

AN "UNINTENTIONAL" CHURCH PLANT  
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During my tenure as Westover's pastor from 1984-1990 a most interesting "church plant" happened that was truly "unintentional" from Westover's standpoint. During those years Westover was meeting at the facility on Westover Terrace.

In 1985 a Christian radio station in High Point (WHPE) asked if they could broadcast our Sunday morning service on live radio. WHPE also sent the broadcast signal to the Sparta, N.C. area which included the communities of Roaring Gap and Glade Valley. A group of approximately 30 people in the Glade Valley area were meeting as a "home church". They became aware of Westover's services that were broadcast so they built their worship around Westover's sermon. They had a piano, fiddle, flute, etc. all blended together as they sang hymns and waited for the Bible message to begin.

One Sunday approximately 25 of them came to the Sunday service at Westover here in Greensboro. After the service they waited for me in the lobby until everyone had been greeted. They introduced themselves to me and called me "their pastor" and said "We're your church in the mountains!" I remember being so thrilled and saying that Linda and I would love to come up during the week at some point and meet everyone!

For a number of years several of their men would come to the Tuesday AM Bible study that I taught at the YMCA in Greensboro and then we'd have breakfast afterwards. Linda and I would go to Glade Valley once or twice a year and meet with these sweet and committed people during the week. They'd have a carry-in dinner and then I'd lead a Bible study.

As the years went by the group grew and began to meet in a community center and started "official" Sunday services. A school teacher from the area began to take Bible training at Columbia Bible College and became the first pastor of Grace Community Church of Allegheny County. Now 30 years later they meet in their own church building which they built. The initial pastor and his wife went to China as missionaries for several years and are now in Greece with a ministry to refugees. Their son is now the pastor of the church!

This is an amazing story of how Westover "unintentionally" planted a church in the Sparta, NC area that is thriving today. It all started with a radio signal in that area that was forwarded from the radio station in High Point and ended up in a home church.