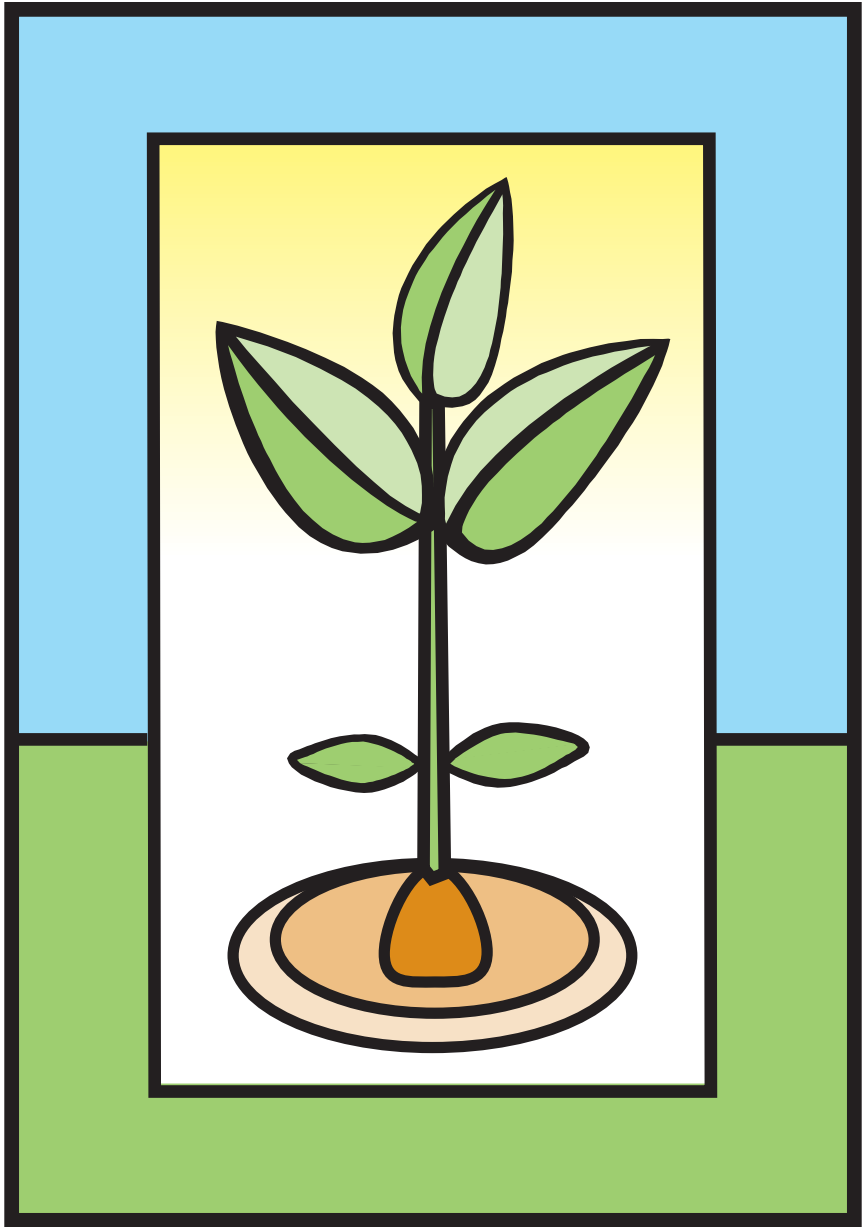


STARTING



NEW CHURCHES



Starting New Churches:

A Process of Discernment

(Version 3.0)

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Introduction

Starting a new church is not rocket science — it is much more complicated! A new church is the work of the Holy Spirit, which immediately puts this task way beyond our ability to understand. The following guide is linear, a series of 17 gatherings with assignments and steps a team could complete that take you from zero to a new church. Unfortunately, starting a new church is not linear; it is organic, contextual, and based on relationships between God and people. It is reformed and always reforming.

Our prayer is that you will let the Holy Spirit lead you. Our goal is to lay out a process that encourages you to address key aspects of starting a new church, while leading you to listen to the sometimes still voice of God, rather than ours or anyone else's. This process of discernment does not guarantee success, but we do believe it will help keep you focused on the one who starts new churches.

That said, we urge you not to fear failure, because God might be leading you to fail. Many of the Martyrs would be considered failures by our standard, yet their witness changed the world. Jesus gathered a mere 120 people who were considered his followers according to the first chapter of the book of Acts. That's hardly a great new church; in fact, most of us would have had Jesus attend a seminar led by Peter, who, in his first sermon, gathered 3,000 believers. Only God knows what God wants to accomplish through you and the new churches the Holy Spirit is placing on your heart. Trust God. Strive to be faithful rather than successful. Faithfulness brings a success beyond our imagination and wildest dreams.

Each of the 17 gatherings suggests a Bible study and an extended time of prayer. We encourage you to engage this process *slowly*. Resist the temptation to rush through the Bible studies and prayerful reflection. New church development is not the implementation of successful models and techniques; it is the faithful discernment of God's leading and the faithful implementation of God's mission. Wrestle with the scriptures, listen, and fall on your knees in humility.

Church planters and those who are attracted to beginning new

churches are often “doers.” We can’t wait to get started, bring in the kingdom, make it happen and happen now. Remember Jesus told his “doers” to go back to Jerusalem, pray and wait until God’s right time. We hope that all of you fellow “doers” will resist the temptation to start doing and will take the time to discuss, listen, discern, and wait for God’s right time. We have countless stories of teams who were delayed in their plans and the finding of the right leadership took longer than expected, yet in hindsight those delays led the team to the “perfect timing.”

This document is version 3.0 of a work in progress. We hope you will share your experiences and feedback for incorporation in subsequent editions.

