



# RURAL MATTERS

Planting, Revitalizing, Resourcing and Sustaining  
Life-giving, Spirit Filled Ministry in Rural America



September 2016



# Defining Rural and North America

“If you have a Starbucks, you are not rural.”

“If you have a Subway and it is attached to a gas station you are rural.”

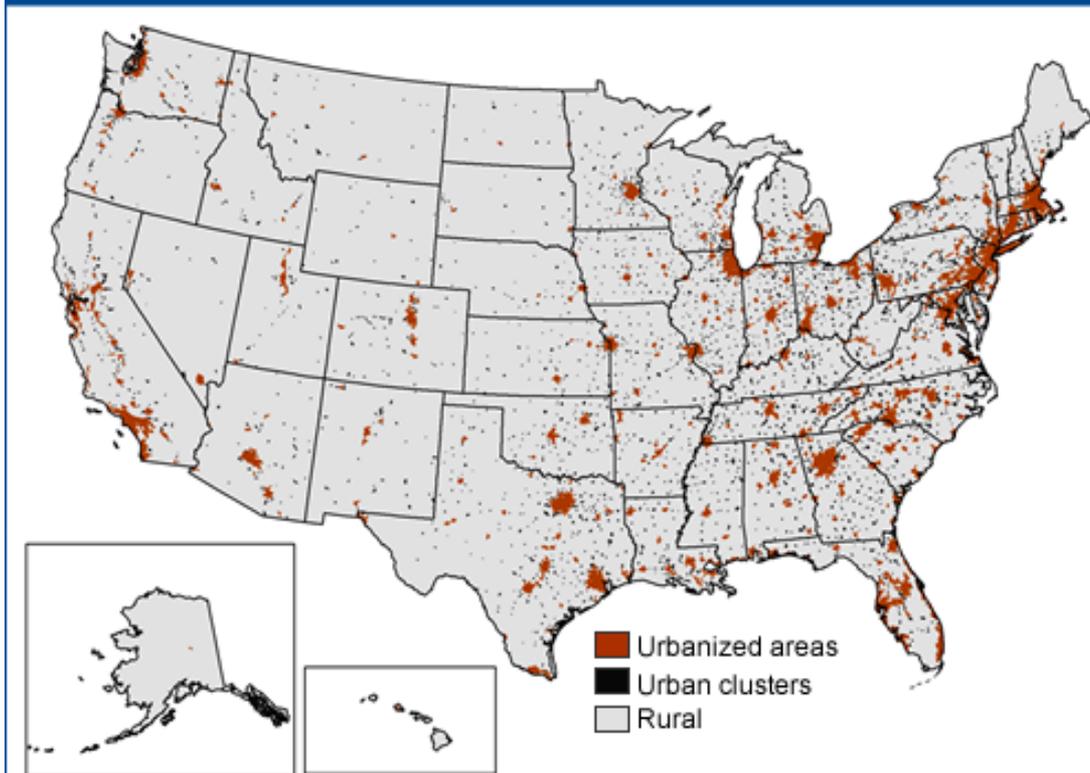
*- Shannon O'Dell, rural church planter*

