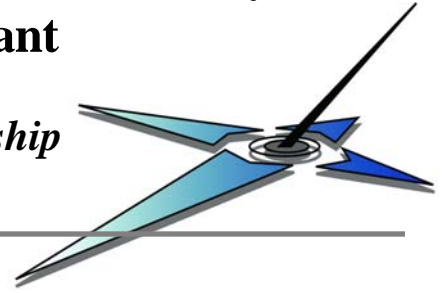


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# **The Ascent of a Multi-Generational Missional Ministry at HCBC's University of Texas Church Plant**

*A Case Study for Campus Crusade Senior Leadership*

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**Case Study Summary:**

Two years after church plant launch, HCBC UT church leaders had to decide whether to maintain their attractional model approach enjoying solid church attendance growth with Christian students, or follow the Lord's prompting and take a major risk knowing it could easily be the church plant's demise. A commitment to the vision at all cost and comfort paid off, and HCBC UT reemerged as a multi-generational incarnational missional church with an arsenal full of divinely-guided lessons learned and stumbled-upon best practices. The "perfect storm" of logistical, financial and performance challenges ultimately resulted in a collegiate ministry environment with a student church body mobilized on mission, supported by multi-generational shepherds.

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### ***Special Thanks and Recognition:***

Many thanks to the Hill Country Bible Church family for your complete support of this study, and for the genuine desire to share your divine lessons learned with other ministries for Kingdom growth. The transparency and humility that is inherent at every level within the HCBC church body is truly admirable. May your work continue to bear much fruit, and may you continue to progress in your quest to ensure that every man, woman and child in Greater Austin has the chance to experience the life-changing reality of Jesus Christ.

# The Ascent of a Multi-Generational Missional Ministry at HCBC's University of Texas Church Plant

## Introduction

Hill Country Bible Church at the University of Texas in Austin, Texas, is a collegiate church plant with a mission to communicate the Gospel of Jesus Christ to a campus full of college students. However, after only two years into the process, the church leaders reached a crossroads. They could maintain their attractional model approach enjoying solid church attendance growth with Christian students, or they could follow the Lord's prompting and take a major risk knowing it could easily be the church plant's demise. A commitment to the vision at all cost and comfort paid off, and HCBC UT reemerged as a multi-generational incarnational missional church with an arsenal full of divinely-guided lessons learned and stumbled-upon best practices.

The success of the UT missional model has redefined how the Hill Country Bible Church Plant Training Center trains and coaches future church plant pastors. John Herrington, director of HCBC church planting, described the impact of HCBC UT's kingdom growth success on the Training Center curriculum and approach:

"Things have changed so much since Denny Henderson and the HCBC UT team did it. We learned so much from their experience."

However, the effective campus church model did not emerge readily or effortlessly. Denny Henderson, HCBC UT senior pastor, described the journey as a "perfect storm" of logistical, financial and performance challenges that ultimately resulted in an incarnational, multi-genera-

tional missional model that witnessed significant kingdom growth:

"I didn't have an 'Isaiah moment' for a missional model for this church. No, we kept facing obstacles and tackling them one by one, while staying true to the vision God had given us. It was the perfect storm for God to use us."

## History of the UT Church Plant

Hill Country Bible Church is a Bible teaching, evangelical church that has had significant kingdom impact in the greater Austin area. The foundation for this impact was laid in the early 1990s when HCBC revised their church vision to focus on personal accountability for reaching the unbelieving non-believers in Austin. The vision statement reads:

*"Our Vision:* Every man, woman and child in Greater Austin has the chance to experience the life-changing reality of Jesus Christ because they hear the Gospel from the lips of someone at a Hill Country Bible Church.

*"How Will We Reach 1.4 Million People?* By planting churches that are spiritually vibrant and strategically located; by multiplying disciples; and by partnering with like-minded ministries."

The mission of the church migrated from single-point concentration to one that emphasized geographical span and influence across the Austin region, with the long-term objective of ensuring that all 1.4 million Austin residents have heard the Gospel. Tim Hawks, HCBC NW senior pastor, explained the motivation for the new vision:

"Acts 1:8 moved from our purpose statement to our vision, taking responsibility for our geography. So, our goal wasn't

the number of churches, but having witnesses in all the geographies."

To fulfill this mission, church elders launched the Association of Hill Country Churches in 1992 to oversee strategic church planting throughout the Austin region and formulate partnerships with other Austin-area churches. The Association established a Church Planting Training Center to groom and develop

apostolic pastors to lead the strategically located churches. Fourteen HCBC churches have been planted to-date, and five more are planned for launch within the year.

In addition to the geographical coverage, the Association identified four Austin-specific demographic entities for long-term pursuit.

Hawks described these as Austin's "redemptive demographics" which necessitate outside-the-church-walls missional ministry work:

1. Influential Institutions of Higher Learning (e.g., *the University of Texas, Concordia University*)
2. Seat of Government (e.g. *the Capital of TX*)
3. Prominent High-Tech Industry<sup>i</sup> (e.g. *Dell, Samsung Semiconductors*)
4. Thriving Arts Community (e.g. *official city slogan is "Live Music Capital of the World"*)<sup>ii</sup>

The first of the four redemptive demographics to be engaged is the concentration of higher learning institutes in Austin, most notably the University of Texas. The University of Texas is one of the largest public schools in the United States with more than 50,000 students attending the Austin campus<sup>iii</sup> and with many students residing in the Austin area after graduation. In addition to size, the University is considered to be one of the top 75 universities in the world<sup>iv</sup> and boasts highly ranked and sought after graduate school programs<sup>v</sup>.

However, formalization of the campus

***"Acts 1:8 moved from our purpose statement to our vision, taking responsibility for our geography. So, our goal wasn't the number of churches, but having witnesses in all the geographies."***

- Tim Hawks,  
HCBC NW senior pastor

***"I didn't have an 'Isaiah moment' for a missional model for this church. No, we kept facing obstacles and tackling them one by one ... . It was the perfect storm for God to use us."***

- Denny Henderson,  
senior pastor

<sup>i</sup> The Greater Austin Chamber of Commerce reports that Austin is home to 3,300 technology companies totalling 100,000 employees, including top industry names such as Dell, Samsung Austin Semiconductor, IBM, Freescale Semiconductor, Advanced Micro Devices, and Intel.

<sup>ii</sup> "Live Music Capital of the World" became the official slogan for Austin by Council Resolution 910829-46 on Aug. 29, 1991, after it was determined that Austin had more live music venues than other prominent music cities such as Nashville, New York, Las Vegas, and Los Angeles.

<sup>iii</sup> University of Texas. *Campus Facts*.

<sup>iv</sup> "The Top 200 World Universities, World University Rankings 2008." *Times Higher Education*.

<sup>v</sup> U.S. News and World Report Survey. March 30, 2007.

church plant did not begin until Hawks was introduced to Denny Henderson and the two struck up a correspondence. Hawks recalled his introduction to Denny Henderson and the corresponding impact on the church vision:

“One of the places so strategic for (our mission) is the University of Texas, but we hadn’t started a national search for the pastor role. Then I met Denny and realized he was the guy. It was a huge Godwin for this vision.”

Prior to joining HCBC, Denny Henderson was the teaching pastor of The Gathering, a college and young adults ministry at McLean Bible Church in the Washington, D.C., area. In 2004, he moved to Austin to commence his 1-year residency with the Church Plant Training Center in preparation for planting a church at the University of Texas’s Austin campus.

**The Journey from Attractional Church Plant to Re-visioning the Mission**

HCBC UT held its first service on August 27, 2005, with 110 founding members: 98 non-students and 12 students. The mission of the church reads: “to strategically reach over 50,000 people at the University of Texas with the Gospel of Jesus Christ” (see Appendix **Illustration I**: HCBC UT Purpose Statement).

HCBC UT began their journey by employing numerous attractional methods and programmatic activities. However, several deficiencies in this approach sur-

facated during the church’s first few years of existence due to misalignment between operational model and mission. While the overarching church vision seemed to be clearly defined, the method of fulfilling this mission was ambiguous and thus overall goals suffered.

First, the early congregation consisted primarily of married couples with young families or couples about to start families, all of whom had voluntarily come from HCBC NW to plant the UT church. The young families expected programmatic activities, such as a children’s ministry, marriage ministry and beyond, which were anticipated offerings during the recruitment process. These families clearly desired to reach UT students and believed in the church vision for the campus, but they were not yet fully aware of sacrifices involved. The small HCBC UT staff soon learned that meeting the “needs of the saints” proved to consume a disproportionate amount of staff time and resources, and detracted from the mission of sharing the gospel and discipleship with thousands of UT students. While fulfilling the needs of the saints is an essential part of equipping the congregation so they can continue their work in advancing the mission, HCBC UT leaders feared they were instead appeasing the saints simply to retain them in the congregation.

Second, nearly any student outreach or activity was approved and supported in an effort to reach UT students. The lax definition of campus outreach allowed a range of

service projects that included everything from raking leaves for a UT campus cafeteria worker to assisting with on-campus events. In addition to preparing for and executing Sunday morning and Wednesday evening church services, church staff and lay leaders spent a significant amount of time executing a dynamic yet unfocused calendar of non-scalable events.

At the end of the 2007 academic school year, nearly 2 years since church launch, staff and elders assessed their performance and collectively admitted discontentment. Despite countless hours of hard work, a full calendar of successful events, and measurable growth in student attendance, Kingdom growth was meager. The attractional model was prosperous, evidenced by a continuous increase of students attending church services and events, however the vast majority of these students were already Christ followers. (See **Exhibits I** for church attendance and **Exhibits II-III** for life transformation decisions.) Heather Lodovico, director of HCBC UT college ministry, explained why they were not content with only traditional growth versus Kingdom growth:

“The attractional model wasn’t working (for our vision). We saw the numbers grow, but not conversions. We were disappointed. The conversion rate was 0.8 percent and that’s too low. The year before, we had only two people come to Christ. We had a big budget, but not a lot of lives were changed.”

To address this shared disappointment, the church conducted an internal DNA

**Exhibit I**

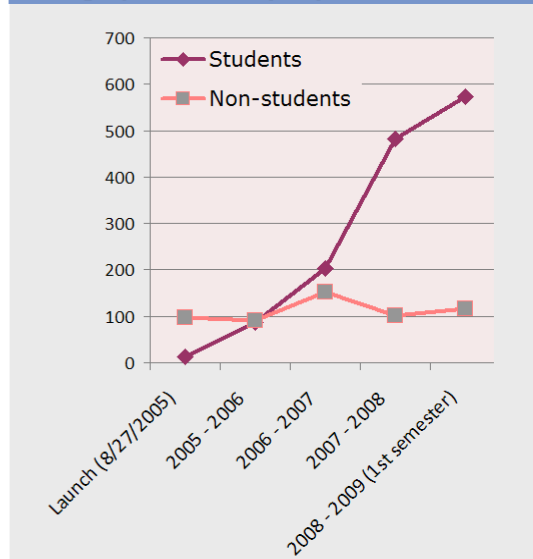
**HCBC UT 'Gathered' Congregational Demographics**

Period (end of School Year)	Students	Non-students
Launch (8/27/2005)	12	98
2005 - 2006	87	90
2006 - 2007	203	152
2007 - 2008	482	101
2008 - 2009 (1st semester)	<b>573</b>	<b>117</b>

**Student growth continued as the ministry re-aligned...**

The data includes regular attendees and members. The non-students represent adult missionaries who typically are serving as life coaches or in other ministry support capacities. Currently, approximately 387 additional students are being impacted through missional communities 'outside the walls' of the church and may not be participating in 'gathered' activities such as Sunday services or the '405' mid-week community. Therefore, the combined number of people involved at HCBC UT is 1,077.

**Demographic Trends (No.)**



## Exhibit II

### HCBC UT Life Transformation (Decisions for Christ)

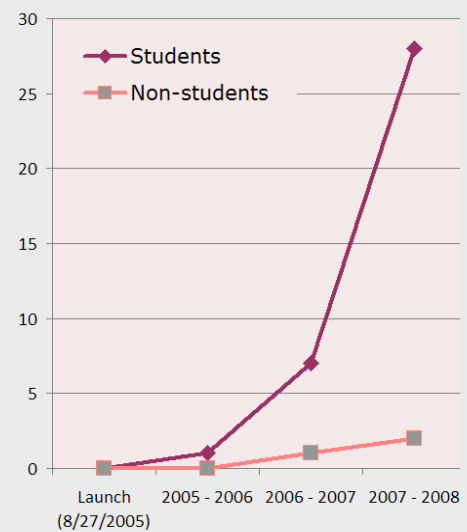
Period (end of School Year)	Students	Non-students
Launch (8/27/2005)	0	0
2005 - 2006	1	0
2006 - 2007	7	1
2007 - 2008	28	2
2008 - 2009 (1st semester)	21	0

#### Decisions for Christ rose dramatically in the 2007 - 2008 school year...

Decisions represent situations where people indicate a personal commitment of faith in Christ as their Lord and Savior. The majority of these people were initially engaged 'outside-the-walls' through relationships and increased missional activity of the HCBC UT students. In the first semester of the 2008 - 2009 school year, the trend continued at an even higher pace. The non-student trend is flat, likely reflecting the fact that these are adult missionaries who typically have longstanding relationships with Christ.

The number of student decisions may seem low for two reasons. 1: Seeing tangible 'fruit' of this nature in the missional communities takes time and patience (oftentimes at least one full semester if not two). And, 2: Many *known* life transformations are occurring with students who had proclaimed to be a Christian beforehand, however they had never experienced significant spiritual growth or produced significant 'fruit.'

Decisions for Christ Trends (No.)



Workshop in the fall of 2007. The workshop, facilitated by Apollos Leadership, featured a self-assessment of their church history over the past two years. This assessment was then translated into a diagram of what God was already doing in the church and who God had sent to the congregation in terms of talents, gifts and passions. The purpose of the assessment was to hone HCBC UT's understanding of God's specific will and "holy discontentment" for their mission field in order to join God in His redemptive efforts wherever they were occurring. The exercise turned into a re-visioning process which ultimately gave the church leaders license to jettison all other distractions from the single mission of reaching 50,000 UT students with the Gospel of Jesus Christ. The process also highlighted the need to reevaluate the existing culture and method of developing leaders for their mission. As a result, HCBC UT leaders shifted their operational strategy away from an attractional church model to an incarnational missional model instead. Church staff, the elder board, lay leaders, and the Association virtually unanimously agreed on the new direction. Clint Cagle, chairman of the elder board during this period, recalled the universal decision:

"There wasn't a whole lot of disagreement in that this was the way to go. The model we were going on wasn't going to be aggressive enough (to achieve our mission). We had a lot of disjointed and siloed ministries."

