

FELLOWSHIP NEWS



LIFEGATE Church, Denver, Finds a Permanent Home

In 2020, amid the pandemic quarantines, LIFEGATE Church, Denver, found a permanent home. One year later, they have created a welcoming, community-oriented space for their members and neighbors.

After launching in February 2015, they met at Cherry Creek High School in south Denver for five years. When the school asked them to vacate for renovations, they had a difficult time finding another space. However, a local church offered their space on Sunday evenings, so the LIFEGATE team put together a weekly event, Summer Nights, offering food and fun. Then they returned to the high school for two more years, until more renovations forced them to look for another space to meet. That's when they found their current building, just 10 minutes away.

LIFEGATE subleased the building from a church that moved to another location in February 2020. With a permanent meeting space, church leaders planned a

capital campaign to purchase the building and bought new chairs for services. But, one month later, the pandemic shut down in-person gatherings. Undaunted, they waited until September for the capital campaign to raise money for the purchase and renovations, purchasing the building in November 2020.

The new building has not only given LIFEGATE Church a permanent place, but it has also given them a home in a community. Over the past year, they have been able to meet needs in their area through school supplies, food at Thanksgiving, and individual requests. As they renovate the building, they want to create more community areas. With that goal in mind, church leaders are asking, "How do we plan a building so that people have access to it?" Currently, they are renovating the second floor to create a work space or gathering place for meetings or hanging out with friends. Executive Pastor Ryan Mead said, "We want our building to be open as much as possible."



Reunion Church, Denver, Plans Unique Ministry Model & 2022 Launch

Reunion Church in Denver has a unique culture of making disciples, and its pastor has a unique perspective on his life after a life-threatening heart attack in 2021. Colorado natives Andrew and Hannah Morrison have invested their lives in discipleship-oriented ministries, so when they began planting on Denver's northeast side, they chose that model for the ministry.

In 2019, the Target Analysis Process (TAP) led the Morrisons to consider planting in Commerce City, northeast of Denver Metro. The area had grown 138% in 10 years because of its location near the Denver airport and its potential for young professionals and families.

Then in 2020, when the pandemic quarantine halted their plans, the Morrisons' core team took the time to rethink their vision. Andrew said, "We realized that we weren't event driven, and our target group wanted real community." So, he began asking, "What are we good at?" Since Andrew and his core team knew how to personally disciple people, the group decided to refocus on planting a discipleship-oriented community.

As they were moving forward with their plan in 2021, Andrew suffered a "widow-maker" heart attack in April. That event has taught him to slow down and entrust other people with leadership. The Reunion Church core team still plans to launch in 2022, with a focus on making disciples. Andrew says, "People have expectations of what a church looks like, and this is a little bit different."

Denver Church Plant Seeks Location & Vision for Ministry

The process of planting a new church takes time and planning. For Jerrod and Maggie Keith and their team, the time has been used to help them envision the church that God has called them to plant on Denver's east side.

In early 2019, Jerrod and Maggie left the Denver church where they served bi-vocationally to consider church planting. Since that time, they have visited 55 churches to listen and learn. That process has brought clarity about the kind of church they want to plant. In 2020, they attended FEC's Church Planters Assessment Center (CPAC) in Fort Wayne and received a green light to move forward with church planting.

Over the past year, they have built a core team with two other families: David and Lezli Urlacher and Derick and Melody Brooks. The team has started the Target Analysis Process (TAP) to discover where they should plant a new church. The team started the TAP with 27 different zip codes in six different states, narrowing their location to five zip codes in eastern Denver.

No dates for a launch have been set, yet. For now, they are envisioning the structure and leadership of the church they will plant. All of the couples have worked in a church as bi-vocational ministry staff, so the new church will likely be led by bi-vocational staff. But, their vision for unreached people in Denver will remain the heart of this new church.

