

# CHURCH PLANTING UPDATE

Kenny Stokes, April 2020



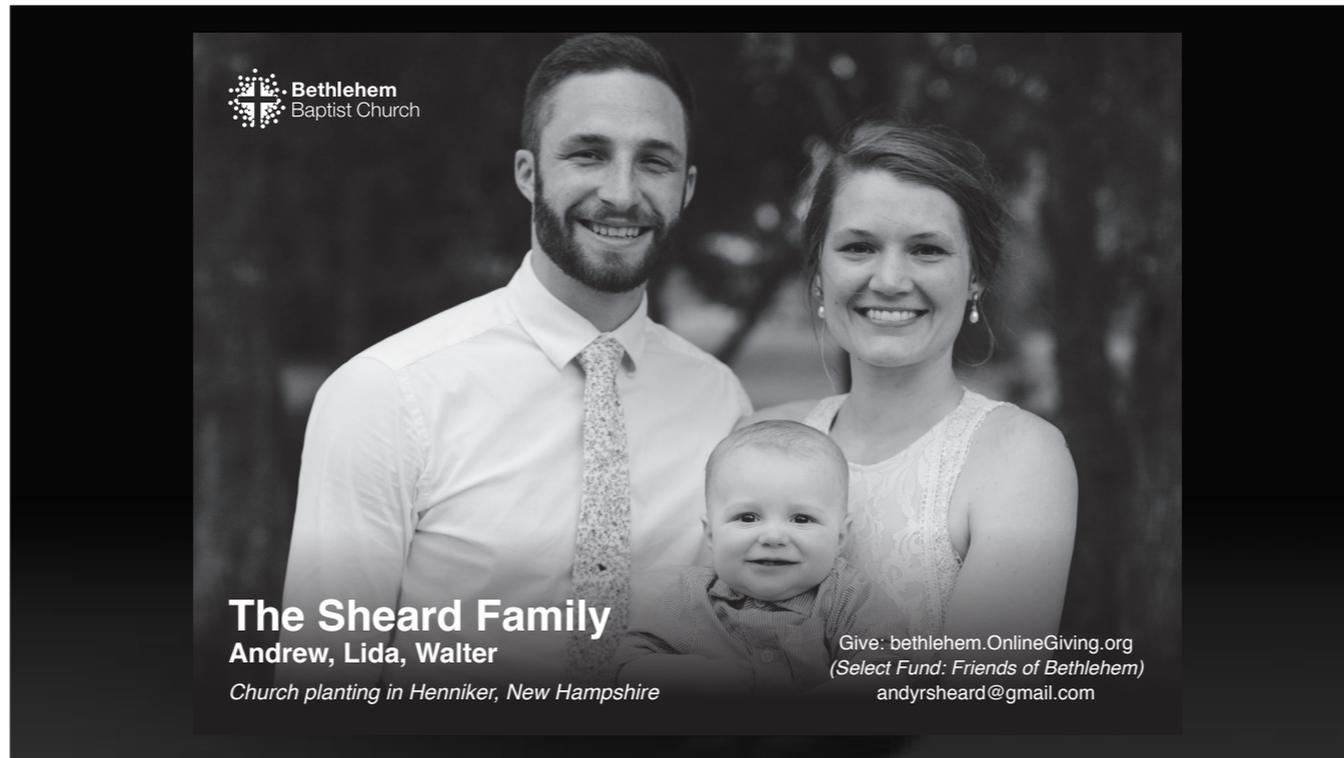
Hi, I am Kenny Stokes, Bethlehem's pastor for church planting.

I want to give you some of the highlights of our church planting work over the last quarter.

