

Church Planting Steps for Mission Partners

Texas District LCMS – Board of Mission Administration

This document and the Appendices included are both descriptive and prescriptive of the steps which should be followed by congregations or networks desiring to enter into a partnership with the Texas District LCMS Board of Mission Administration in planting new churches.

While these steps are not exhaustive, they are helpful in helping a congregation move toward planting.

1. Discipleship and Spiritual Growth Steps

- A. Our Pastor has been spiritually preparing his own heart for mission.
- B. We have been working at discipling our people for mission.
- C. We have spent time in prayer and conversation to hear and see God's vision.
- D. We have met with our Mission and Ministry Facilitator (MMF) to prepare our leaders and members for missional thinking and action.
- E. Our leadership has openness to God's call for our church to plant a new church.
- F. We have an initial GO from our leadership team (staff and lay leadership) to begin the exploration stage.
- G. We have a Church Planting Parenting team in place (This is not the Launch Team but it is the team which will help your church prepare for launch) [*Resource: The Ripple Church: Multiplying Your Ministry by Parenting New Churches, by Phil Stevenson, Wesleyan Publishing House*].
- H. We have a Mission Prayer Team in place [*see Appendix A*].

2. Exploration Steps

- A. Our Planting Parenting team has been preparing our membership for church planting both spiritually and with adequate logistical information to make a Spirit-led decision.
- B. We have done initial demographic studies of potential church plant locations [these can be obtained from your MMF through MissionInsite].
- C. We have determined the initial target population for this plant (e.g. language group, ethnic group, geographic region, age range demographic group, socio-economic group).
- D. We have a GO from our decision making body (Church Council; Board of Directors; Voters) to move to the preparation stage.

3. Preparation Steps

- A. We have determined whether we wish to partner with the Texas District Board of Mission Administration in creating a partnership agreement which includes a financial support.
- B. If we desire such a partnership, we have given an initial verbal request to be included in mission funding with the Texas District.
- C. We have developed an initial draft of our Mission Prospectus reflective of "right person, right place, right plan" thinking and have submitted it to our MMF [*see Appendix B*].
- D. We have communicated with our MMF our readiness to interview Church Planter candidates who have gone through successful assessment by Dr. John Hirsch.

(Writing of the Mission Prospectus and seeking of candidates can happen simultaneously).

4. Implementation Steps

- A. We have interviewed approved Church Planter candidates and have made our recommendations to the appropriate decision making group(s) at our church or we have raised up a planter from within our body of believers who has successfully completed Church Planter Assessment.
- B. We have issued a call (if on the Ordained or Commissioned roster of LCMS) or a contract to a lay worker to which the Holy Spirit has led us.
- C. We have submitted our formalized Mission Funding Requests to our Texas District MMF [see *Appendix C*].
- D. Church Planter is on the scene and has been installed/commissioned for the work to which he has been called.
- E. Church Planting Parenting Team has completed its work and disbands.

5. Launch Steps

- A. Church Planter works with MMF to gain additional mentoring from a Church Planting Network or church planter in addition to mentoring from the pastor of the parenting congregation. [This is in addition to a Missional Coach]
- B. Church Planter has read "best practices" books on church planting [a variety of titles will be shared by the MMF].
- C. We are willing to follow and work closely with our Church Planter to determine the style of ministry most appropriate to reach the targeted area or people group.
- D. We have worked with our MMF to secure a Church Planting for our Church Planter (Funding from the Texas District to cover up to \$2,500 of the Church Planter Coaching Process over a period of two years with the Coach and Planter meeting monthly.) Coaches are certified as Missional Coaches by the Texas District.
- E. Church Planter explores potential church planting locations identified by the Church Planting Parenting Team and prayerfully leads in discerning the "right place" for the church plant.
- F. The Church Planter begins formation of a Launch Team (Planter develops Launch Team with the goal that at least 50% come from new contacts in location of new Church Start.) He is trusted to select Launch Team members.
- G. If Church Planter is lay or commissioned, he works with the Area MMF in planning for appropriate certification and training.
- H. Church planter and Launch Team develops appropriate initial systems preceding launch of public worship (e.g. evangelism/discipleship, record keeping, website, leadership development, basic accounting, corporate/legal structure)
- I. Church Planter and Launch Team researches and contracts for high visibility location for first worship site.
- J. Church Planter and launch team plans for a soft launch of regular worship and missional community groups.
- K. Church Planter and launch team personally invite others to missional community and soft launch worship.
- L. Church Planters and launch team plan for public launch of regular worship.