# My Community



# U.S. Census Bureau

U.S. Census Bureau's urban and rural areas, 2012

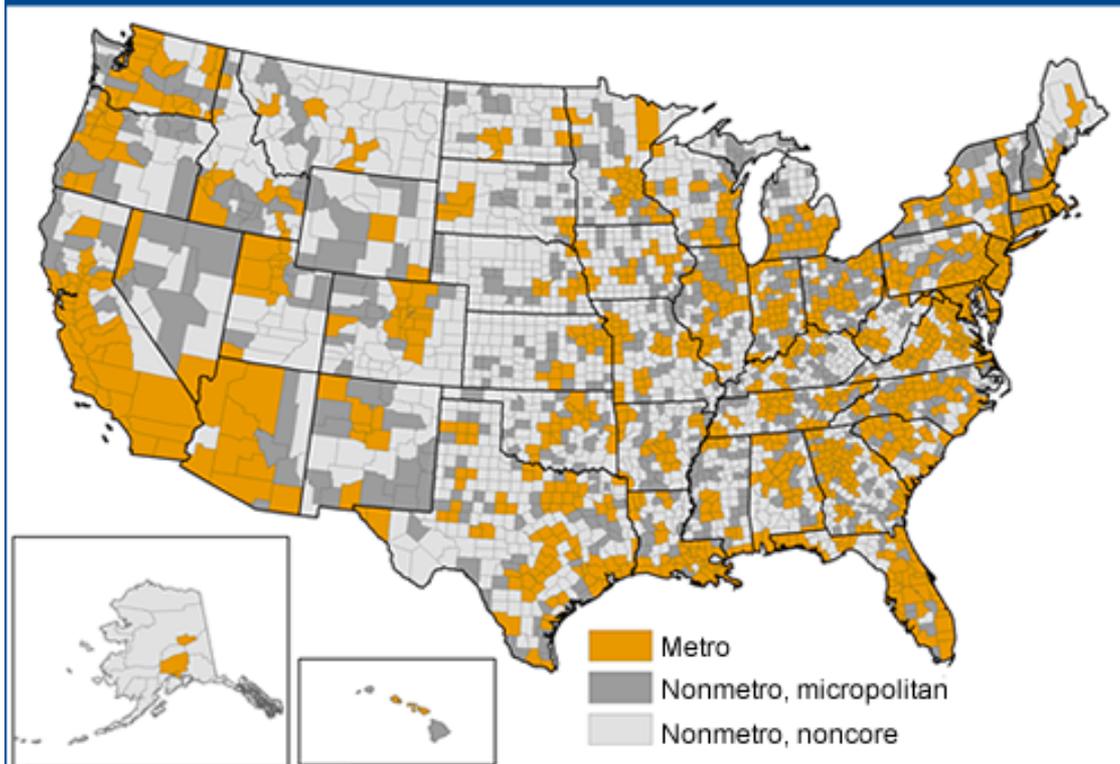


Source: USDA, Economic Research Service using data from the U.S. Census Bureau.

Source: <http://www.ers.usda.gov/topics/rural-economy-population/rural-classifications/what-is-rural.aspx>

# Office of Management and Budget (OMB)

Metro, nonmetro micropolitan, and nonmetro noncore counties, 2013



Source: USDA, Economic Research Service using data from the U.S. Census Bureau.

Source: [https://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/gils\\_gil-home](https://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/gils_gil-home)