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How to Use This Resource

When this resource was developed, it was done so with the idea that it would be used by different groups who are passionate about starting a new church. To that end, you will find moments when, depending on who you are, you will be prodded to seek counsel from coaches, approval from your Session or Presbytery, and input from those who may have oversight of the project. We encourage you to include as many “feedback loops” as possible because the more input and collaboration you have, the broader your support becomes and the better it will be for the new church.

With 173 Presbyteries in the PC(USA), there are approximately 173 ways that Presbyteries organize the work they do. How you use this process depends on how your structure works. We intentionally did not include too many specifics (who, what, and when) about the approval of particular items, but made some suggestions at certain points for you to seek advice and/or approval, if needed.

If you are a Church Development Committee (responsible for starting churches):

- If you are contemplating starting one new church, this process will help you refine and define some specifics about the who and where of the new churches you want to start. If you are the group that will be walking with the new church throughout its life, then you will want to work through all 17 gatherings as a group. If you plan to hand off the work to a task force (commission, subcommittee, etc.) consider identifying these people ahead of time and inviting them to be a part of your process. Otherwise, once the area/people for whom this new church will be started and the task group is identified, they will need to review and agree with the first three sessions before starting their work together in Gathering Four.

- If you are starting multiple new churches, follow the process outlined above. Once the areas are defined and task groups identified, you can hand off the work in Gathering 10. It is important that the group you hand off to reviews and agrees with the foundational work in Gatherings 1-3.

NOTE: Do not skip this critical step of reviewing and obtaining agreement with the Foundational Statement you create in the first

few gatherings. Everything we do flows from our Christology- what we believe about Jesus. If we do not make sure that we are clear on who Jesus is, we run the risk of starting a church without him or with two different Jesus'. It is risky and confusing. If there are differences between the Church Development Committee and the Task Group, make sure to resolve them before moving forward.

If you are a Church:

The process is the same as it would be if you were a Presbytery committee. Our assumption is that you will have a committee that will work through all 17 gatherings. If you are a large church seeking to do more than one new church, follow the same procedures as the Presbytery committee doing more than one as well. One thing you need to do is to communicate with your Presbytery and your Session. They should be your biggest allies in church planting. You will need their input and approval to apply for a Mission Development Resource Grant. (For information on grants, call the Office of Church Growth at 888-728-7228 ext 5247.)

If you are beginning with an organizing pastor:

Work through the gatherings with your core leadership team, even the gathering on calling the missionary. You will be calling more people to the leadership task than the lead church planter. You will need to create leadership position descriptions and how they relate to each other for all the leadership team.

If you are an energetic visionary who wants to start a church:

What are you thinking? Just kidding.... You could use this as well. You may already have a group of people you feel called to reach and the temptation would be to skip some steps. In order to help you be faithful in your call to start a new church, gather a group of people with a deep love for Jesus to be your team as you think about planting this church. Work through the sessions, even the one on calling the missionary, as you will need to discern the same issues of call to be a new church pastor. Consider the same process for you as for the church and make sure you communicate with your Presbytery. Don't do it alone.

Our prayer for you is that God would make you faithful in centering yourself on Jesus, getting to know the culture in which this church would be planted and developing a structure that would make the new church everything God wants it to be.



Definitions

Gatherings— We use the term ‘gathering’ to describe the individual working sessions found in “Starting New Churches”. The term DOES NOT MEAN that you will meet just once on that topic. IT DOES MEAN that there is work to do on that particular topic and that you will have as many meetings to accomplish your work as necessary. You are ‘gathering’ around the topic. The overall work of “Starting New Churches” could be as short as four months, an average of about six months, or it could take longer if a team needs to take its time.

Foundational Statement:

The team will develop a one-page statement that answers the question, “Who is Jesus?” and defines “church,” “salvation,” “evangelism,” and “service.” The responses will determine what is started. The first three gatherings will be working toward creating this statement.

Vision Statement:

This is a one-page description of “who” this new church is being started for and “why” this new church needs to be started. This statement will be developed after several site visits, much prayer, and significant time to reflect. It is really the discerning of the heart of God at this time. The vision statement will be developed by the 9th gathering.

Mission Plan:

This is a one- or two-page description of the core values, ministry plan, outreach plan, and leadership plan for the new church. It will be based on the Foundational Statement and the Vision Statement and will include the costs--human, financial, time, and other. This mission plan will be developed in the 12th gathering.

Missionary Plan:

This is a one or two-page description of the people needed to fulfill the Mission Plan to begin a new church for those identified in the Vision Statement. The missionaries may or may not be ordained.

New Church:

This is what results from the implementation of the Mission

Plan by those identified in the Missionary Plan when they reach the people of the Vision Statement while being faithful to the Foundational Statement.

Discernment Team: This is the group who will discern God's will for the beginning of a new church among a particular people or community. This group will covenant together to work through the gatherings of "Starting New Churches" once they have completed their third gathering. They may or may not continue to be part of the Core Leadership of the projected new church. There are several moments for members of the Discernment Team to reaffirm their commitment to the processes or to move on.

If the new church begins with an organizing pastor, then the discernment team will probably have members from both the sponsoring organization (parent church/presbytery) as well as those who are committed to be part of the new church.

Check out "Forming the Discernment Team" and "Beginning with an Organizing Pastor" and "Guidelines for the Discernment Team" in appendices 1 & 2.



Overview and Checklist:

TASK I

Gathering One: The Big Picture

During this session you will begin the process of discernment and the venture of starting a new church. This gathering will give you an overview of the rest of the process.

Date of the next meeting: _____

Gathering Two: Who Do You Say That I Am?

Who is Jesus and what is the church? These are not small questions but a key discussion that must happen within the team if a new church is going to emerge from this process.

Bible Study/Prayer Leader: _____

Content/Homework Leader: _____

Date of the next meeting: _____

Gathering Three: Are We On The Same Page?