With the concise vision and sharpened operational strategy to match, the leaders distilled the critical activities for fulfilling the mission. This synthesis pointed to three essential activities for the missional model: Engage, Equip and Empower.

***"The attractional model wasn't working (for our vision). We saw the numbers grow but not conversions. ... We had a big budget but not a lot of lives were changed."***

- Heather Lodovico,  
director of college ministry

#### Essential Actions for the Missional Model: Engage, Equip, and Empower

The three essential actions of Engage, Equip and Empower convey the continuous and cyclical model for operating HCBC UT as an incarnational missional church (see Appendix **Illustration II**: HCBC UT Missional Model). This succinct list of essential activities helps church leaders to focus their limited resources and time with students to high-impact activities, according to Lodovico:

"At most, we have 4 school years with a student which equals 117 weeks. What can we realistically do during that time? We cannot turn them into theologians or apologists. So, we engage, equip and empower them."

First, UT students are engaged by HCBC

UT staff, lay leaders, and student leaders according to the two audience groups: Christ followers and non-Christian followers. The mission field (non-Christian UT students) is engaged through HCBC UT student leaders living out their calling by proactively entering into missional communities, expressing faith, and exploring truth with other UT students. These missional communities represent life intersections of affinity, social interest, faith, ethnicity, and physical location across people groups on campus. As relationships allow, students within the missional communities (both those who have and have not made life transformation decisions) are invited to join the HCBC UT gathered community.

The other engagement intake channel serves Christ-following UT students. Christ followers who are not yet attending HCBC UT are engaged through personal relationships and attractional means and are also invited to join the gathered community. HCBC UT students and lay leaders in the gathered community participate in ongoing engagement activities through weekly worship, teaching and fellowship.

In the second essential action for the mission, students in the gathered community (Christ followers) are equipped and developed by the church to become missionaries to the UT campus. Students are equipped through ongoing discipleship and missionary training, which encompasses a shift from curriculum-based training to life development that prepares mis-

### Exhibit III

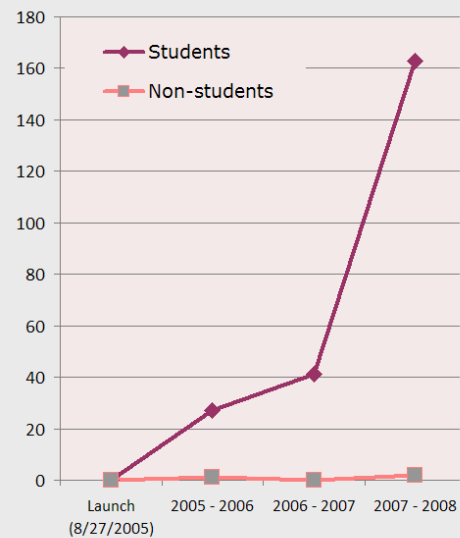
## HCBC UT Life Transformation (Re-commitments)

Period (end of School Year)	Students	Non-students
Launch (8/27/2005)	0	0
2005 - 2006	27	1
2006 - 2007	41	0
2007 - 2008	163	2
2008 - 2009 (1st semester)	<b>107</b>	<b>0</b>

#### Re-commitments of faith in Christ rose dramatically in the 2007 - 2008 school year...

Re-commitments represent situations where people are committing to greater Lordship or release of control over their lives to Christ. The significant increase parallels a corresponding trend of increased missional activity in the period. In the first semester of the 2008 - 2009 school year, the trend continued at an even higher pace. The non-student trend is flat and likely reflects the fact that these are adult missionaries who typically have longstanding relationships with Christ.

Re-commitment Trends (No.)



missionaries for circumstances encountered in the mission field.

The third essential action of empowering students to serve as missionaries for the campus requires the elder board to take big risks. HCBC UT releases students on mission into the missional communities that ultimately engage UT students. The elders recognize that incarnational ministry, much like Jesus' model and recorded experiences, is inherently risky because of the people groups and activities that HCBC UT could be associated with in the process. Examples of these activities include: an HCBC UT-supported Open Mic Night event featuring unseemly content, or a missional community adding an alcohol-related component to the weekly Bible study sessions. However, the elder board also recognizes the need to trust and empower the student missionaries to make their own decisions in the mission field. These risks are tempered with ongoing life coaching, encouragement, and accountability. Cagle described this tradeoff of risk and success in the incarnational ministry model:

"If you look at the objective of this church, it's going to take some daring. It's a bit scary sending out students freely in the name of HCBC UT. We often wonder, 'How many months till phone calls come in regarding some issue?' ... But by necessity, in order to accomplish this mission, you have to rely on the students to reach their peers."

With the operational model clearly

defined, the HCBC UT leaders reevaluated every internal and external activity planned for the 2007-2008 academic school year to determine degree of alignment within the essential actions for the missional model. Service projects, individual efforts, and program offerings that did not line up with Engage, Equip or Empower - however well intentioned - went under consideration for complete or partial removal. This marked an important turning-point for the church, symbolizing a shift from church activity to community transformation. The focus turned to relationships and serving the community, which incited significant changes in resource allocation (both time and budget) and strategic outreach planning.

These changes impacted the adult congregation most. Extraneous internal programmatic ministries were consolidated or terminated, and the role of adults in the church expanded to a dual responsibility: life coach to student missionaries (primary) and financial supporter of student ministry (secondary). The shift from attractional to missional model required the adult congregation to be and act like missionaries. The adults were being asked to migrate from a church consumer mentality to a missionary mentality, and to become active participants as mentors for students during the week beyond Sunday interaction. However, the mindset and profile of most church plant families were not conducive to this new model. Bridget Henderson, regional

shepherd and wife of HCBC UT senior pastor, described the impasse:

"In all fairness, we (originally) thought we'd be able to offer those programs, but we morphed (the execution of) our vision a bit. We had to shift the way they thought about church. ... They were younger couples with younger families, or married couples about to start a family. That phase of life is hard to be missional because it's hard to get kids to church on Sunday let alone mid-week. The couples that could not come down to campus on Wednesday nights felt disconnected. We understood that it was too



Denny Henderson, senior pastor, discusses the subject of homosexuality during HCBC UT's *The Unspeakables* sermon series.

difficult with families. It was extremely difficult to watch them leave ...”

As a result of these changes, the majority of original church plant families decided to leave the church. HCBC UT quickly became a church comprised almost entirely of students, with a restricted cash flow that would completely dry up in a few short months in the current operational expense environment.

**The Missional Church that Emerged**

Despite the mounting logistical dilemmas in front of them, HCBC UT leaders held fast to their faith in the missional model and vision specific to the church. Working together, the staff, elders and Association made a series of key decisions to move forward in the new missional model, which ultimately reshaped the footprint of church within 12 months. Each of these key decisions had significant and unexpected impact on the congregation, reaping dramatic results. (See **Exhibit IV** for an overview of the key decisions and corresponding impact.)

*I. Communicating the Missional Vision; Reaping Committed Church Body*

In conjunction with the operational changes, Denny Henderson and his staff launched a comprehensive sermon series on the church vision explaining what it means to be missional and what the Word says about living a missional life. The teaching opportunities for studying Jesus’ example of living in missional community were not limited to Sunday and Wednesday sermons. The new church vision and missional model were consciously incorporated into every event and corporate gathering, and HCBC UT staff conducted multiple workshops and Q-and-A sessions for all lay and student leaders to ensure the missional vision was fully communicated in the context of Scripture.

Despite initial fear and hesitancy across all audiences due to the fact that the new model pushed many church members (adult and student alike) out of their comfort zone, the Word and the Holy Spirit worked in the hearts of those who heard

<b>Exhibit IV</b>	
<b>HCBC UT Key Decision</b>	<b>Impact on HCBC UT</b>
I Continually communicate missional vision to church body through targeted sermon series founded in Scripture	Deep commitment to vision became widespread, despite initial fear, and fresh influx of missional-minded students and lay leaders were attracted to unique church calling
II Dramatically reduce operational budget by downsizing building expenses to bare minimum	Reduced building availability reinforced missional mindset by quickly forcing students onto campus and outside of church building walls
III Formalize roles of student missionaries by launching Student Entrepreneur Program	Entrepreneurs served as change agents for entire student community, who proactively mirrored the model in their own social circles
IV Sanction the departure of church plant families as desired, and express gratitude for being early pioneers	Distinctive HCBC NW people group, Empty Nesters, enlisted as short-term missionaries and became linchpin of multi-generational mentoring for students

the vision messages and independently studied the Scripture. As a result, a majority of the congregation committed to the new vision and missional model even though many were apprehensive about personal evangelism. Commitment to the new vision was both widespread and genuine; students and adults in the existing congregation who had very little experience in any kind of missional community found themselves wholeheartedly agreeing with the new direction despite personal discomfort. Emily Padula, life coach and newlywed, recalled her initial misgivings regarding the departure from attractional church offerings:

**“I was worried about the support here because there was not a young married group. I thought we were giving that up but ... I have learned that the organic relationships in the church actually nurture that, and ... that side-by-side missions is good for a marriage.”**

- Emily Padula, life coach

“We came here after our wedding and I was worried about the support here because there was not a young married group. I thought we were giving that up but discovered I wasn’t giving up anything. ... I had friends leave the church because they said this church doesn’t have a women’s ministry and things like that. But I have learned that the organic relationships in the church actually nurture that, and I have learned that side-by-side missions is good for a marriage.”

Candace Crittenden, student, described her commitment to stay with the church despite her discomfort with evangelism:

“I’m surprised I stuck with the church after the vision change. Evangelism isn’t my gift, but this makes so much sense. The church preached on it for two months and they had seminars that equipped us.”

In addition to the mounting loyalty among the existing congregation, the sharpened focus attracted a fresh group of students and adults already interested in the missional environment. Kenneth Day was one such student:

“Growing up, I was turned off by legalistic views - what you say versus what you did. At HCBC UT there’s a Biblical standard, loving and caring, so easy to find community. ... It was so natural, the process of getting incorporated into the movement. I was very excited about the vision change. It made sense for the church to do.”

The new adult members were equally passionate about the missional model and most had previous mission field experience. These adults were missionary-minded prior to joining HCBC UT, and most were coming from non-programmatic churches. Stacy Gauthier, life coach who joined HCBC UT post-vision change, explained the benefit of raising her young family in an incarnational ministry environment:

“I love the concept of this church being so inter-generational. The Holy Spirit grows you no matter what age, growing the leader and the students. I love the idea of the college girls pouring into my 18-year-old, and I love the fact that college-aged guys are available to my 12-year-old twins.”

The number of these adults was markedly smaller than the peak during original

## Exhibit V

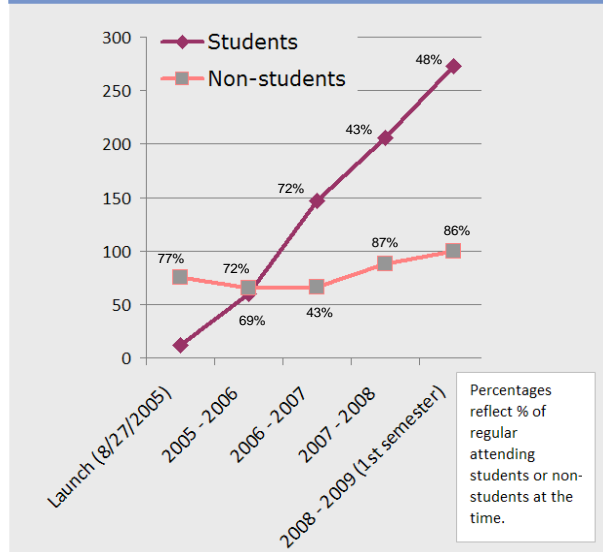
### HCBC UT Ministry Involvement

Period (end of School Year)	Students	Non-students
Launch (8/27/2005)	12	75
2005 - 2006	60	65
2006 - 2007	147	66
2007 - 2008	206	88
2008 - 2009 (1st semester)	<b>273</b>	<b>100</b>

#### HCBC UT is experiencing strong ministry involvement trends...

The number of students involved in ministry has continued to increase since the launch, while the percentage involvement is impacted by the strong congregational growth trends. The numbers for non-students have fluctuated since the launch, with declining percentages in the intermediate years until the 're-visioning' of the mission which generated a key role for non-students - serving as life coaches to students. Since then, non-student participation has remained above 85% involvement. The increased involvement also resulted from the recruitment of new missionaries from HCBC NW who responded to the new direction and strategies.

#### Number & Percentage Involved in Ministry



church plant family attendance, but commitment levels to the missional vision were dramatically higher. Since the re-visioning process and the launch of inter-generational mentoring, adult participation has remained steady at more than 80 percent involvement (see **Exhibit V** on ministry involvement). This participation rate reinforced the lesson to HCBC UT leaders that the size of the team matters less than having the right people on the team. Bridget Henderson likened the lesson learned to the story of Gideon's army as told in Judges 7:

"Once we explained the missional side of the church, those who wanted to stay stayed and others left. It was a turning point for us. Now, we look around the room and see all the people here on board. Before, it was discouraging because half of the people got it and half didn't. Some of the people came down to HCBC UT because Denny is a charismatic leader, not really for the vision. ... One of the lessons I've learned is to be okay letting go and let the Lord redefine the (team) so we have a community that is passionate about the campus, which is what we have to have. I feel God saying: 'This is the smaller number and just the right amount of people you need to reach this campus - this is the army.' I keep thinking of Gideon's army."

#### II. Scaling Down the Church Building; Gaining Bigger Campus Footprint

In response to the financial implications from the transition to the missional model,

HCBC UT leaders had to significantly reduce line items in the church budget. The church's financial model depends on both internal and external income: 50 percent from internal tithe offerings, 35 percent from outside donors, and 15 percent from the Association and regional HCBC church donors. Approximately \$200,000 of HCBC UT's tithing income disappeared due to the adult congregation turnover following the re-visioning process, which accounted for 40 percent of the overall budget.

To address the gap in income versus expenses, the two largest budget line items of staff and building rent had to be dramatically reduced. Staff size was cut in half and church leaders quickly mobilized to reduce the cost of church building space. HCBC UT staff renegotiated their lease and decided to eliminate any and all leased building space that was not considered essential to execute Sunday and Wednesday corporate church gatherings. The building space deemed to be essential and retained in the lease included: the small auditorium, one set of bathrooms, two small classrooms for nursery and childcare, one small multi-purpose meeting room, and one small multi-functional room that houses everything from the photocopier and church files to the refrigerator and kitchen pantry. Building space considered non-essential to the corporate gathering and was thus eliminated included: all staff members' offices, conference rooms, and community rooms for social interaction.