# Economic Research Service of the Department of Agriculture

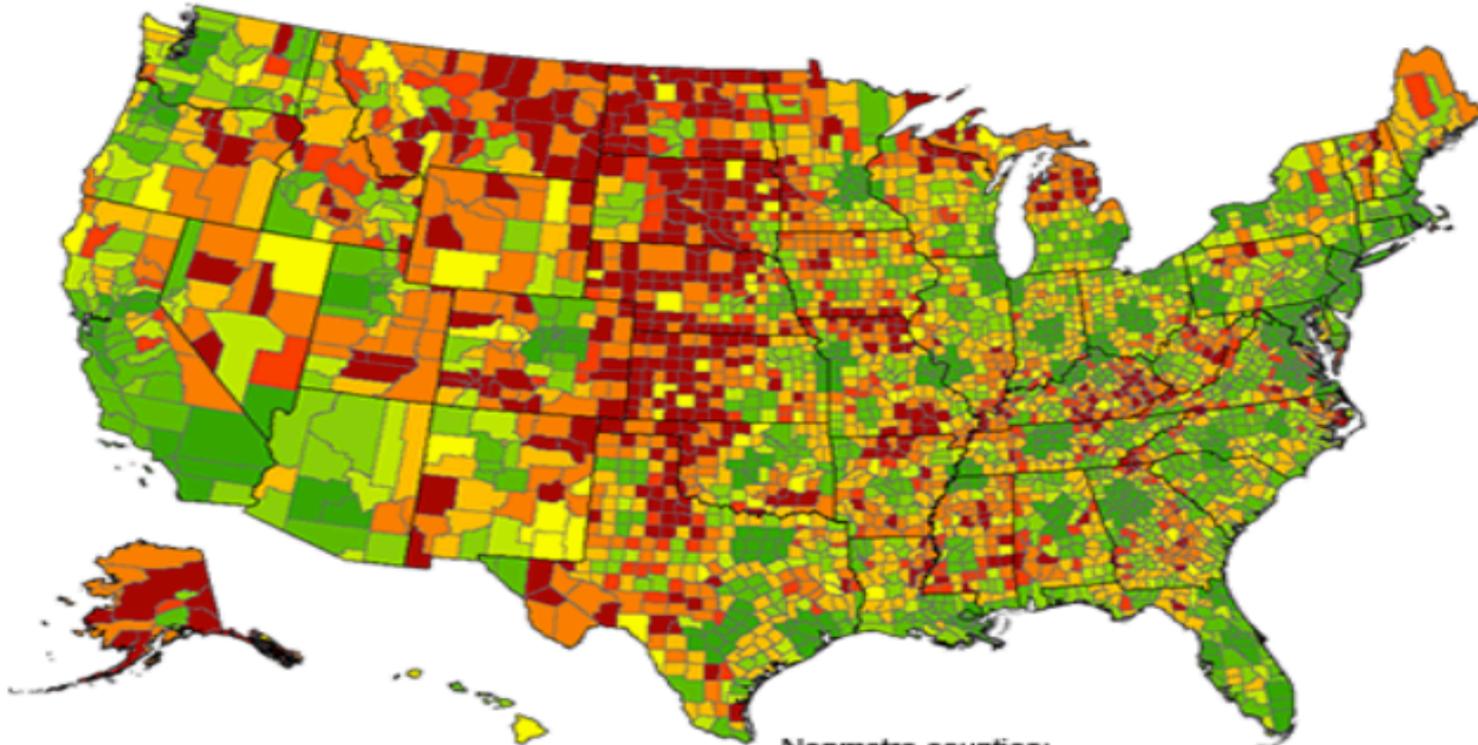
## 2013 Rural-Urban Continuum Codes

Code	Description
<b>Metro Counties</b>	
1	Counties in metro areas of 1 million population or more
2	Counties in metro areas of 250,000 to 1 million population
3	Counties in metro areas of fewer than 250,000 population
<b>Nonmetro Counties:</b>	
4	Urban population of 20,000 or more, adjacent to a metro area
5	Urban population of 20,000 or more, not adjacent to a metro area
6	Urban population of 2,500 to 19,999, adjacent to a metro area
7	Urban population of 2,500 to 19,999, not adjacent to a metro area
8	Completely rural or less than 2,500 urban population, adjacent to a metro area
9	Completely rural or less than 2,500 urban population, not adjacent to a metro area

Source:

# ERS USDA

## 2013 Rural-Urban Continuum Codes



Metro counties:  
population size of metro area

- 1 million or more
- 250,000 to 1 million
- Fewer than 250,000

Nonmetro counties:  
size of urban population, adjacency

- 20,000 or more, adjacent
- 20,000 or more, nonadjacent
- 2,500 to 19,999, adjacent
- 2,500 to 19,999, nonadjacent
- < 2,500 or completely rural, adjacent
- < 2,500 or completely rural, nonadjacent

Source: USDA, Economic Research Service using data from the U.S. Census Bureau.

# Carsey Institute

Rural communities fall into one of three categories:

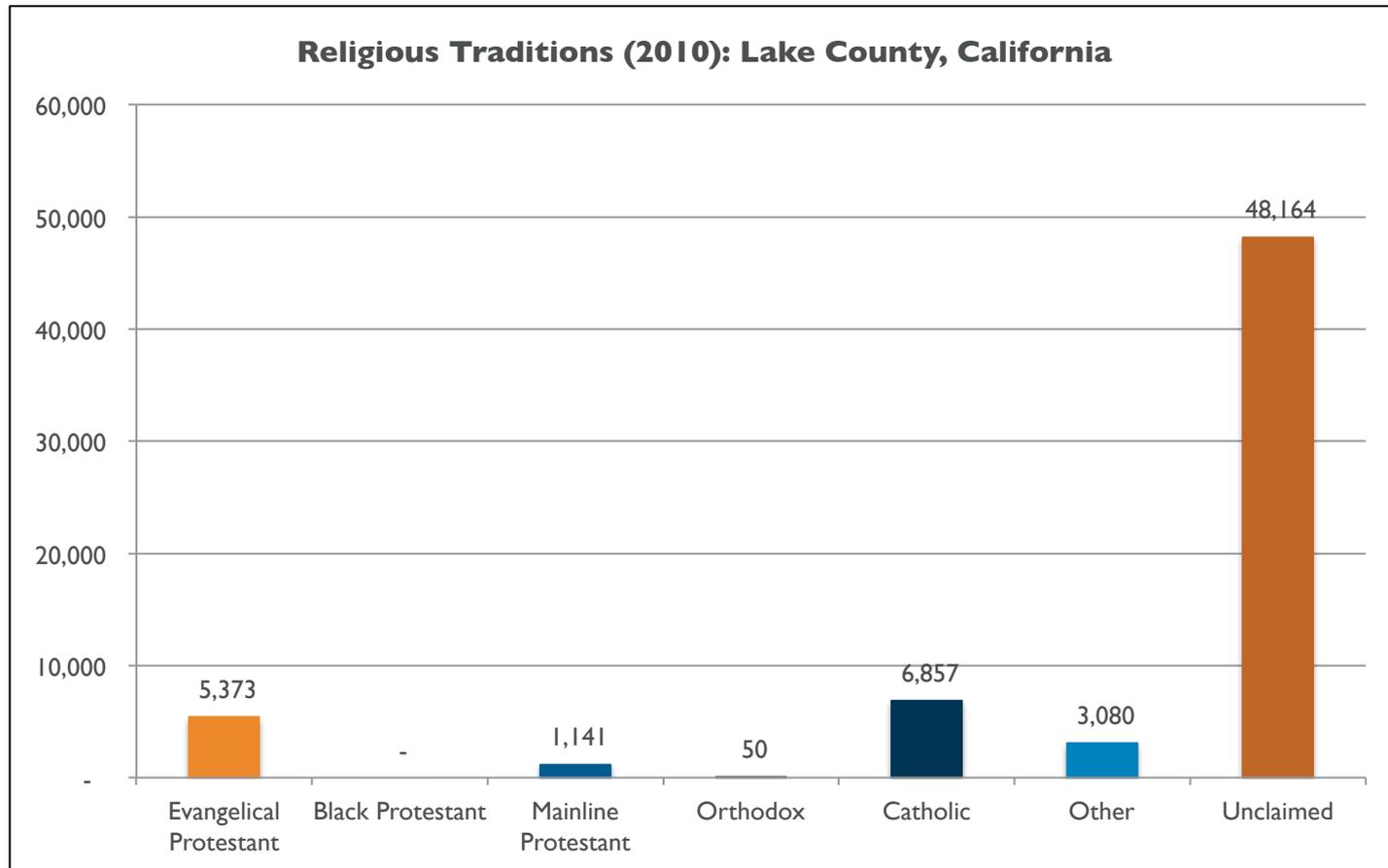
1. Remote Isolated Communities
2. Scenic Communities
3. Re-Migration Rural Communities

**Source:** Johnson, K. (2006). *Demographic Trends in Rural and Small Town America* (Rep.). University of New Hampshire, NJ: Carsey Institute



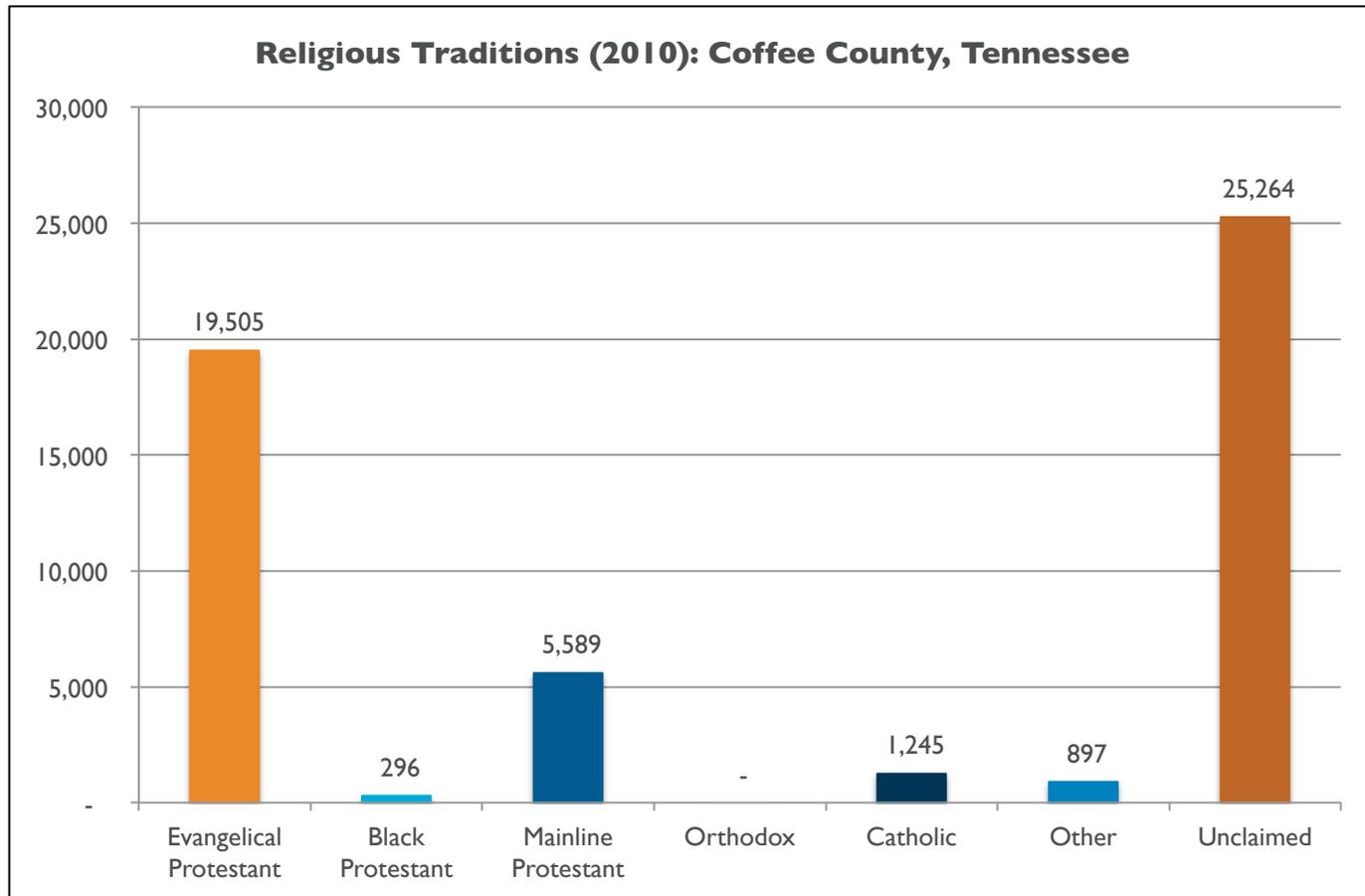
**Spiritual Condition of  
Rural North America**