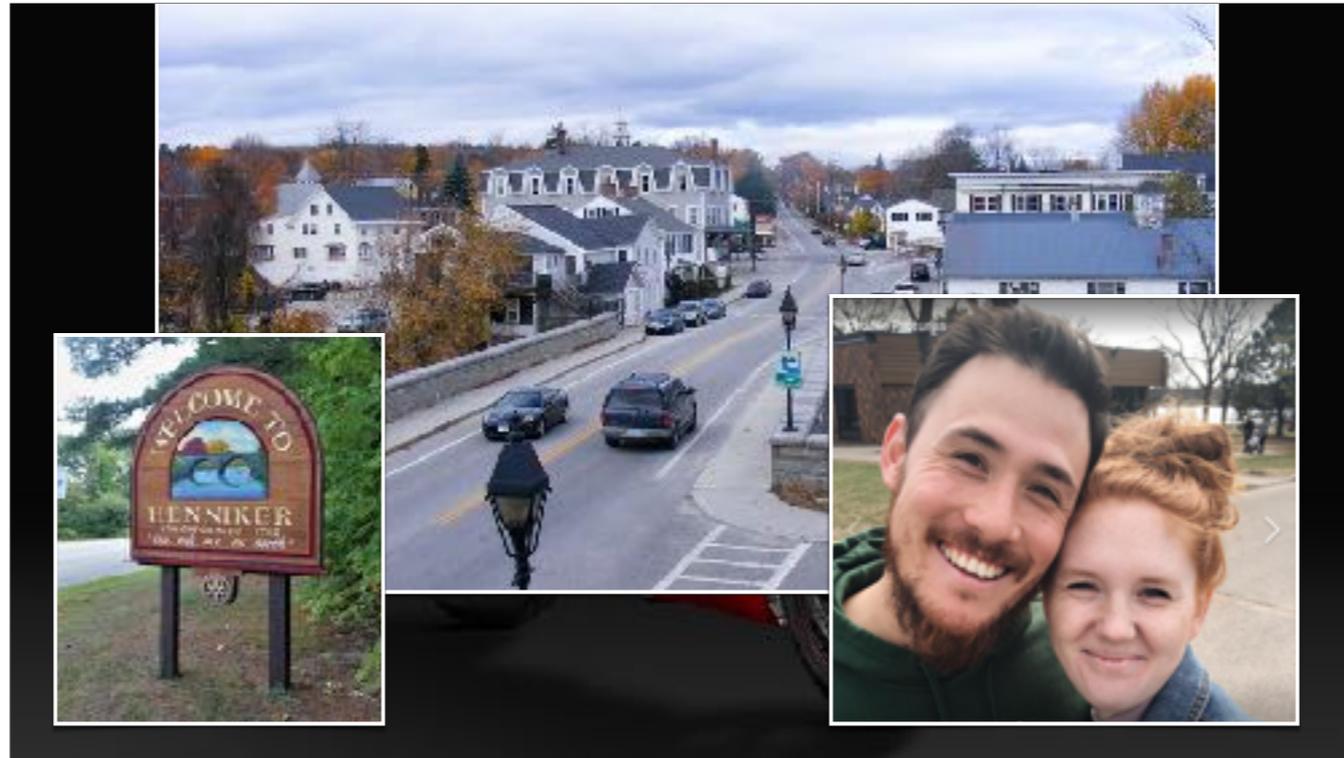
## RESIDENCY APPLICATIONS

- Received several completed applications by the March 1 deadline
- Recommending one applicant to the North Elders
- Next application deadline: September 1
- Pray for new applicants to the Church Planting Residency

We received 5 completed applications for our next church planting residency and in May we will be recommending one of those applicants to the North campus Elders for a residency. The next application deadline is September 1. Please pray that God would bring us new qualified applicants to our church planting residency.



Our current church planting residents are preparing to go before the elders for approval to plant. In May the Downtown Elders will consider approving Andrew Sheard, our downtown church planting resident to plant a new church in Henniker, NH.



Andrew and his wife Lida, have formed a partnership with Elliot Delorme and his wife Olivia during their time here in seminary together. Both men graduate from the Seminary in May and both plan, Lord willing, to move to New Hampshire this summer. This is the kind of thing we really want to see— ministry teams birthed here at Bethlehem that might serve together for years and years to come.