With the reduction of half the building space availability, church activity found a new home not too far away - the UT campus. Meetings among students, staff and lay leaders take place on campus in the student center or in local restaurants. Since students lost the ability to hang out inside the church building, Bible studies are conducted in dormitories or the campus cafeteria. Discipleship conversations between students and mentors transpire in coffee shops or on the campus lawn. The four full-time church staff members set up makeshift offices, complete with desks and computers, in the wings of the stage in the auditorium. However, oftentimes the staff is more likely to be found working on laptops and interacting with church members in the student center on campus. On Wednesday nights, for example, adults and students disperse all across campus to conduct their regularly-scheduled small groups and discipleship sessions. There simply is no room inside the church building for the small groups to meet, so they leave the church building walls and find suitable places on the UT campus. The downsizing of the church building, as HCBC UT leaders soon discovered, ended up serving as a parallel force for the transition to a missional model. Lodovico described the new outlook on building space requirements:

"A small building isn't holding us back. ... To be missional, why do we need lots of space? We want them out on campus."



Church staff set up make-shift offices in the wings of the auditorium stage to reduce building space cost. This is the "office" of Joshua Tullis, worship director.



The multi-purpose room literally houses everything and the kitchen sink, including: a photocopier, computer and desk, refrigerator, church files, pantry items, and office supplies.



Church staff set up make-shift offices in the wings of the auditorium stage to reduce building space cost. This is the "office" of Heather Lodovico, director of college ministry.

Because meeting space and community rooms no longer existed, the congregation was forced to take the "church" onto campus and conduct their Christian lives, complete with prayer meetings and discipleship sessions and Bible studies, in an environment surrounded by others -which is a key component of a missional church model.

### III. Launching Student Missionary Program; Mobilizing Community of Missional Students

In addition to communicating the new missional model to the church and downsizing operational expenses to match, HCBC UT leaders decided the next logical step was to overhaul the established church internship program. Because the mode of the church had changed from attractional to missional, the role of HCBC UT church interns needed to be transformed as well. Eight students were already signed-up to participate in the church internship program for the upcoming 2007-2008 academic year. Denny Henderson implemented an idea he termed the "Entrepreneur Program" for HCBC UT interns. The objective of the Entrepreneur Program is to shift the interns' focus and time spent outside of the church walls and on to campus missional communities instead.

Each intern individually selects and enters into a UT student missional community with the objective of expressing faith and exploring truth on a weekly basis. Denny Henderson described the concept of the Entrepreneur Program akin to a record label's street team:

"I came up with the idea of 'entrepreneurs' two springs ago on a study break. Record labels use street teams to stir up energy with stickers and t-shirts and CDs. So if it works for labels, what would a church street team look like and would it work? ... We called it the Entrepreneur Program because we didn't want them to relate to their preconception of church interns, internally-focused. You're going to try and fail like a business entrepreneur. And just like a street team, how it goes will impact the rest of the church body."

Entrepreneurs can pick any people group for their missional community, typically a community they are already famil-

iar with or a member of. Examples of entrepreneur missional communities include: the kinesiology club, business students, a housing coop, chemical engineering students, country line dancers, the sailing club, and the Habitat for Humanity campus chapter.

The job description of an entrepreneur emphasizes entering the daily living of an identified people group, expressing faith on a weekly basis in a formal context, and exploring spiritual truths through conversations. The HCBC UT students are tasked with intentionally developing genuine relationships with fellow UT students and carrying out an always-open weekly faith-based forum (such as a Bible study) once other Christians in the people group emerge. Kayla Simpson, one of the original eight entrepreneurs, described living life together with her missional community of business students:

**"I came up with the idea of 'entrepreneurs' two springs ago on study break. Record labels use street teams to stir up energy ... . So if it works for labels, what would a church street team look like and would it work?"**

- Denny Henderson, senior pastor

"We don't just do Bible studies together. We hang out, go to the store, and we camp. I study the Bible with the same people that I study and go to the store with. ... There is nothing wrong with intentionally hanging out. You see that everywhere in the Bible. You are intentionally putting yourselves in places where life change happens, and that's

uncomfortable and awkward. ... But, you do have to be really careful on a mission. You have to just be genuine. And in the end, we ended up really liking each other."

However, migrating from the "enter daily living" phase into the "explore spiritual truths" and "express faith" phases often requires many months of relationship-building and a great deal of patience. Most students, like Michele Knoles, cited one semester as the length of time it typically takes to move past the "enter" stage within their missional community:

"In the kinesiology club, it took three months to get past, 'So what did you do this weekend?' My advice to others is: Do not be discouraged, because after a year I'm just now entering Scripture with my community."

Just like other missionaries across the globe, entrepreneurs do not have out of the starting-block success. They encounter numerous hardships which challenge their



(Left to right) Student Missionaries: Kayla Simpson (business students entrepreneur 2007-2008), Jenni Youman (women's volleyball team entrepreneur 2008-2009), and Steven Downey (Moore-Hill dorm community group leader 2008-2009).

*“I study the Bible with the same people that I study and go to the store with. ... There is nothing wrong with intentionally hanging out. You see that everywhere in the Bible. You are intentionally putting yourselves in places where life change happens, and that’s uncomfortable and awkward.”*

- Kayla Simpson, business students entrepreneur 2007-2008



(Left to right) Student Missionaries: Jaclyn Wyatt (country dancers entrepreneur 2008-2009), David Gonzales (sailing club entrepreneur 2008-2009), and Thomas McIntosh (Ultimate Frisbee Club entrepreneur 2008-2009).

faith and confidence. Brian Legault, entrepreneur for the chemical engineering missional community, described the frustration of a missionary:

“It can be discouraging. You have to reset your expectations. It’s hard to go to Bible study and only one person is there. It’s hard to define success. Success is if one person is any closer to Christ. ... We didn’t see a lot of numbers, but we did see huge growth in individuals.”

Entrepreneurs learn first-hand that building genuine relationships takes time, work and purpose. To garner assistance in building relationships in the missional community, each entrepreneur is tasked with identifying two or three other students to partner with them in reaching the identified people group. This team is called the Missional Core Team for the missional community. Ideally, at least one of the team members emerges from within the existing missional community. Missional Core Teams meet on a weekly basis to discuss missional community direction and support and encourage one another.

In addition to frustration encountered by the slow pace of success, entrepreneurs have also struggled in adjusting to the focus on metrics and high accountability. To track their progress within the missional community, entrepreneurs are asked to complete a Missional Contact Sheet each week (see Appendix **Illustration III**: Missional Contact Sheet). This form is essentially an account of the number of spiritual conversations conducted that week, which encourages students to evaluate their recent missional efforts and develop a strategy for the upcoming week(s).

Knoles described the bittersweet accountability of the Missional Contact Sheet:

“I had a hard time because I felt motivated by the Missional Contact Sheet. I had to ask myself, ‘What is my motivation: the Contact Sheet or Jesus’ work?’ It’s a fine line between accountability and God’s timing. But, they do need to hold you accountable.”

HCBC UT staff and life coaches later assuaged the emphasis on metrics by redirecting the students’ focus to identify the immediate victories for the week. Underscoring the question, “what’s your win for this week?” helps the student missionaries to better assess incremental progress at their individual pace, and to more easily recognize what the Lord is doing through them in the missional community. Lodovico described this as a milestone for entrepreneurs who then began celebrating their own victories instead of getting discouraged when comparing progress with another entrepreneur:

“Let’s focus on what is the ‘win’ for each student? What are the identifiable wins for each person? Then, their faith grows because they are celebrating the wins, not comparing.”

To prepare these students to be on-campus missionaries, the entrepreneurs enroll in a 12-week summer bootcamp with HCBC UT. By the end of the intensive summer training program, entrepreneurs have identified a people group as their missional community, decoded the unique culture of their missional community (see Appendix **Illustration IV**: Decoding UT Exercise), and developed a tactical plan for missional work in the community.

For development and coaching throughout the school year, the students attend several ministry and leadership training workshops, gather for weekly entrepreneur small group sessions, and are assigned a life coach and a shepherd for ongoing discipleship. Coach roles are filled by HCBC UT staff members, and shepherds are an elder, an elder’s wife, senior staff members, or a pastor’s wife. These weekly mentoring sessions proved to be an essential support structure for the students’ missional activities. Jenni Youman, entrepreneur for the women’s volleyball club, explained how she relies on her mentors for encouragement and motivation:

“Because I was hanging out with non-believers so much, I was in a spiritual depression because I was carrying their burdens. But when I had someone discipling me it made a huge difference to me and in the way that I could be missional. ... I need encouragement from my coach more than anything. When you talk about your burdens with your peers, it puts burdens on them too. I need coaching not for the missional community but for own heart and soul because you are pouring out so much.”

Entrepreneurs earn a modest stipend of \$6,300 over the course of the year to offset the need for a job during the summer and school year, and also to fund relationship-building social activities such as meeting for coffee or ice cream. The students raise approximately half of the funds for their stipend, and the church provides the other half.

By the end of the school year, each of the eight original entrepreneurs personally witnessed “fruit” of some degree in their mis-

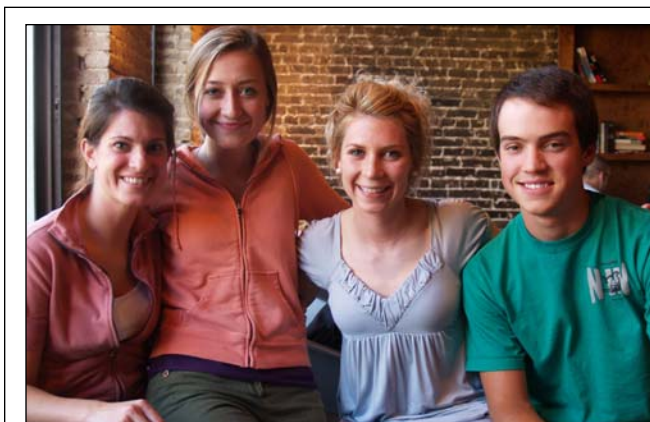
sional community, and numerous success stories were recounted throughout the HCBC UT congregation. One of the first entrepreneur success stories, from the 21st St. Co-op missional community, is considered to be a milestone by HCBC UT staff and elders and single-handedly allayed lingering reservations about the transition from attractional to missional mode. Sarah Tooley was an entrepreneur for the 21st St. Co-op, a “clothing-optional” student housing cooperative with approximately 100 residents. Co-op residents share everything including rooms, belongings, food, and household duties such as cooking, cleaning and house maintenance. Tooley first entered the community by hosting recurring Open Mic Night events and over time developed a missional team and many relationships with residents. However, a weekly Bible study was sparsely attended until the missional team re-branded the study session as “Beer and Bible.” The missional team members provided one bottle of beer for each attendee to drink while they all read and discussed the book of John. The Bible study popularity grew to a steady average of 12-15 attendees each week, and the co-op student president even began attending the study sessions and Missional Core Team meetings. Tooley described the success in the co-op missional community:

“The Bible study was really slow for a while, so we added beer. People were fascinated: ‘How can you drink beer and study the Bible and be okay?’ We call it Beer and Bible. ... The new trustee even attends our studies and our core meetings and prays

The Entrepreneur Program formula of (1) being intentional with a people group you have a passion for, and (2) gaining weekly support and encouragement from a life coach, was attainable and attractive to non-entrepreneur students, as well. So, when the 2008-2009 academic school year began and HCBC UT staff gave students in the congregation the freedom to choose to lead either a community group (a traditional weekly Bible study) or a missional community, more than half of students chose to lead a missional community group right in their own social circle.

A community group, as opposed to a missional community, is a topical Bible study led by HCBC UT students and is open to all UT students. Examples of current topical studies include Biblical womanhood, Blue Like Jazz, and the Book of Romans. On the other hand, missional communities are identified UT people groups, such as the Ultimate Frisbee team or the gaming community, that HCBC UT students have chosen as their mission field.

In one year after the re-visioning process and the first set of entrepreneurs, HCBC UT students proactively identified and conducted 12 Bible study community groups and 53 missional communities on a weekly basis during the fall semester. (See **Exhibits VI-VII** for missional activity and student min-



(Left to right) Student Missionaries: Aubrey Kennedy (nursing students missional community leader 2008-2009), Sarah Tooley (21st St. Co-op entrepreneur 2007-2008), Michele Knoles (kinesiology club entrepreneur 2007-2008), and Kenneth Day (Blue Like Jazz missional community leader 2008-2009).

with us. We have 12-15 people show up to the Bible study, mostly non-believers. We are studying John and still we’re only on Chapter 13 because it opens into other spiritual conversations. ... They like Jesus, but wouldn’t step foot in a church.”

As it turned out, entrepreneur success stories like Tooley’s and the tangible model of leading a missional community inspired the broader student congregation to action.

## Exhibit VI

### HCBC UT Missional Activity

Period (end of School Year)	Missional Communities	Community Groups
Launch (8/27/2005)	0	3
2005 - 2006	0	7
2006 - 2007	0	16
2007 - 2008	18	22
2008 - 2009 (1st semester)	53	12

#### Missional Communities & Community Groups trends reverse direction...

The summer 2007 kickoff of the entrepreneur program marked the beginning of a rapid rise in the number of missional communities. Prior to and during the first year of the entrepreneur program, students in the congregation had become increasingly involved in community groups which are small groups focusing on fellowship, Bible study and discipleship. But with the maturing missional focus within HCBC UT, more students elected to become involved in the missional communities and fewer in community groups for the 2008 - 2009 school year.

No. Missional Communities & Community Groups



## Exhibit VII

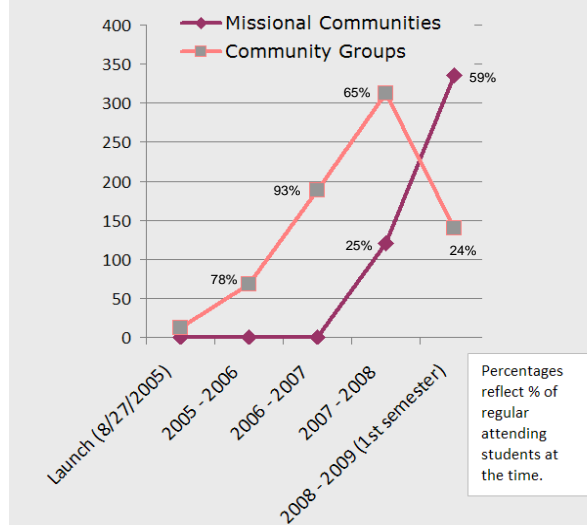
### HCBC UT Student Involvement in Mission & Community

Period (end of School Year)	Missional Communities	Community Groups
Launch (8/27/2005)	0	12
2005 - 2006	0	68
2006 - 2007	0	188
2007 - 2008	120	312
2008 - 2009 (1st semester)	<b>335</b>	<b>140</b>

#### Nature of student involvement changes course...

Since the launch, the level of student involvement rose with the growth of the church. However, with the maturing missional focus within HCBC UT, more students chose to become involved in missional communities than community groups. They did not walk away from the fellowship, Bible study and discipleship found in their community groups, rather they added missional activities to these benefits.