During this session you will write your “foundational statement” that will allow you to determine whether or not the team is headed in the same direction. By the end of this session you will have a written piece that will be the foundation of your future work together.

Bible Study/Prayer Leader: _____

Content/Homework Leader: _____

Date of the next meeting: _____

TASK II

Gathering Four: People and Places on Our Heart

This session will be devoted scripture and prayer about those whom God seeks through you and where they are.

Bible Study/Prayer Leader: _____

Content/Homework Leader: _____

Date of the next meeting: _____

Gathering Five: What are the Possibilities?

In this session you will begin to define and identify who God may be calling you to reach and where the places are that a new church might be started.

Bible Study/Prayer Leader: _____

Content/Homework Leader: _____

Date of the next meeting: _____

Gathering Six: Site Visits

This gathering will sharpen your observation skills and help you begin to discern the context in which, where, why, and how the new church might gather. You will visit one potential site where God might do something new.

Bible Study/Prayer Leader: _____

Content/Homework Leader: _____

Date of the next meeting: _____

Gathering Seven: What's Our Vision?

The purpose of this gathering is to discern where your passions (those of the Presbytery, church, people) align with where you believe the Spirit of God is asking you to go.

Bible Study/Prayer Leader: _____

Content/Homework Leader: _____

Date of the next meeting: _____

Gathering Eight: Are We the Ones?

The purpose of this gathering will be to determine if you are the best ones to pursue the ministry in the areas you've identified.

****Possible Presbytery Action required****

Bible Study/Prayer Leader: _____

Content/Homework Leader: _____

Date of the next meeting: _____

Gathering Nine: The Who and the Why

In this gathering you will develop your Vision Statement of "Who and Why."

Bible Study/Prayer Leader: _____

Content/Homework Leader: _____

Date of the next meeting: _____

TASK III

Gathering Ten: Beginning a Mission Plan

In this gathering you will begin to develop your Mission Plan.

Bible Study/Prayer Leader: _____

Content/Homework Leader: _____

Date of the next meeting: _____

Gathering Eleven: How Many Ways Could We Do This?

In this gathering you will determine the possible different models to begin a new church to reach those you identified in your Vision Statement.

Bible Study/Prayer Leader: _____

Content/Homework Leader: _____

Date of the next meeting: _____

Gathering Twelve: The Mission Plan

In this gathering you will develop the Mission Plan.

Bible Study/Prayer Leader: _____

Content/Homework Leader: _____

Date of the next meeting: _____

Gathering Thirteen: Define Success & When to Shake off Dust

During this gathering you will clarify how you will assess and measure success.

Bible Study/Prayer Leader: _____

Content/Homework Leader: _____

Date of the next meeting: _____

TASK IV

Gathering Fourteen: Who Will Go For Us?

During this gathering you will define both the kinds of leaders needed to begin your new church as well as the gifts, skills, talents and characteristics needed in them.

Bible Study/Prayer Leader: _____

Content/Homework Leader: _____

Date of the next meeting: _____

Gathering Fifteen: Writing the Job Descriptions and Church Information Form (CIF)

At this gathering you will write job descriptions and your CIF. This will describe the ministry opportunity that you are inviting people to consider leading. You will have resources for recruiting both clergy and non clergy people.

Bible Study/Prayer Leader: _____

Content/Homework Leader: _____

Date of the next meeting: _____

Gathering Sixteen: Support and Implementation Plan

This gathering will name the human, financial, spiritual, coaching, and oversight resources available and necessary for this new church.

Bible Study/Prayer Leader: _____

Content/Homework Leader: _____

Date of the next meeting: _____

Gathering Seventeen: Finishing Well, Beginning Well

During this gathering you will wrap up the discernment process and begin the transition into the implementation of the work of a new church.

Bible Study/Prayer Leader: _____

Content/Homework Leader: _____



The First Task: Develop a Foundational Statement

Gatherings 1-3

The first task of the team is to develop a one page statement that answers the question, “Who is Jesus?” and then defines “church,” “salvation,” “evangelism” and “service.” We realize that when it comes to answering the question, “Who is Jesus?” the writer of the Gospel of John is right by saying, “the world itself could not contain the books that would be written.” (John 21:25) The key to this first task is that when a team discusses, debates, and writes down their absolutes about Jesus, church, salvation, evangelism and service, they find out if they can move forward together to start a new church. This also determines what the team will start.



COACHING POINT: This task will set the tone, direction, and mission of the new church God is forming through the team. Take your time and don’t worry if gatherings two and three each take more than one meeting of the team to complete. A team that is diverse is going to need more time to discuss these key issues. The New Church Coaches have seen teams of strangers become true brothers and sisters in Christ by taking their time with this task. Don’t rush it. Enjoy the journey!

Gathering One: The Big Picture

During this session, you will begin the process of discernment and receive an overview of the process.

Opening: 30 minutes

Introduction: Have everyone introduce themselves by sharing:

- His/her name.
- The person(s) instrumental in your being a Christian.

Read: Matthew 9:35-38

Jesus went through all the towns and villages, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the good news of the kingdom and healing every disease and sickness. When he saw the crowds, he had compassion on them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. Then he said to his disciples, “The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field.” (NRSV)

- Read it again, only this time, have everyone close their eyes.
- Ask: What images, pictures, word(s), or phrases stood out for you?

Pray: Have each person thank God for the person who was instrumental in their being a Christian.

Content: 1 hour (Beginning the Foundational Statement)

Play the video clip: “I Say Jesus, You Say...” (The video is available in the leaders packet or on the web at www.presbygrow.net.)

- If you primarily viewed Jesus as “Savior of the Lost,” how would that impact the church you started?
- What would a new church look like if your primary view of Jesus was “judge?”
- What would a new church look like if your primary view of Jesus was “serving the least?”
- Finish this statement: “People need Jesus because _____.”

- Finish this statement: “People need the church of Jesus Christ because _____.”

