



## Obstacle or Opportunity?

by Mark Custalow, Director of  
Multiplying Churches and Church  
Planting Strategist, Southeast Region



### LEADERSHIP TRAITS:

1. Vision
2. Vision casting
3. Service
4. Team building
5. Networking
6. Planning

### RESOURCE

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

**SBCV Contact:**

Call 888-234-7716 for details from your region's missionary.

**Consider:**

How can you lead using obstacles as opportunities?



Planted by Bert and Luann Kirk with a focus on reaching and serving military personnel and their families, True Course Community Church meets at the Virginia Beach Aquarium for worship. However, on Sunday, March 20, their meeting facility was not be available because the annual Shamrock Marathon with 24,000 participants representing all 50 states interfered. Pastor Bert, a visionary leader, saw this as an opportunity to serve.

After a little research, Pastor Bert learned that the marathon's organizers were looking for volunteers. The race's website heralded: "Is your group interested in competing in our Water Stop Competition? You need a minimum of 25 people to be willing to work hard, be loud, and have loads of fun." Seizing the opportunity, Pastor Bert proceeded to register True Course.

The next step was to cast the community service vision to his church and its sponsoring churches. Pastor Bert asked them to let their service be their worship. Thirty volunteers quickly caught the vision. Sponsor churches, Palestine Baptist and Virginia Beach Beacon Baptist, provided 11 of the 30. In addition to helping with the water stop, the mission team from Palestine assisted True Course in distributing 2,000 *Find It Here* Gospel cards and Easter worship invitations on the day of the event.

By the Lord's hand, the event's organizers paired True Course with the Birdneck Lake neighborhood association to co-man a water station. Their water stop succeeded in

winning the award for the most spirit along the route. Pastor Bert expected to share the monetary prize of \$500 with Birdneck Lake, but the association insisted the church keep it all. This money has since been used to further the evangelistic outreach of True Course.

While preparing and distributing thousands of cups of water to runners, Pastor Bert took time to help a volunteer make an important connection. John Hayden, a church planting apprentice from Harvest Fellowship in Smithfield, had come to volunteer. He is preparing to plant a church in Roanoke, just about an hour from Palestine Baptist. Knowing the proximity of Palestine to Hayden's future church, Pastor Bert introduced him to John Huddleston, Palestine's mission team leader. Their introduction sparked an interest in Huddleston to help the new church planter with his work in Roanoke.

What could have been an obstacle became an opportunity, thanks to a true leader, Pastor Bert Kirk. Through this event, the church has earned favor in the Birdneck Lake subdivision and among municipal leaders. What obstacles do you or your church face? How can you lead using obstacles as opportunities?



*Pastor Bert*