



**JESUS IS  
GLORIOUS  
AND EVERY  
PERSON  
NEEDS TO  
KNOW HIM.**



**CHRIST  
FELLOWSHIP**  
MURFREESBORO



# ABOUT CHRIST FELLOWSHIP

Hello!

My name is Blake Pierce. Along with my wife, Sam, our four kids, and a small team of others, I am preparing to plant a new church in Murfreesboro, Tennessee.

Our desire to begin a new church, particularly in the city of Murfreesboro, has come about in three major movements. God has drawn our hearts to the work of church planting in general over years of reading, listening, prayers, conversations, and the input of ministry partners and mentors. Then, in the summer of 2023, it became clear that the Lord was stirring our hearts in preparation for the next season of life and ministry. As we consulted trusted friends, looked at areas of opportunity and needs, and prayed that the Lord would give clarity, we encountered a group of churches looking to promote church planting in the city of Murfreesboro.

Murfreesboro, at the literal geographical center of Tennessee, is currently in an extensive season of exponential population growth with no signs of slowing down. While there are a number of healthy evangelical churches in Murfreesboro, there is also a great need for more churches to be planted to effectively reach both the current community and the future generation. Between these existing churches, the incredible growth of the city, and the transient nature of many Murfreesboro residents, we believe there is a massive opportunity for a new local church that practices discipleship, leadership training, and sending in a way that impacts not only the local community, but middle Tennessee and the world with the gospel.

As we have worked to prepare and to share this vision with others, the Lord has moved a few dear friends to uproot their lives, find new homes, jobs, and schools, and join us in our new mission field.

We are eager to begin working in our new community, praying that through our work the Lord would establish a new, Christ-centered, reproducing community of believers who live to know Jesus and make him known amongst the neighborhoods and the nations.

**Please take some time to read about our vision for planting in Murfreesboro and consider how God could use you to help us establish this new church!**

In Christ,  
Blake & Sam Pierce





# OUR TEAM

## The Pierce Family

Blake and Samantha Pierce met when they were paired together as co-leaders of a Bible study in college. They have been married for 11 years. Blake holds an M.A. in Pastoral Ministry from New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary, and is currently serving as a pastor in North Georgia. He is passionate about teaching God's word, building up the local church, and equipping Christ's people for the work of ministry. Sam is a fantastic wife and mom who loves discipling other women and helping them learn to read and understand God's word. Blake and Sam have the great joy of parenting four crazy, wonderful, adventurous kids. The Pierce family will be moving to Murfreesboro in the Summer of 2025 to begin the process of making disciples and planting a new church.



## The Barber Family

Kyle and Heather have been married for 18 years. Kyle works full time in commercial construction and Heather is a lifelong student and stay at home mom. They both began their walk with Christ as teens and have continued to pursue the Lord imperfectly and unapologetically ever since. They love connecting with people through small groups and are passionate about marriage ministry. They have two teenage daughters - Keira and Easley - who love Jesus but will also school you on quotes from "The Office".

## Todd Vandiver

Todd Vandiver is currently finishing the accelerated B.A. and M.Div in Biblical and Theological Studies program at Boyce College and Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. Todd has served repeatedly as a Ministry Track Leader and Bible Study Leader at FUGE camps and is passionate about seeing students impacted with the gospel. Todd will be moving to the Murfreesboro area after graduating to serve as a core team member.



**We will continue to actively build our Plant Team and Core Team through the end of 2025.**





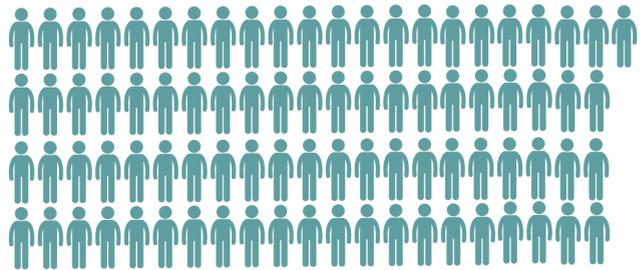
# MURFREESBORO: A RAPIDLY GROWING CITY

Rutherford County, Tennessee is the fastest growing county in the state - so fast, that Rutherford county recently surpassed Hamilton County as the fourth most populous in the state, and is expected to surpass Knox County as the third most populated in the next two decades.

