



Kingsway Christian Church: Expansion Philosophy

KINGSWAY IS HERE...

Kingsway Christian Church was born into the age of the Mega Church philosophy being the one that was reaching more people - that bigger was better. This was also mirrored with large malls going up around America. Entire expansion and strategy plans have been built around that idea and thought as one campus tried to reach the multitudes. Our build, our land, our staff, our thinking, and our decision making was filtered through that one driving thought. As a result, thousands of "Mega Churches" reached to the sky all around the United States, "one big location to have it all." It worked, for a while.

But something happened in the mid 2000's that changed everything and Kingsway was not spared the results that came from this dynamic shift. Big was no longer better. The Mega Church philosophy was coming to an end as people wanted small versions of exceptional quality that focused on meeting specific needs in their own back yard with less people. People began to avoid the "big." This also has been mirrored in the corporate world in mega malls now decentralizing, many closing, people shifting to on-line buying or boutique shops. As far as church, people no longer attended like before and those mega churches now had insurmountable debt on their hands but with lower revenue that could no longer sustain the basic utilities and deferred maintenance it required. Churches, that at one time were thriving, were doing well to survive and in many cases, are closing their doors.

Kingsway faces down the same path that most churches have faced. The same discussions that have taken place in our meetings has been had in countless rooms with church leaders around our nation. Kingsway looks around to see a lowering membership count with decades of debt and lack of resources to reinvest in itself. In survival mode, we look more like a declining community club than the church that boldly marches on the gates of hell. Many times, we fall into the trap of thinking that strategies never change while purpose, vision, and values do. But in reality, it is the opposite. Our vision of becoming like Christ, our purpose of glorifying God by making disciple of all nations, and the values that derive from the attributes of God will and should never change while strategies should constantly change. What strategies worked 20 years ago is not as effective today but the attributes and reasons we execute those strategies remain the same, Jesus wants people to have eternal life. Churches end up fighting with their last breath to hold onto a strategy that God Himself has abandoned but not only do we tend to hold tightly to it but do so with an attitude that dishonors Christ. That, in itself has, shouted to the world that it is "the church" who is not listening to God and "the church" who has become irrelevant to minister to unmet needs in the shadow of their "Mega church" steeples. Churches seem to be the last ones that "get it," the last ones to see that we might be living in disobedience to what God is doing in THIS generation. Is the problem our lack of trust God and over trust in "things" that makes us to refuse to redesign our "barns," not to build bigger barns, but many smaller ones? Does it hurt our pride to not have the biggest campus in town or should our hearts break because even with the biggest campus the numbers of lost families around us increases? If our doors shut today would anyone other than our members really miss us? Are our hearts truly broken for the lost enough that we would try anything and everything to make Christ known? The

hope today at Kingsway is, our leadership has a driving desire to hear God's voice, obey what He is saying and trust Him with the results. We desire above all, to please God and let God do whatever He wants with His church, after all, Kingsway is not our own. The entire "Mega Church" philosophy that has formed our culture, our decisions, our membership, our service and our label for success is being turned upside down. Why? Because we have stopped reaching the lost and unchurched and God does not like the results.

KINGSWAY WAS HERE BUT NOW GOD WANTS US TO BE THERE.

God moves differently in every generation as His message of hope stays the same. How He accomplished His mission in one generation is not how He wants to do it in another. But regardless of what generation we find ourselves in, the same courage, boldness, faith, love, and driving passion to become like Christ to a lost, hurting or unchurched world, is required to please God and produce eternal fruit just like any other generations. God desires, once again, to reach this generation with bold and dynamic communities of faith that love Him and love people. A community of faith that will abandon it all to produce thriving results for God's glory. Instead of having strategy meetings to keep our church the way it was or even what we thought it would be, we are having decision meetings to make Christ-honoring choices, with His creative and innovated design, to better reach the world around us, *His way - for today.*