Read: Matthew 9:35-38

35 Then Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, and proclaiming the good news of the kingdom and curing every disease and every sickness. When he saw the crowds, he had compassion for them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. Then he said to his disciples. “The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few; therefore ask the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest.”

- What do you hear Jesus saying to you now?

Review the Big Picture:

Review the Overview at the front of this document and make assignments for at least the next two gatherings. Ask everyone to commit to the next two gatherings. During the third gathering everyone will be asked to continue or step out at that point. The rest of the assignments can be made at that time.

Homework:

Have each team member ask one or two people active in a church and one or two people not currently attending a church, “What comes to mind when you hear the word, ‘Jesus?’” and “What comes to mind when you hear the word, ‘Church.’”

Gathering Two: Who Do You Say I Am?

Who is Jesus and what is the church? These are not small questions but a key discussion that must happen within the team if a new church is going to emerge from this process.

Bible Study and Content: 90 minutes

Have a volunteer pray for God's Spirit to guide this time.

Gathering One homework:

- Ask everyone to share what they heard when they asked
- "What comes to mind when you hear the word 'Jesus?'" and "What comes to mind when you hear the word 'Church.'"
- Ask everyone in the group to respond to the question, "When was the first time God's love for you in Christ Jesus became real?"

Read: Matthew 16:13-25

13 Now when Jesus came into the district of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, "Who do people say that the Son of Man is?"

14 And they said, "Some say John the Baptist, but others Elijah, and still others Jeremiah or one of the prophets." 15 He said to them, "But who do you say that I am?" 16 Simon Peter answered, "You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God."

17 And Jesus answered him, "Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah! For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father in heaven. 18 And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not prevail against it. 19 I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven." 20 Then he sternly ordered the disciples not to tell anyone that he was the Messiah.

21 From that time on, Jesus began to show his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem and undergo great suffering at the hands of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and on the third day be raised.

22And Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him, saying, “God forbid it, Lord! This must never happen to you.” 23But he turned and said to Peter, “Get behind me, Satan! You are a stumbling block to me; for you are setting your mind not on divine things but on human things.”

24Then Jesus told his disciples, “If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me.

25For those who want to save their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake will find it.” (NRSV)

- Have two or three people share, “What phrases and ideas jumped out at you in this passage?”
- Have two or three people share, “What were some of the differences between Peter ‘getting it’ and Peter being a ‘stumbling block?’” (Read Matthew 16:22-23)
- Key Question: Have each person share, “Who is Jesus to you?”
- Read together the following statement from the Book of Order, section G.1.10001:

The Head of the Church: All power in heaven and earth is given to Jesus Christ by Almighty God, who raised Christ from the dead and set him above all rule and authority, all power and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age but also in that which is to come.

a. God has put all things under the Lordship of Jesus Christ and has made Christ Head of the Church, which is his body.

b. Christ calls the Church into being, giving it all that is necessary for its mission to the world, for its building up, and for its service to God. Christ is present with the Church in both Spirit and Word. It belongs to Christ alone to rule, to teach, to call, and to use the Church as he wills, exercising his authority by the ministry of women and men for the establishment and extension of his Kingdom.

c. Christ gives to his Church its faith and life, its unity and mission, its officers and ordinances. Insofar as Christ’s will for the Church is set forth in Scripture, it is to be obeyed. In the worship and service of God and the government of the church, matters are

to be ordered according to the Word by season and sound judgment, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

d. In affirming with the earliest Christians that Jesus is Lord, the Church confesses that he is its hope and that the Church, as Christ's body, is bound to his authority and thus free to live in the lively, joyous reality of the grace of God.

Key questions:

- What descriptions of Jesus are helpful to you?
- What descriptions of Jesus that you read here challenge you? Offend you?
- Have everyone share, "How does your understanding of Jesus impact what your church does, how it worships, how it interacts with those outside your church?"
- Have everyone share, "What is salvation?" and "How does your definition of salvation impact your definition of church?"
- Have everyone share, "What is service?" and "How does your definition of service impact your definition of church?"
- Have each person share, "What is church? In other words, if by the power of the Holy Spirit we were absolutely successful at starting a church, what would that look like? What would we observe in the lives of those who belonged to that church? What would we observe when the members got together? What would they do together, on their own?"
- Have each person share, "What is evangelism?"
- What other term do you believe needs to be defined as part of your foundational statement? How do you define that term?

Pray: Explain that first there will be a five-minute or more time of silence when each of us should:

- Confess the ways we have been stumbling blocks to the Jesus' work.
- Ask for the Holy Spirit to lead us to see Jesus a little more clearly each day.

Following this silence, spend some time praying for the person on your right. Thank God for the person and ask God to give him or her the vision for the church or churches God wants to start through the work of this team.

Homework:

Prior to the next gathering, each team member should write down in a few sentences the answer to each of the following questions and have them available to share:

- Who is Jesus?
- What is the church?
- What is salvation?
- What is service?
- What is evangelism?

Gathering Three: All on the Same Page?

During this session you will write your “foundational statement” that will allow you to determine whether or not the team is headed in the same direction. By the end of this session you will have a written piece that will be the foundation of your future work together.



COACHING POINT: Experience says that this will take more than one meeting. You may want to consider scheduling at least one or more times to gather to work on this or extending your time together.

Bible Study: 30 minutes

Pray: Have everyone close their eyes and ask them to imagine that their burdens, worries, and the tasks they have yet to do are all in their hands. Now challenge them that before praying for this gathering and one another that each person put aside all that tries to steal their focus from God.