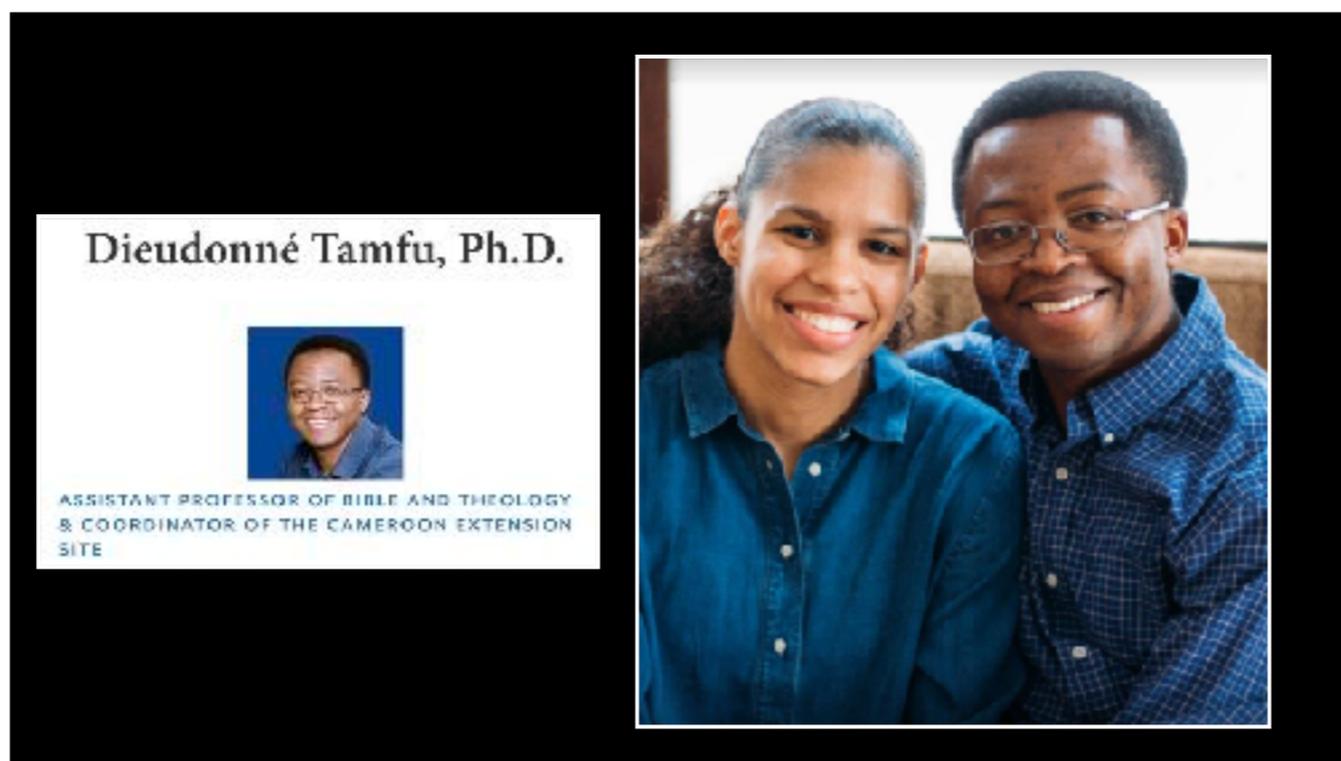


In June the North Elders will consider approving Tom Boyer, our 2nd current church planting resident to plant a new church in White Bear Lake, MN. Tom and his wife Emily have moved to the White Bear area and have been gathering a core group over the last year— largely composed of north campus members.



**EMMAUS**  
C H U R C H

The new church will be named, Emmaus Church. This also is the kind of thing we really want to see— church planting core groups formed from Bethlehem small groups and members who plant churches in their own communities.



Many of you may know, Dr. Dieudonne Tamfu. This church plant is a little different. Having completed his theological studies here in the US, and completed his time teaching in our seminary, Dieudonne and his wife Dominique were sent out from one of our church plants, Jubilee Community Church in Minneapolis. The vision is to plant a church in the capital city of his home country, Yaoundé Cameroon. And not only that, but the hope and prayer is that a Bethlehem College & Seminary extension site will be planted as well. In a few weeks, we are asking the north elders to review the vision, interview Dieudonne and receive a recommendation that we endorse this new church as a Bethlehem Church plant working in partnership with Jubilee Community Church.

