

Vision  
Tour



a church plant in  
the south metro  
area of Boston

Dear Pastor,

Welcome to the Boston area! Thanks for taking the time out of your schedule to check out the spiritual need here personally. We are glad that you are here and that the Lord is pulling the hearts of men like you to resource church planting in New England.

We are excited at the possibilities in front of us and are encouraged by the evidence of God's hand our journey this far. It is my hope that, as you see how God has blessed us and hear where He is leading, you will see how your church can play a part in where we are going.

Please take a few minutes to familiarize yourself with this packet of information. We hope you enjoy your time here and that this will be a meaningful experience for you. Let us know if you have any questions or if there is any further way we can be a blessing to you while you are here.

May the Lord bless you and may He help you see how, together, we can make a dent for the glory of God here in the south metro area of Boston.

Thanks,

Sean Sears

781-603-7989 cell





# South Metro BOSTON



## AN OVERVIEW

The Boston metro area has 6.4 million people and contains all those communities inside the I-495 loop. Grace Church is in Stoughton, which has a population of 28,000 but is within a 15 minute drive of 540,000 people. The American Religious Data Archive ([www.thearda.com](http://www.thearda.com)), only 2.4% of these people attend an evangelical church of any denomination.

Most of the towns south of Boston are older than the invention of the car (i.e. Stoughton was founded in 1726). As such, they have their own unique identities, apart from Boston proper. None of the townships would

refer to themselves as a suburb of Boston even though a significant number of their residents work in the city. Each community maintains their own cultural identity through historical societies, event committees, community services, school systems and a representative form of local government.

The metro area of Boston has been a church planting target for evangelical groups for the past ten years with very limited success. The non-English speaking missions have done well while their English speaking counterparts have struggled greatly. There are plenty of theories as to why



but the end result is that mission agencies are now reluctant to sponsor ministry projects in New England.

# Timeline of Growth

## 2005

- Home Bible study began in March with 6 people
- Second Bible study started in June
- First service on November 6th at Holiday Inn with 35

## 2006

- Children's ministry added
- Had 70 for our first Easter service
- Baptized 6 in neighbor's pool.
- Finished the year averaging 60 people

## 2007

- Left hotel for more space
- Took first mission trip
- Pushed out of space by cult



Glenn and Tiffany Middleton  
Saved and Baptized - 2006

- Signed lease on current warehouse
- Grew to 75 by the end of the year

## 2008

- Had 109 for our grand opening
- While averaging 85, we had 159 at Easter
- Launched Life Community Church in Quincy with 15 people from Grace
- Finished the year back at 85

## 2009

- Grew to 120 by the beginning of summer
- Brought on Ken Knott as a part-time staff pastor
- Launched small groups
- Finished the year at 150

## 2010

- Went to two services in the month leading up to Easter
- Had 282 for Easter
- Added volunteer office admin
- Finished the year at 200

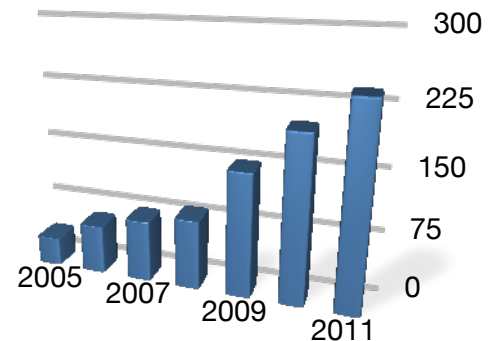
## 2010

- Averaging 240 in weekly attendance
- 50% of adults signed up for small group
- 30% volunteered for some type of ministry in the past 12 months

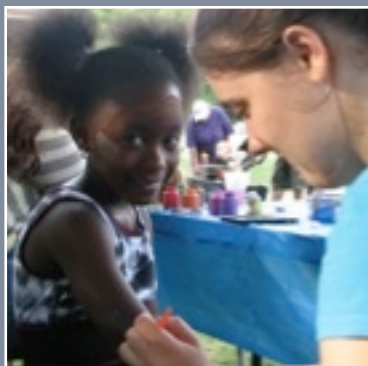


Dave and Michelle Massorelli  
Saved and Baptized - 2008

### Growth Trend



# What We've Learned...



Our understanding of the typical New England community is that **they are tightly-knit, family oriented and religiously sensitive.** Most of our neighbors are Catholic, Jewish or liberal Protestant, in that order. New churches are not very common and are looked upon with suspicion and are considered to be a cult until proven otherwise.

