



Preparing for Revival in the City
Pray. Expect. Prepare.



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At any given time...in any area...at any moment... revival will break out in Houston but are we, as the Body of Christ, truly ready to receive that which has been promised to us?

We believe that it's time to expect what we have been praying for. In eager expectation of what we are to receive, we must work diligently to prepare for the outpouring and for the harvest that is still yet to come.



Previous Awakenings

In the First Great Awakening of 1735, it was stated $1/7^{\text{th}}$ of the population converted to Christianity. In the Second Great Awakening of 1857, thousands would join together for prayer meetings that were being held at least 3 times a day; at its peak, 50,000 people got saved per week with 20,000 baptisms per week, and out of a population of thirty million more than a million people were converted to Christianity within one year.



Exponential Growth

If an Awakening happened in the Greater Houston area, we can easily expect to see at least 400,000-500,000 (> 33,000 per week) convert to Christianity within a year but are we ready?

- Are we ready individually? Are we ready for our lives and our schedules to change?
- Are we ready corporately? Are our hearts ready for the face of the church to change?
- Do we have the right infrastructure in place to handle the sudden growth?



Prepared?

No matter if you are a small church or a mega-church, the question is the same:

If your church grew three times its size overnight, are you capable NOW to efficiently handle this shift?

If your answer is “No” then we encourage you to work with your team in developing a *Church Contingency Plan*.



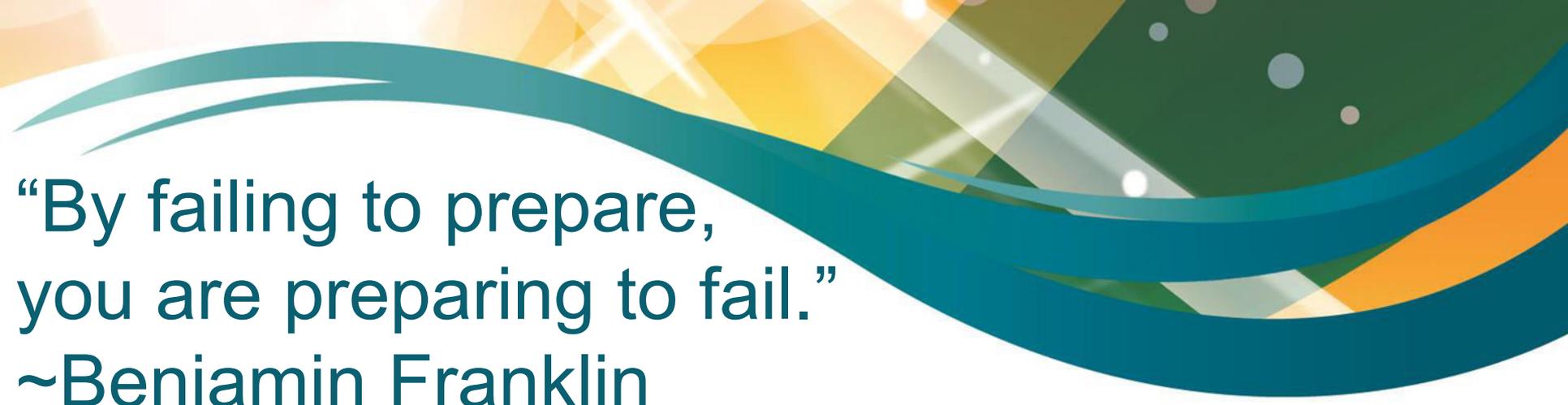
What is a Church Contingency Plan?

We define a *Church Contingency Plan* as a response plan that is activated during times of unusual, unexpected, sudden change and/or growth to a church that will potentially disrupt the normal daily operations of the church. The goal of the plan is to rapidly adjust to membership changes and implement streamlined processes in order to minimize disruption and maintain operations.



The next several slides are items we submit for your consideration when developing your *Church Contingency Plan*.

Note: What we suggest may not be all-inclusive so please evaluate each ministry and areas of operation in your church in order to completely develop your Church Contingency Plan.