Prayer Team -- Appendix A

Mission Prayer Team Guidelines

No partner is more important than prayer partners.

Planting a church is a major undertaking. Satan does not want your church to succeed in being missional or in planting a church. Surround your church and your leadership team with a group of mission prayer partners who will pray for discernment, wisdom, boldness and openness to follow the leading of the Holy Spirit. Many churches underestimate the amount of spiritual warfare they will face as they ponder the possibility of planting a church. Satan will work to discourage your church from reaching out with the Gospel or from planting a church. Prayer must be a priority for the process of considering the planting of a church. This team can later transition into being a Prayer Team for the new church plant if God leads your church to participate in planting one. Your congregation should seek a group of 8 – 10 people who are known to be consistent prayer warriors for this effort

To recruit the 10 prayer team members, consider the following:

- A. Brainstorm at least 10 people who would be committed to praying for church leadership and for the emerging Parenting Team.
- B. Contact them about being on the Mission Prayer Team.
- C. Initiate some form of weekly communication with them with specific prayer requests.
- D. Encourage them to invite others to join them as members of the team.

Suggested initial prayer requests:

- E. Pastor and church leaders – You need God's wisdom, patience and strength.
- F. Your congregation – that they will be open to the guidance of the Holy Spirit through God's Word to seek to be part of God's mission to the world.
- G. Protection – Satan will attack you, your family, and anyone who wants to join you.
- H. Vision – that God would guide your congregation's planning and give you a clear vision for the new church.
- I. Parenting Team – that they would lead wisely and not lose momentum.
- J. Planter Search Process – that God would direct the congregation to the right person to lead the effort to plant a church.
- K. Launch Team – that God would provide the right people to form the core of the new church.
- L. Finances – that God would provide the resources to make the church planting effort possible.
- M. Inform – the congregation about what issues the Mission Prayer Team is specifically praying.

Prayer partners should pray for the specific needs faced as the congregation moves through the various steps in the planting process. A group email program is usually the most effective way to do this. It is imperative that the prayer team emails clearly communicate the prayer needs of the congregation in this effort.

Guidelines -- Appendix B

Guidelines for Writing Your Preliminary Mission Prospectus

Studies show a strong correlation between prayerful planning and a church plant that is thriving 5 years down the road. With that in mind, church plants receiving financial assistance from the Texas District LCMS begin by working with their assigned Mission and Ministry Facilitator to write a Mission Prospectus which eventually morphs into a Mission Plan when the Church Planter is on the scene. The following provides a framework for writing your initial Mission Prospectus. This is not the blueprint for your mission but rather makes the case for its development. Remember the goal is etched in concrete but the initial prospectus is written in sand!

Potential Location Analysis

Your MMF has provided or will provide you with Full Insite demographic studies from MissionInsite of your potential target areas. Use these studies as well as "demographics by walking around" and other information you may have gathered to answer the following questions:

- A. What is the population of the area?
- B. What are the population projections for the next 5 years?
- C. What is the ethnic/racial make-up of the area?
- D. Which ethnic groups are project to grow rapidly in the next five years?
- E. What is the economic make-up of the area?
- F. What lifestyle groups dominate the area?
- G. What are the greatest perceived needs of this area?
- H. Which of the greatest needs of this area can a church address best?
- I. What is the level of faith involvement in your area?
- J. What are the best ways to communicate with people in your target area?
- K. What are the Mosaic Groups most represented in the area (See your Full Insite Study from MissionInsite Demographics).

People Groups Likely to be served by the Church Plant

Describe the likely community/area(s) in which you plan to start this mission. (Final determination will not likely be made until your Church Planter has led exploration of the potential areas for best match of planter with potential growing populations) including a descriptive paragraph which describe the likely age demographic group, geographic region, language group or socioeconomic group you believe the Church Plant will serve: (See Mosaic Groups listed above)

Area Church Screening

- A. How many existing churches are in your target area?
- B. How many of them are effectively reaching the same kinds of people you plan to target?
- C. What are the closest LCMS churches to your target area? Share your church planting plans with congregations that are close to your anticipated church plant.
- D. What has been the response of those churches (if applicable)?

Vision

- A. Describe briefly your vision for this church planting effort. (*Vision is a description of the preferred future.*)
- B. What do you think is God's desire for this ministry?
- C. What is your congregation willing to do to create the best possibility of success for this new church plant?
- D. What healthy DNA can your church impart to the launch team?
- E. Will the church planter spend time serving in your congregation as he assesses the area, recruits launch team members and does initial spadework for the new church?