Murfreesboro, Rutherford's county seat, is the 16th fastest growing city in the United States, its population having increased from around 70,000 to 173,000 since 2000. Both the city and the county continue to experience exponential growth, and are expected to double in size between now and 2045.

Unsurprisingly, even though there are a number of healthy churches in Murfreesboro, the population growth has far outstripped the multiplication of churches. Currently, the estimate is that there is one evangelical church in the city for every 8,500 residents. This stands in sharp contrast to the average ratio of one church for every 2,300 residents in most communities in the Southeastern US.

## RESIDENTS PER CHURCH SOUTHERN US | MURFREESBORO



 = 100 RESIDENTS

Not only because of the continual growth that Murfreesboro has seen in recent years, but because of the expectation for that trend to persist, there is an urgent need for new churches to be planted in this rapidly growing community if the churches in Murfreesboro are going to be adequately postured to introduce each person to the living hope of the gospel of Jesus.

# MURFREESBORO: A GOSPEL OPPORTUNITY

Murfreesboro's exponential growth has left a clear need for more churches, but it has also opened a unique opportunity. As more people move into the community, an increasing number of doors open for the gospel to have a life-changing, culture-shaping impact in the lives of these new residents.

In addition to this growth, Murfreesboro is home to Middle Tennessee State University, which hosts over 20,000 college students each year. These students come from the surrounding area, across the US, and around the world to seek the opportunity to study, develop, and open doors for their future. MTSU graduates enter the career field in various industries, and have far-reaching opportunities to influence both the local community and the world.

Between the opportunity to meet new neighbors and introduce them to the gospel, and the transient nature of university students coming into town, Kingdom-minded churches in Murfreesboro are uniquely postured to build discipleship structures in which new believers and church members are strategically trained up, equipped, empowered, and sent out to carry the gospel and plant new churches in the local community, around the United States, and across the globe.

**Imagine a city where the local churches have become so known for partnering together to raise up and send out disciple-making missionary teams, that young Christians orient their college plans around the opportunity to move to that city, join those local churches, be trained as missionaries while completing their degrees, and be sent out alongside brothers and sisters who are well-prepared to impact the world for Christ.**

We believe that Murfreesboro has the opportunity to be that city, and we believe that Christ Fellowship can play a strategically significant role in the process.





# THE EPHESIAN MODEL: A VISION FOR CHURCH PLANTING

In Acts 18, we see the apostle Paul's first interactions with residents of Ephesus. Over the following two chapters, and over the course of two years, Paul, along with some skilled friends, planted a church in which ample space was given to training up Christians in their understanding of and ability to steward the gospel. Those who became believers and were trained through this ministry went on to carry the good news of God's grace throughout their native city, and also around the known world, including planting churches in Colossae, Laodicea, Hierapolis, Smyrna, Pergamum, Thyatira, Sardis, and Philadelphia.

The Ephesian church is a wonderful example of what God can do through a local church that is intentionally postured to make disciples, train those disciples for gospel ministry, give those disciples opportunities to grow in leadership, and develop systems which lean into sending those disciples out to be used by God.

We believe that this is a model worth replicating in today's local church. As the gospel is shared, and those who are dead in their sin become alive in Christ, those Christ-followers must be equipped to live out their faith personally and publicly, becoming disciple-makers themselves. Those disciple-makers are equipped and empowered to serve one another, to skillfully use Scripture to counsel each other with godly wisdom, and to make a difference in their families, schools, and workplaces. Every day, they live as sent people in the lives in which God has placed them, and sometimes, they are sent out to take the gospel to the nations, for the glory of Jesus.

Our hope is to build systems and structures - small groups, accessible theological training, leadership development, and strategic partnerships with partner churches, mission agencies, and networks - to intentionally develop each believer theologically, devotionally, missionally, and, for those called to vocational ministry, professionally.

We believe that the Lord will use these systems and structures to raise up and call out teams of individuals who can replicate what we are doing now - planting new churches to see the gospel impact lives in Murfreesboro, middle Tennessee, and around the world.

