

# Better Life Church

Loving God, Loving People, Loving Life.

## STRATEGY GUIDE 2013-14

## CALLED TO PLANT A CHURCH: WE WANT OTHERS TO ENJOY THE “BETTER” LIFE FOUND ONLY IN JESUS CHRIST.

**M**ichelle and I believe God is leading us to plant a life giving church, filled with the Spirit of God. That we believe is the vision God has called us to.

Bringing people together to be Christ followers, generously sharing with one another and experiencing the wonders and worship of God.

This vision becomes alive when we help people realize the words of Jesus in John 10:10, - The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly (better) - NASB.

Michelle and I know what it's like to live apart from the presence and blessings of God. But we have witnessed Him taking the two of us, who were literally kids when we married and the cards stacked against us, and blessing us over and over again the more that we trusted Him.

Despite the situations that life “could throw” at us and our marriage, we believe that the life we have with Jesus is better than if we had never trusted.

Yet, so many people settle for less because they listen to what I call “the voice of less.” We believe in that verse that Jesus wants to speak and be “the voice of more” in people’s lives.

So that’s why we believe God has birthed this vision of Better Life Church in our hearts. We truly want others to enjoy this abundant or better life as we have and that they might also realize, with Jesus as their Savior, the best is yet to come.

Use this strategy guide as a resource to find out more about the kind of church God has called us to lead!

- Clint and Michelle Abbott



### BETTERLIFEPEOPLE.COM

Stay up to date on everything happening at Better Life Church by visiting our website.

You can find information about upcoming events as well as more detailed information about our mission, vision and values.

If you have any additional questions, please call us at 616-550-1067 or email us at [clint@betterlifepeople.com](mailto:clint@betterlifepeople.com).

8/1

**BUILD LAUNCH TEAM**

August 2013

8/1

**START A PRAYER NETWORK**

August 2013

9/1

**HOST INTEREST DINNERS**

September – November 2013

10/1

**START LAUNCH TEAM MEETINGS**

12/1

Pastor Clint and Michelle  
**ATTEND ARC 3.0**

1/1

**FIND LAUNCH LOCATION**

January – April 2014

4/1

Pastor Clint and Michelle  
**ATTEND ARC 4.0**

9/21

**LAUNCH SERVICE SUNDAY,**

September 21, 2014 10:00 a.m.

2017

**2017 LAUNCH A SECOND CAMPUS**

2020

**START A BETTER LIFE MINISTRY COLLEGE**

**STRATEGY & TIMELINE**  
FOR MORE INFO VISIT  
[BETTERLIFEPEOPLE.COM](http://BETTERLIFEPEOPLE.COM)



**SIMPLY PUT: THEY LOVED GOD, LOVED PEOPLE AND LOVED LIFE.**

Jesus offered a better life, - The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly (better) - NASB.

Jesus’ disciples then set out to offer this new life to people by building His church.

**A picture of that church is found in Acts 2:42-47**

42 They devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. 43 Everyone was filled with awe at the many wonders and signs performed by the apostles. 44 All the believers were together and had everything in common. 45 They sold property and possessions to give to anyone who had need. 46 Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, 47 praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.

**Therefore at Better Life the vision that God has given us is build His church just as the New Testament disciples did:**

**VISION**

Bringing people together to be Christ followers, generously sharing with one another and experiencing the wonders and worship of God.

**SIMPLY PUT**

*They loved God, loved people and loved life.*

“Loving God, Loving People, Loving Life”

Better Life then exists to connect people, grow people, serve people and help people find their ministry in the church and their mission in the world!

**“LOVING GOD, LOVING PEOPLE, LOVING LIFE”**



## WHO WE ARE

Clint completed his undergraduate work at Ferris State University while majoring in Business Education with minors in Physical Education, Social Studies, and Computer Science. He has also completed his ministry studies at Grace Bible College with some graduate work at Columbia Bible College, (SC).

Clint has 20 years of pastoral experience having served in pastorates in Carter Lake, Iowa (Lakeview Bible Church), Newaygo, Michigan (New Community Church), Dutton, MI (LifeTrak Community Church) and is now church planter and Lead Pastor at Better Life Church in the Kentwood & Gaines Township area (SE Grand Rapids, MI).

Michelle has served as Director of Children's Ministry, Small Group Leader, Women's Fellowship Facilitator and is extremely gifted by God with the gift of hospitality.