Read: Acts 15:36-41

³⁶After some days Paul said to Barnabas, “Come, let us return and visit the believers in every city where we proclaimed the word of the Lord and see how they are doing.” ³⁷Barnabas wanted to take with them John called Mark. ³⁸But Paul decided not to take with them one who had deserted them in Pamphylia and had not accompanied them in the work. ³⁹The disagreement became so sharp that they parted company; Barnabas took Mark with him and sailed away to Cyprus. ⁴⁰But Paul chose Silas and set out, the believers commending him to the grace of the Lord. ⁴¹He went through Syria and Cilicia, strengthening the churches. (NSRV)

- Have three or four share, “Tell about a time when a disagreement was helpful? What was gained by the disagreement in Acts 15?”
- Have three or four share, “Give an example of a time when a disagreement was hurtful? What was lost because of the disagreement in Acts 15?”
- Ask, “What would our options be as we share ‘Who is

Jesus and what is the church?’ if we reach an absolute we cannot agree upon?”

Content: 1 hour

- Have everyone share their homework sentences on “Who is Jesus?”
- List those statements on a white board or for all to see.

Once everyone has shared the “amen” statements, ask:

- Is there anything missing that must be included to answer the question “Who is Jesus?” Why? (Add those statements.)
- Is there anything written there that you would like to see removed? Why? (Remove those statements.)
- Is there a better way to say something you want removed or is it already noted in a better way?
- Have everyone pair up. Have each pair take what is on the white board and write a statement answering the question, “Who is Jesus?”



COACHING POINT: Try writing statements that don’t use “churchy” or “theological” language. Write your statements for the person outside the church.

As a group share your responses and come up with your group answer to “Who is Jesus?”

Repeat the process above for the following questions:

- What is the church?
- What is salvation?
- What is service?
- What is evangelism?
- What is _____?

Outcome: Combine the group’s statements for each of the four questions into a single statement. This is your Foundational Statement and your “Absolutes.” You will refer to it throughout the rest of the process.

- Read the Foundational Statement for this team that articulates who the team understands Jesus to be; what the team understands the church to be; what the team understands salvation to be; and how the team defines service.
- Ask everyone “Is there anything in this statement that goes against your personal absolutes? Is there anything in this statement that would prevent you from going forward with this team?”
- If there are those who do not feel comfortable with the foundational statement of the group, they may choose at this time not to continue with this particular group. There may also be an opportunity for another group to look at other possibilities around a different theological perspective. There are plenty of opportunities to start a new church.

Ask the group that is willing to go forward to covenant together. Develop a covenant that fits your group. Here are some suggested elements of the covenant:

- To pray daily for this venture
- To pray for the others on this team
- To be open to starting the church that the team discerns Jesus to be leading them to start, even if it is very different from what they expect
- To attend the rest of the gatherings
- To continue the work and homework needed to move forward

This would be a good time to share your foundational statement with others, depending on your situation. If you are a church starting a church, you might choose to share it with the staff or Session of the church or the appropriate Presbytery committee. You might also share it with a NCD coach. In all of these cases you're not looking for approval but creating a feedback loop to help keep those involved in the process aware of your progress and to create a sense of journey with them.

Homework:

- Bring a map, newspaper clippings, and pictures of some communities or people groups God is placing on your heart as possible fertile ground for a new church.
- Before the next meeting, recruit people in your church or Presbytery to commit to pray with you during your next gathering. They don't have to be in the same room with you but should be committed to praying at the same time you are praying. These people also may become a prayer team of sorts as you continue your work.



The Second Task: Develop a Vision Statement

Gatherings 4-9

The second task of the team is to develop a one page description of “who” this new church is being started for and “why” it needs to be started. The temptation is to try and start a church for everyone, which usually leads to communicating clearly the love of God to no one. The vision statement will be developed after several site visits, much prayer, and significant time to reflect.



COACHING POINT: Remember, gatherings might take more than one meeting to complete. You will likely need more than one site visit. The key to this task is discerning the heart of God at this time not rushing to a conclusion.



COACHING POINT: “This is going to be a waste of time!” “We have the demographic study, why do we need to do this?” “What could we possibly learn from this?”

These are just a few of the statements we have heard before teams have done the site visit in Gathering Six. Amazingly, we have not led a site visit yet in which the team has not found the experience profound and the key to the whole discernment process. We even took 30 of our New Church Coaches on a series of site visits; most of them went kicking and screaming. All 30 returned anxious to lead their own church teams through this process in their neighborhoods. May God give you eyes to see real people in the midst of real life, needing the real God.

Gathering Four: People and Places on our Hearts

This session will be devoted to scripture and prayer about those whom God seeks through you and where they are.

Bible Study: 30 minutes

You are moving from the foundational questions of new church development to more specific issues of vision: Who is God calling you to reach? Who has God placed on your hearts?

Read: Acts 16: 9-10

That night Paul had a dream: A Macedonian stood on the far shore and called across the sea, “Come over to Macedonia and help us!” The dream gave Paul his map. We went to work at once getting things ready to cross over to Macedonia. All the pieces had come together. We knew now for sure that God had called us to preach the good news to the Europeans. (MSG)

The passage falls at a time after Paul and Barnabas had separated and gone different ways. Paul has joined with Timothy and they continue to travel while preaching and teaching. It says that they had a travel plan. They tried to go to Asia. They were blocked. They tried to go Bithynia. The Spirit blocked them again. That night Paul had a dream.....Macedonia!

Form groups of two or three and discuss the following:

- Why did God block Paul from going where he wanted to go?
- What new churches in your area, if any, have failed to be what they thought they would be?
- Who are the “Macedonians” in your Presbytery, church, city, or county?
- What dream has God given you about your “plans”?

Share briefly in the large group what you discovered.

Prayer/Content: 1 hour

Prayer is central to the process of starting new churches. While it

may seem easy to dismiss this session as routine or tangential, it is not. If we desire to discern where God is calling and sending us, it must be done in conversation with God.

We have included one session completely devoted to prayer because of how vital it is to your ability to be faithful and successful in what you are doing on God's behalf.