## DISCIPLESHIP PATHWAY



# DISTINCTIVES

## WHAT SHAPES CHRIST FELLOWSHIP

Christ Fellowship will be grounded in the historic Christian faith and shaped by Baptist convictions. Our teaching and discipleship will be guided by the Baptist Faith and Message (2000), as well as historic confessions of faith (the Apostles Creed, the Nicene Creed, and the New Hampshire Confession of Faith).

We will partner in cooperation with other churches and ministries to raise up and send out disciple makers. Our strategic partnerships include the Concord Baptist Association, the Tennessee Baptist Mission Board (and more broadly, the SBC), Pillar Network, and the Churches Planting Churches Network.

### Core Values

**Christ-centrality** - We will seek to be a Christ-centered people, living out the new identity that he has won for us in the gospel; and we will seek in everything we do as a community of believers to make his gospel clearly known.

**Biblical Clarity** - We will seek to be clear in our understanding of Scripture, to shape our corporate and personal lives around it, to live in obedience to it, and to guard doctrines which are essential to our faith.

**Convictional Covenant Community** - We will seek to live out the corporate identity Christ has given, following the pattern of the "one another" passages in the New Testament and spurring one another on to remember the gospel and to live to make Christ known.

**Authentic Engagement** - In our work, in our study, in our creativity, in our relationships, and in every other facet of life, we will seek out what is the best way to live to the glory of Christ and to leverage our every day for the spread of his gospel.

**Gospel-driven Multiplication** - We will seek to live in joyful obedience to Christ's Great Commission both personally and corporately, investing our lives in making the gospel known among our neighborhoods and the nations.





# TIMELINE

**Lord willing, our timeline to planting Christ Fellowship will follow the outline below:**

June 2025

Christ Fellowship's Initial Core Team members move into the Murfreesboro area, begin finding jobs, homes, and ways to plug into the community.

Summer-Fall 2025

As our team connects with people in the community, we will work alongside partner churches to build out our full Core Team

November 2025

Core Team members are finalized, monthly core team meetings begin for fellowship and training.

March 2026

Home group Bible studies launched around the Murfreesboro area, led by Core Team members who have gone through small group leader training.

Summer 2026

Planting Team & Core Team members gather to officially covenant together as Christ Fellowship Murfreesboro, public worship gatherings begin.

Post Launch

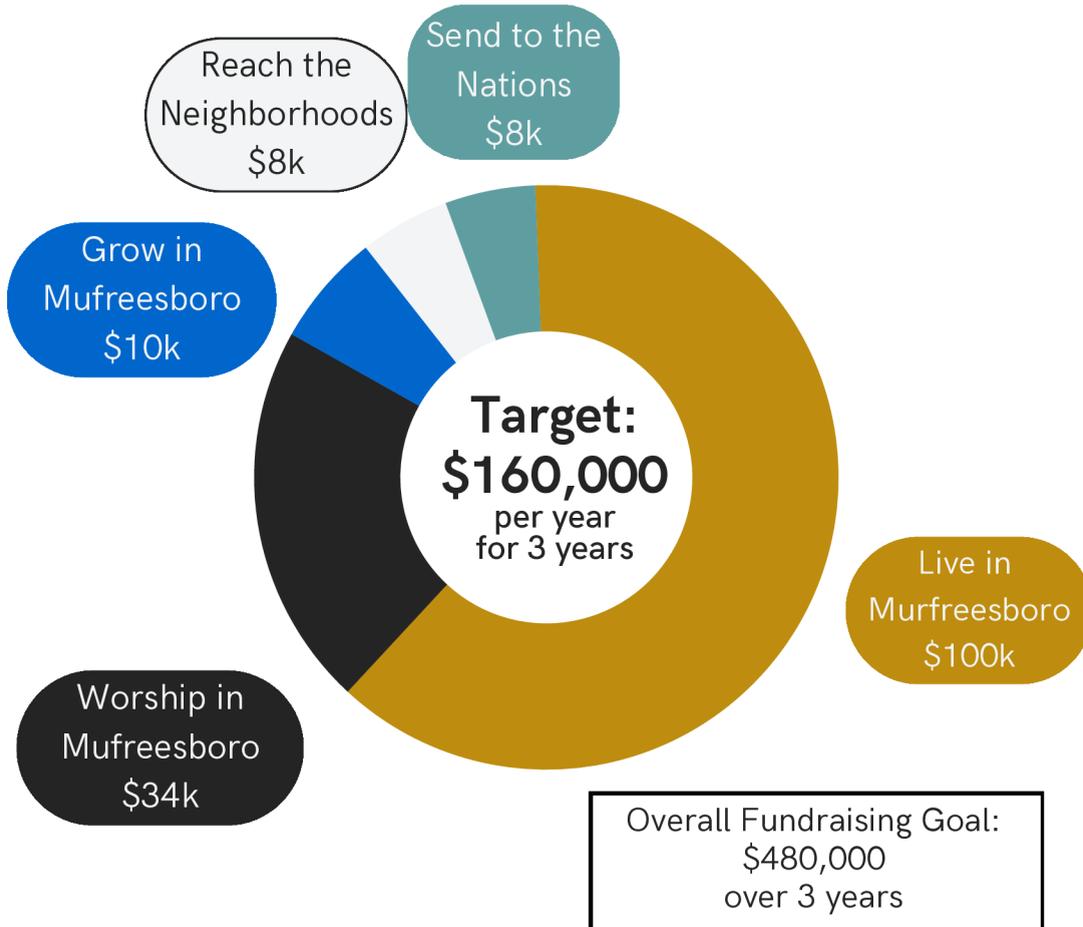
Members of Christ Fellowship will be a people redeemed by grace alone, seeking the good of the city and carrying the gospel across the globe so that the name of Christ may be glorified amongst the neighborhoods & the nations.