Number & Percentage of Students Involved



istry involvement.) Day was one such student who decided to lead a missional community within his sphere of influence:

“My best friend, Nick, and I realized last year that with our group of friends we already had a missional community. This fall, we started a weekly Bible study with the guys.”

Similarly, Aubrey Kennedy, a student in the School of Nursing who had recently and independently committed to living as a missionary among her peers, was happy to leverage the structure that HCBC UT provided for missional community leaders:

“God had already changed my heart toward the nursing school, but this was before the missional community existed. HCBC UT gave it more urgency and more vocabulary. ... I see these girls everyday, so it was natural. We started social and just now it is Scriptural.”

Upon seeing the entrepreneurs’ example and success in the mission field after only one academic year, the gathered community of students was mobilized to become missional leaders. Denny Henderson was overwhelmingly pleased at the movement the entrepreneurs had stirred and the missional church congregation that had emerged:

“Entrepreneurs are change agents. I didn’t expect in such a short time that everyone would go missional. ... We were pleasantly surprised at how when students were given a chance between leading missional groups or community groups, (students) chose missional. Eight students

really were able to be change agents to 100 people. Those eight students helped create the culture we wanted.”

#### IV. Staying True to Vision despite Short-Term Cost; Gaining Right Team of Adults for Mission

One of the most difficult decisions to make during the transition to the missional model fell to the elder board - the gatekeepers of the mission. The elders had to make a firm decision regarding their degree of steadfastness to the new vision: either dilute the new missional operational model to be more conducive for the church plant families, or commit to the new vision and courteously let the church plant families leave HCBC UT in order to find a church model more suitable for their young families’ needs and interests. The leaders stepped out in faith and chose the latter and, as expected, the majority of church plant families left the church.

While a handful of new adults and families had recently found their way to HCBC UT because of the focused missional vision, there still were not enough adults to serve as life coaches and mentors for all of the community group and missional community leaders. The

church leaders went back to the Association to seek fresh recruitment from HCBC NW to fill this gap. The people group they were pointed to was unexpected: empty nesters. Hawks described why he identified empty nesters as probable mentors for HCBC UT in the incarnational ministry model:

“Baby Boomers are becoming Empty Nesters. So, the idea of keeping them in seats here is not helping the Kingdom. We need to re-engage them with missions. If they don’t have a transcendent cause engaging them, then we will lose them anyway.”

Dave Cochran, chairman of the HCBC UT elder board, and wife Kristin Cochran, regional shepherd, commenced recruitment in the summer. They created a model of requirements for participation and garnered buy-in from the Association. With the refined missional vision and a defined set of expectations, they explained to HCBC NW empty nesters the need for one-year commitments serving as a missionary on the UT campus. Coined “NW Missionaries,” recruited empty nesters responsible for serving five in-person hours a week as life coaches to HCBC UT students. The profile of these empty nesters

**“Baby Boomers are becoming Empty Nesters. So the idea of keeping them here in the seats is not helping the Kingdom. ... If they don’t have a transcendent cause engaging them, we will lose them anyway.”**

- Tim Hawks, HCBC NW senior pastor

responsible for serving five in-person hours a week as life coaches to HCBC UT students. The profile of these empty nesters

included low levels of involvement in the church and no prior missions experience. Kristin Cochran recalled the uncertainty felt during the recruitment process:

“We’re getting empty nesters whom just recently became committed to church involvement. Most were pew sitters, thinking ‘there must be more’ and unhappy where they are. I was afraid we weren’t going to get anyone, maybe 2 couples. We got 12. ... The difference is that many churches take the most experienced adults and ask them to come forward and lead. But here, we are taking anyone willing to make a commitment.”

Twelve couples signed-on to become NW Missionaries at the end of the summer, and each individual was paired up with another HCBC UT life coach to form weekly, same-gender discipleship small groups for community group and missional community student leaders. The ratio of life coach to student is purposely kept small, not to exceed 1-to-3.

The combination of empty nesters and students proved to be a highly complementary match. The empty nester brings life experience and insight to the relationship, while the student brings passion and a propensity to take risks. Kennedy described why multi-generational mentoring in the missional model is so essential:

“Could HCBC UT excel in its mission if it weren’t multi-generational? No. I have a word picture: a vacuum without a container. The young, we have passion and excitement and opportunities. The older has wisdom and counsel and Scripture knowledge.”

Surprising to some, the mentoring relationship does not primarily focus on the community group or missional community that the student was leading. Instead, the mentoring relationship focuses on real-life coaching, encouragement, accountability, and counsel for whatever struggles or circumstances the student is experiencing in the mission field, as described by Crittenden:

“The adults took us on as their kids. The adults had an openness to questions about the Gospel and were very willing to work with me where I was. It wasn’t condemning, ... and it has turned into a much different thing than I thought it would be. I thought it would focus on the community group all the time. But it doesn’t - it focuses on personal life coaching and building a relationship.”

The degree of impact the empty nesters had on students was a surprise for all involved and even considered “counterin-

tuitive” by some; Bridget Henderson explained:

“The students love having the adults pour into them. It’s counterintuitive; you think they’d want their peers. (1) It is because there’s more wisdom. (2) Adults are passionate about it. Hearing the stories personally, the coaches say, ‘You’re not going to believe what happened this week!’ They get filled up by serving as coaches to the students.”

To equip empty nesters to serve in the missionary and mentoring role, NW Missionaries attend an upfront 1-day training session before the academic year begins. The training focuses on tools and techniques for building relationships with students quickly, and guidelines for maintaining coaches’ spiritual growth during the process. The training sessions are administered by Dave and Kristen Cochran,

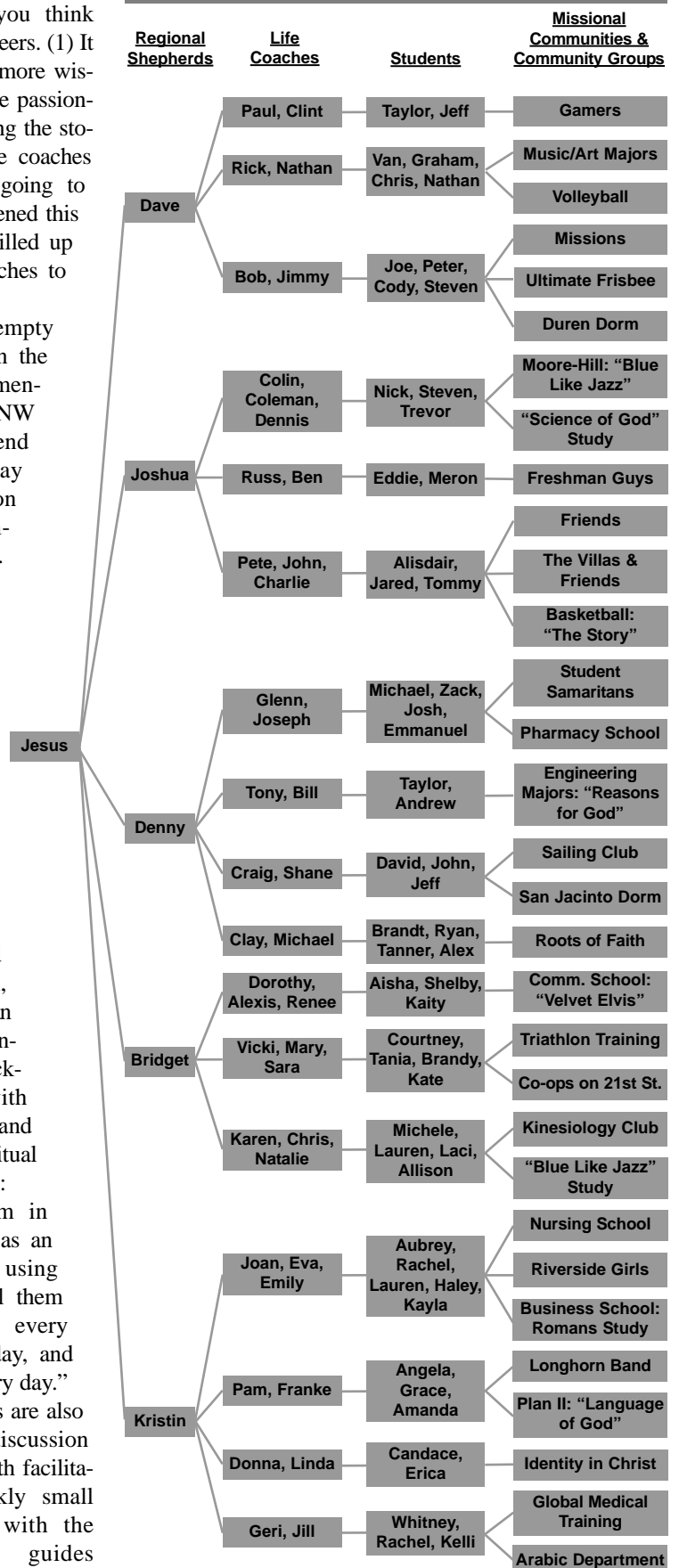
which Dave Cochran described as the fundamentals for quickly connecting with college students and serving as a spiritual mentor in their life:

“We train them in basic skills, such as an introduction to using Facebook. We tell them write to students every day, pray every day, and read the Word every day.”

The life coaches are also given topical discussion guides to assist with facilitation of the weekly small group meetings with the students. The guides include a handful of discus-

## Exhibit VIII

### HCBC UT “Family Tree” Diagram (partial list)



sion questions and several challenges for life application. However, coaches are not required to strictly adhere to the discussion guides, and are encouraged to be flexible when group dynamics or relationships deem another topic more urgent for discussion at that time.

In addition to the training and curriculum, the life coaches themselves receive mentoring and discipleship from other adults for ongoing accountability and development. These individuals are called regional shepherds, who consisted of elders or elders' wives, senior staff members, and pastors' wives. (See **Exhibit VIII** for a "family tree" diagram of mentoring relationships and the missional communities and community groups they feed in to.) Dave Cochran described the balance of grace and accountability in the relationship between a life coach and regional shepherd:

"There are high levels of grace. But, we don't assume anything, and we ask about (their relationships with students) all the time. I'm willing to accept anything that may or may not fail. I'm not willing to accept character sin and issues they won't talk about. Also, I look at their level of commitment to the vision and doctrine of the church. If they pull back, then usually there is something in their life - rocks, weeds, or hard soil."

The NW Missionaries are admittedly timid at first, especially since they have never done anything of this nature before. They often described themselves as "100% excited and 100% scared" at the beginning of the school year, according to Denny Henderson. However, HCBC UT staff report full retention of the recruits throughout the year and satisfaction with all parties involved, even prompting two of the couples to sign-on again for the upcoming academic school year. Denny Henderson described his reaction to the unanticipated linchpin for multi-generational mentoring in the incarnational ministry model:

"I was totally surprised (that empty nesters were the solution). I thought we needed young couples in their 20s-30s. We had an 'aha moment' in the spring. We give the (NW Missionaries) a deadline so the expectation is that we are not sad when they leave. ... When we look back, this is how we should have started it."

The four key decisions made in faith by HCBC UT leaders aligned with the refined vision and missional model of Engage, Equip and Empower for the church. However, no one predicted the kind of impact the decisions would have in ultimately reinforcing the incarnational model and launching a thriving multi-generational, missions-minded congregation in such a short time span.



HCBC UT Church Staff Leaders: Denny Henderson (senior pastor), Joshua Tullis (worship pastor), and Heather Lodovico (director of college ministry).

*V. Addressing Post-Transition Challenges*

However, as with all major change management initiatives within an organization, several challenges surfaced post-transition that merited church leaders' attention. The three primary challenges that emerged were:

- ♦ misinterpretation of the missional vision by spectators
- ♦ perceived diminished worth of the church body's time of corporate gathering
- ♦ reduced sense of internal community in an outward-focused environment

One major challenge that student missionaries quickly encountered is the opportunity for misinterpretation of the church's missional ministry model by spectators.

***"Could HCBC UT excel in its mission if it weren't multi-generational? No. I have a word picture: a vacuum without a container."***

- Aubrey Kennedy, nursing students missional community leader 2008-2009

Upon communicating and requesting support for their work in the mission field (the campus), many entrepreneurs experienced pushback from family friends and relatives who misunderstood the mission. Thomas McIntosh, entrepreneur with the Ultimate Frisbee team, described some of the phone calls his father received regarding McIntosh's participation in the Entrepreneur Program:

"Some people called my dad and said, 'What is your son doing? Is this a cult?'"

This pushback is often rooted in an inaccurate perception of what it means to be a missionary and the definition of a mission field. David Gonzales, entrepreneur with the sailing club, also encountered misunderstanding about the campus as a mission field:

"They understand being a missionary far away, not here."

This misunderstanding and inaccurate portrayal by individuals outside church walls is an inherent and persistent risk in the incarnational ministry environment. Denny Henderson conceded that the fight to remain committed to the vision even in the face of

opposition and counter opinions will remain a challenge for the foreseeable future for HCBC UT:

"The temptation we are going to continue to fight is sticking with our vision. Our Association is for the city. This church fills a piece of the puzzle, on campus. I don't think the vision and resources battle is over. It will always be our fight."

In addition to external misperceptions, another lasting challenge for the missional model is the battle to impart the significance of the corporate gathering to the congregation. In the shift away from the attractional model, many HCBC UT students stopped attending Sunday church services in an effort to focus more time and energy in their missional communities. Recognizing the importance of teaching the Word for the congregation's continued spiritual growth, Denny Henderson and the staff responded by strongly emphasizing the value of coming together as a congregation for corporate worship and teaching. Joshua Tullis, HCBC UT's worship pastor, described the worship ministry's role in the new environment:

"My ministry is different in missional community. ... What is my role? I struggle

with that because my role is serving the church. Our role as a band is to serve the corporate church to edify and then send them out - being incarnational, leading as examples.”

Both Denny Henderson and Tullis struggle with the ongoing challenge of retaining the essential elements of corporate gatherings within an outside-the-walls incarnational ministry paradigm. For those in the gathered community, HCBC UT seeks to create a safe biblical environment where people can learn and worship in Spirit and in truth, free of the trappings of an often found sacred-secular dualism.