On Palm Sunday, as Jesus saw Jerusalem, he wept for the people. His heart was breaking due to their lack of faith and "lostness." God places on our hearts a desire to reach certain people. This is different for different people, churches and Presbyteries. Who is God placing on your hearts? Who is Jesus weeping for in your area? These are the questions that will guide your prayer time this session.



COACHING POINT: At this point you should not be praying alone. Every effort should be made to include a wide circle of people who are praying with and for you as you discern which people God has placed on your heart. As a part of the homework from the last gathering, you should have called/recruited a group of people in the church or Presbytery who have committed to praying with you during this gathering. They do not have to be with you physically but they have to be committed to prayer. It would be good if these same people would become a prayer team for your group over the course of the remaining gatherings.

Prayer Time:

First...

Start your time of prayer by spending time in silence.

Have the one in charge of the prayer/content time guide the time of silence with the following thoughts. (Provide enough time to allow each person to move through each one.)

- Share with God the most pressing issue on your heart at this moment.
- Ask God to reveal the plans for you...your family, your faith, your church.

As a group share: “What did you hear God saying?”

Next...

Place the map of the area in which you are considering starting a church, where all can see or touch it. Spread out pictures, news articles, flyers from local areas, or any other material that might represent a people group.

- Which areas stand out? Which people stand out?
- Share what God is saying to you as you look at the map and pictures.
- Is one area or person calling to you “from across the ocean?”
- Who are these people and places? List on newsprint or whiteboard. Don’t over think or justify; simply allow God to reveal different areas and people.
- Spend time praying for the areas and people identified. Ask each person to lift up in prayer one or more of those locations or one of those people groups.

Pray out loud for these people and places and for eyes to see and hear.

Following the time of prayer:

- What do you hear God saying?
- Where is God’s voice resonating with your own sense of call?
- Who has God placed on your heart?

Conclude this time by reflecting on the next stage and where the journey seems to be going.

Homework:

Have each member answer the following questions for the next gathering:

- Who are the people groups within your Presbytery (community) that have yet to hear the good news in their own context?
- Who are the people and areas that God has placed on your heart?

- Where are the distressed (not just economically distressed) communities?
- Where are the communities in transition (age, race, income, racial ethnic)?
- Where are the communities of growth and change?

Have one person review the Presbytery's annual statistics asking, "Who is not here?"

Ask people whom you believe have "God's eyes" who they think needs to experience the presence and love of Christ. Who currently does not have a readily available witness to God's love in Jesus?

Have two people gather the demographic information for the Geographic Presbytery. Who are the people who live there? What are the churches and the ministries already in the area?

Consider asking local law enforcement officials to give one of you a tour of "trouble spots." Know that where there are difficult challenges there are great opportunities! If you are looking at a people group, use the demographics to help discern if they are located in a particular area or if a regional approach will be more likely.

Sources of demographic information: (Also available in Appendix 7)

- www.MissionInsite.com - Your Presbytery might have a contract with this group. Contact your Presbytery executive to determine if you have access. If you do not have access, call the Office of Church Growth, 888-728-7228, ext. 5266 or 5247.
- There are also a few places you might find this information at no cost. Realtors are very good at tracking demographic information. Your local School District will also have done a significant study on where the population is moving and the ages of the shift. Make an appointment with your local city planners; they are usually up on the latest trends. The Association of Religious Data can also be helpful. www.thearda.com.

- The PCUSA Research Services has a site that will also allow you to access neighborhood information. <http://www.pcusa.org/research/help2.htm>
- You can also do a Yahoo (www.yahoo.com) or Google (www.google.com) search on specific groups and demographic data and explore that way. Use Google Maps and zip codes to find out some information.

Gathering Five: What are the Possibilities?

In this session you will begin to define and identify who God may be calling you to reach and where the places are that a new church might be started.

Bible Study and Prayer: 20 minutes

Read out loud: Mark 6:30-44

30 The apostles gathered around Jesus, and told him all that they had done and taught. 31 He said to them, “Come away to a deserted place all by yourselves and rest a while.” For many were coming and going, and they had no leisure even to eat.

32 And they went away in the boat to a deserted place by themselves. 33 Now many saw them going and recognized them, and they hurried there on foot from all the towns and arrived ahead of them. 34 As he went ashore, he saw a great crowd; and he had compassion for them, because they were like sheep without a shepherd; and he began to teach them many things.

35 When it grew late, his disciples came to him and said, “This is a deserted place, and the hour is now very late; 36 send them away so that they may go into the surrounding country and villages and buy something for themselves to eat.” 37 But he answered them, “You give them something to eat.” They said to him, “Are we to go and buy two hundred denarii worth of bread, and give it to them to eat?” 38 And he said to them, “How many loaves have you? Go and see.” When they had found out, they said, “Five, and two fish.”

39 Then he ordered them to get all the people to sit down in groups on the green grass. 40 So they sat down in groups of hundreds and of fifties. 41 Taking the five loaves and the two fish, he looked up to heaven, and blessed and broke the loaves, and gave them to his disciples to set before the people; and he divided the two fish among them all. 42 And all ate and were filled; 43 and they took up twelve baskets full of broken pieces and of the fish. 44 Those who had eaten the loaves numbered five thousand men. (NSRV)

Reflection:

- What motivations, other than the compassion of Jesus, could be behind your desire to start a new church, reach a new crowd?
- When you begin to see some of the possibilities of this new church, how are you going to know when it is for you to take care of the crowd or when they should be sent somewhere else?

Read out loud as a group Mark 6:31.

- What were the motivations behind these words?

Read out loud as a group Mark 6:34.

- What was Jesus' motivation for teaching the crowd?
- How do you imagine the disciples felt about the crowd?

Read out loud as a group Mark 6:36-37.

- How did Jesus' motivations impact the disciples' actions?
- How do you know when God is asking you to step out and do something, even without all the resources in place, and when the lack of resources is a sign from God that you are not the ones to go forward with this crowd?