**Make Disciples.  
Foster Community.  
Develop Leaders.  
Invest in Missions.  
Plant Churches.**

# PARTNERSHIP

Church planting is an opportunity for Kingdom investment. Over the next several years, our team will leave homes, jobs, neighbors, family, and comfort, and invest our lives in making disciples and forming a new, Christ-centered, multiplying church in the city of Murfreesboro. While we invest our lives, we are praying that the Lord would provide partnerships with both churches and individuals who can invest financially to help us see this vision come to fruition. These gifts will be tax-deductible through partnering churches, and eventually through Christ Fellowship's own 501(c)(3).

**Is the Lord leading you to invest in a cause larger than yourself, to see the gospel bear fruit among the neighborhoods and the nations?**



# HOW YOU CAN SUPPORT CHRIST FELLOWSHIP

## PRAYER

We are deeply aware that regardless of our planning, strategy, fundraising, and execution, without the power of God at work in and through our team, we will not see success in planting Christ Fellowship.

What's more, we would not want to succeed at what we could accomplish in our own strength.

Our desire is to see the glory of Christ made known through the growth of his Kingdom. That will only happen if the Spirit of God accompanies our work with His power. Would you join us in praying to that end?

To join our prayer team and receive regular updates and prayer requests, visit <https://pierce-family.epistle.org>!

## PARTNERSHIP

Since the first century, churches have begun with the support of other local churches and individual believers.

Christ Fellowship will be no different. Our team is leaving homes, jobs, schools, family, and friendships to invest our lives in Murfreesboro in order to see disciples made and the gospel go forth. We are actively seeking financial partners to join with us in this effort.

Is God calling your church, or you as an individual, to invest with us financially to enable this ministry to happen?

Visit [cfboro.org/give](https://cfboro.org/give) for information about how to join our financial partnership team!

## PARTICIPATION

In addition to prayer, and financial support, planting Christ Fellowship will require the participation of fellow believers.

Perhaps as you read about our planting plans, the Lord is stirring your heart to take a more active part in His work in Murfreesboro.

Whether that means uprooting your life and actually moving to do the work of planting the gospel as a member of our team, or coming on a short-term team to help with church planting projects, we would love to have your help in carrying out gospel ministry in Murfreesboro!

To begin a conversation about opportunities to participate in our planting work, email [bpierce@cfboro.com](mailto:bpierce@cfboro.com)!



# NOTES



GOD WANTED TO MAKE  
KNOWN AMONG THE  
GENTILES THE GLORIOUS  
WEALTH OF THIS MYSTERY,  
WHICH IS **CHRIST IN YOU,**  
**THE HOPE OF GLORY.**

COLOSSIANS 1:27