Clint's hobbies include running, officiating (volleyball, basketball & soccer), and hanging out in coffee shops meeting people. Michelle enjoys reading, music, arts & crafts, starbucks coffee and family.

Clint & Michelle, have been married for 40 years, have 3 sons, 2 grandsons and reside in Gaines Township.

***"CHURCH PLANTING IS THE SINGLE MOST EFFECTIVE EVANGELISTIC  
METHODOLOGY UNDER HEAVEN" C. PETER WAGNER***



### WHAT IS YOUR DOCTRINE? WHAT DO YOU BELIEVE?

Better Life Church aggressively reaches out to people who are far from God. Although our approach is anything but traditional, we believe in and maintain a conservative theological position. Visit our website for a complete list of our beliefs.

### ARE YOU AFFILIATED WITH A DENOMINATION?

We are not, however Better Life Church is partnered with a number of church planting organizations and churches to ensure transparency and accountability.

### ARE MY DONATIONS TAX DEDUCTIBLE?

Yes. Better Life Church operates as a non-profit in the State of Michigan and enjoys federal tax exempt status as a 5013c organization.

### HOW IS YOUR CHURCH LED?

Better Life Church is senior pastor-led, but is under the ultimate authority of our 5013c board and church bi-laws. The senior pastor is pastored by the "Board of Overseers" led by leaders who pastor large congregations. Their advice and insight is invaluable to our pastor's decision making process.

Elders are also appointed by the senior pastor to provide care for our church body.

## THREE WAYS YOU CAN GET INVOLVED...

# PRAY

### PRAY & SHARE

We are asking our supporters to pray for Better Life Church in the following areas: relationships, finances and leadership.

Do you know anyone that lives in or near the greater Grand Rapids area? We are eager to get to know as many people as we can. Just email their information to [clint@betterlifepeople.com](mailto:clint@betterlifepeople.com).

# GIVE

### GIVE FINANCIALLY

Will you prayerfully consider how you can partner with us to launch Better Life Church?

We are raising \$100,000 to launch on September 21, 2014. This will cover all of our start up equipment and facility costs. You can view our itemized budget online at our website.

Give by mail:  
P.O. Box 888157  
Kentwood, MI 49588-8157

Give online:  
[Betterlifepeople.com](http://Betterlifepeople.com)

# JOIN

### JOIN OUR TEAM

Are you interested in being a part of building a life-giving church from the ground up? If so, we'd like to connect with you. Reach out and email us directly so we can set up a time to meet and get to know each other better.

You can email [clint@betterlifepeople.com](mailto:clint@betterlifepeople.com) for more information.

# **BETTER LIFE** THE KEY “LOVING GOD, LOVING PEOPLE, LOVING LIFE” **VALUES**

## **EMPOWERING LEADERSHIP**

Better Life values empowering people for the ministry that God has for them. This begins with taking them through the Growth Tract and continuing in helping each person find their ministry and mission that God has for them. We flip around the pyramid of authority so that our leaders assist others to attain the spiritual potential God has for them.

## **DISCOVERING MY MINISTRY**

Better Life values promoting spiritual gift development and deployment over traditional hierarchical structures. We believe that God has gifted each person for a ministry within the church and mission in our world. Our Better Life leaders help others determine their spiritual gift and area where they can serve. When Christians serve in their area of giftedness, they generally function less in their own strength and more in the power of the Holy Spirit. Therefore ordinary people can accomplish the extraordinary!

## **PASSIONATE SPIRITUALITY**

Better Life values providing an atmosphere in which people develop a passion to their spiritual life. Are the Christians in this church 'on fire'? Do they live committed lives and practice their faith with joy and enthusiasm? Prayer life & Enthusiasm. At Better Life another value is to help each person develop this fire or passion for the Lord so that their relationship with Jesus is evident (Acts 4:13 NLT).

## **DISCOVERING MY PURPOSE**

At Better Life Church we offer the “the Growth Tract” which is a process of helping people become Christ followers and on to serving their Lord in the Kingdom of God.

## **INSPIRING WORSHIP SERVICE**

Better Life values worship services to be inspiring, unforgettable and life changing events. Whenever the Holy Spirit is truly at work (and the Spirit's presence is not merely presumed), there will be a noticeable effect upon the way a worship service is conducted including the entire atmosphere of a gathering.

