

GARDEN CITY CHURCH





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Table of Contents

Greetings!.....	3
Why Chicago?.....	4
Mission & Vision.....	6
Core Identities.....	7
Beliefs.....	8
Our Team.....	9
Timeline.....	10
Budget.....	11
Fundraising.....	12
Get Involved.....	13



Greetings!



Thank you for taking the time to read more about how the Lord is at work in us to plant a new church in Chicago, IL. We want to make disciples who love God, love people, and seek the good of the city.

The Need

The City of Chicago is home to more than 2.3 million people, with over 9.4 million people in the Chicagoland metro area—every single one, loved by God but separated from Him by sin. We need to be restored in right relationship to God and our need for Him permeates all of life. The convergence of an incredible diversity of people in the city creates a beautiful mosaic. But we also know differences can create

division and hostility. Amidst the darkness of our sin and our fractured relationships with one another, where can we look for hope?

The Solution

God has not left us without hope. Our hope is found in Jesus Christ, the light of the world (John 8:12). Jesus encountered us in the middle of our brokenness and delivered us from the darkness of sin. In Christ, people of every tongue and nation are united in His beautifully diverse family. Now, as His people, we are sent to a world darkened by sin and divided against itself to proclaim the light and life of Christ. When we love our neighbors in Jesus' name, we make Him visible to a weary, watching world.

For the Good of the City

We aspire to be a local church family that reflects the diverse kingdom of God for the good of the city. We long to see God's kingdom come, in Chicago as it is in heaven. God is inviting us to work with him to seek the good of our neighbors, neighborhoods, and city. This includes loving the poor, showing mercy and living justly, and cultivating renewal.

God's story of redemption culminates in a garden city where God dwells with his people in perfect peace. We desire to join God's redemptive work as we, in partnership with other healthy churches, seek to plant a church that displays the glory of God for the good of Chicago.

Why Chicago?

Chicago is a city teeming with buzz and bustle, bruises and brokenness. It is home to Lou Malnati's deep dish pizza and Garrett's popcorn, the Bulls and the Bears, Louis Armstrong and Sam Cooke, towering skyscrapers and bustling commercial districts, as well as injustice, division, crime, and hopelessness. Full of breathtaking beauty and devastating brokenness. It is a city we have come to love because it is a city God loves.

Chicago is a city desperately in need of the good news of Jesus Christ. We believe God is calling us into his work of redeeming all things and is sending us to Chicago to make him known through the proclamation of the gospel and the demonstration of his good kingdom.

God's Heart for the City

Millions of image bearers, concentrated in cities, are cut off from relationship with God and one another. By 2050, 66 percent of the world's population will reside in cities. The call from Christ to take the gospel to every people, tongue, and nation is a call to the city. In cities, the gospel can reach people from hard-to-reach places, and from cities, it can be transported across seemingly impassable borders.

We desire to see the global, multiethnic, and multicultural Kingdom of God expressed in the local church. We long for a multiethnic, multigenerational community gathered around the cross of Christ and united by the Holy Spirit. In the church, as an embassy of God's kingdom, we are built together into a dwelling place for God, where we grow together in him, and are sent out to make disciples of all nations.

"Yet once you've come to be part of this particular patch, you'll never love another. Like loving a woman with a broken nose, you may well find lovelier lovelies. But never a lovely so real."

Nelson Algren,
Chicago: City on the Make



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"I've found the Copelands to be a humble and godly couple who love God, His people, and are deeply committed to reaching the lost for the glory of Christ. I believe that God's hand is upon them and that they will be vital to the advancement of the Gospel here in Chicago and to the nations. We are honored to partner with them."

Jon Kelly, Lead Pastor, Chicago West Bible Church

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The City in a Garden

In the 1830s, Chicago adopted the motto "City in a Garden." Parks throughout the city have been formative for community life, the sharing of ideas, social movements, and the cultivation of beauty for generations.