The third challenge HCBC UT faced after the transition is a bit more unique to their situation, namely with the dramatic reduction in building space availability. An unintended effect of losing all meeting and social space within the church building walls was the loss of a sense of community within the church body. In addition, Sunday church services had to be split up into three separate times to accommodate growth. This notion of loss was compounded when HCBC UT eliminated Wednesday evening church services for the general congregation in order to focus that time and resource availability on coaching missional community and community group leaders instead. Bridget Henderson explained the challenge the small building size posed for church body unity:

“It’s been a challenge. Because of the building size, we have to split up the services. We had to replace 405 (our Wednesday night church service) with Re-Group (our Wednesday night coaching for student leaders). It’s definitely a loss of community, but Wednesday night has been invaluable to student leaders. So, it’s just been those two things impacted, but it has had a big effect so we are brainstorming what we can do to bring back community.”

Because of the congregational speed of growth and building space constraints, the church body cannot be physically gathered for a church service together at one time. Students, even highly-involved student leaders such as entrepreneurs, were impacted by the reduced sense of “cohesiveness” in the church body, according to Legault:

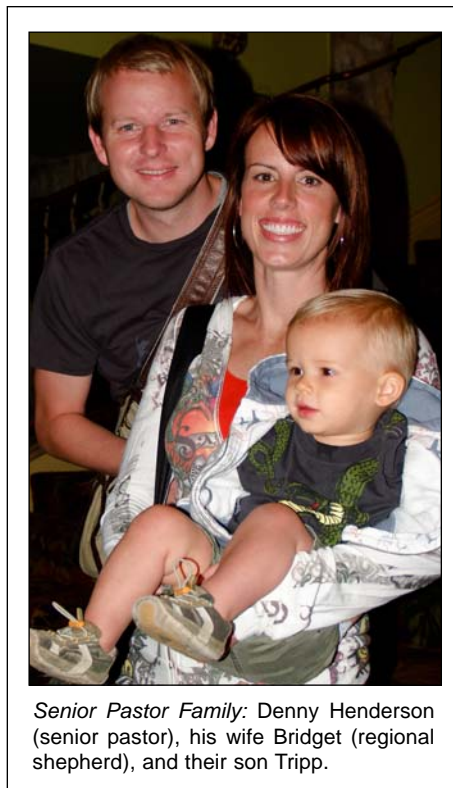
“It’s tough to maintain cohesiveness in missional community as well as in the church body. We don’t have 405 (the Wednesday night church service) anymore and some people miss it because we used to see each other.”

Some students even felt that the empha-

sis on the mission field and resulting lack of internal community diminished the widespread enjoyment that stemmed from hanging out with other church body members. Tooley described the sentiment brewing:

“I don’t know who is plugged in and who is not. In some ways I think our church has forgotten how to hang out because it is so focused on the mission.”

In response, Denny Henderson acknowledged the growing sense of discontinuity and even mandated that “having fun” be a chief objective for the following academic year. In addition, HCBC UT modified the Sunday and Wednesday schedules for the following semester so



Senior Pastor Family: Denny Henderson (senior pastor), his wife Bridget (regional shepherd), and their son Tripp.

more of the congregation could connect and overlap. The three Sunday services were scaled down to two, despite crowding that resulted in the auditorium. The Wednesday night “405” was reinstated as a casual church service which incorporates a worship music set, a game, and a short topical message each week. The topical sermons, such as a series on dating, are intentionally light-hearted, humorous, and focus on only one or two relevant verses. Denny Henderson described this casual environment and the success thus far:

“The 405 is really a blast. We tell students to bring their friends and to not worry about us going too deep. We tell them to bring people that they are trying to get on mission with them. We have had 180 new

visitors just in the past 4 weeks. It’s turning into its own Engagement outreach activity.”

To compensate for the reinstated Wednesday evening service, the former weekly regional shepherd discipleship sessions with life coaches were reduced to a monthly adult gathering. The life coaches felt the monthly recurrence was a better match for their needs anyway. The Wednesday-night leadership training and small group discipleship for student leaders - core elements for the incarnational ministry - remain in place just with a new meeting time.

These recent changes have seemingly improved the sense of internal community within the church body, however a fair assessment cannot be conducted until later in the academic year.

### Support Functions for Collegiate Missional Church Environment

While adapting and refining the church vision and ecclesiology to an incarnational ministry environment is an essential first step, recognizing the support structure to underpin the new operational model is equally important for long-term success. For the HCBC UT ministry model that hinges on preparing and releasing students on mission, there are six critical support functions:

- ♦ targeted, ongoing experiential missional training for students
- ♦ structured assimilation process for getting new students plugged in quickly
- ♦ swift semester-based speed of change to address suboptimal operational activities
- ♦ continuous stream of dedicated adult recruits to serve as multi-generational mentors
- ♦ focused, permanent fundraising campaign to cover sizeable portion of operating budget
- ♦ proactive partnerships with fellow campus ministries to combine strategic missional efforts

#### I. Grooming Student Missionaries Continually

Ongoing missional training for students is an imperative development function for the HCBC UT student congregation. Before students can be empowered and released on mission, they must be equipped and groomed for the missionary role and environment. And due to the short lifecycle inherent in college ministry, future student missionaries need to be proactively identified and prepared to take over mission field

vacancies created by the 30 percent student turnover that HCBC UT experiences each year. This attrition rate is created by student graduations, transfers, and students who do not return to HCBC UT despite the church's best efforts to reengage them. Drawing upon the lessons learned from the training program for the original entrepreneurs, HCBC UT now

grooms future and current student missionaries primarily through two intensive training modules per year: Emerging Leader Development during spring break week, and Summer Missional Training for the first six weeks of summer break.

The Emerging Leader Development training course takes students to an offsite church plant community for hands-on, experiential learning during the week of spring break. The offsite church plant community is identified and contacted by church staff through the Acts 29 Network. For the 2008 spring break training, for example, HCBC UT students went to the Coram Deo Church Community in Omaha, Neb. Participants learn how to decode a community culture, conduct spiritual conversations with strangers, and study ecclesiology. Lodovico, who oversees the student missionary training program, described the cultural decoding exercise and participants' daily schedule of experiential learning assignments:

"The students had to decode a church plant community in Omaha. The students had to answer questions like: What would be their soundtrack? What movies do they watch? Every morning they had to learn ecclesiology. Every afternoon they redeemed the city in some way. Every night they learned how to apply it to UT."

Training for the Emerging Leader Development program begins eight weeks before the actual spring break missional training trip. Participants are given two book reading assignments and meet every Sunday night to study and answer the question, "What does it mean to be missional?"

***"The students had to decode a church community in Omaha. The students had to answer questions like: What would be their soundtrack? What movies do they watch? ... Every night they learned how to apply it to UT."***

- Heather Lodovico,  
director of college ministry

***"Missions to me was going to Africa and Mexico, but (the training in) Omaha changed all that."***

- Tiffany Henry, Duren dorm  
community group leader 2008-2009



(Left to right) Student Missionaries with their Discipeler: Tiffany Henry (Duren dorm community group leader 2008-2009), Heather Lodovico (director of college ministry), and Candace Crittenden (Identity in Christ community group leader 2008-2009).

The overall objective of the training course is to provide participants hands-on experience as a missionary, and then translate those lessons learned into personal applications for the UT campus mission field. Participants like McIntosh identified the decoding exercise and the compulsory spiritual conversations in Omaha as the most applicable lessons and experiences for their own UT missional communities:

"Decoding Omaha has been very helpful in our own UT missional group. It's easier to talk about Jesus if you have common ground. ... In Omaha, they forced us to have spiritual conversations. So, it's easier now because you know you did it before. How do you do it in your comfort zone now?"

The Emerging Leader Development training module is targeted to freshmen and sophomore students engaged in the HCBC UT culture and vision but not quite ready to be released on mission. Lodovico expressed the importance of taking note of freshmen and sophomores in the church body, and encouraging engaged students to participate in the leadership training:

"I try to take as many freshmen and sophomores as I can. ... We zero in on the freshmen getting involved. I get them on the spring break training trip and pay special attention to their reactions and interests. The sophomore year is the 'sweet year' for us. If we get them as freshmen, we have their heart. By the time they are sophomores, they are ready to jump off the cliff and into the mission field."

With a maximum of only 117 weeks with students, which assumes the student joined HCBC UT as a freshman, church staff rec-

ognize the fundamental need to develop underclassmen into student missionaries right away.

The training in the Emerging Leader Development program serves as a key step in reshaping students' perceptions of being a missionary. The week-long intensive training at an offsite church plant community helps students redefine their outlook of the UT campus as their mission field.

Tiffany Henry described her shift in perception of the mission field upon participating in the Emerging Leader Development training:

"Missions to me was going to Africa and Mexico, but (the training in) Omaha changed all that."

In nearly all cases, spring break training participants are successfully released on mission for the upcoming academic year.

The second module to further develop students' missionary training is the six-week Summer Missional Training offered immediately after the spring semester concludes. Church leaders ask students to remain in Austin for the first six weeks of summer where possible. The summer training module consists of training sessions and service projects five nights a week, Monday through Friday. For example: Tuesday night sessions include a topical seminar with a guest speaker; Denny Henderson conducts a sermon series on the missional vision and spiritual disciplines every Wednesday night; and Thursday evening sessions feature team strategy meetings for missional communities. In 2008, 50 students attended the training. For 2009, HCBC UT has partnered with 13 other campus ministries for the training session and set an attendance goal of 150 students.

## *II. Assimilating New Students into the Movement*

Another principal ingredient in HCBC UT's support function is the process of integrating new students into the missional movement quickly. The church staff adheres to a rapid follow-up timetable for new stu-

## Exhibit IX

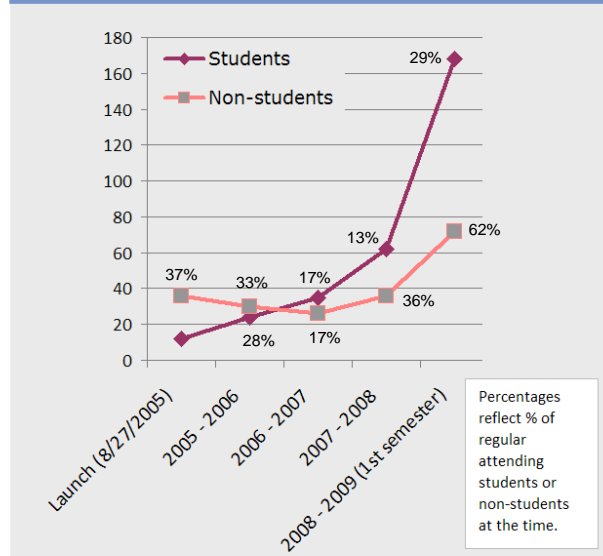
### HCBC UT Leadership Involvement

Period (end of School Year)	Students	Non-students
Launch (8/27/2005)	12	36
2005 - 2006	24	30
2006 - 2007	35	26
2007 - 2008	62	36
2008 - 2009 (1st semester)	<b>168</b>	<b>72</b>

#### HCBC UT is experiencing strong leadership involvement trends...

The number of students involved in leadership has continued to increase since the launch. A decline in numbers for non-students occurred from launch through 2006 - 2007. A breakthrough occurred for both groups during the 2007 - 2008 school year after the fall 2007 're-visioning' process that clarified HCBC UT's new direction and strategies. Currently, the percentage of leadership involvement in both groups is high, particularly in consideration of the increasing size of the congregation.

Number & Percentage of Leaders



dents. When a student visits the church for the first time, he or she receives a greeting email from Lodovico within 24 hours. Lodovico conducts a face-to-face meeting with the student within three weeks of the initial church visit. During this initial meeting and several subsequent meetings, Lodovico seeks to find the student's "sweet spot" as she calls it, meaning how and where the student should get plugged into the missional movement. Lodovico has three objectives for new students: identify the appropriate missional community, assess the appropriate leadership level within that missional community, and appoint a fitting life coach.

Lodovico leverages S.H.A.P.E.<sup>vi</sup> questions during her meetings with new students to identify students' natural passions, spheres of influence, and spiritual gifts, which are then aligned with a missional community or community group opportunity (existing or new ventures). Lodovico's primary rule for plugging students into the movement is simple:

"Don't add to their plate. Find out what they are already doing. Find out their natural people group and interests. Let them be a missionary where they already are."

In addition, Lodovico assesses the appropriate leadership level for that student within the identified missional community or community group. However, not all interests of leadership roles are granted. Lodovico explains that sometimes the best

response to a student who seeks to lead a group is "not no, but not now."

"You must check their motive - why do they want to lead this group? Are they trying to please me, or do they want to lead just because they were asked? What's best for the student? Maybe it's co-leading a group or joining a group, but maybe not leading the group."

And finally, Lodovico plays the role of "matchmaker" between student and life coach. Once Lodovico has created a shortlist of potential life coaches, she suggests that the coach and student meet up for an initial, casual introduction over coffee:

"I play matchmaker. Who best can help them grow? I look at their major, home life, mental expectations, and personality. I tell them to have a non-committal coffee with the coach."

These three components - aligned missional community opportunity, appropriate leadership level, and life coach match - represent the holistic "stickiness factor" for HCBC UT student commitment, according to church leaders. Therefore, assimilation is designed around these tenants.

#### III. Adopting Swift Rate of Change for Collegiate Environment

The third support structure for HCBC UT's missional model centers on the staff's acute understanding of students' swift adoption of change. In the collegiate

environment, the unit of measurement is the semester. Thus, students adapt to change on a per-semester basis. HCBC UT leaders adopt this rate of change as well to address suboptimal operational activities.

A recent example of these changes is the evolution of the Wednesday night lineup. Upon disbanding the Wednesday evening church service at the start of the 2008-2009 academic year to instead focus on life coaching and discipleship of student missionaries, the student congregation experienced a sense of loss of community. To address this challenge, HCBC UT again adjusted the Wednesday schedule for the spring semester to reinstate the Wednesday night service while also changing the schedule for the weekly student missionary training and coaching. Denny Henderson described the church's continuous adjustments and modifications:

"Every semester we learn something and have to adjust. We don't always know if it's the best approach, but we are willing to try. We are always looking and searching for effective practices that will hopefully become successful and consistent for us."

HCBC UT leaders aspire to modify at least one operational element with each new semester based on recent lessons learned and new challenges faced.

<sup>vi</sup> S.H.A.P.E. is an acronym for spiritual gifts, heart, abilities, passion, and experience. S.H.A.P.E. workshops are widely offered within churches to help individuals identify their God-given spiritual gifts. These workshops typically include a self-administered S.H.A.P.E. questionnaire to assess and rank-order a person's spiritual gifts.