Pray:

As a group, pray for the people sitting next to you for the Spirit to guide them in this process and in their lives.

Content: 75 minutes

Share the Foundational Statement developed in Gathering Three. Share the answers to your homework questions and either project them on a screen or have someone write them on a white board or butcher paper.

- Who are the people groups within your Presbytery (community) that have yet to hear the good news in their own context?
- Who are the people and areas God has placed on your heart?

- Where are the distressed (not just economically distressed) communities?
- Where are the communities in transition (age, race, income, racial ethnic)?
- Where are the communities of growth and change?

Have the person who looked at the Presbytery's statistics share who was missing from them. Display the list so all can see.

Have the two people assigned to do the demographics share the key insights they gained from that information. Display the insights also.

What patterns do you see? Discuss the patterns, people and groups on many of the lists; people not on anyone's list, but revealed in the demographics or Presbytery statistics; and those whom God has placed on your heart.

Make a list of the people who are on multiple lists. Are there any people not on multiple lists that the group believes needs to be considered a possible "urgent" group?

Outcome:

Form a list of 3 to 10 groups of people God seems to be revealing to you as possible high priority for starting a new church that is contextual to them. Make a second list of possible people to be considered at a future time.

Homework:

Have someone prepare and plan the logistics of the site visit for the next gathering, choosing one of the sites from your possible priority list. Consider contacting and inviting a coach to join you at your next gathering, the site visit. Consider having each member work through, "Site Observations: A Windshield Survey" found in Appendix 4, in their neighborhoods. This is one way to prepare for the site visit in the next gathering. Read through "Site Visit Guide" in Appendix 4 to prepare for your next gathering.

Gathering Six: Site Visits

This gathering will sharpen your observation skills and help you begin to discern the context in which, where, why, and how the new church might gather. You will visit at least one potential site where God might do something new.



COACHING POINT: In Gathering Five, you should have identified 3-10 potential sites and/or people groups. You cannot proceed without having identified them. If you do not have them stay with Gathering Five until you do.

Bible Study and Prayer: 20 minutes

This visit will provide a model for future site visits. If you are able to meet in a sanctuary, a park, or meeting room near the site, do Bible Study option #1. If you are meeting in a public place, do Bible study option #2.

Bible Study Option #1: (20 min. for guided meditation and prayer)

In preparation for visiting and observing potential sites, join together for this guided meditation:

Leader: Close your eyes. Sit in a comfortable position. Become conscious of your breathing. Take in God's words, in a rhythm that flows with your breathing.

Leader: Breathe in. (hold breath) Breathe out. (pause)

Leader: Breathe in. (hold breath) Breathe out. (pause)

Leader (Read Isaiah 43:19.) Listen to the Word of God. *19I am about to do a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it? I will make a way in the wilderness and rivers in the desert.* (pause)

Leader: Repeat Isaiah 43:19 two more times

Leader (Pause after each sentence.): You are in search of the place where God will do a new thing. Imagine a place of wilderness. Is it light or dark? Is it quiet or loud? Is it solitary or crowded? Who is there? Who needs a spring of living water? And how is the water flowing to that person or to that group of people? Hear the water flowing. How does it sound? Feel the water flowing into the wilderness. It refreshes. It satisfies. It turns the wilderness into something fresh...and alive...and safe...and full of life. Now, continue breathing slowly. Open your eyes when you are ready.

Briefly share what you envisioned in terms of both wilderness and the waters of life.

Bible Study Option #2 (20 minutes for Bible study and prayer)

Read: Mark 6:7

He (Jesus) called the twelve and began to send them out two by two, and gave them authority over the unclean spirits. (NSRV)

Jesus sometimes sent his disciples to handle special assignments in twos:

- Jesus sent two disciples to fetch the donkey on which he'd ride into Jerusalem -- Mt. 21:1
- Jesus sent two disciples to prepare for Passover – Mark 14:13

What ministry have you done/do you do with a partner and why?
What are the advantages of serving with another person?

Pray:

- Share with the group a person with whom you've recently done ministry in partnership. After everyone has shared, take turns thanking God for and praying for that person in spoken prayer.
- Each member, in a circle, pray one line for their hopes for these site visits, as informed by the Isaiah verse (Bible Study Option #1). Leader closes.

Content: 90 minutes

Divide your committee into groups that travel easily (i.e. fit into the available cars). All committee members will be visiting the same site together on this day/night. But you will visit all the remaining potential sites with a partner at a later time.



COACHING POINT: If you have a coach you can ask them to join you in this first site visit. If you do not have a coach, and we believe you would benefit by having one, call the Office of Church Growth at 888-728-7228, ext 5266 or 5247.

- As you make it to your location, take time to notice the neighborhood as you walk/drive into it.
- Gather at a location at the site (coffee house, restaurant, park).
- Divide up. Stand/sit apart from each other to make observations. Sit on benches/stand on corners/place yourselves in separate spaces, walk in pairs, to be able to observe from different directions and points of view.
- Take a moment and ask God to reveal insights to you. Absorb the atmosphere and surroundings. Notice activities, faces, sounds, smells.

Site Visit Guide (available in Appendix 4)

This is intended to be a subjective view of your potential ministry areas. The first set of questions you answer by watching and observing people in the area. It's what some people call a "windshield" survey. It's what you see from your car or as you walk around. The second set of questions gets you "into" the neighborhood or ministry area. Together you will find this one of the most energizing experiences for your team. Don't skip this part! Demographic reports don't motivate or define. This will both intimidate your team and motivate your team.

Site Visit Observations: A Windshield Survey (do this as you make your way into the area you're going to visit.)

- Who is there?
- What are they doing?
- What are they talking about?
- What are their ages, genders, races?
- What language are they speaking?
- How are they dressed? Notice details: jewelry, shoes, hairstyles, nametags, tech toys.
- Can you imagine what they might do for work?
- Do they live in the area? Work in the area?
- Do they seem in transient?
- Do they come and go as if they are on a tight schedule?
- Is their manner leisurely?