# ARDA County Reports



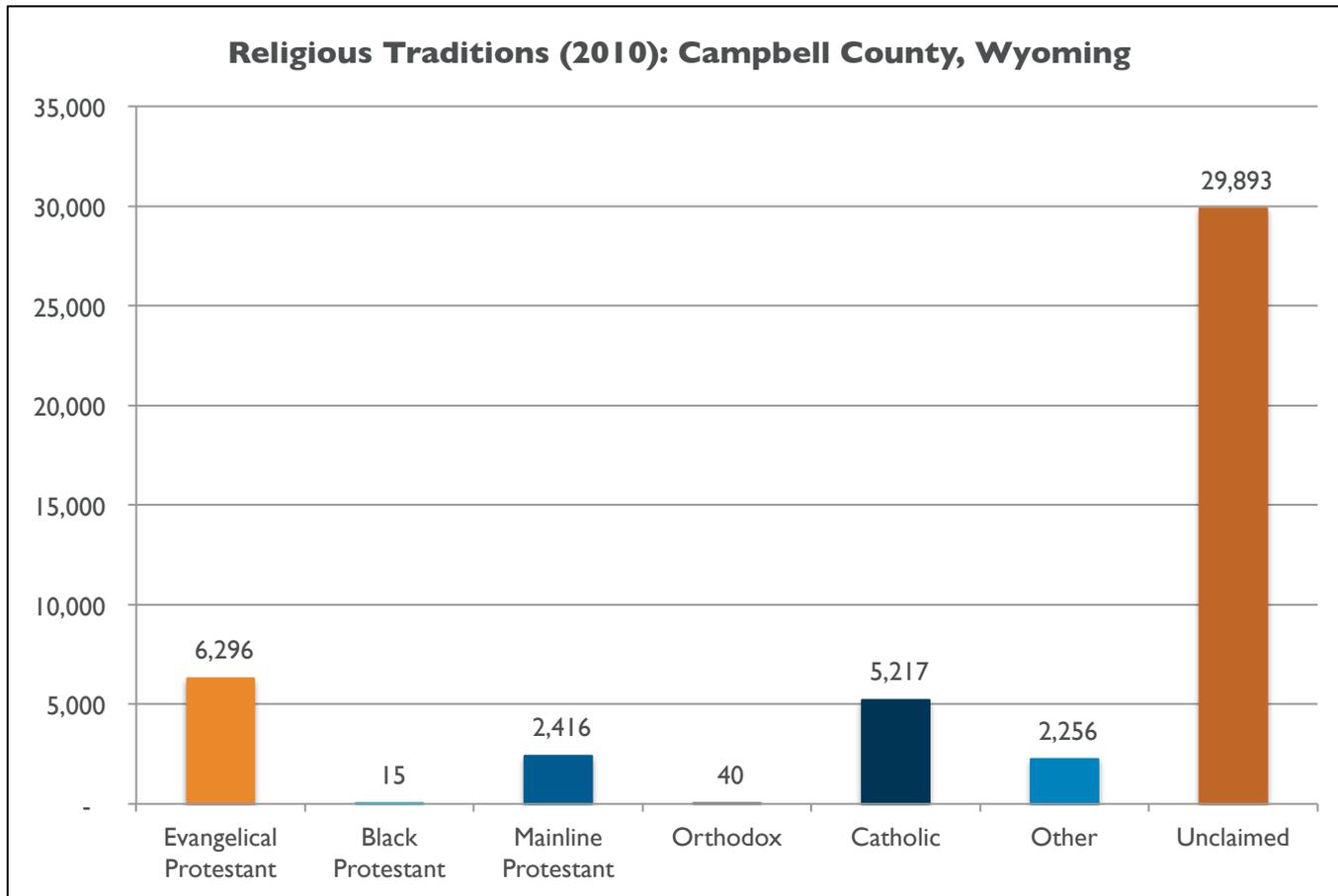
Source: <http://www.thearda.com/rcms2010/>