The story of humanity emerges from a garden (Genesis 1) and is moving towards a garden city (Revelation 21-22). The withering effects of sin we all experience are being revived through the redemptive work of Christ. One day, all will be fully and gloriously restored in the city of God where we will dwell with Him in perfect peace. We long to tell this story of life in Jesus Christ to a city in need of renewal.

Gospel Renewal

SEND Network estimates only 3 percent of Chicagoland's 9.4 million people are followers of Jesus. 22% of Chicagoans identify as Religious "Nones," the largest growing religious affiliation in the U.S. Many people, especially of younger generations, are leaving local churches or orthodox Christianity altogether. For many, politics, power, and abuse of leadership has provoked their departure rather than the gospel itself. While the actual number of Christ-followers in any place is hard to estimate, few Chicagoans attend church regularly and many neighborhoods are underserved by biblically faithful, gospel preaching churches.



Followers of Christ



Religious Nones



Missional Church Planting

We are excited about working together with a local church to proclaim Christ, make disciples, and plant another church in the city of Chicago. We will begin our work as missionaries—connected to a local church, intentionally living among the lost, sharing Christ, and loving and serving our neighbors in the name of Jesus.

Mission & Vision

Our mission is the same mission Jesus gave the church from the very beginning. The reason we exist flows from the Great Commandment (Mt 22:36–40) and the Great Commission (Mt 28:18–20). Our vision statement aims to answer the question, "what do we envision for our future as we accomplish our mission?" Our vision emphasizes the importance of place and relationship as well as our desire to share the life of Jesus, one city block at a time.

OUR MISSION:

TO MAKE DISCIPLES WHO LOVE GOD, LOVE PEOPLE, AND
SEEK THE GOOD OF THE CITY.

OUR VISION:

A MULTIETHNIC COMMUNITY OF ALL GENERATIONS AND
BACKGROUNDS EXPERIENCING RENEWAL THROUGH LIFE IN
JESUS.



Core Identities

Rooted

At the crux of God's redemptive story is His dwelling with us in the person of Jesus Christ—His coming, living, dying, rising, and reigning. In our shared life together, then, we seek to proclaim and demonstrate the good news of Christ with one another and with a weary, watching world. Our faith and practice are centered on Christ, shaped by his life, rooted in Scripture, and enriched by His ancient and global Church to which we belong.

Key Scriptures: Luke 4:18-19; Col 1:15-20

Diverse

God created humanity—people of all ethnicities—in His own image. Though our sin brought enmity and division, separating us from God and one another, in Christ, God is reconciling to himself a new multiethnic, multigenerational family—the Church. God's redemptive story culminates in the gathering of people from every tribe, nation, and tongue around His throne in worship. Life together in multiethnic, multigenerational community shapes, challenges, and transforms us into the people God desires us to be.

Key Scriptures: Gen 1:27; Eph 2:1-22; Rev 7:9-12

Bountiful

Jesus said it was more blessed to give than to receive. We joyfully and generously give ourselves, our time, and our resources to advance the work of God. We embrace hospitality and generosity among our neighbors. We seek to partner with others in alignment with our mission—in our city and around the world.

Key Scriptures: Acts 2:42-47; 4:32-35



“One of the things I appreciate most about Sam is how diligent he has been to prepare for this season of church planting. He has worked hard to cultivate a unique balance of head (theology), heart (mission), and hands (service). Not only that, but Sam is also a gifted leader—authentic, kind, and winsome. All of this has us, as a sending church, really looking forward to seeing how the Lord will use both Sam and Emily as missionaries to Chicago.”

Pete Schemm, Lead Pastor, Cave Spring Baptist, Roanoke, VA

Core Identities & Beliefs

Flourishing

God's grace in Christ moves us to act justly, love mercy, and walk humbly with Jesus. By loving our neighbors and seeking the good of the city, we follow Jesus' example and make His reconciling work visible to a broken and divided world. We will seek to learn from and listen to our community as we work together for flourishing. This includes loving the poor, showing mercy and living justly, and cultivating renewal.