## **GROWING BIGGER AND SMALLER AT THE SAME TIME**

Better Life is pro-active in providing small groups. We use the term “holistic” to indicate that Life Groups are more than just discussing Bible passages to applying its message to daily life. In these groups, members are able to bring up those issues and questions that are immediate personal concerns. We are sharing life together!

## **GENEROSITY**

Better Life values reaching out to address physical needs and spiritual needs of people in our community. Evangelism at Better life isn't just using some programmed format rather it is people sharing with one another and in the process of sharing needs, sharing their spiritual stories and journeys together.

## **LOVING RELATIONSHIPS**

Better Life values loving relationships! Why? This is what the New Testament Church was all about as in our vision statement- Acts 2:42-27. It is people spending time with one another outside of the morning worship service or other official church sponsored events (laughter and hospitality).



**Facebook**

[facebook.com/better life church - kentwood](https://facebook.com/betterlifechurchkentwood)



**Twitter**

[@twitter.com/betterlifegr](https://twitter.com/betterlifegr)

# THE OPPORTUNITY

## About Kentwood / Gaines Township Section

Kentwood is a suburban community on the south eastside of Grand Rapids and is home to approximately 50,000 residents while neighboring Gaines Township to its south, is home to approximately 30,000 residents. This southeast section of what is called the Greater Grand Rapids Metroplex is among the fastest growing areas, necessitating the creation of the south beltline (M-6) to facilitate improved transportation for this growing community. Just north of Kentwood is the city of Grand Rapids, with a population of approximately 200,000 and the entire region is listed as the Grand Rapids Metro with a little over 1 million people.

## Why another church in greater Grand Rapids?

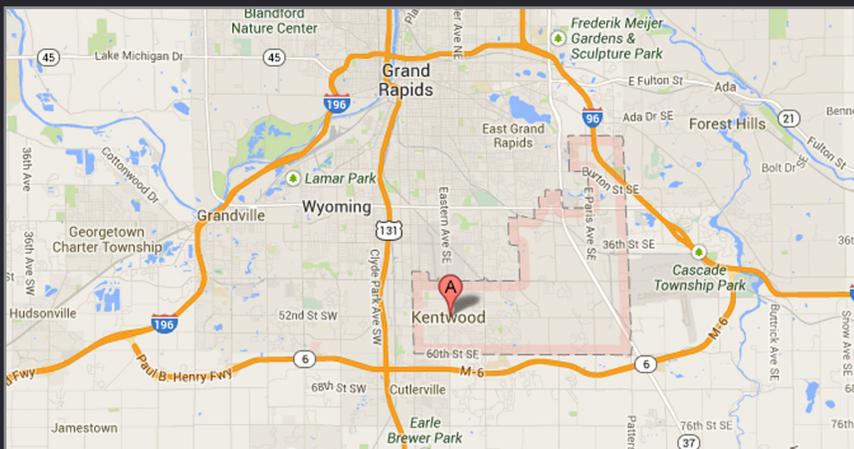
The city of Grand Rapids is slowly beginning to show signs of growth. The suburban areas surrounding the city are growing rapidly, with some of the greatest growth in our Kentwood and Gaines Township communities as well as neighboring Byron and Caledonia Townships.

Even with the number of churches in the West Michigan community, if everyone in these neighboring communities wanted to attend church, there would not be enough seating capacities to accommodate.

## Cultural Impact

One factor that is incredibly important to be aware of is that Kentwood and Gaines Township are growing into extremely diverse communities. In the Kentwood School district over 70 different languages are spoken. The community, with its rich diverse culture, is ripe for a Better Life Church to strategically present the gospel of Jesus Christ.

## Kentwood/Gaines Township in relationship to The Greater Grand Rapids area



# YOUR OPPORTUNITY



Today I am here to serve and love people. I choose to be full of faith; I will not only be a hearer but a doer of God's Word.

I choose to dedicate my life to prayer and ask God for His miraculous power and the courage to do the impossible.

I will make Godly relationships a priority in my life as I esteem others higher than myself.

Today, I commit to living a life of excellence and doing the best I can with what I have.

I choose to be generous and to look for opportunities to bless those around me. Today, I will be full of character and integrity so that I may live my life in such a way that others will see the goodness of God.



