

BRANCHES

CHURCH PLANTING IN **SAN FRANCISCO**

Nov/Dec 19

We hope you had a Merry Christmas and a Happy New year!! Our family was able to visit us during the holidays, and we had a wonderful time with them. The boys are growing and really enjoyed Christmas this year. We started our first home bible study in mid-November and have been holding them every Sunday night. We had 18 (9 Adults and 9 kids) at our first Bible Study!! This most recent week we had 18 again and we praise God that we have never had a Bible study where just our family showed up. God is good. We have also been meeting more people and doing outreaches to meet more people and build relationships...please pray that God blesses these efforts and brings people to know Him.

You know whoever said, "Work Smarter Not Harder" must have never started a church. It seems to me that it doesn't matter how smart you are, church planting is just hard and living in San

Francisco doesn't make it any easier. We found that even the simple act of picking up furniture we bought from Craigslist, can be an all-day adventure because you can't find street parking and next thing you know you're walking a baby crib down a busy street bustling with cars. Lol. It must have been a funny sight. San Francisco is also just so spiritually dark. I'm reminded of the verse Eph. 6:12 "For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places." Here in the city the darkness is almost palpable. The battle against the darkness here can get very hard and exhausting.

Sometimes I allow this darkness to get to me. I begin to think about things like, "What if no one shows up for our first service," or "what will people think of me if this church doesn't grow as fast as people expect it to?" I can begin to look at others and try to measure myself by their expectations. I think we can all get like this sometimes. Often when life is hard or we go through difficulties, we begin to think "Am I doing everything right? What do others think of me? Why is this so hard?" We as Christians are not only battling against the spiritual darkness in the world around us, but we also must battle the sin within us. Praise God for His everlasting grace! Without Him no victory would be possible, the darkness would win, and we would lose. That's why we must always remember that Christ has the Victory! There is Victory in Jesus My Savior Forever!!!!

I must remember, 1 Cor. 10:31 "...whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God." This means it doesn't matter what the expectations of others are, there is only one that I must please, and that is God. If on our launch day I can look back and say I gave my all for the glory of God, then whatever the results are, I can rest in confidence that God was glorified. This ministry isn't about me. It isn't about people thinking that I have accomplished something. It is about the glory and majesty of Jesus.

After all, Jesus is the Vine, we are just the **Branches**.

Love you all =Bear Fruit= The Woodfins

Prayer List: Family- Judah's adoption, finances, our kids.

Bible Study- Cody, Kelsie, Ken, Alisha, Kaleb, Mikaela, Selah, Johnny, Radford, Joyce, Justus, Able, Charity, Katie, Colby

Community Contacts- Ann, Julio & Mai, Ray, Caleb, Sarai, Filly, Lidia, Sam & Susan, Joanna, Rod, Jericho, Mod

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Mission Trip Opportunities:

Dear Pastor & Church,

While on deputation we had multiple requests asking if churches could schedule mission trips to come help with Branches Baptist Church. We would love for anyone that is willing to come and help to come. Or if you cannot come there is an option at the end called "Mission Trip Sunday" that you might be interested in.

The Experience:

Sending your people on a mission trip to San Francisco can be one of the most life changing experiences they could have. They will be confronted by the desperate need for the Gospel in San Francisco as they are able to experience first hand the spiritual darkness in the City. They will also be able to experience exactly what it is like to start a church in such a needy area. As many people have never experienced church planting firsthand this will give them a greater burden for church planting and worldwide missions. And if this passion is continually cultivated this can give your people a deeper desire to see people reached and more churches started in their own communities as well.

Your people will also get to experience all that San Francisco has to offer and look at it with Gospel eyes. Everything from experiencing the world wide diversity of Chinatown, to seeing the dark prison of Alcatraz then gazing at the majestic beauty of the Golden Gate Bridge will give them a visual picture of those in SF imprisoned by their sins and our hope to see them set free to experience the Golden gates of Heaven.

Please consider scheduling an unforgettable trip to San Francisco to see people reached with the Gospel.

Basic Info

Housing: There are several places within the City that are dormitory style rooms at very low cost. There are also hotels in our neighborhood that are available. If it is a small group (5 or less) we also can house people in our apartment as long as you do not mind sleeping on an air mattress or a pull-out sofa bed.

Transportation: Through the kindness of a local church, we have access to church vans (Depending on availability and insurance these might be a possibility for use for your group). The Muni Bus system in San Francisco is also very reliable and safe to use. I have used it to get around the city multiple times. It is also very inexpensive; a full day bus pass is only \$5.

Fights: Cheap flights to San Francisco can be found at most major airports. A few possibilities to consider...
1. San Francisco Airport (SFO), Oakland Airport (OAK), and San Jose Airport (SJC) are all within an hour drive of San Francisco, make sure to check multiple airports for the best prices. 2. Spirit Airlines & Frontier Airlines are very cheap airlines if you are not bringing a lot of baggage. These airlines also have even cheaper prices if you buy the tickets AT THE AIRPORT instead of online b/c they charge high fees for online purchases.

Key Dates:

Here are key dates leading up to our launch. If you cannot make these dates many Summer opportunities are available as well. Just call or email and we can work on scheduling.

March 9-15: Outreach Leading into Sunday Preview Service

March 23-29: Outreach and Service Activity leading into Preview Service

March 30- April 5: Outreach, Beach Clean Up, Invites to Easter

April 6-12: Outreach and Invites leading to Easter Launch service.

April 18th: Major Outreach Activity

BRANCHES Mission Trip Sunday:

We realize that going on a mission trip to San Francisco is not for everyone. Whether it be time, finances, or just lack of desire we understand not every church will be coming to SF.

Because of this we will be offering Sunday Service Mission Trips for your church. This will be an interactive way for your church to get “hands on” with Branches without leaving the church building.

HOW THIS WORKS:

-A month out there will be an announcement made to your congregation about a “Sunday Service Mission Trip” with Branches.

-The Sunday before we will schedule either a Skype call or send a short video announcing and hyping up the event.

-The Service: After your regularly scheduled singing ext... The Congregation will be shown a video tour of San Francisco hosted by Jake and the Branches team. This video will show the city as it is touring through different neighborhoods from the Tenderloin, to see the sting of homelessness and drugs, to the Castro, to see the hold of homosexuality, and the desperate need for the gospel in each instance. From there the video will break with a call to prayer. (Each member will be asked to fill out a prayer pledge card committing to praying for Branches daily for at least 1 full month up to a year. After the prayer pledges are filled out and pastor leads in prayer, a second video will play.)

This will be the preaching video, in this video Jake will deliver a Bible message highlighting the desperate need for every individual to be a missionary in their own city. Jake will also give highlights as to how we are getting the gospel out in San Francisco.

This video will end as a call to action, to go, give, and pray for Branches.

CALL TO ACTION: Two Options

Prayer: Spend extra time at the end of the service in concentrated prayer for Branches (a prayer list can be provided).

Offering: an offering can be taken for Branches to buy Bibles, Tracts, and Mailers to help us get the gospel out.

Hands On: for an even more hands-on experience the church can participate in a Branches project. (i.e. addressing and mailing postcards to SF residents...ext.)

.....OR DO THEM ALL!!

This will be a way for your church to experience San Francisco and Branches Baptist Church without leaving the Pew. This experience can also be tailored to fit mission conferences or other service times.

If this is something that you feel your church would be interested in, please feel free to call me or email me @

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WE love all of you and thank you for your faithful prayers and support.

Jake Woodfin