

## Westwood Church - Proposal for Student Housing Ministry

**Vision:** To purchase a home for the purpose of intentional discipleship, in a safe and nurturing environment, for up to eight college/university students at one time who will be more committed to Jesus, the scriptures, and the local church so that they will be more effective disciples in the calling that Jesus has for them upon their graduation.

***Imagine the impact Westwood Church can have in five, ten, and twenty years in equipping next generation leaders in their followership of Jesus as they serve in education, medicine, business, and countless other areas including their local church!***

**Rationale:** One of our priorities is discipleship. One demographic on which we want to continue to focus is our next generation. For many reasons, younger generations experience less stability, increased mental health challenges such as anxiety and depression, and less meaningful community. This is representative even within the faith community. Once a young adult leaves home to go to school in a new community, without meaningful community and a supportive local church nurturing their faith through hospitality, personal care, and an environment where they can both test and develop their faith in a gracious manner, the likelihood of the individual abandoning their faith in the college/university years increases greatly.

**Big Idea:** This ministry would come under the oversight of a current Westwood Pastor or depending on the final business model, potentially could come under a “new hire” with specific focus on young adult/university ministry. The home would be well suited to reasonable renovations enabling six to eight students of the same sex to have their own bedroom, spacious kitchen and dining area, large community area for group gatherings, at least three full bathrooms, shared laundry, and personal storage areas. This home would be ideally located in close proximity to Westwood Church, with easy access to a bus route for school, grocery shopping, drug store, coffee shop, etc. The students...

- Would be integrated into the Westwood Church family from the beginning of their time in Prince George.
- Would commit to a community standards covenant.
- Would pay rent that would be slightly below campus dorm costs.
- Would provide their own groceries.
- Would participate in community discipleship endeavours entailing both informal spiritual formation (Bible reading, prayer, journaling, etc.) and more formal spiritual formation (eg. an apologetics seminar, OT/NT survey class utilizing online partnerships with CBC, Prairie, or Briercrest).

One variation to the “Big Idea” is having “House Parents.” If a home was found that enabled “house parents” to live onsite in a separate suite, the community arrangements might look different with greater oversight, community meal preparation, etc.

**Business Plan:** The home would be purchased with a mortgage through our Canadian Conference of MB Churches through Legacy. A proposal and application to secure a mortgage would be required but Westwood Church has been highly dependable over the years and there is no reason to believe this would change. As

Dufferin Apartments is now paid, Dufferin Apartments becomes the leverage to enable Westwood Church to move forward in this endeavour in alignment with Westwood's decision to utilize Dufferin for ministry initiatives. A home purchase of \$400,000 - \$600,000 is a reasonable target with additional renovation costs of approximately \$100,000 to set the house up to where it needs to be to serve students well. Current housing prices have fallen significantly as higher inflation and interest rates have had a cooling effect on the housing market. The mortgage of the home would be paid for by the rental income received from the student. As an example, monthly rental costs of \$500-\$600 per student multiplied six to eight times ranges between \$3000 - \$4800/month revenue.

### **What has happened to this point?**

- Significant dreaming and vision casting with Pastor Rob and the Dufferin Board.
- Some initial discussions with the Westwood Board of Elders who have asked for continued development of the proposal.
- One initial conversation between Pastor Rob and Pastor Craig, as overseer of Young Adults.
- House looking by the Dufferin Board and Pastor Rob to gain a sense of what is required for such a ministry endeavour, housing prices, and renovation costs.

### **What still needs to happen?**

- A more in-depth discussion between Pastor Rob and Pastor Craig on the concept.
- Hold a focus group comprising current college/university students and parents of high school students for the purpose of gaining insight into the challenges of the university years, critical factors to consider for a successful proposal, and overall feedback on this concept.

If there was positive movement...

- Bring a more fully orbbed proposal back to the Board of Elders for feedback and direction.
- Engage the congregation in a structured discussion through the microChurches and receive feedback.
- Present to the congregation for final direction.
- Make a decision.