“By failing to prepare,
you are preparing to fail.”
~Benjamin Franklin

*Whether we're prepared or not, Revival will come. If Revival comes to your church; If Awakening comes to our city, there's nothing you nor I can do to stop it; there's nothing we can do to control it. We can't control what will happen, what God will do or where God will send the people but we can prepare. The purpose of developing a **Church Contingency Plan** is to help us get prepared ahead of time for the inevitable Revival and Awakening that will come to our city.*



Contingency Planning: Things to consider

Prayer Team

- Prayer is needed before, during and after revival. If prayer stops so does revival.
- Pray individually and/or corporately with a goal of each time of prayer being at least one-hour in length. Goal: Consistent, frequent prayer (1 hour per day is preferred)
- Specifically pray for transforming revival, sustained revival, for the hearts of the people in the church to be prepared to receive new converts, for the church to be prepared, increase in church finances, resources, and leaders, godly wisdom, strength and divine health



Contingency Planning: Things to consider

Area Demographics

- Establish relationships with other pastors within the area, particularly those within your same zip code. If you're not already part of the Adopt-a-Code program you may want to get connected. www.adoptacode.org
- Know the demographics of the neighborhoods that surround your church. Knowing may help you understand and be better prepared to receive and best serve them when they arrive to your church.
 - Poverty? Language barriers? Homelessness? Single parent homes? Younger or Older generations?, etc.



Contingency Planning: Things to consider

New Leaders

- New leaders may be needed in order to help absorb some of the new and/or increased workloads.
- Identify potential new leaders and new aides/assistants
- Determine scope of responsibilities
- Provide Leadership Training
 - During training, explain expectations and what their role will be when the *Contingency Plan* is enacted.
 - You may want to give them small (or increased) responsibilities now so they can be further developed and used at a greater level when needed.



Contingency Planning: Things to consider

Preparing Your Congregation

- Consider preparing your members for what they might witness and experience
- Those who have been rejected by the world but have been accepted by God will enter into the church as they are (tattoos, piercings, worldly dress, crude language, strange behaviors, different race, different culture, the rich as well as the poor, etc.) and they will be totally unchurched! They will not know Christian terminology, how to act in church, what's appropriate dress. They will not know how to praise and worship. They will not know about tithes and offerings, etc. The Body of Christ will be called to love, to be patient and to nurture these new souls.



Contingency Planning: Things to consider

Preparing Your Congregation (cont'd)

- You may want to do a message that encourages soul-searching so your members don't have any prejudices hidden in their heart so that they will be able to accept and love all people regardless of their current condition or outward appearance.
- You may want to consider encouraging all your members to serve in some capacity now at the church as they will be called upon to serve in a greater capacity during the season of revival and transformation.



Contingency Planning: Things to consider

Sermon/Meditation/Message

- Be prepared to preach a clear message of salvation.
 - A message of salvation will have to be repeated frequently during this time so you may want to have several different messages of salvation.
- Identify other ministers you know within and without your team that will be able to help preach in order to allow you time to rest and seek the Lord.
 - Ensure that each minister you choose is able to preach a clear message of salvation.



Contingency Planning: Things to consider

New Member Programs

- New people will constantly be coming into your church so you may want to consider modifying and increasing availability to attend some of your new member programs
 - New Membership Classes: Consider condensing and only reviewing items that are of utmost importance.
 - Discipleship Classes: Consider decreasing content to essentials and/or increasing weekly frequency. For example: If you currently meet for one hour once a week for 12 weeks then consider meeting for one hour 3 times a week for 4 weeks or for 2 hours Tuesday-Thursday for 2 weeks or 2 hours Monday-Friday for one week, etc.



Contingency Planning: Things to consider

New Member Needs

- These new converts will come with needs: emotional, spiritual and financial. Determine how you can help.
 - Determine who amongst your leaders will be available to provide individual, marriage and family counseling.
 - Determine how to handle when couples living together in sin indicate they want to get married immediately.
 - Identify churches in/near your area that have resources readily available. Example: Assistance to the poor, job training, financial budgeting, etc.
 - Know of other non-church resources available: Example: Houston Food Bank and their social services programs.



Contingency Planning: Things to consider

New Member Needs

- Determine who will do discipleship? Who will do follow-up? Will you equip them to immediately evangelize to their family and friends? If so, how?
- Increase current on-hand resources related to new believers: bibles, CDs, new member materials, etc.
- Resource consumption will significantly increase so determine what free resources provided by the church are absolutely essential for the new member to have.
- Determine how you will be able to communicate with new members, particularly service times and location changes.



