



Multiplication Beats Addition

Pastor Carlton Burns came to the 2021 SBCV Annual Homecoming with something on his mind. It wasn't the COVID pandemic preeminent on our nation's mind, nor was it the struggles and size of his local church, **Pleasant Grove Baptist Church** in Upper Marlboro, Maryland. Though, there were plenty of concerns, like all SBCV pastors, for Pastor Burns what was on his mind was multiplication.

Pastor Burns has lived in Prince George's County all his life. He loves and serves his community. He is connected to pastors and community leaders throughout his county. With just under one million residents, Prince George's County is the largest and the second most affluent African American county in the U.S., according to the Washington Post. Burns dreams of seeing his entire community transformed by the Gospel.

What is unique about Pastor Burns is his ministry approach. Rather than attempting to build a large regional church through addition, he is equipping a few other men to reach the community through multiplication. His dream

is that Pleasant Grove Baptist Church becomes a church planting "hub."

After two years of investment in two apprentices, this is no longer a mere dream. One apprentice, Marvin Sellman, has recently been endorsed by the North American Mission Board and the SBC of Virginia as a church planter. Sellman's church plant, **My Redeemer Lives Baptist Church**, has plans to launch in the spring of 2024. As this new church begins, dollars and manpower move out of Pleasant Grove Baptist Church. Pastor Burns is not overly worried about this because God has already supplied two new men for training and service in this church planting hub.

Pleasant Grove Baptist shows us that no matter the size of a church, whether big or small, all can make big contributions to God's Kingdom. ■

RESOURCE:

For more information about church planting, visit:

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