# ARDA County Reports



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Source: <http://www.thearda.com/rcms2010/>

# Church Planting in Rural North America

# Advantages

- Perseverance of the Rural Church
- Shared Optimism Among Congregants
- Considerable Absence of Competition
- High level of impact the planter can have in the community

**Sources:** Moore, W. S. (2012). *Rural Revival: Growing Churches in Shrinking Communities*. Rogersville, AL: Eleos Press.

Payne, J.D. (2014). *Unreached Peoples, Least Reached Places: An Untold Story of Lostness in America*. (Rep.). Retrieved from <http://www.jdpayne.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/04/Unreached-Peoples-Least-Reached-Places-Payne.pdf>.

# Challenges

- Denominational Loyalty
- Lack of Trust
- Lack of Experience
- Lack of Momentum
- Lack of Finances
- Lack of a Building

Source: [http://enrichmentjournal.ag.org/200004/056\\_small\\_community.cfm](http://enrichmentjournal.ag.org/200004/056_small_community.cfm).

# Hearing from Multi-site Rural Church Planters

*People Driven* Mutual  
**Assessment and** Agreement  
**Metrics** Generous  
Resourcing  
Coaching and **Scalable**  
Development **Solutions**

# Challenges Faced When Planting or Revitalizing the Church

amount away **building** casting  
**change** church community  
congregation cultivating culture decision excellence funds involved jealousy  
**lack** launch leaders mindset moving network **person** raising  
re-training **resistance** resources  
**responsibility** small-mindedness staff stubbornness team  
**trust** vision **volunteers**

# Surprises When Planting or Revitalizing the Church

acceptance **attacks** attendance attitude bad bond campuses  
**church** developed **different** ebb  
entire expectations experiment faster flow formed growth knew leaving levels  
life members models nothing pastoral **people** planting  
**quick** quickly ready roles similar special thought trends urban  
welcoming willingness

# Greatest Support While Planting or Revitalizing the Church

board campus children church compassion convert  
family fellowship friends larger  
mentor network  
pastors rural support tower water wife

# Recommendations

- Know Your Community and What Makes it Distinct
- Understand Generational and Cultural Differences
- Be Willing to Make Mistakes (and have them known community wide)
- Spend Time with the More Receptive

**Source:** Payne, J.D. (2014). *Unreached Peoples, Least Reached Places: An Untold Story of Lostness in America*. (Rep.). Retrieved from <http://www.jdpayne.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/04/Unreached-Peoples-Least-Reached-Places-Payne.pdf>.

# Recommendations

- Model Partnership, Not Paternalism
- Emphasize Denominational Affiliation when appropriate
- Stress Networking and Relationship Building
- Reach Out to Children

**Source:** Payne, J.D. (2014). *Unreached Peoples, Least Reached Places: An Untold Story of Lostness in America*. (Rep.). Retrieved from <http://www.jdpayne.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/04/Unreached-Peoples-Least-Reached-Places-Payne.pdf>.

# Discussion and Q&A