Contingency Planning: Things to consider

Schedule Changes

- Determine what are the essential vs. non-essential activities, classes and services at your church
- Cancel all non-essential activities, classes, and services during this season (reincorporate as things stabilize)
- Determine if service start and end times need to change.
 - Consider adjusting worship services to essentials.
- Consider increasing the number of services on Sundays, and consider adding Saturday services.
- Consider canceling Sunday classes/teachings or consider shifting them to a day or evening during the week.



Contingency Planning: Things to consider

Exceeding Maximum Capacity

- Determine the maximum capacity of your sanctuary before you reach “overflow”
- Plan for Overflow
 - Are there rooms (where classes were being held) or other sanctuaries (youth building, prayer room/chapel) with a TV where the overflow can be seated to view the worship service via livestream?
 - Is there enough room outdoors to hold dual services: one inside and one outside simultaneously?
 - If yes, make plans to conduct such a service



Contingency Planning: Things to consider

Exceeding Maximum Capacity (cont'd)

- Develop a plan on how to deal with parking challenges
- Determine how to deal with the increased amount of children that will be part of Children's Ministry. How will you handle this overflow?
- Identify other temporary venues that could handle new seating capacities
 - Can a neighboring church take some of the overflow?
 - Can services be moved to inside a school? Football Stadium? Movie theater? Open field? Arena, etc?
 - Consider costs; determine needs; develop plan



Contingency Planning: Things to consider

Exceeding Maximum Capacity

- Determine if you need to change the way you do altar call as hundreds may respond in one service
- How will you handle mass baptisms? Will you be able to perform them in your church or will you have to perform outdoor baptisms at the church? Or will you have to move the baptisms and perform them in a pool, beach or river?
- If dual services and/or services held in other locations, how can/will you ensure that the services remain consistent throughout all services and locations?



Contingency Planning: Things to consider

Exceeding Maximum Capacity

- Consider identifying members who may be able to start prayer groups or bible studies at their home during this season.
 - You will need to know how large of a group they can host and how many sessions per week are they willing to host.
 - You will need to give these leaders an outline/training materials/teaching book or manual and/or provide training.
 - Once this is implemented, the IT staff would need to update website with date and times of session, type of sessions (teaching, prayer, bible study, etc) and name/number of contact person. Update other communication tools as well.



Contingency Planning: Things to consider

Technology

- There may be a strain on your IT resources so consider identifying others who can help. Example: One person manages web, another manages social media, etc.
- Consider reducing non-essentials: upload, modify, revise only those things identified as essential.
- Consider posting new member, evangelism and discipleship materials on a password protected, member-only section of website to reduce printing costs
- Encourage members to look daily, even before leaving home to attend church, for important website updates



Contingency Planning: Things to consider

Other Considerations

- You may want to consider having a selection of simple yet deeply spiritual worship songs (less words but meaningful) that everyone could easily grasp and sing.
- Leaders will need to be able to still meet the needs of existing members so how will you be able to do that?
- Our city will become the mission field so you may want to consider how best to utilize your missionaries here and determine when it's appropriate to send them abroad.
- Consider how you will be able to teach and nurture those that may be illiterate.



Contingency Planning: Things to consider

Other Considerations

- Based on the demographics in your area, you may need to make resources available in other languages for both youth and adults.
 - Will you need to translate materials? If so, which ones? Will you need translation during one service? All services? New Spanish speaking-only service, etc.?
 - Consider financial impact as your supply costs will increase due to increased usage (coffee, hygiene supplies, paper products, housekeeping services, communion supplies, utilities, etc.)



Pray. Expect. Prepare.

We encourage you to develop a Church Contingency Plan with your leadership team. Transforming revival will come to our city suddenly and it is our responsibility to be ready to receive the harvest. We need to prepare not only for ourselves but for the dear sheep that the Lord will entrust us to nurture and raise as children of God. May we all be prepared.

Thank you for taking the time to read this information. Please feel free to share this with other pastors. If you have any questions then please contact us at info@churchonfirecc.org. Blessings to you and your church!