Each town is rich in its own history and is comprised of a large percentage of “townies” (multi-generational residents). These native New Englanders are not new to the area and have extensive, pre-existing social networks and a rich religious heritage at a local church/synagogue. **They aren't looking for a new church, new friendships or a religious experience.** In their words, they are “all-set”.

We have interpreted the success of non-English church plants as a result of immigrants who are looking for new friends, social connection and ethnic identity. Their lack of established connections of any kind and the opportunity to attend a new church in their own language gives them those things they left behind in their former country.

So, we either choose to target English speakers in similar circumstances (recent move-ins) or we figure out how to connect with local New Englanders already connected to other churches/synagogues with pre-existing friendships. Our calling to

plant a church is in the context of local friendships and determines our spiritual direction.

Our recent growth has been unique among other recent church plants in the south metro area of Boston. I can't tell you exactly why that is but, if we take for granted that each was called, had equal prayer cover and financial resources, **there is only one other characteristic that sets us apart. We were residents in the community for four years before starting** our small group. During that time we did all that we could to involve ourselves in the fabric of the community, outside of religious experiences.

We are currently known as “that church who does the movie nights” every summer. In fact, an adjoining town asked us to host movie nights in cooperation with their department of recreation. Additionally, we serve the communities around us through our backpack program, Thanksgiving meals, and Closet Exchange. None of the churches in the area serve the community without financial compensation.

It hasn't been the quickest start. However, we're discovering that **it is necessary to bring value to a community in order to earn legitimacy** in their eyes. It is a combination of consistent marketing and service projects that has built a bridge whereby our current attenders have been able to walk their friends across here at Grace.



# What's Next...

We've done a great job connecting with the people in Stoughton and Randolph. Our next move is target our neighbors in Canton and Avon. In addition to marketing, we're increasing our service projects this summer by 50% in these towns.

People in New England will drive two towns away for church but will not drive more than that. We believe this is because of the parish mentality - people are supposed to go to church in their own town.

We've never been able to let anyone in these areas know we're here. So, we want to bump out our advertising to the towns closest to us. This means we'll be

