

**CREATING A STRATEGIC CHURCH GROWTH PLAN FOR  
THE ABUNDANT LIFE OF THE ASSEMBLIES OF GOD  
IN COLCHESTER, CONNECTICUT**

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Abundant Life of the Assemblies of God, a sixty-year old church in a rural New England community, has struggled with fluctuating attendance. Even after constructing a new facility and changing its name, the church still struggled to increase its attendance. With the Great Commission as the compelling mission, this project sought to develop genuine health and strength at Abundant Life that would ultimately result in numerical growth. To accomplish this monumental task, this project examined the scriptural foundation for church growth and reviewed current literature regarding principles for establishing a healthy and growing church.

This project incorporated numerous internal church surveys and evaluations that helped guide Abundant Life in forming an effective strategy toward church growth. An internal Appreciative Inquiry and a professional survey through Natural Church Development provided crucial insight into the strengths and weaknesses of the church. Field research, through interviews with effective New England pastors and leaders, contributed pertinent information which Abundant Life will continue to incorporate into its growth strategy. The research also revealed the importance of visitor retention, the key role of leadership and vision, and the power of small group ministry. The academic research, in combination with the field research, supplied valuable insights that will assist Abundant Life in the church growth process. This project will serve as a helpful tool for other church leaders in New England who desire to lead their church to greater health and church growth.