## 25 X 25 UPDATE: 2020

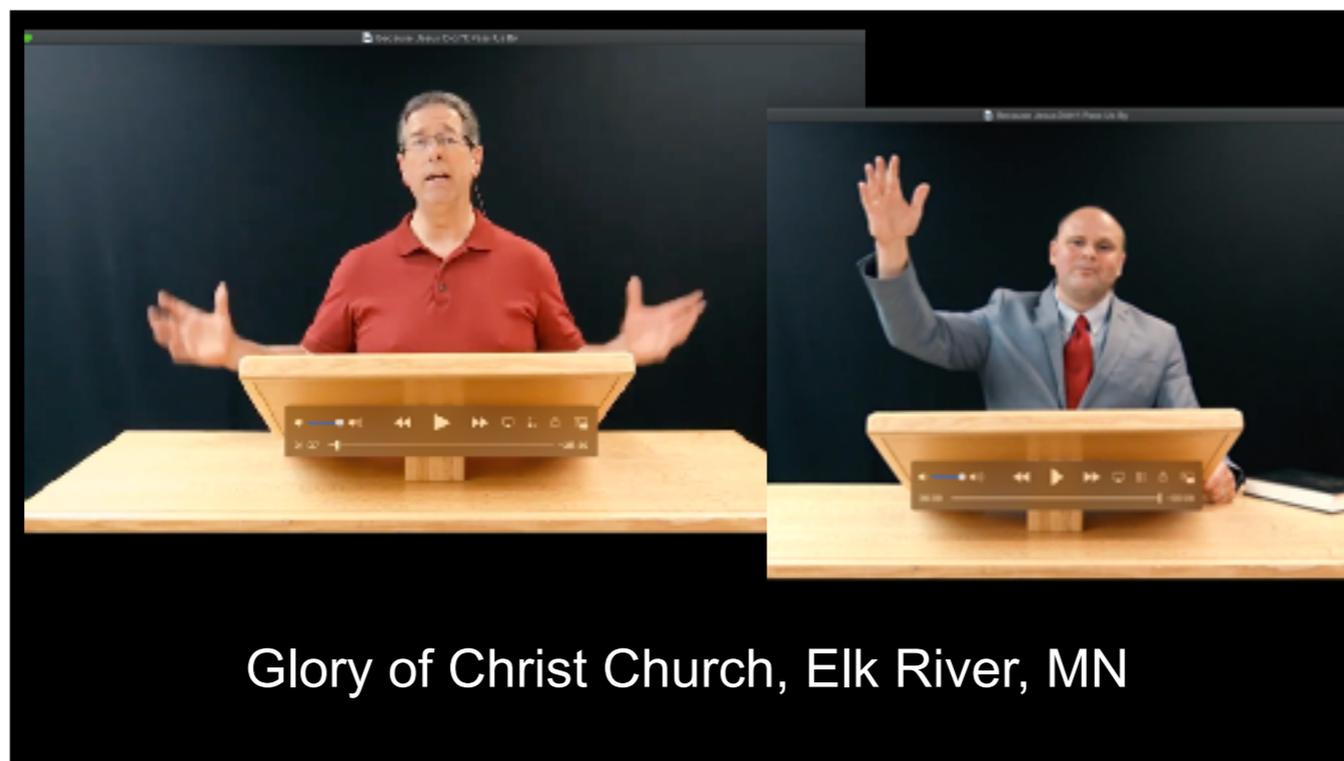
- 10. **Église Baptiste Bethléem**, Yaoundé, Cameroon- 2020 (Dieudonné Tamfu)
- 11. **Henniker, NH**- 2020 (Andrew & Lida Sheard; Elliot & Olivia Delorme)
- 12. **Emmaus Church**, White Bear Lake MN- 2020 (Tom & Emily Boyer)

So in the next few weeks, we have the potential to add 3 churches to our 25 x 25 prayer goal by early June, bringing the total to 12 on our way to 25 by the year 2025. Please pray for each of these three churches to be well established, healthy, led by a happy plurality of elders as soon as is possible. And would you pray specifically that each of these churches would have an evangelistic grace to love their neighbors sacrificially, speak the gospel with joy, and that the Lord would add to their number those who are being saved.

## HOW ARE OUR CHURCH PLANTS DEALING WITH THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC?

How are our church plants dealing with the Covid-19 pandemic?

In short, most of them are responding in ways similar to our own. But the beauty of each church is that they are responding to it in their own unique way. All are striving to shepherd the church through this time of separation due to mandated social distancing.



Glory of Christ Church, Elk River, MN

Most are using some form of video, live or recorded, for weekend sermons.



Echo Church, Chino Hills, CA

Elders, wives, small group leaders and other members are maintaining personal contact with one another through varied means— phone calls, video conferencing, even stand outside the house visits.



Grace Upon Grace Church, Weston, FL

Small groups, women's bible studies, men's groups, children's classes, morning devotionals, prayer groups, book reading groups and even after worship conversation is taking place via video conferencing.



City of Joy Fellowship, East St. Louis, IL

All are mobilizing the church to check on one another, provide food and other essentials for the needy, and shopping for the elderly.



These means of grace grow out of the strength of the church community before the virus, and when the social distancing recommendations are eased and each church is able to gather again —



Northfield Community Church, Northfield, MN

— our prayer is that God would use all of these efforts during the pandemic to strengthen each church in faith, to love one another more deeply and spread the gospel of the glory of Christ near and far.

## 2 THESSALONIANS 3:1

*“Finally, brothers, pray for us,  
that the word of the Lord may speed ahead  
and be honored,  
as happened among you...”*

(Let's pray...)