Key Scriptures: Jer 29:7; Micah 6:8; Luke 10:25-37

Reproducing

The church is not a cul-de-sac or a dead end. The mission of the Church flows from the eternal Mission of God and expands until every street block, to the ends of the earth, is filled with worshippers of the King. We all participate in the work of ministry individually and corporately. We are all sent as ambassadors for Christ—in our homes, our neighborhoods, our city, and to the nations.

Key Scriptures: Gen 1:28; Mt 22:36-40, 28:18-20; 2 Cor 5:20

Beliefs

We stand in a biblical tradition of Christian belief centered on the Triune God and the gospel of Jesus, anchored in the truth of the Scriptures, aligned with the church's early confessional statements of faith, like the Apostles' and Nicene Creeds. More specifically, we align with the Gospel Coalition's Confessional Statement.

GARDEN CITY
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Our Team

Samuel Copeland | Pastor & Planter

Samuel is married to Emily. They have three daughters: Ella (4), Eva (2), and Emilia (4 mo). Samuel began his career in nonprofit and development work overseas, utilizing his undergrad in Business Administration. After sensing a call to pastoral ministry, he earned an MDiv from Southeastern Seminary. He has a passion to help others deepen their affections for Jesus, grow in Christ, and worship God in all of life. Samuel is also a huge fan of Liverpool, guitars, and ice cream.

Our Team

In order to seek God's heart and reach a diverse community in Chicago it's going to take a diversely gifted, multiethnic, and intergenerational team of men and women serving together. We are a team of imperfect people humbly walking in grace together. As we prepare to launch, we invite you to join our team as we grow together, live on mission, and serve our community.



Advisory Team

Garden City is led by our pastor and is currently advised by an external Advisory Team of mentors, pastors, and church planters. Our Advisory Team is intentionally multiethnic and missionary minded. After a season of initial growth and raising up of qualified leaders, Garden City will be led by a multiethnic, congregationally-affirmed leadership team of pastor-elders. Additionally, a team of men and women will serve as ministry team leaders (deacons) in various essential ministry areas.

