fresh reason to make personal contact with every family within your church field. As new people are reached and visit your Church, your Church will experience the joy and excitement of seeing people come to Christ. And as Church members disciple these new Christians, they in turn will grow stronger in their own faith.

WHAT IF OUR CHURCH'S FIELD OF MINISTRY OVERLAPS WITH THAT OF ANOTHER CHURCH?

Cooperation is a hallmark of New Testament Christianity (I Corinthians 3:9a, Romans 15:2-3a). Churches are encouraged to work together to ensure that every household in Missouri is reached. Inasmuch as there are more lost people in our state than present church facilities can handle, geographic preciseness should not be a problem.

IS THERE A COST INVOLVED?

Yes, but you will decide how much this cost will be. The North American Mission Board and Missouri Baptist Convention, through your gifts to the Cooperative Program, the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering as well as Missouri's Reuben L. South Missions Offerings, are covering much of the costs of implementing "GPS ACROSS MISSOURI." Churches are being asked to buy the plastic bag and Gospel presentation brochure for the number of homes they commit to reaching. The bag/brochure unit is estimated to cost approximately 7 cents each and can be ordered in bulk through your Association or the Evangelism office of the MBC.

Beyond the cost of the bags and brochures, any additional spending will be a decision of the individual Church. For instance, your Church may choose to add a brochure or flyer to the bag with the Gospel presentation to promote a new ministry or to invite the household to visit your Church on Easter Sunday. You may also choose to purchase banners or yard signs. Artwork for billboards has also been created. Your Church could also decide to supplement the “GPS” media campaign by buying additional air time, newspaper ad space, or billboards.

WHAT RESOURCES ARE BEING PROVIDED BY THE MBC?

The Missouri Baptist Convention is posting resources for Churches at www.mobaptist.org/mogps. Available resources include a Church Preparation Guide, a Prayer Walking/Driving training presentation and Evangelism training tools. Materials will be added throughout the year as they become available. Additional resources are also available through the North American Mission Board’s GPS site at www.gps2020.net.

CAN I SEE THE TV SPOT NOW?

Yes. The TV spot has already been created and is available for you to view on the www.findithere.com website. This spot was used in five pilot projects in selected communities across the nation leading up to Easter 2009 as part of the North American Mission Board’s preparation for next year’s GPS media campaign.

HOW DO I SIGN UP?

There is no formal dotted line to sign. If your Church would like to participate in “GPS ACROSS MISSOURI,” please let your Director of Missions know. Or, you

can also notify the MBC Evangelism Office by sending an email to gtaylor@mobaptist.org, or, bpeeper@mobaptist.org. Or, you can contact us by calling 1-800-736-6227, extension 650 (Gary Taylor), or 651 (Beth Peeper).