**IV. Ensuring Steady Flow of Adult Recruits**

Another critical function for the success of HCBC UT’s inter-generational mission-al model is the annual recruitment of NW Missionaries, the empty nesters who commit to serving as a life coach to student missionaries for one academic year. Since the coaching and discipleship element is essential to encourage students working in the mission field, HCBC UT heavily relies on the healthy relationship with HCBC NW for access and permission to recruit mentors. Denny Henderson described the church’s long-term dependence on HCBC NW, and how the NW Missionary program benefits all parties involved:

“Part of our 3-5 year goals is to amp up recruitment from HCBC NW. It’s a benefit for (HCBC NW) too because when people go back, they have missional mindset and experience.”

While empty nesters are the primary source for life coaches, HCBC UT has discovered an additional and secondary people group with the appropriate amount of free time to serve as mentors: young adults. The young adults group at HCBC UT encompasses individuals who have recently graduated from college but do not yet have family responsibilities. They too serve as life coaches for the student missionaries. Although this group is smaller than the empty nester group within the church, HCBC UT has identified this people group as a good source for recruitment of life coaches for the growing student congregation, as well.

**V. Raising Funds Continuously to Cover Significant Portion of Budget**

Due to the nature of student ministry where students have little if any money to tithe, HCBC UT depends on external funds to meet the already-downsized operational budget. The church can only cover 50 percent of the budget from internal funding so the remaining 50 percent must come from other sources. Currently, 15 percent of external funds is provided by the

Association and other HCBC churches. The remaining 35 percent of external funds comes from outside donors, meaning individuals who are not directly involved with the church. These individuals tend to support the church either out of commitment to the missional vision or to Denny Henderson himself. While this structure has proven to be sufficient thus far, Dave Cochran noted the inherent risk in this type of financial model for the church:

“We need to lessen our dependence on donors. We need to restructure how we use donors’ money because a core of the church is at risk. With donors who are outside the committed church body, there’s a tension there because of the strings attached. It’s risky getting money outside your building because it becomes a complex relationship.”

**VI. Partnering with Fellow Campus Ministries for Missional Reach**

One final support function that is key to HCBC UT missional success highlights the importance of proactively partnering with fellow campus ministers to advance the shared vision of impacting the UT campus with the Gospel. Denny Henderson joined forces with Campus Renewal Ministries at UT, led by Justin Christopher, in an effort to increase collaboration among UT campus ministers at large.

Collaboration and inter-ministry relationships soon spawned from ongoing, weekly prayer gatherings among campus ministers. Christopher explained the impact of the weekly prayer meetings that began two years ago:

“There’s a culture now of cooperation and weekly meetings of campus ministers. It represents 30-40 ministries on campus. They are trusting each other because now they are praying with each other one time a week, which (1) grows their hearts for campus together, and (2) allows them to get to know each other and develop relationships.”

Building upon that trust, UT campus ministries are now increasingly working together to advance missional efforts on the campus. To complement and encourage the trend of campus missional activity, campus ministers collaborated with Campus Renewal Ministries to create a UT Missional Community map (see **Exhibit X**). This map plots all known active missional communities around the campus so ministry groups can readily connect missional-minded students with appropriate communities as well as join efforts for people groups.

In the 2008 Longhorn Chronicles publication, a report published by Campus Renewal Ministries that features quantitative data gathered from all UT campus ministries, the data denotes an increase in the size of the Christian student population at UT. However, this increase does not correlate with church



size growth, meaning the Christian population on campus is growing somewhat independently of campus church size. Christopher attributes the missional community effort as a significant force behind the growing Christian UT population:

“There is a growing Christianity population on campus; from 7.6 percent in 2004 to 11 percent in 2008. Last year for the first time, there were more students involved in ministry than coming to large groups (in churches). This points to the impact of the missional communities.”

HCBC UT and six other campus ministries currently employ missional community outreach. However, more than half of the missional communities on campus are attributed to HCBC UT student missionaries, and the strictly missional focus and multi-generational discipleship elements are unique to HCBC UT.

To expand the missional community model across the entire campus, Denny Henderson presented the idea of “Renovate UT” to Christopher for the 2009-2010 academic year. Renovate UT is a movement to unite all campus ministries with a single mission to reach every UT student through Christian communities on mission (see Appendix **Illustration V**: Renovate UT Vision Statement). The Renovate UT vision statement reads:

“Renovate UT is a partnership of campus ministries seeking the redemption and restoration of God’s kingdom at the University of Texas through reaching every student with the gospel of Jesus Christ. Our goal in this partnership is to strategically connect ministries and students toward establishing a viable Christian community on mission in every college, club, residence and culture at UT.”

Through the weekly prayer

gatherings among campus ministers, several providential relationships developed which underpin the embryonic Renovate UT partnership. Denny Henderson was one of the campus ministers involved in the weekly meetings, as was Todd Engstrom from Austin Stone Community Church - the two largest college ministries in Austin. Austin Stone, like HCBC UT, was already employing a missional model to reach UT students.

(See **Exhibit X** for Austin Stone missional communities.) So, when Christopher presented the idea of Renovate UT to all campus ministers, with full and public endorsement by HCBC UT and Austin Stone, many of the campus ministries signed on to the initiative. Denny Henderson credits the weekly prayer meetings as the “softening of the soil” for the collaboration in this campus-wide ministry effort.

Thirteen campus ministers have volunteered to join the Renovate UT leadership team, including Denny Henderson, Christopher, and Engstrom. Being a member of the leadership team requires 12-15 hours time commitment per month, faithful meeting attendance, and homework completion between meetings. Homework assignments drive upcoming meeting discussions and include several questions such as: “How you would define a missional community? Write your short definition,” and “What must a missional community must be doing to ‘count’ as a missional community? Make a short list.”

Renovate UT is not church specific and is open to all campus ministries. The leadership team hopes to launch campus-wide missional training bootcamps before each semester and to conduct networking events so missional community students can join forces. Denny Henderson explained the importance of Renovate UT’s inaugural year, and why the leadership team is working hard to lay the groundwork for campus-wide missional community collaboration and partnership:

“If we can get it right over the next year through Renovate UT, then it will be the test of whether we (campus ministries) can

**“There is a growing Christianity population on campus; from 7.6 percent in 2004 to 11 percent in 2008. Last year for the first time, there were more students involved in ministry than coming to large groups (in churches). This points to the impact of the missional communities.”**

- Justin Christopher, Campus Renewal Ministries director



Justin Christopher, Campus Renewal Ministries director, explains data findings from the 2008 Longhorn Chronicles regarding Christian population growth at UT.

all come together, put our guard down, and pursue a single mission.”

The widespread partnership among UT campus ministries has eliminated the competition and turf battles that are too often present in the collegiate ministry environment. This collaboration is essential in a collegiate missional model since other ministry groups may be better suited to penetrate certain people groups or geographies on campus. Denny Henderson emphasized the importance of strategic partnerships with fellow campus ministries, such as Renovate UT, for the missional calling and responsibility of HCBC UT for the students at UT:

“God has called us to proclaim the gospel to 50,000 college students, whether through partnerships and relationships or through our own missional communities.”

**Changed Lives within the Church Body**

In addition to the metrics that report HCBC UT’s success in the incarnational missional model, qualitative evidence of changed lives within the community is widespread as well. The mobilized church body - the adult and student lay leaders - has been profoundly impacted by the transitional journey and faith lessons experienced along the way.

For students, being a member of the incarnational ministry environment has redefined their definition of church. Students who were already missional-minded and trying to live out their faith in relationships on campus found that a

**“If we can get it right over the next year through Renovate UT, then it will be the test of whether we (campus ministries) can all come together, put our guard down, and pursue a single mission.”**

- Denny Henderson, senior pastor

church body can directly empower the incarnational process and support the missionary's spiritual growth in the process. Tooley and Day were two students committed to sharing the Gospel with peers in real-life environments but did not feel at home in a formal church or in church communities. Tooley, previously a "lone ranger" who became an HCBC UT entrepreneur and then staff member upon graduation, explained how her appreciation for the church body and structure evolved through her experiences in this church body:

"I was missional before, but without structure. I was a lone ranger, and I struggled with the balance of pouring into both the church and the missional community. I'm learning to be more strategic about pursuing relationships."

Similarly, Day habitually distanced himself from churches and the "Christian label" as he called it, until he learned of HCBC UT's missional model and joined the movement. Through the process of becoming a missional community leader, he recalled how he reached a turning point and finally publicly associated himself with a church body:

"I had to reassure people that this isn't 'church' as they would expect based on their preconceptions. Knowing that I was going to be labeled as a Christian, I was fearful at first. But there was a turning point for me in being okay with that. I even lost a friendship because of the label and sharing the Gospel."

On the other hand, the HCBC UT journey also impacted the lives of students who had grown up attending church but shied away from missional activity. Kendall Howell was one such student who grew up attending church but was frustrated with the lack of real-life application in the messages. Upon entering college, he turned away from the church and became a highly well-known personality on the UT partying scene. However, Howell's life and priorities changed upon developing a friendship with Simpson, one of the original eight HCBC UT entrepreneurs, in the missional community of business students. Howell described how he was engaged through the student missionary and began attending HCBC UT, and within one year he was equipped, empowered and released out on mission to co-lead the business student missional community:

"I grew up in a church that was very doctrinal. I got tired of hearing the same message for 20 years. Kayla Simpson (an entrepreneur for the business student missional community) invited me to go to HCBC UT, and I don't even remember what the sermon was but I heard them talk

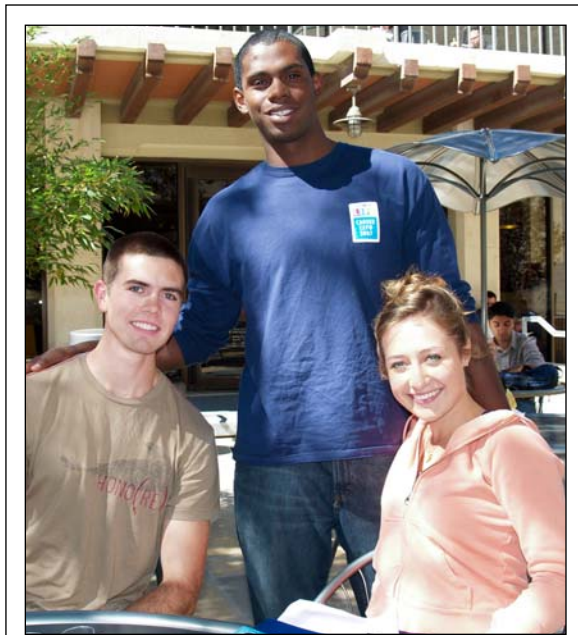
church family were hesitant to transform from a church consumer to missionary mentality. However, their hearts were slowly softened upon studying the Word in response to HCBC UT sermons and watching peers and staff members step out in faith and garner results. For these students, their notion of "church" was completely changed and has impacted their approach to choosing a church body after leaving the Austin area. Crittenden, who was initially uncertain about staying with the church upon transition to the missional model, explained that her experience in the incarnational ministry environment has become her new standard for choosing a church body:

"I have learned that being missional isn't preaching the Gospel 20 times each week. ... Now, I'm looking for similar churches in other cities. I'm looking for missional churches in the cities where I'm applying for jobs."

Lodovico explained that life transformation stories such as these are widespread in the HCBC UT church body yet are hard to quantify in terms of church metrics because some of the lives being changed are occurring with students who proclaimed to already be Christians. However, their understanding of what it means to live

life as a Christian has dramatically changed, which has marked a significant turning point in the spiritual lives of many students. This transformation is difficult to record in terms of life transformation decisions for Christ and recommitments, according to Lodovico:

"We have trouble with the word recommitments because it can be confused with conversion and life change; it all blurs together. I've been in ministries where students 'get saved' or 'pray the prayer' and then live like the devil only to come back next year and recommit their lives to Jesus over and over with no real life change. ... In these cases, I would say most if not all of our students that grew up in the church experienced life change when they encountered HCBC UT, and we challenged them with the Gospel and getting on mission. They are not pew sitters anymore. They are not going to church because their parents told them to. They have made their faith their own and are getting to know Jesus and are on mission with Him. They are now experiencing



(Left to right) Student Missionaries: Brian Legault (chemical engineers entrepreneur 2007-2008, ROTC missional community leader 2008-2009), Kendall Howell (business students missional community leader 2008-2009), and Sarah Tooley (21st St. Co-op entrepreneur 2007-2008).

***"People have seen my transformation. I was known for partying, but now I say 'I'm going to church' when people ask me what I'm doing this weekend. I'm a walking case study."***

- Kendall Howell, business students missional community leader 2008-2009

about being missional. I had always heard 'go' but just wasn't sure how and was scared. With HCBC UT I had the opportunity to 'go.' The church is missional and relevant, and the church has all these opportunities to be missional - abroad trips, weekend trips, dodge ball groups, missional communities. ... People have seen my transformation. I was known for partying, but now I say 'I'm going to church' when people ask me what I'm doing this weekend. I'm a walking case study. I had to learn to let go, like Paul."

Many students who had grown up in a

exponential growth and bearing much fruit. Now did they just meet Jesus? Perhaps. Or did they meet Him when they were 5 years old and just now are growing? That’s the great debate.”

Just like students within HCBC UT, life coaches experienced a shift in their perception of church and the importance of their individual role in the Kingdom. The adults who became active participants in the HCBC UT missional model overcame the inertia commonplace among empty nesters and discovered a new purpose for the golden years, according to empty nester and life coach Ron Rogers:

“I think there is initial inertia and fear that often prevent people our age from getting involved like this. ... This place is all about sacrifice and commitment. It’s not about us, it’s about the students. Students say ‘this is my church’ not ‘this is the church I go to.’ They rally toward us.”

The life coaches relish the relationships developed with students and are often surprised by their degree of impact on students’ spiritual growth. Jimmy Burkett, empty nester and life coach, explained that the gratification and fulfillment from being a student’s mentor and discipler far outweighs the time commitment required:

“Yes, mentoring and coaching does take time, but it’s worth every minute. One of the biggest fears I hear from students is: ‘I know some stories of the Bible but I don’t know how to use the Bible.’ It is so exciting and fun to be a part of and to see how the church has evolved. At first I was apprehensive about the church’s directional change, but as I learned more and experienced more I became excited.”

In a church model that revolves around empowering the congregation, evidence of changed lives within the church body is not only encouraging, it is an important health indicator of spiritual growth and risky commitment.

