



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

We believe that God has called us to plant a biblically faithful, winsomely reformed, Christ-centered church in St. Cloud, MN. There is not only a need for more churches in St. Cloud, but St. Cloud serves as a strategic crossroads for gospel witness in central Minnesota. Situated in the geographic center of the state, St. Cloud is both a growing metro area (2020 pop. Est. 290,000) and an influential university town. It has potential for national and global impact in the cause of Christ.

- **Opportunity:** Plant a church in new territory for the ARP, expanding the Kingdom of God.
- **Why St. Cloud, Minnesota?**

Core Community and Urban Migration: St. Cloud is a metro area with about 290,000 people, growing industries, and a hub for education in the center of Minnesota. Of this group around 70-80% don't worship in a church on any given Sunday. St. Cloud's "Nones" are growing at a slightly faster rate than nationally, with about 27% or 80,000 people making the claim. Local churches, both mainline Protestant, Catholic, and Evangelicals, reflect similar trends to the US overall, and are declining in membership by 5-10% annually.

Among the non-immigrant people of St. Cloud, family values remain strong in their cultural memories, but the biblical roots of these memories have often been forgotten. These people are primed for spiritual renewal because of the current cultural disturbance in the region. Loneliness and isolation caused by the Covid-19 pandemic has caused many to have new openness to spiritual life and guidance. It is causing many to seek the answers found in the Gospel in new way.

Recent social and political disruptions in Minneapolis/St. Paul are causing migration to outstate urban centers and rural Minnesota. This dislocation is causing new people to move to St. Cloud and other areas of Minnesota. People are moving to escape the unrest and violence of the inner cities and are frightened about the future, often seeking spiritual comfort, wisdom, and community. A new church plant is uniquely positioned to offer displaced people the Bread of Life, that only the Good Shepherd can offer. We believe this is an opportunity for the Gospel which did not exist prior to 2020.

Now is the time to seize the day.

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Core Group: We are developing both a men's and women's discipleship group's (currently, 4 men and 4 women in each group), as well as a core group (5-10 families), utilizing online and Zoom groups. These groups should be close to multiplying by next spring/summer (2021), when we would arrive on the field. We believe that this will be the foundation of growth and multiplying of ministry in spiritual maturity, leadership, and further church planting multiplication.

College Students: St. Cloud State University, and six other colleges and vocational schools are located here (approx. 25,000 students) The university and college students of St. Cloud are strategic to reaching the next generation for Christ and affecting it with Christian thought leadership. Planting a church that intentionally reaches out to them and turns them into disciplinarians will have an outsized influence, way beyond its own doors and for generations to come.



Unreached Immigrants: St. Cloud is a key gathering place for the immigrant population of Somalia's who have come to Minnesota from their war-torn homeland. Official estimates are that there are about 6000-8000 Somalia's but unofficially there maybe in excess of 25,000 in St. Cloud. With a worldwide population of 15.8 million, 99.6% are Muslims. In fact, there are less than 16,000 known believers in the entire world. This is one of the most unreached populations on the planet. This presents an opportunity from the Lord, since there are no known missionaries working in the nation of Somalia, but they will live among us, as our neighbors in St. Cloud



- **Why Scott & Amy Smith?**

Leadership and Disciplemaker Experience: Scott is married to Amy and has served as ruling Elder at 1st Presbyterian Church of Lake Placid, Florida and in various other roles since 2012. There he and Amy also helped plant Iglesia En Movimento, volunteering as discipleship pastor and as a provisional elder. Prior to Faithful City, Scott served more than 30 years as a financial advisor & business leader.

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Amy is a graduate of Luther College in Decorah, Iowa, and served previously on the national leadership of Student Venture, a high school ministry of CRU, and as executive director of the Mason G Smoak Foundation in Lake Placid, Florida. Amy is an experienced disciplinarian and small group leader, as well as an able public speaker.

Cultural Match: Because we lived and worked in the Minneapolis/St. Paul area for nearly twenty years, returning to Minnesota will be returning to home for us. The cultural and linguistic adjustments will be much easier. (How to Speak Minnesotan!) We still have many friends in the area, and even a couple that will be part of the core group who have been our friends for nearly 25 years. This is an often-overlooked factor in the church planting, elongating the process, since the planters must take time to gain insider status, which can sometimes take years. In the eyes of the core group and others we have spoken to during the exploration process, they often say that we are “returning to Minnesota” (true), reflecting the fact that we already have some insider and cultural capital with them.

Church Planting and Ministry Know How: Faithful City is Scott’s fifth church planting experience. Scott earned his B.A. in Education & History at the University of Northern Iowa and his MDiv. in Theology, Missions, and Church Planting from Southwestern Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas. He also has completed graduate work in Finance at the American College. He has more than 35 years of experience as a disciplinarian, business, and church leader. He has also developed and lead business as mission projects in more than 25 countries, helping to enable church planting and evangelism in Asia, former Soviet block countries, and the Middle East for more than 20 years.

Amy’s experience with CRU also gave her experience in the core activities of church planting, such as evangelism, disciplinarian, and small group formation and congregating. This will be Amy’s second church planting experience. Additionally, in line with the admonitions of Paul to Titus, we believe that her experience as a wife and mother can have great influence in the lives of women, as both singles, and as wives and mothers.

- **Action Steps:**

1. **9/1/20 Zoom Core Group Training (Scott & Amy to 5-10 families – in progress)**
2. **11/1/20 Zoom D-Groups (Scott & Amy to 4 men, 4 women, in progress 11/15/20)**
3. **11/20 Approval from FPCLP Session (Church Planter)**
4. **11/20 Initiate Partner/Support Raising (in progress @ 33% of goal 12/7/20)**
5. **10/27/20 Scott Licensed Completed – Florida ARP Presbytery**
6. **ASAP Ordination Process Completed (calling in process, April 27, 2021?)**
7. **ASAP Presbytery & ONA Endorsement & Funding (Wes Spring)**
8. **Sell home & move to field (4/30/21?)**
9. **5/1/21 Coaching initiated**
10. **5/1/21 Provisional Session Chosen – Done and meeting monthly as of 12/7/20**
11. **6/1/21 Launch second wave of D-Groups (9 leaders to 30 individuals)**
12. **9/1/21 Additional Core Group Training & Preview Services**
13. **Launch third wave of D-Groups (30 leaders to 90 individuals)**
14. **Launch Sunday Worship Service(s) TBD – Christmas 2021? Easter 2022?**
15. **Launch fourth wave of D-Groups (90 leaders to 270 individuals)**
16. **Launch fifth wave of D-Groups (270 leaders to 710 individuals)**
17. **Particularize congregation, elect elders and deaconate**
18. **Launch 2nd plant in appropriate Minnesota city**
19. **Launch 3rd plant in appropriate Minnesota city**
20. **Etc.**