Jon Kelly

Lead Pastor
Chicago West
Bible Church

Kent Steiner

Pastor of Outreach
Chicago West
Bible Church

Pete Schemm

Lead Pastor
Cave Spring Baptist
Roanoke, VA

Allen James

Pastor of Missions
Cave Spring Baptist
Roanoke, VA

GARDEN CITY TIMELINE



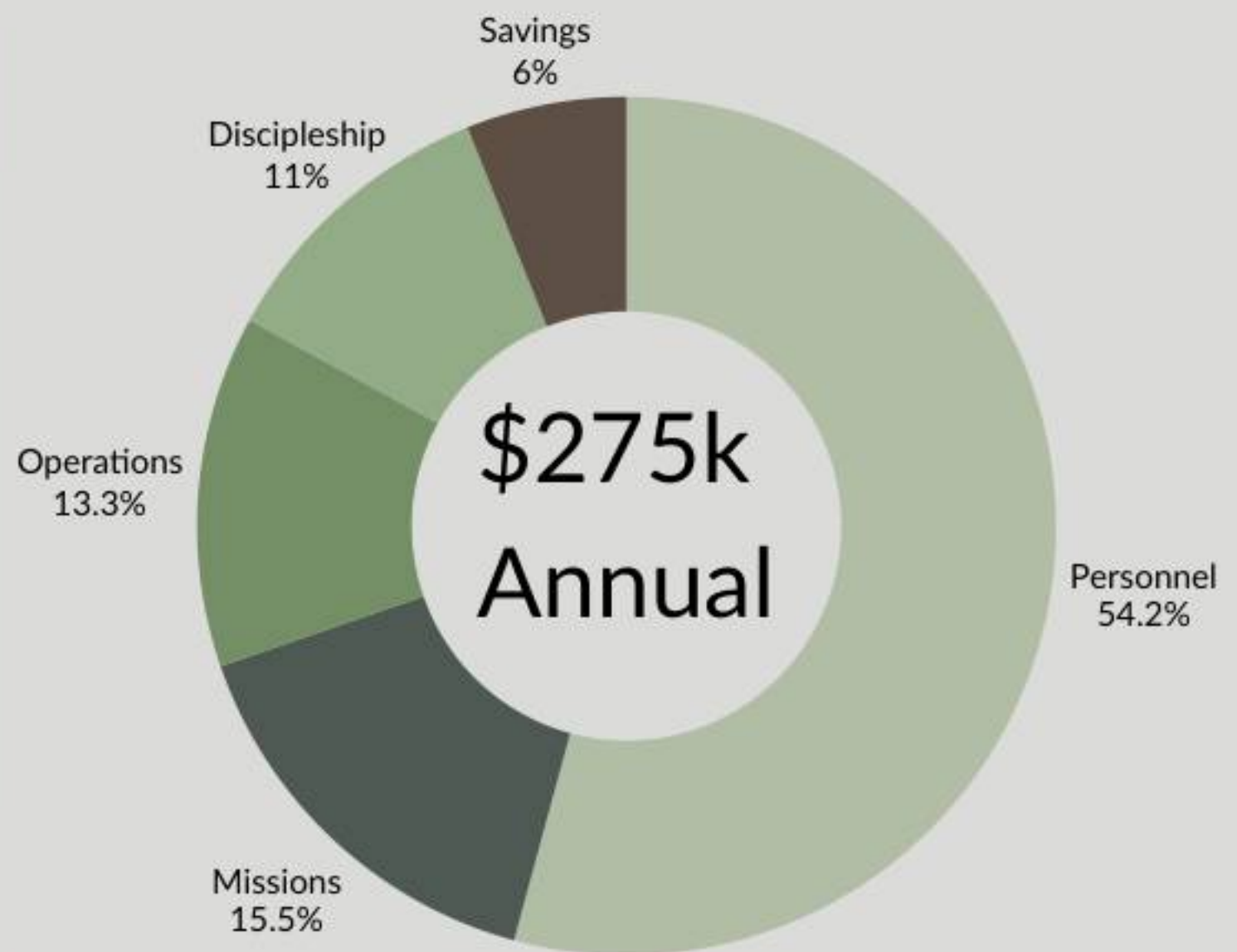
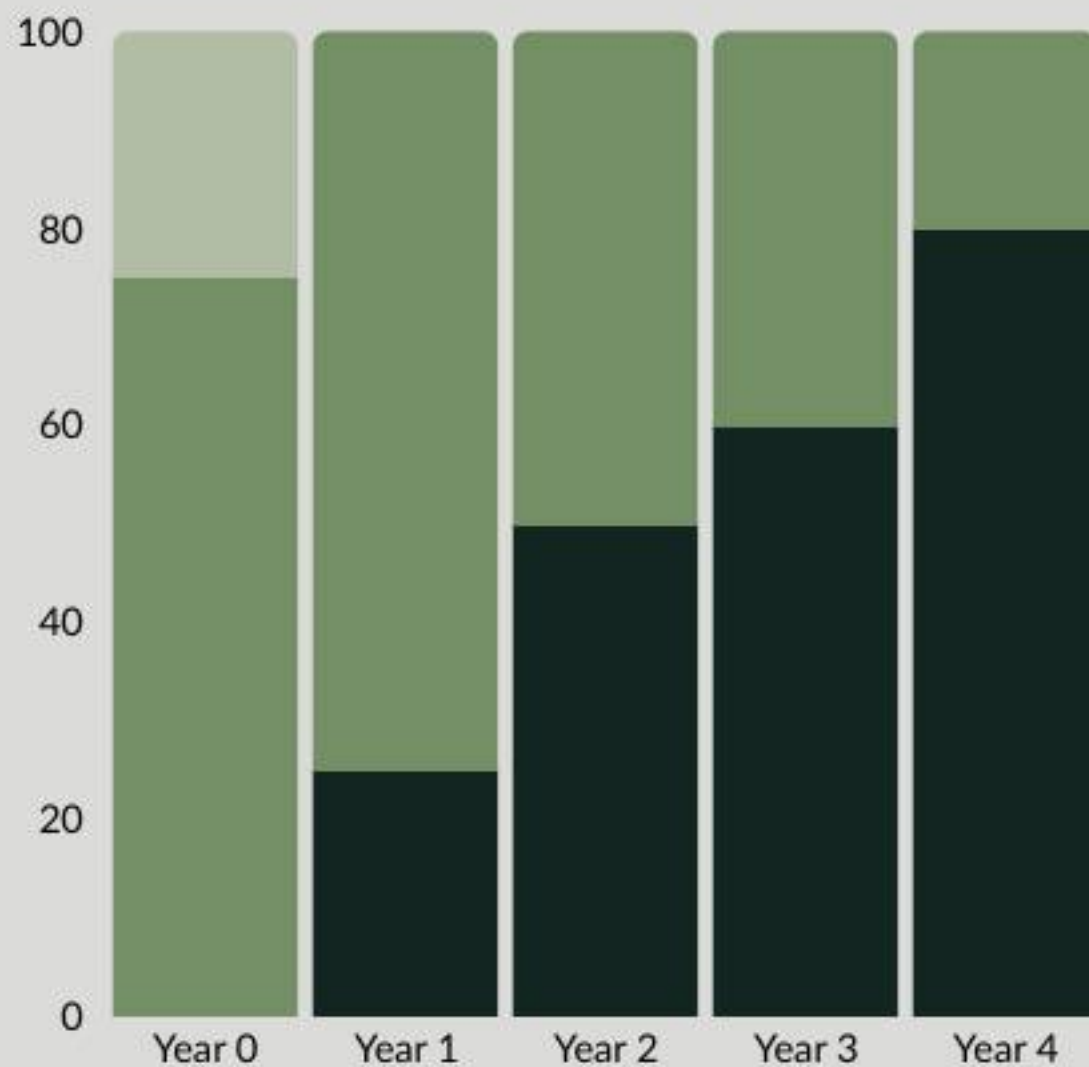
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“Samuel Copeland has the mindset of a humble learner that will be of great value as he moves to Chicago to engage in planting the gospel in a neighborhood there. He has a strong theological vision for church planting that will serve as a great foundation for the work. His past faithfulness in cross cultural gospel mission and serving local churches will be a great benefit to his team and the community in which he plants.”

Reid Monaghan,
Harbor Network Leader, Former Church Planter/Pastor in NJ

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Budget



We are currently seeking support for our launch year of ministry. Our goal is to become self-sustaining as a congregation over a period of 3-5 years.



“I have found Sam to be a very authentic brother. I’ve watched him over the last few years faithfully serve his local church, finish seminary, love his family and discern God’s next assignment without unplugging from any of his responsibilities. I highlight this because we need more committed, curious, faithful leaders like Sam everywhere ministry is needed. Chicago, just like many places, needs godly, authentic, long haul folk like the Copelands, that show people the real Jesus right where they are planted.”

Charles Wilson, Lead Pastor, The Hill Church, Roanoke, VA



Fundraising

Churches & Networks



Individual Partners



One-Time Gifts



Get Involved

PRAY

Please ask the Lord to go before us as we serve our community, love our neighbors, and establish a new church in our city.



GIVE

Prayerfully consider how the Lord would have you give financially to help bring the gospel to Chicago, Illinois.



GO

Perhaps you would like to get involved through serving in partnership with us or even joining our team to live on mission with us.



Contact

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Scan the QR Code to sign up for our newsletter and stay informed with what is happening and how to pray!



Scan the QR Code to give online.