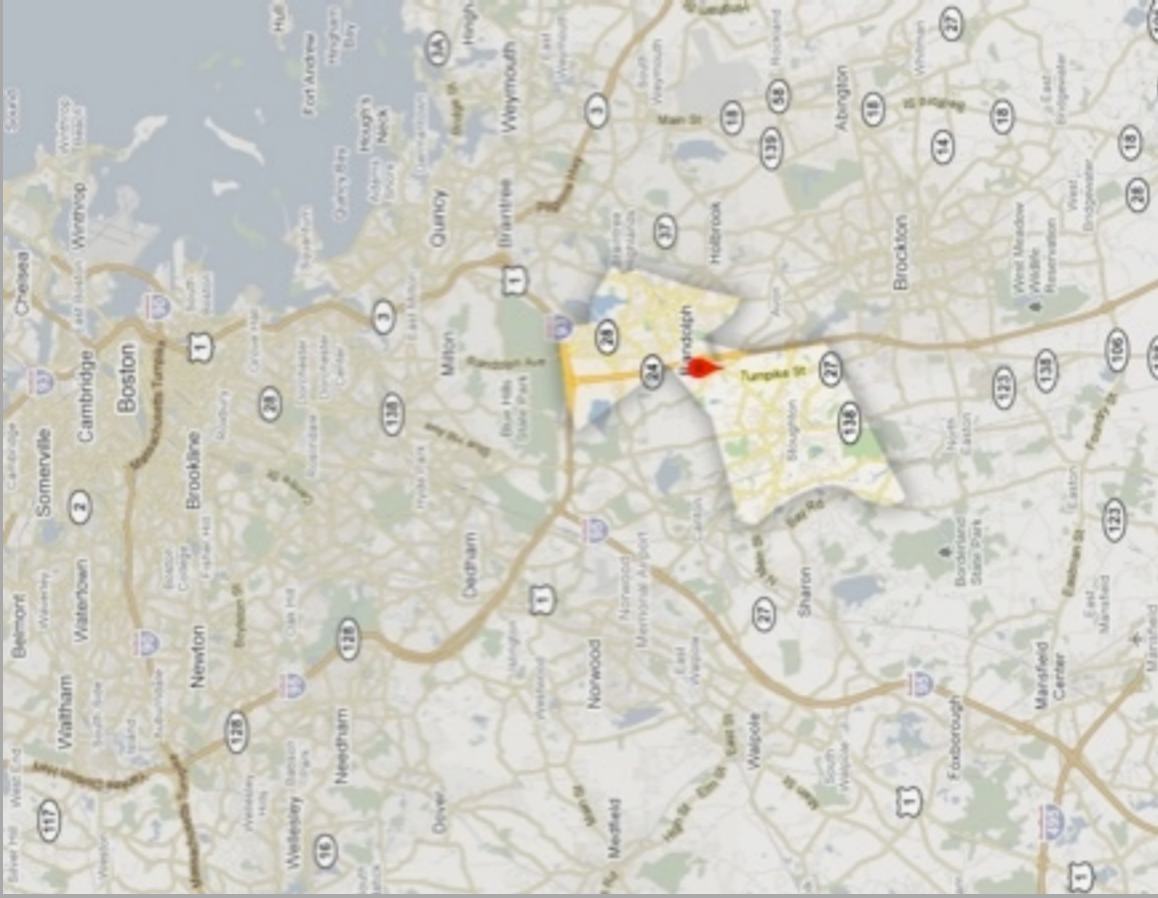
direct mailing all those 25-45 year olds in 15 minute driving radius of Grace Church. This new market area represents 540,000 people, most of whom have no idea we are here.

Our plan is to send them two mailers this year, Easter and Christmas, increasing to three next year. We'll also expand our service projects into these surrounding town.

Experience has shown that marketing, in addition to visible service projects, has the greatest impact. It's necessary for us to make ourselves available, physically, in order to reach them with the Gospel.

