



# Healthy Churches Plant Churches AND PLANT CHURCHES AGAIN

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Just as it is important for expectant mothers to be healthy during pregnancy, churches giving birth to new church plants also need to be healthy. A symptom of health is a rapidly growing church that is bursting at the seams. Another indicator is a congregation that senses a burden for a strategic pocket of lostness within the reach of the church.

Swift Creek Baptist Church in Midlothian is that kind of healthy church.

In 2002, Swift Creek gave birth to Parkway Baptist Church in Moseley. A core group of members left the sponsor church to assist Church Planter Brian Autry in starting a church further west on the Rt. 360 corridor. Today, Parkway is healthy and thriving, sponsoring church plants of its own and averaging over 700 in attendance.

Swift Creek's heart for church planting did not end with Parkway. Several years later, the church extended the reach of the Gospel even further west by sending Church Planter Mark Wells to plant Grace Harvest Baptist Church in Amelia County. When Grace Harvest dedicated its new building on Sunday, January 10, 2010, Swift Creek's senior pastor, Ronnie Brown, preached the evening

message and brought a charge to the new pastor and congregation. It was more than the dedication of a building; somehow it felt like a parent-child dedication, where the parent church committed the health and growth of the baby church to the Lord Jesus and His purposes.

How has Swift Creek given birth twice in seven years? It has required the able leadership of the pastor and the support of a healthy church family. The congregation:

- Sees the need for church planting
- Prays for the people that will be impacted in the targeted areas
- Prays that the Lord would send laborers into the field
- Mentors the planter
- Sends a team to assist the work
- Financially supports the mission
- Continues to have close relationships with the plants as they grow toward maturity

Pastor Ronnie has also been the motivating force behind Swift Creek's church planting efforts. Pastor Mark

testifies, "[He] captured the vision, cast it to the congregation, [and] took the step of faith—not once, but twice.... He had confidence in me, mentored [me], and helped me every step of the way."

Is your church healthy and ready to give birth?

## RESOURCE

**Website:**  
[www.swiftcreekbaptist.org](http://www.swiftcreekbaptist.org)

**SBCV Contact:**  
Call 888-234-7716 for details from the missionary in your region.

**Consider:**  
How healthy is your church?