But how do we get from "here" (where we are at today) to "there" (where God wants us to be)? We start right where God originally planted us, on our Avon Campus. This place, this land, was set aside by God Himself to be a beacon of light, love, truth, and hope for Hendricks County. It is on this campus at Avon that we take our first bold steps to a new wave of ideas that will generate historic fruit for the Kingdom. Avon becomes the model for our other sites to replicate (in concept). God wants Kingsway to be a ministry base that launches outward to our community and world because He wants that for all churches. God wants Kingsway to be a place where the lost, hurting, and unchurched can come and experience His hope, power, and provision by experiencing true servanthood, Sunday through Saturday. God wants Kingsway to be a place where a follower of Jesus can find meaning in ministry and missions, as they worship the One True Living God while reproducing disciple-makers that produce disciples. God wants Kingsway to make a positive difference in the lives of this community by making a true contribution as citizens of it. God wants Kingsway to constantly meet new people who need Him and promote His answer to their problems in life. God wants to bless Kingsway with resources and provisions as we boldly obey His vision for us. That is the "there" we are going to. That is the "there" of this generation and we each are able to ride the wave of hope that will sweep our community from loving multi-sites, businesses, and non-profits. Who wouldn't want to go "there?"

BUT WHY?

But why? Why do all of this? Why go to these extremes to change everything? Because Hendricks County is more than 408 square miles of over 160,000 people of the average age of 32-38 year old parents with 2.4 kids in each home, who need care, need eternal life in Christ, and are looking for hope and meaning that they can only find in Jesus. And they are the reason Kingsway was built in the first place. And don't get lost in those stats because they mean a deal more when we put names to them. You see these are the Ryan Taylors, Kynadee Poland, Emma, Ray, Cheryl and Jared Bakers. They are the "whys." They each have names, they have faces, and are more than numbers – they are people Christ died for and sent Kingsway here to reach in His name. God has changed people's lives by the power of His blessed Son and God wants

to do that to every man, woman, boy and girl in Hendricks County and around the world. That is the reason He has invited Kingsway to be driven with this undying “why.” It is for those reasons God has us here. Kingsway exists for them.

Kingsway has a gracious passion to fulfill the command God has given to us, His church, by Christ. Jesus knew we would lose our focus so He said in Mark 16:15-16 *“Go into all the world and proclaim the Gospel to the whole creation. Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned.”* Jesus knew that we would use the lack of people as an excuse for not reaching the lost so He said in Matthew 8:37-38 *“The harvest is plentiful but the laborers are few; therefore, pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest.”* God knew that we would be more committed to strategies instead of the unchanging mission so Paul said in First Corinthians 9:22, *“To the weak I became weak, that I might win the weak. I have become all things to all people, that by all means I might save some.”* God knew we would want to place more attention on our members being pleased instead of equipping our members to find the lost so Jesus tells the story of Luke 15.

God wants Kingsway to be a place, to be places, that tries almost anything to reach the lost and unchurched because we are not ashamed of the message God has given us and freely share it with our community. We echo Paul in Romans 1:16 *“For I am not ashamed of the Gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek.”* Our purpose of becoming like Christ (Phil. 2:5) means we do the things Christ does and we exist for the same reasons. Kingsway wants to be like Jesus because of what it says in Luke 19:10 *“For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost.”* What is true of Christ must be true of His church, must be true of Kingsway.

Kingsway can trust God by walking the path He has given us because He promises to fully equip us, as His church, to do His work, His way, and we leave nothing on the table in any of our experiences, education, skills, abilities, passions, or gifts to boldly accomplish that shared mission. We care more about those who are not a part of God’s family than we do about being complacent or comfortable with those who are. God is calling Kingsway out. God desires to mobilize a people movement to sweep Hendricks County in such a way that uses those mobilized tens of thousands to go after other communities in the world. The “why” could never be clearer. Jesus tells a story in Matthew 25 about the demand of being stewards of His resources and opportunities and Kingsway will have to face the same questions regarding our opportunities and resources. What will we say? How will that conversation play out? We are planning now to look forward to that question because we intend on making sure we use everything and recruit everyone to move this mission forward. We are taking that “hill.” Period.

AND HOW?

How will we accomplish this task of advancing the Gospel to the lost and ministering to unmet needs in our community around us? Where is God at work and what has He invited us to do in best reaching our community and world for Him? God is using new and expanding ways for churches to make positive contributions to their community and creative ways of resourcing His plan and as a result are putting God on full display for Him to be known through that gracious care and service.

