

# The Power of a Place

In the last two years, Joe Manafa, Nathan Colqhoun and Darryl Silvestri have worked hard to take their idea of church plant in Sarnia from idea to reality. This process began first in the hearts and minds of the three many years ago. Folks from all corners of Sarnia began to meet for BBQs and beach days, and meeting in various places in the city. Excitement mounted. Finally in September 2006 theStory began its first weekly services in Joe's living room. Making a further move into the Sarnia context, theStory began to meet Sunday mornings in a youth drop-in centre. This less intimate and therefore less intimidating environment made it easier for a number of strangers to "check out" the new church in town. Within months these "strangers" became part of the growing faith community. Now in 2008, theStory has taken an even deeper move into the physical and social fabric of Sarnia. They have rented (and are working toward buying) a permanent storefront in the downtown core of the city. Joe is enjoying the curiosity that has accompanied their new-found place in Sarnia. Work is often "interrupted" by the curious wanting to know the purpose of this new feature on the downtown scene. Joe has recently been reminded by Henri Nouwen that these are not interruptions of his work; the interruptions ARE his work. Recent weeks have seen locals begin to use the talents and pastoral skills of this creative bunch. Visits have been for anything from help with video editing to needs for prayer.



There are a lot of factors that God uses to bring His dreams for cities, towns and countrysides into existence. In the case of theStory he has also used our **collective generosity through Giving Streams** to make a place for Joe, Nathan and Darryl in the story of the city of Sarnia. **Through your church's generous gifts we are able to make stories like theStory's happen all over the country.**

Over the last few years the Church Development Giving Stream has been blessed to support an ever growing number of church plants. Unfortunately (or fortunately, depending on your view point), the Giving Stream has not been able to keep up with the demand. So, for the next three years we intend to close the gap and ensure that we have a bright future in church planting. This year we have set a goal to have \$100,000 in this Giving Stream. We serve a generous God and we look forward to seeing how He empowers us to respond to our challenge this coming year.

**Your giving, directed to "Church Development" through your local church, can help church plants establish permanent ministries. Thank you for prayerfully considering this Giving Stream.**

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