# OUR FOCUSED STRATEGY ARE THESE 4 COMPONENTS

## 1 Attractional Church Model

The attractional church is a life-giving model that uses a relevant, practical approach to reach people through felt needs and meeting people right where they are in any season of life. This is the first part of our strategy which will be implemented through our week-end services. (For more information, please read *The Attractional Church* by Billy Hornsby)

## 2 Small Groups

Our small group (Life Groups) strategy will be based on affinity groups that meet based on the interests of people but will be centered around a shared experience with Jesus. The goal of these groups will be to build community but more importantly introduce those far from God to loving Christians in a casual, non-threatening environment.

## 3 Local Community

Whether through serving in homeless shelters, visiting hospitals and treatment centers, helping displaced refugees that are flocking to Kentwood and Gaines Township, or school supply giveaways; we will be constantly overwhelming our local community with the love of God through the actions of Christ. Our goal is to communicate the gospel through our actions and our love in order to reveal the glory of God to the community around us; the people that we come in contact with everyday.

## 4 Missions

We envision the day when we, through collaborative efforts with social justice campaigns (A21, Celebrate Recovery), various treatment centers in greater Grand Rapids, and local food banks in order to execute justice throughout the earth. We will be reproducing our local efforts by planting churches throughout West Michigan and into other countries (A Better Life Church influence on each continent) as well as extending influence into the local correctional facilities. We will be traveling to other countries to help establish God's kingdom in the uttermost parts of the earth.



THEY LOVED GOD,  
LOVED PEOPLE  
AND LOVED LIFE.

**A SPECIAL THANKS TO:**

**Pastor Lew Vander Meer**

**Pastor Lew Vander Meer, Sr. Pastor of New Community Church, Grand Rapids, MI**

Pastor Lew was the first to sign on our Overseer Board of Directors and has encouraged Michelle and myself in ministry for over 15 years.

He brings 40+ years of ministry experience and Better Life will be blessed by his wisdom and insights.

**ASSOCIATION OF RELATED CHURCH**

[www.arcchurches.com](http://www.arcchurches.com)

The strategies and relationships we made through your network were tremendous. No where did we find more practical and useful tools and resources



“... The church is the hope of the world... God is calling you to play a role in the building of His Church. Will you respond?”  
-- Pastor Bill Hybles



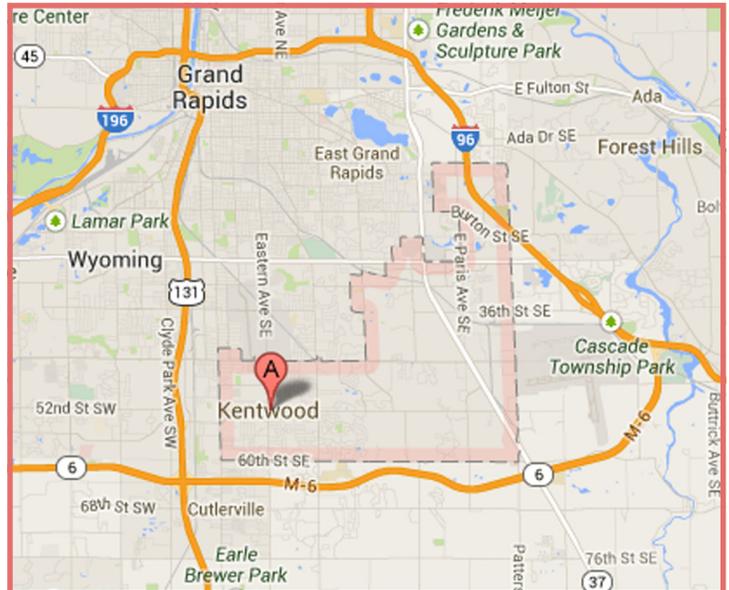
A non-denominational organization, Willow Creek Association provides affiliated churches with many resources for the equipping of leaders and churches.

Facebook



Better Life Church - Kentwood posted:

Like us on Facebook to stay updated on events and happenings at Better Life Church. Just visit: [www.facebook.com/better-life-church-kentwood](http://www.facebook.com/better-life-church-kentwood)



Twitter



@betterlifegr tweeted:

Stay connected by following us on twitter. Daily Scriptures, quotes and resources to study!  
[@twitter.com/betterlifegr](https://twitter.com/betterlifegr)



**BETTER LIFE CHURCH**

P.O. Box 888157  
Kentwood, MI 49588-8157  
Clint Abbott Lead Pastor  
616-550-1067 or [clint@betterlifepople.com](mailto:clint@betterlifepople.com)