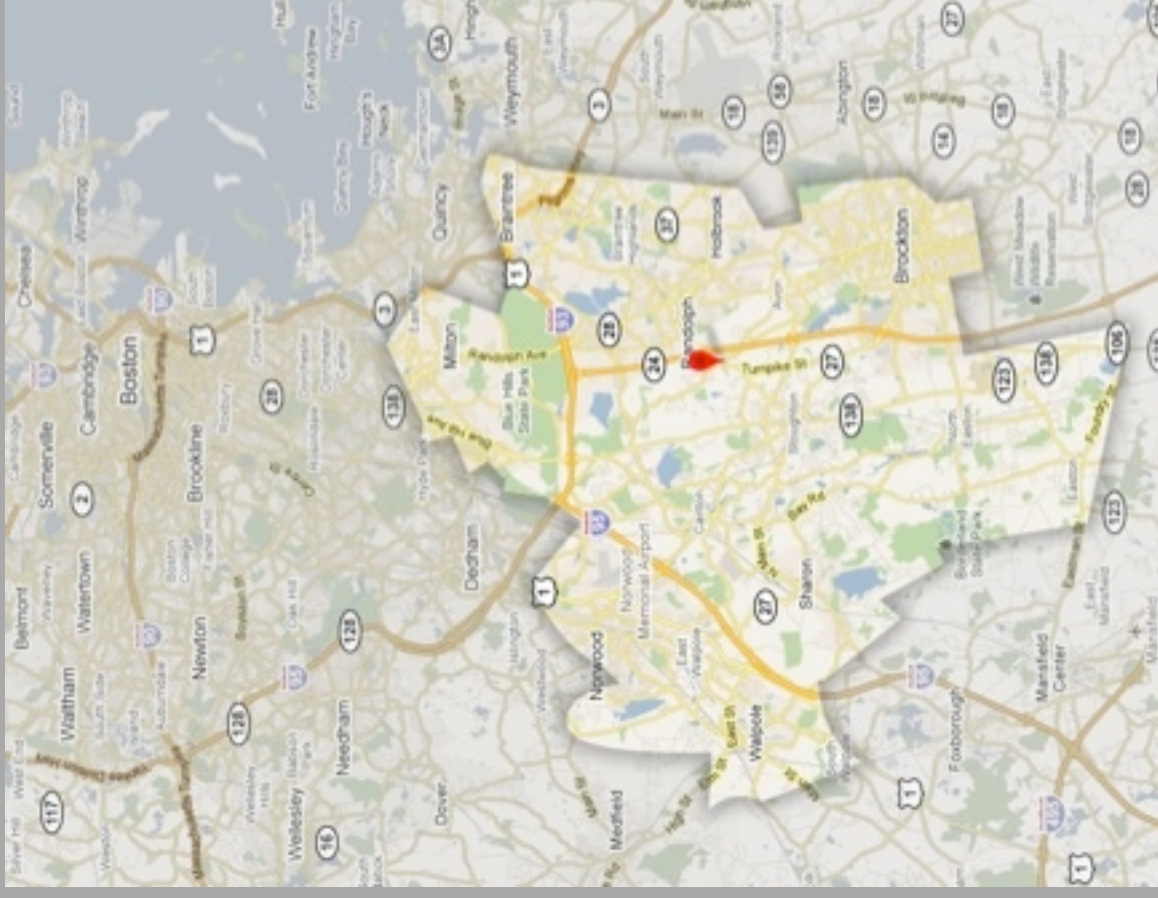






### Stoughton & Randolph

This is a map of Stoughton and Randolph. These are the towns we have spent most of our time and advertising dollars in. Everyone in the highlighted area can make it to Grace Church in less than seven minutes.



### Two Town Radius

There are 540,000 people living within the shaded area above. All of them live within a fifteen minute drive of Grace Church. We have not been able to connect with them yet.

# Grace Church Income & Expense Projections

BUDGET	2010 ACTUAL	2011	2012	2013
Grace Tithe & Offering	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
Individual Support	[REDACTED]	\$0	\$0	\$0
CHURCH PARTNERSHIPS				
[REDACTED]		TBD	TBD	TBD
[REDACTED]		TBD	TBD	TBD
[REDACTED]		TBD	TBD	TBD
[REDACTED]		TBD	TBD	TBD
[REDACTED]		\$30,000	\$30,000	\$30,000
[REDACTED]		TBD	TBD	TBD
[REDACTED]		TBD	TBD	TBD
Projected Income	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
Projected Expenses	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
Retained/Needs	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]



# Partnering with Grace Church

EXPENSES	2010		2011		2012		2013	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Ministry	██████	15.4%	██████	24.5%	██████	27.7%	██████	29.3%
Facility	██████	25.4%	██████	16.0%	██████	13.9%	██████	12.3%
Operational	██████	4.6%	██████	3.4%	██████	3.8%	██████	3.5%
Missions	██████	10.3%	██████	7.9%	██████	8.6%	██████	9.0%
Staffing	██████	44.3%	██████	48.1%	██████	46.3%	██████	45.9%
Totals	██████		██████		██████		██████	

“I thank my God in all remembrance of you, always in every prayer of mine for you all making my prayer with Joy, because of your partnership in the gospel...” (Phil 1:3-5)

## Prayer

We’ve had an extensive prayer team since the very beginning of Grace Church. This prayer cover has been used by the Lord to prepare the hearts of our friends and neighbors to hear the Gospel. Please commit to praying for Grace Church and our ability to make disciples here in the south metro area of Boston. Pray for us every time you see one of our sports teams or hear of us in some other way.

## Mission Team

Consider sending a group of people from your church to help us serve one of communities this summer. We’d love the extra help and the opportunity to show your people the need for the Gospel here.

## Financial Support

Your financial partnership will allow us to do things we’ve never done before. You’ll help us connect with people who would be drawn to Jesus through Grace Church but simply don’t know where we are right now. We’d love for you to help us do what we can’t do on our own.