We believe God is leading Kingsway to use the multi-site strategy with a hybrid approach. We believe God wants us to remain open about how our multi-sites originates, based on the opportunities He has

provided, needs in the targeted area, and how to fund His mission. That means we will be open to new church construction, restructuring pre-existing buildings, renovating dying churches, and approaching the multi-site with various, church and missional or missional and church formulas. We can start with a soup kitchen that meets as a church or start a church that provides an Early Childhood Learning Center. Regardless of how we start, we start, and as we do both formulas include a local community of faith that provides care and services to the community. God can use Kingsway to create a better future for the community through a true platform that provides opportunities for them to meet Christ as Savior in the process. Kingsway would then become a church that the community would miss if our doors closed. Because those who are served, supported, and ministered to will not be able to tell, on Tuesday, if it is care provided by a business or a church, because in our strategy...it will be both.

Even though we are open to how God wants to do this in relation to the building and ministry specifics, we believe God is placing some requirements that each site location as a part of its DNA:

- 1. Each new church site must also have a business related to it to better:**
 - A. Engage with the community during the week “off from Sundays”– getting people on the campus during the week
 - B. Offer the new church site an opportunity to build relationships with the lost and unchurched
 - C. Make a positive contribution to the community
- 2. The business associated with each Kingsway campus can be “religious” or “non-religious” strategic partner of Kingsway**
 - A. Regardless of how the business is listed “religious” or “non-religious” the partnership will act as an intentional Christian tool of the church to increase community engagement with the lost and unchurched families in that particular community. It is to serve unmet needs. The type of business might change from multi-site to multi-site because we will contextualize the work according to the need in that particular community and the partners God sends us. This is also a way for Kingsway to make a true contribution back into the community.
 - B. The Kingsway strategic partnership is built in such a way to have the church fully apart of the work as to build and forge meaningful relationships with the lost and unchurched families in that community so they can come to know Jesus through those relationships.
 - C. The objective is another, not the only, effective way for the church to engage the community. Our prayer is that it offers us another gateway into the community and by doing so helps us have a Christian purpose to the partnership. Much like Hobby Lobby and Chick-fil-a are led from a business perspective they still have Christian influence and we seek the same from our partners. In other words, even if a specific strategic partnership may be listed as non-religious it does not mean the staff would be unsaved individuals. On the contrary, the staffing could be followers of Christ and the company would fully understand that the intent of our partnership would be to engage the lost families and individuals in the target community for the sole purpose of them knowing Christ in salvation and being discipled to have spiritual fruit for the glory of God. As a result, Kingsway can meet real community needs and see a real social footprint made from a Christian perspective.
- 3. The business must be managed by professionals of that field so the church can focus on the church portion. For example, if we have an Early Childhood Learning Center there will be a partner that will run it for us, as we run the church site.**

- 4. The business operates with the purpose of being an economic engine for the church by giving the proceeds to the church for ministry and missions support, either in a direct one time amount or an on-going amount. This fuels our mission and is the secondary impact for Kingsway. Our primary impact will always be relational.**

This allows Kingsway to establish multiple revenue streams to support expanding ministry with increased distributions streams for the Gospel. Did you get that? Multiple distribution streams to serve people while at the same time multiple revenue streams to support our mission. Our long term objective of this approach is to have enough business partners to underwrite our entire operational budget and cost so that 100% of every penny we receive through contributions can support ministry and missions. If God allows us to accomplish this, we might be the first church to do so. What a great position Kingsway can be in if we can say every dollar people give goes to ministry and missions.

As we brainstorm together, how could this work for future sites? The potential future Kingsway network could look much like this (not necessarily in this order or aligned with one another, any combination could work):

Potential Campus Site

Plainfield Campus
Danville Campus
Speedway
Avon
Eagle Creek

Potential Economic Engine to support Ministry

Early Childhood Learning Center
Retirement Home
Hotel
Community Center/Gym
Food Pantry and Supplies

Stop now and turn to Acts 29. Acts was written to document the life of the church. You see Acts was never completed. Why? Because the church is still being lived and our story is still unfolding. You may have looked by now and say "There is no Acts 29!" And you would be wrong. We are Acts 29. It is our chapter that has yet to be written. What will Acts 29 say about Kingsway? What words will be written as our story unfolds. Let's be determined to make sure that those pages are filled with joyful stories of victory and about people who trusted God to their last breath and faced challenges with creative ideas that expresses nothing but faith and obedience to the God we serve. May it be filled about fruit that overflows from a place called Kingsway, from a community called Avon to the ends of the earth and to the end of time. For His glory, we do this. We hold nothing back and we see God's greatest power and provision. We are the Church of the Living God and we are going to move forward and charge the gates of hell. Period.