**Next-Generation Ministry Challenges**

To preserve the rapid growth and early success HCBC UT has encountered in the incarnational missional model, church leaders recognize several rising challenges for the next phase of growth. Namely, these challenges highlight the need for sustainability, scalability and standardization to maintain and build upon the effort and progress made in the campus mission field thus far. The three primary areas of imminent focus for

HCBC UT church leaders include:

- ♦ sustaining missional community progress beyond student attrition
- ♦ scaling church operational functions to accommodate continuous growth
- ♦ standardizing discipleship of student missionaries for more effective evangelism

*I. Sustaining Missional Community Progress*

To date, most missional communities have been key person dependent, meaning continued growth within the community is highly dependent on one or two students (the missional community leaders) being active and present in the community. In order to sustain the life of missional communities in the face of a 30 percent student attrition rate, HCBC UT plans to incorporate spiritual gifts into the missional assignment process so students and life coaches are more strategically placed to broaden the spiritual gifting present in the community. The current missional community assimilation process primarily weighs student interests and spheres of influence, and the student-coach matching process is based on personality and availability. However, HCBC UT will be adding spiritual gift consideration into both the student missional community assignment process as well as the student and life coach matching process for the upcoming year, according to Denny Henderson:

“Right now we have a lot of people serving because there are needs, but we want to become more strategic. We want to start pairing people up for missional communities based on skill set and gifts. Therefore, we hope to pair our adult coaches in a way that shows diversity of gifts. For example, a perfect scenario is to have a coaching pair where one coach is gifted in discipleship and the other coach gifted in evangelism. This way students are being challenged in spiritual formation while also being challenged to stay missional and outreach focused.”

By incorporating spiritual gifting into the assimilation process, HCBC UT hopes to achieve a more representative body of Christ within the missional communities, thereby reducing key person dependency for missional community progress.

*II. Scaling Church Operational Functions*

While the campus church plant enjoyed significant success even after downsizing staff by half, church leaders identify scalability as a key issue in order to maintain the church’s speed of growth in the missional

**Senior Pastor Reflections**

**Denny Henderson’s Lessons Learned for Leading a Collegiate Missional Church:**

*(partial list)*

“In the past 3.5 years, I have learned specifically about:

- (1) The Kingdom economy versus Worldly economy, and the importance of being content where God has me. We may never be a mega-church or have a dynamic teaching ministry. As difficult as it is, I love this church and campus and mission. But, you definitely have to tackle your pride and get away from wanting to get a book out, or wanting people to hear your teaching.
- (2) Seeing people not as tools to be utilized but instead as sheep to be shepherd-ed. I’m still learning. I’m not always a good shepherd, but God has called me to be a shepherd.
- (3) Resting on God’s grace in the emotional, spiritual and physical side, which may mean being okay with not getting everything done because I need to see my wife and kid.
- (4) My complete inadequacy. We’re completely insufficient, myself and my staff, to get it all done. I feel like Moses, trusting God to speak for me.
- (5) The importance of a providential mentoring relationship, like mine with Tim Hawks (HCBC NW senior pastor). It is critical for every young leader to have a seasoned mentor that serves as a coach and friend.”

**Elder Board Chairman Reflections**

**Dave Cochran’s Advice for Leading a Collegiate Missional Church:**

*(partial list)*

- (1) “As best you can, find and communicate your vision. Don’t worry about the number of people you’re engaging, rather their commitment.
- (2) Focus on things you can’t live without, and don’t worry about anything else.
- (3) Think about resources but don’t limit yourself to see where they are coming from. Act on faith, don’t chain yourself to things you can’t see.”
- (4) When hiring staff, hire positions and not people. Fill a specific staff need and fulfill a role, but don’t hire a great person that isn’t committed to the vision.”

model. Identified pressure points within the existing model include administrative staff duties and the infrastructure for student-adult mentoring program.

Lodovico's role as director of college ministry has been a kingpin for HCBC UT's success in student and life coach assimilation. In addition, a sizeable amount of organizational acumen lies with Lodovico. For continued growth, however, Lodovico's capacity and organizational knowledge must be scaled across several individuals to maintain long-term momentum. To accomplish this, HCBC UT plans to disband the Entrepreneur Program in its current form since the two classes of entrepreneurs have fulfilled their change agent mission of mobilizing the community, and instead leverage the students as the church's "hands and feet," according to Denny Henderson:

"Next year's entrepreneurs will participate in a missional community just like every other student in the church body. However, that won't be their unique job description anymore. Our greater need now is for the entrepreneurs to serve as our hands and feet to function. We can't go out and hire more staff, but we have a highly relational-intensive ministry. So, we need to use their creativity and time to help us do ministry better."

The student interns will still be called entrepreneurs, however their responsibilities will be focused on the church's operational structure and daily activities in the missional environment.

In addition to staff capacity, HCBC UT church leaders plan to add a layer of reporting to the multi-generational coaching relationships so that church leaders can be better informed of positive and negative activity within missional communities. Denny Henderson likened the importance of communication flow between life coaches and church staff to soldiers and commanders on a battlefield:

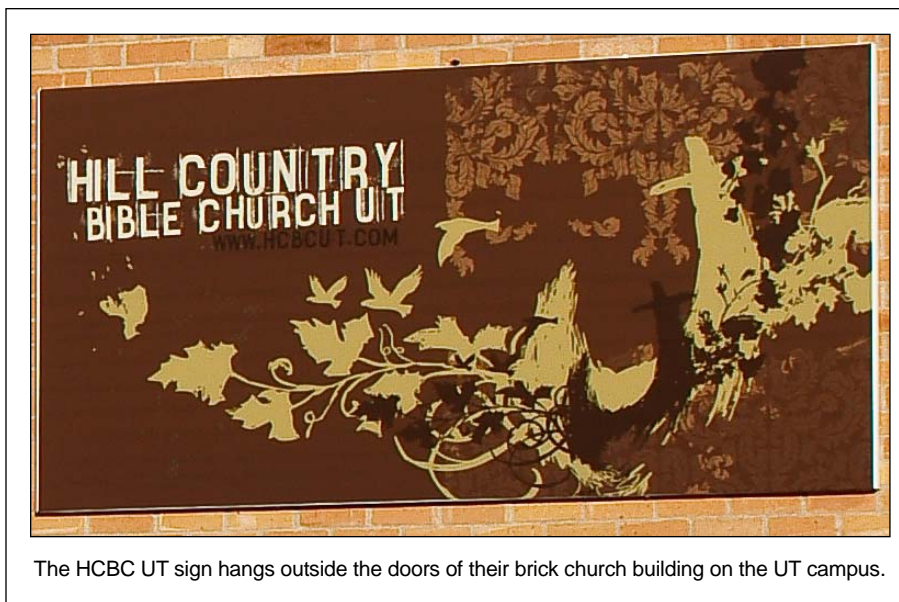
"Within our life coaching relationships, we need to be more effective in getting information from the battlefield up to the commander. I'm concerned about that flow now. For example, if something negative

happened in a dorm community group, that information needs to flow up through their coach all the way to the top so we can address it. Or, if a group of 30-45 students starts meeting somewhere, we need to know so we can do a video venue. Or if there's renegade theology. Or changed life stories. It's fine now but for scalability we need better infrastructure. I'm not sure we've trained the coaches for that. Thus far, we've trained them to love them and treat them as a kid."

As the number of students and life coaches grows, the need for this vertical communication flow between missionaries and church staff will become increasingly important for both resolving issues and identifying opportunities in the mission field.

es disperse into their small groups. This is good quality control because coaches and students hear the same thing from us at the same time. The response has been very positive because students say they like hearing directly from us, as opposed to filtered through their life coach. We have 85 to 90 percent attendance from student leaders."

In a growing missional ministry environment, a reasonable degree of standardization for equipping students for evangelism is essential for continued growth. Clear, consistent and frequent communication to students and life coaches, in addition to recurring training, will help level set expectations of and capabilities within the vast campus missional community landscape.



The HCBC UT sign hangs outside the doors of their brick church building on the UT campus.

**Conclusion**

The HCBC UT church body has created and maintained a culture that celebrates the wonder of seeing lives transformed, loving and caring for people in their mission fields, and growing spiritually in the process. Church leaders have committed themselves to faithfully pursuing the specific mission the Lord has called them to own, and they have loosened their grip on

*III. Standardizing Evangelism Training*

Another rising challenging in the missional model at HCBC UT is growing inconsistency in equipping and discipling student missionaries to share the Gospel with peers in their missional communities. Church leaders have identified the need to provide more formal and standardized evangelism training, both for students and the life coaches shepherding them. The church hopes to improve communication and training consistency by leveraging the new Wednesday night schedule which features a mandatory 30-minute leadership training session for community group and missional community leaders as well as their life coaches. Denny Henderson described the weekly group training as essential for "quality control:"

"On Wednesday nights, we now have a large group training session from 6:30 p.m. to 7 p.m. before the students and their coach-

operational mechanics and tactics so that the ecclesiology can adapt and mature for the mission. The church leveraged agile ministry techniques and some of the outcomes and lessons learned have pleasantly surprised everyone involved.

As a result of numerous logistical obstacles and leaps of faith starting from the top of the church leadership structure, an incarnational, multi-generational missional church model has emerged and flourished. The lessons uncovered during HCBC UT's journey are applicable and transferable, particularly for church plant communities in collegiate environments. Denny Henderson summarized the key lesson for other churches seeking to transition to the missional ministry model:

"You can't just add an evangelism program to your church model and call yourself a missional church. To be a missional church, you have to recalibrate *everything*."

## Appendix

### HCBC UT Case Study

#### Illustration I: HCBC UT Purpose Statement

##### Who We Are

We are a Missional Church for College Students!

Established in September of 2005, Hill Country Bible Church UT's purpose is to strategically reach over 50,000 people at the University of Texas with the Gospel of Jesus Christ. We place our energy in living out our shared vision:

##### OUR PURPOSE:

We are a Missional Community of Christ-followers committed to connecting people with the transforming power of Jesus Christ.

##### The power of Christ becomes evident in our lives through:

###### **Risky Commitment:**

"We walk by faith expecting God to do beyond what we can imagine."

Our greatest adventure is to know the surpassing value and power of Jesus Christ in which we respond with...

- \*Bold, confident prayer,
- \*Extravagant worship,
- \*Eternal Perspective and
- \*Complete surrender and obedience to Christ.

*Isaiah 26:8, Ephesians 1:18-23, Ephesians 3:17-20, Philippians 3:21, Hebrews 11:1-2*

###### **Authentic Community:**

"We love people and embrace their God given value."

Our greatest commandment is to love one another just as Christ loves us by living in Authentic Community that ...

- \*Values all people from all cultures and all generations,
- \*Invests in relationships that are full of grace and mutual accountability,
- \*Serves others with sacrificial love,
- \*Demonstrates the unity that Christ has purchased for His Church on the cross.

*Romans 12:10; Ephesians 4:32; Hebrew 10:24-25; John 13:34-35*

###### **Focused Mission:**

"We impact the world by reaching the University of Texas."

Our greatest commission is to passionately proclaim the gospel of Jesus Christ as the treasure and hope for all people by being

...

- \*Missionaries who value relevant, innovative and revolutionary means of communicating the gospel,
- \*Servants who are humble and incarnational,
- \*Shepherds who are willing to leave the 99 to pursue the 1, and
- \*Soldiers who are enrolled in active service for God's Kingdom.

*Luke 15; Acts 1:8; II Timothy 2:3-4; I Peter 2:9; I Peter 3:15*

###### **Transformed Lives:**

"We follow Christ and desire Christ to be formed in others."

Our greatest pursuit is to follow Christ, have our hearts transformed into His image, and present others complete in Christ by...

- \*His all-sufficient grace,
- \*His indwelling power,
- \*His transforming Word,
- \*His specific answers to prayer, and
- \*His unified Church body.

*Galatians 4:19; Ephesians 4:11-13; Philippians 4:6-7; Colossians 1:28-29; II Timothy 3:16*

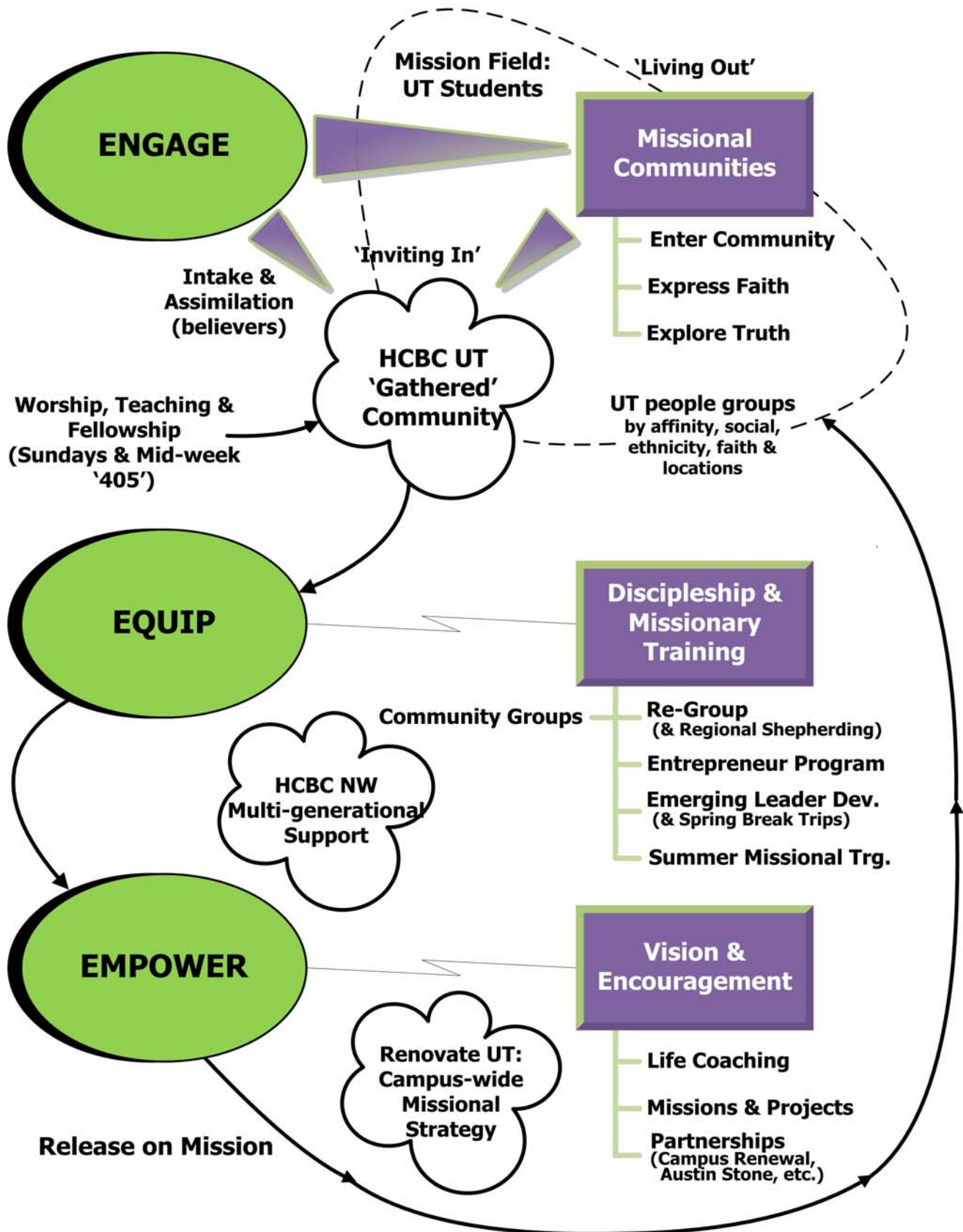
Our mission is to give every person at The University of Texas the opportunity to connect with the life-transforming power of Jesus Christ because they hear the Gospel from the lips of someone at HCBC UT.