The People

- A. Will you begin the effort with a church planting pastor or will you begin the effort with a key lay leader or another church professional as the key leader?
- B. Will this key leader be full time, part time, volunteer—or bi-vocational?
- C. Is the congregation willing to allow the Church Planter to invite some members of your congregation to be part of the Launch Team for the new church?

The Plan

- A. Will this be free standing daughter church plant from your congregation or a multi-site ministry?
Describe the anticipated relationship between the parent church and the new church plant:

- B. How will you communicate to your members that this plant is designed to reach people "far from God" (*unchurched, dechurched*) and not merely a place to transplant Lutherans who don't want to drive as far?

- D. What might be possible first steps in terms of ministry—home Bible studies, children's ministries, community service - which could happen even prior to the arrival of your church planter?

Finances

- A. What congregational financial resources do you plan to invest in this new church plant?

- B. What other expected sources of support/income do you anticipate for the first three to five years of the new church's life?

- C. Assuming that you request and are eligible to receive financial assistance over five years in the form of a no-interest loan from the Texas District, attach a preliminary budget for the first year.

Preliminary Budget should include the following items:

Anticipated Income

- A. From Texas District (returnable dollars)
- B. From parenting congregation, if applicable
- C. Grants/bequests/endowments from individuals, groups and businesses
- D. Resources raised by the Church Planter himself
- E. From offerings
- F. From other sources (name sources)

Anticipated Income

Anticipated Expenditures

- A. Initial marketing strategy
- B. Worship equipment (sound, projector, etc.)
- C. Educational equipment
- D. Rental

- E. Insurance
- F. Signage
- G. Website development
- H. Equipment (computers, cell phones, etc.)
- I. Facilities (rent, utilities, etc.).
- J. Salary and benefits for Church Planter
- K. Stipend for part-time staff (worship leader, children’s minister)
- L. Outreach expenses
- E. Loan repayment (District and other).
- F. Mission Giving (at least 10% of the money received through regular offerings should be earmarked for the Texas District LCMS missions). All church starts are encouraged to model good stewarding of God's resources.

Signatures:

Anticipated Expenditures

Pastor or Parenting Church

Congregational Pres. or Network Leader

Mission and Ministry Facilitator

Application for Returnable Mission Funding

Texas District LC-MS

7900 E. Hwy. 290

Austin, Texas 78724

Date: _____ / _____ / _____
Month Day Year

Part 1: Ministry Information

Will this be a Word and Sacrament Ministry? ___ Yes ___ No

Will this be a satellite or multi-site location? ___ Yes ___ No

Will this be a daughter church start? ___ Yes ___ No

Is this a Network church start? ___ Yes ___ No

If a Network start, please indicate which Network:

New Church Plant Description:

Describe anticipated language spoken/ethnic makeup of ministry:

Is it the intent of this ministry to become a member LC-MS Congregation? ___ Yes ___ No

Part 2: Ministry Sponsor Information

Is an existing congregation or network sponsoring your church plant? ___ Yes ___ No

If yes, please detail sponsor information below:

Name of Congregation/Network: _____

Address: _____

City: _____

State: _____ Zip: _____

Ministry Mailing Address (if different than above):

Address: _____

City: _____

State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____

E-mail: _____

Website address: _____

Will the sponsoring congregation/network, the Church Plant, or a combination of the two be responsible for repaying the returnable funding?

___ Sponsoring Congregation/Network ___ Church Plant ___ Combination of the two

Part 3: Funding Request Details

Funding Amount Applied For:

___ \$200,000* for church plant with a full-time worker in a ministry (100% repayment over 20 years) *\$200,000 maximum can be negotiated if the case can be made for repayment

Requested Disbursement schedule:

Year 1: \$

Year 2: \$

Year 3: \$

Year 4: \$

Year 5: \$

___ \$100,000* for a worker-priest ministry (50% repayment over 20 years) *\$100,000 maximum can be negotiated if the case can be made for repayment

Requested Disbursement schedule:

Year 1: \$

Year 2: \$

Year 3: \$

Year 4: \$

Year 5: \$

Part 4: Mission Proposal

The Person:

Who will be the church planter? Describe qualifications and attach a resume.

If a team of people is involved, please describe the team members along with their qualifications and commitment.

Has the ministry leader completed Church Planter assessment? ____ Yes ____ No

Please summarize the assessment results:

The Place:

Where will this ministry be launched? Include/attach demographic data and observations that reinforce the viability of this ministry start-up.

The Plan:

Please provide the latest draft of your Mission Prospectus, including:

- A timeline of ministry development,
- a financial plan,
- how this ministry will become self-supporting, and
- how this ministry will reach out and reproduce itself.