

# New CfaN Church Movement Exploding With Growth Despite Pandemic

A new study from Lifeway Research says church attendance across the U.S. is declining. A Gallup poll released in March says that church closures are projected to double or triple in the aftermath of the COVID pandemic.

These findings are summarized by an article in Religion News Service titled “Study: More churches closing than opening.” Yet despite these grim reports, there is another side to the story. Daniel Kolenda (successor to the renowned evangelist Reinhard Bonnke) believes that there is a golden opportunity presenting itself to the church.

“It’s an opportunity for a reset,” Kolenda said. “What if we could use this occasion to return to a more authentic expression of church—preaching the gospel, winning the lost, and discipling the nations.”

Kolenda is not simply theorizing. In the height of the pandemic, he, and the ministry he leads—Christ for all Nations (CfaN)—started planning to launch a brand-new local church expression of their ministry. The new effort is picking up incredible momentum as it heads toward its official August 15 launch date.

More than 1,000 people have professed newfound faith in Christ as a result of their outreaches in Orlando over the last few months. Dozens of local small discipleship groups have been launched—often attended by the many new converts. Lakes, ponds, swimming pools and hot tubs have become baptismal tanks. It has all the energy and momentum of a movement.

Hundreds of ministers from across the U.S. and around the

world have relocated to the greater Orlando area to be a part of Nations Church. Many of them originally came to be trained in Christ for all Nations' mass Evangelism Bootcamp.

CfaN has documented more than 80-million conversions through their supermassive outdoor "crusades." They have seen some of the largest gatherings in human history, with hundreds of thousands regularly packing large fields to hear the gospel preached. Their Evangelism Bootcamp is a strategy to "multiply evangelists for the harvest."

But it's not just the Bootcamp Evangelists that are relocating. Many internationally recognized ministers have come to fill roles in the nascent congregation's leadership team. On Mother's Day in May, Kolenda announced that Eric Gilmour (Sonship International) would join the pastoral team with plans to bring his popular teaching ministry to the church.

On May 23, Kolenda again brought exciting news to the young congregation: Scott McNamara (Author of *Jesus at the Door*) will join the team to lead the church's evangelism department. McNamara joins a "dream team" of highly influential and nationally recognized evangelists, like Levi Lutz, Joe Oden and Jerri Hill, wife of the famed Brownsville Revival Evangelist Steve Hill (1954-2014), that are also on the leadership team.

On June 6, Kolenda likewise told a capacity "Pre-Launch" crowd that world-renowned praise and worship leader, Eddie James, will relocate to Orlando, with his entire ministry, to serve as the Nations Church worship director. James will head a team that already includes the legendary Leonard Jones (formerly of Morning Star Worship), dynamic worship pastor Jenny Weaver, acclaimed worship leader/songwriter Amber Brooks, *The Voice* finalist Andrea (Thomas) Hand and many more.

In addition to these ministers and leaders, hundreds of

families are relocating to Orlando from around the country to be a part of the church's "launch team"—so many, in fact, the church has a link on its ministry home page that asks the question: "Moving to Orlando?" They have had to establish a special department to assist those relocating to be part of the new church.

The obvious question regarding all this excitement is "Why?" Each person has their own reason. Some point to divine leading. Some are drawn by the vision. Eddie James gave his perspective in a recent interview, saying, "I believe God is doing this because there is a harvest coming, and He is going to use Nations Church as a model—it's just the tip of the spear. It's an opportunity to demonstrate one of the greatest shifts of culture in church history."

Although the church has not technically started yet (officially launching on August 15), attendance at the pre-launch "Worship and Intercession Services" has reached capacity. The team is already on the hunt for larger facilities! Even more astonishing is the number of volunteers and "launch team" members who have signed up to help with everything from parking cars to children's church. At a recent meeting, Daniel Kolenda announced that Nations Church is on target to build a launch team of 1,500 people before the grand opening.

This incredible growth seems even more extraordinary against the backdrop of record numbers of church closures and decreasing church attendance across the nation. Perhaps the rise of Nations Church is just a glimpse of things to come—a fresh wave of new churches and ministries arising to meet the demands of a rapidly changing cultural landscape. Perhaps it is, as Kolenda put it, "an opportunity for a reset." {eo}

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