We will connect over 50,000 people by ...

- 1) Planting and supporting missional communities
- 2) Preparing to participate in what God is doing

Illustration II: HCBC UT Missional Model

### HCBC UT Missional Model



**Illustration III: Missional Contact Sheet**

<u>Weekly Missional Contacts</u>	<u>Date</u>
<b>Enter Community:</b> What steps did you take to enter Community?	Who did you meet?
-	-
-	-
-	-
-	-
<b>Express Faith:</b> Name:                      Contact:	Where are they Spiritually:
-	
-	
-	
-	
<b>Explore Truth:</b> Name:	Additional Comments:
-	
-	
-	
-	

**Illustration IV: Decoding UT Exercise**

**DECODING UT**

When you think University of Texas, where would you go?

What are your first thoughts?

**CULTURE**

- What do students do with their free time... where do we hang out?
  - Restaurants
  - Coffee shops
  - Places on campus
- If you had to label the UT campus with a genre of music, what would it be (take into account the different parts of campus)?
- What evidences of God's grace do you see at UT?

**NEEDS**

- After talking to students, what do they perceive as their greatest needs as a student in Austin?
  - Socially
  - Education
  - Physically
- What do you think are the greatest areas of brokenness?

**SPIRITUAL CLIMATE**

- What are people's impressions of church/God?
- Does there seem to be a predominant religious influence on those you talked to?
- What would change if the Gospel brought renewal to the UT campus?

## Illustration V: Renovate UT Vision Statement

### White Paper Vision Statement for Renovate UT

#### **Vision/Purpose**

Renovate UT is a partnership of campus ministries seeking the redemption and restoration of God's Kingdom at the University of Texas through reaching *every student* with the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Our goal in this partnership is to *strategically connect* ministries and students toward *establishing a viable Christian community on mission* in every college, club, residence and culture at UT.

#### **Values**

In light of our vision statement, the Renovate UT partnership values four things that will facilitate accomplishing our vision.

#### **Targeted Mission**

We believe God has called us to take ownership of the souls of the 50,000 students at the University of Texas, and that we must work together strategically to do what God has called us to. Within the larger mission, we believe God has called specific ministries to focus on particular groups at the University to effectively accomplish campus saturation with missional communities.

#### **Authentic Accountability**

As God has called us to a common vision and strategy for reaching the campus, we desire to hold one another accountable to our portion in the mission of reaching the campus and to continue to seek the Lord on how our ministry must grow and adapt toward that end.

#### **Community Learning**

We believe that in order to be effective missionaries at the University of Texas, we must learn from one another and challenge one another to grow in effectiveness in ministry. Learning happens best in community, and we value time spent with one another diligently seeking God for best ministry practices in our context.

#### **Creative Collaboration**

We believe we must collaborate together to effectively reach the University of Texas with a common vision, agreed strategy, and empowering partnerships. Our collaboration will include shared training time, cooperative resources, common initiatives and events, and celebration together.

#### **Commitments**

In light of our vision and values, in order to achieve what God has called us to we believe it will require some practical commitments of time and resources to one another.

#### **Collaboration**

- Participation in pre-semester strategy session and post-semester evaluation meetings
- Committing to specific ministry targets for missional communities
- Compiling and sharing resources and training

#### **Connection**

- Monthly meeting to discuss ongoing strategy and learn from one another
- Regular attendance at Campus Minister Prayer
- Resourcing and encouraging students to participate with other ministries with similar hearts for a particular mission field

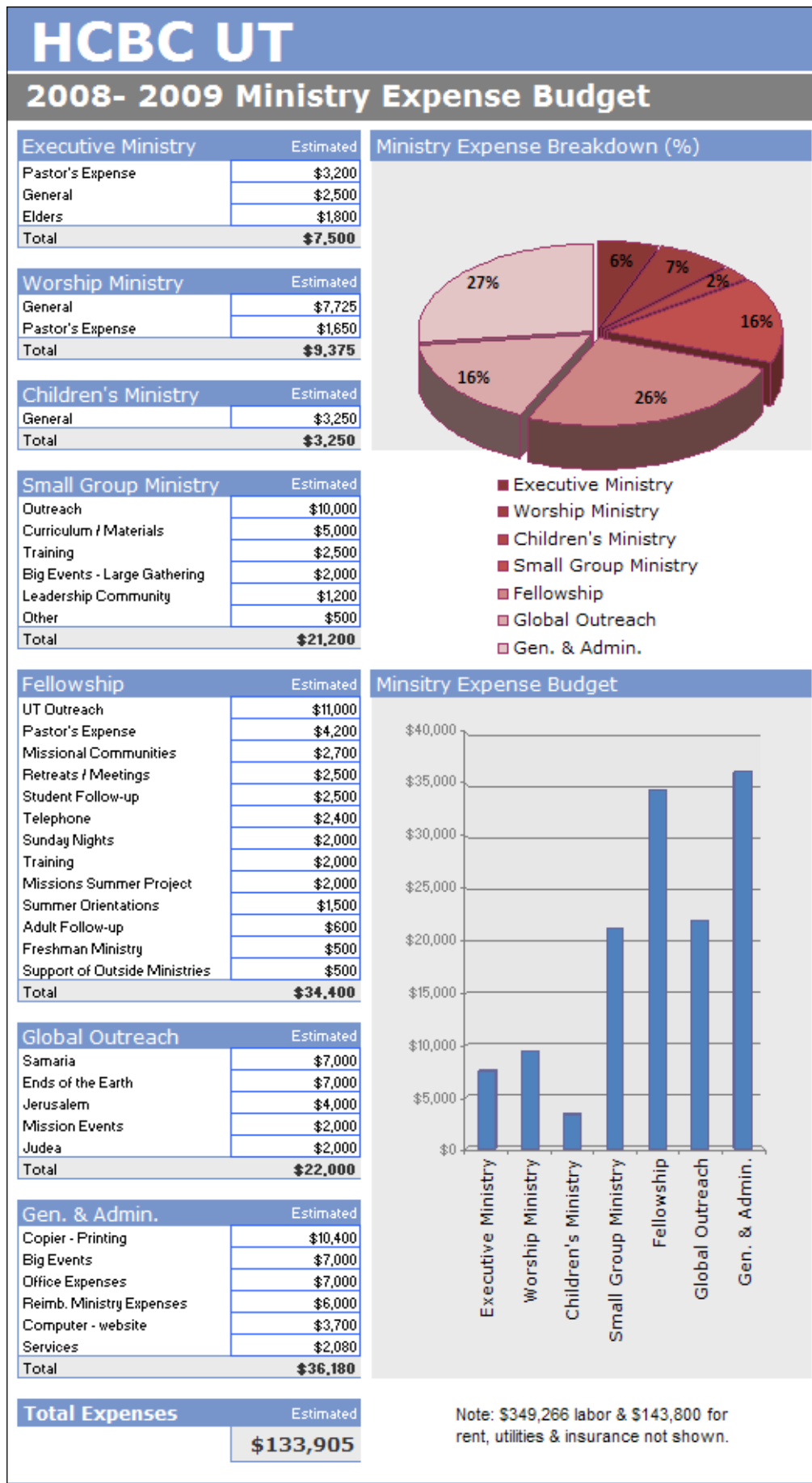
#### **Communication**

- Maintaining updated ministry information and sharing in a central location for the purpose of networking our missional community leaders and students
- Faithfully and respectfully responding to necessary communication (email, phone, etc.)

#### **Celebration**

- We will commit to sharing testimonies of what God is doing throughout campus
- We commit to a united celebration once per semester with our student leaders

**Illustration VI: HCBC UT 2008-2009 Ministry Expense Budget**



**Illustration VII: Senior Pastor's Objectives, 2007-2008 (Excerpt, 2 of 4 Goals)****Senior Pastor's Objectives, 2007-2008**

**Goal #1: Leadership Support and Development:** *Ensure that leaders driving key initiatives are receiving needed support and are positioned for success.*

◆ **What is your plan to achieve this goal and making this objective a priority?**

This ministry year we are launching a number of new initiatives that are strategic and key to the future of the church. This year one of my objectives is to help assist staff, elders and ministry leaders in the launching and implementing of these new initiatives. Below you will find a plan to help support the efforts of our leaders.

**Entrepreneurship**

- Work with Michael and Student Fellowship staff to ensure that the overall program is being implemented in an effective way by following the plan that has been outlined.
- Meet weekly with Michael so that there is continual communication of needs and/or problems that need to be addressed.
- Ensure that Michael and team are not being overwhelmed with other small ministry tasks that may hinder the implementation of the Entrepreneurship program.
- Continue to think strategically how we can better program over the long-term.

**Missional Communities (10+)**

- Work with Michael and student fellowship staff to ensure that the overall program is being implemented.
- Receive communication from Student Fellowship staff on how the Missional Leaders are doing with implementing their plans.
- Ensure that each Missional Community Leader is given resources to effectively reach their people group (budget, human resources, etc.)
- Continue to bring church wide focus of the Missional communities and the importance of them on a long-term strategic level.
- Make sure I am available to help deal with pressing issues and obstacles the Missional Community Leaders are experiencing.
- Ensure that we are prepared to launch 20+ Missional communities in 2008-2009.

**Missional Core Team Training**

- Work with staff, elders and Eric to ensure that we have done all that we can to see all Missional Community leaders have a well-defined action plan. This objective needs to be completed sooner rather than later.
- Work with Eric, staff and elders to ensure that we are doing all we can to support the dreams of our folks by giving them proper serving opportunities, equipping resources and encouragement to be successful with their action plans.
- Continue to push the congregation to participate in life-coach training.
- Begin to work with Eric and elders to identify next steps to help equip our folks to be Missional leaders.

◆ **What will be the Measure of Success?**

**Entrepreneurship**

- Evidence of each entrepreneur living out Risky Commitment.
- Evidence of spiritual and leadership growth in each entrepreneur.
- Answering the question how effective were we in: 1) Illuminating Truth 2) Transforming Character and 3) Mobilizing Students.
- Evidence of success and life-transformation in the identified people groups we attempted to reach (Missional Communities)
- Feed back from Entrepreneurs is consistently positive and felt well supported.
- Feedback from coaches is consistently positive and ideas of improvement are seriously considered and acted upon.
- That we learn lessons from the 1st year to carry into the 2nd year and learn from mistakes and ambitiously refine the program.

**Missional Communities**

- We were able to establish 10+ Missional communities this ministry year.
- That the communities we established fit our definition of a Missional community.
- We are able to mobilize more than just the Entrepreneurs in being a part of Missional communities.
- We see students and adults taking ownership of people groups and think to themselves how can I be a part of reaching "X" people group.
- There is evidence of life transformation in the people groups we have identified.
- We see students within the identified people group experience life transformation and then become passionate about reaching their peers.
- That we learn from our mistakes and correct them methodically and quickly. That we are taking ongoing notes of how we can better this strategic initiative.
- Leaders of Missional communities feel well supported and well prepared to do the task.
- Missional Community group leaders live out Risky Commitment.
- We are strategically prepared by end of year to launch 20+ Missional communities in 2008-2009.
- We did not "lose" any Missional community leader due to burn out or discouragement. No student left behind!!!

**Illustration VII: Senior Pastor's Objectives, 2007-2008 (Excerpt, 2 of 4 Goals)**

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**Missional Core Team Training**

- Eric and others involved experience support and encouragement.
- We are able to mobilize 35+ life coaches and able to pair them up with "disciples".
- Position us to go into 2008-2009 to mobilize 70+ life coaches.
- Missional Core Team members: 1) Have developed an individual action plan and 2) they followed through on the process.
- As a church, we are able to get a little further down the road when it comes to intentional equipping and developing of our congregation.

**◆ Support Needed to Accomplish Goal?**

- Ensure that all new initiatives are properly resourced.
- Ensure that I quickly remove obstacles to forward movement of initiatives.
- Ensure I have proper balance of time as to give needed attention to initiatives
- Feedback... suggested changes, etc.

**Goal #2: Staff Development:** *Ensure that each staff person is experiencing continual growth while participating and leading in the mobilization of our church towards its vision.*

**◆ What is your plan to achieve this goal and make this objective a priority?**

- Continue with our 1 on 1 meetings to ensure the staff person is receiving support, guidance and getting feedback from me.
- Help each staff member develop and execute their plan to be successful with their year's goals and objectives.
- Maintain an environment of high grace and high accountability among staff so that we are all practicing authentic community and I should be the first to model.
- Help each staff person develop a spiritual growth plan for the year.
- Set up a quarterly mini-review system so that staff person can receive quarterly feedback on their accomplishments and areas of growth.
- Give encouragement to staff on a consistent basis and communicate to them what they are doing well. Also, hold the staff person accountable to tasks and objective. Having difficult conversations.
- Help each staff person develop a professional development plan.
- Receive feedback on an ongoing basis from staff people on how I can be better leader for them.
- Develop on overall ministry plan for the church and continue to re-visit the plan with staff to keep us all on same page.

**◆ What will be the measure of success?**

- Evidence of high team morale.
- Evidence that the staff team is working effectively.
- Each staff member is growing spiritually and professionally.
- Each staff person has a 5-year professional plan and is tracking toward their goals.
- Each staff person feels valued, cared for, and supported.
- We see evidence of staff people living in risky commitment and in living out authentic community.

**◆ Support needed to accomplish this goal?**

- Resources for staff development.
- Time to make sure this is a priority for me.
- Budget to send staff to developmental conferences and seminars.
- Need to help identify life-coaches for staff people.
- I need to receive continual resources and opportunities to grow as a leader. Receive mentoring from Danny Box and Tim Hawks in the area of shepherding the flock.