- What sounds do you hear in the distance?
- What levels of car/bus/foot traffic do you observe?
- Are there sidewalks? Streetlights? Signage?
- What do the people you're observing already have?
- What do they need?
- What else do you notice?
- What is your visceral response to this site?

Site Visit Activities: Three Actions

- Have a drink or something to eat in a local establishment.
- Talk with at least one person in the potential ministry area.
- Bring back a token. Something that symbolizes what you saw and heard that helps tell the story of the area.

Site Visit Interview Questions: Casual Community Conversations

Find places where people gather and look for opportunities to ask people questions.

Look for a variety of people. If you go into a business, you might want to be sensitive to the fact that unless you are a patron, you're interrupting their work. Also note, that as soon as you ask about church the conversation will switch. If they ask, "Why do you want to know?" be honest and say what you're doing. But you may want to put the church questions off for later. Be courteous and non-threatening. Don't have more than two people at the most asking questions. Be sensitive to your context. Are there religious groups that do this regularly? Avoid having a similar approach and dress.

- "Excuse me, do you work or live in the area?"
- "If I were to move here, what do I need to know?"
- "What do people do for work here?"
- "Who lives here?" (age groups, race, class, families, singles, etc.)

- “What do people in the area do for recreation?”
- “Do you like living/working here?”
- “Do people live/work here for a long time?”
- “What are the problems in the area?”
- “What could make this community better?”
- “What churches are in the area?”
- “Do you think this area could use another church?”

The list is *not* exhaustive. This should give you a starting point.

Beyond Site Visits: What more can we learn?

What questions have not been asked? The following are some things that can help you understand your ministry area better.

- Repeat the site visit at different locations and times to get a broader feel for the community.
- Who else needs to be interviewed? Law enforcement officials, educators, city officials, business persons, social services, non-profit groups, and others should be consulted. You can use some of the questions above. By now you know the questions that haven't been answered and still need to be asked.
- Use your demographic studies to supplement your local knowledge.



COACHING POINT: Ask for your eyes to become like Jesus' eyes. Offer your comments and try to avoid stereotypes. You may need to make repeat visits to the neighborhoods you are looking at in order to get a 360 degree view.

- Pray silently for the people you see, for the neighborhood, for the businesses, the people who live in the homes, etc. Ask God to reveal if this might be where we are called to “do a new thing” in Jesus' name.
- Come together and share your reflections together. How were your observations similar? How were they different? What very specific details did you notice? How did you see the people and the space through God's eyes?

Homework:

Divide into pairs before breaking up for the night. Before the next meeting, each pair should visit one or more of the sites that were selected in Gathering Five. All of those selected sites need to be visited prior to the next Gathering, with your partner, replicating your experience at the first site visit. Prepare to share your observations about the other sites with the rest of the committee at the next meeting.

Gathering Seven: What's Our Vision?

The purpose of this gathering is to discern where your passions (those of the Presbytery, church, people) align with where you believe the Spirit of God is asking you to go.

Prayer, Reflection and Bible Study: 30 minutes.

Pray: Have everyone in the group pray silently for five minutes.

Reflection on the Day: Give each person a copy of the following questions adapted from Ignatius' "Awareness Examen" and ask everyone to spend the next 10 minutes in prayerful reflection on the questions. Encourage people to feel free to close their eyes or move around the room as they feel necessary.

- What has been happening to me?
- How has God been working in me?
- What has God been asking of me?
- Let your mind quietly go over the different phases of your day. What feelings did you experience? What thoughts or reflections moved you (positively or negatively)? Do these movements tell you anything about how God was working in you and what God has been asking of you? How have you responded?
- Is there any specific area of your life that you know should be focused on? Reflect on the day from that perspective and discuss it with God.

Take 10 to 15 minutes to share observations members wish to share.

Read: Romans 15:14-29

14-16 Personally, I've been completely satisfied with who you are and what you are doing. You seem to me to be well motivated and well instructed, quite capable of guiding and advising one another. So, my dear friends, don't take my rather bold and blunt language as criticism. It's not criticism. I'm simply underlining how very much I need your help in carrying out this highly focused assignment God gave me, this priestly and gospel work of serving the spiritual needs of the non-Jewish outsiders so they can be presented as an acceptable offering to God, made whole and holy by God's Holy Spirit.

17-21 Looking back over what has been accomplished and what I have observed, I must say I am most pleased—in the context of Jesus, I'd even say proud, but only in that context. I have no interest in giving you a chatty account of my adventures, only the wondrously powerful and transformingly present words and deeds of Christ in me that triggered a believing response among the outsiders. In such ways I have trail-blazed a preaching of the Message of Jesus all the way from Jerusalem far into northwestern Greece. This has all been pioneer work, bringing the Message only into those places where Jesus was not yet known and worshiped. My text has been,

Those who were never told of him—they'll see him!

Those who've never heard of him—they'll get the message!

22-24 And that's why it has taken me so long to finally get around to coming to you. But now that there is no more pioneering work to be done in these parts, and since I have looked forward to seeing you for many years, I'm planning my visit. I'm headed for Spain, and expect to stop off on the way to enjoy a good visit with you, and eventually have you send me off with God's blessing.

25-29 First, though, I'm going to Jerusalem to deliver a relief offering to the followers of Jesus there. The Greeks—all the way from the Macedonians in the north to the Achaians in the south—decided they wanted to take up a collection for the poor among the believers in Jerusalem. They were happy to do this, but it was also their duty. Seeing that they got in on all the spiritual gifts that flowed out of the Jerusalem community so generously, it is only right that they do what they can to relieve their poverty. As soon as I have done this—personally handed over this “fruit basket”—I'm off to Spain, with a stopover with you in Rome. My hope is that my visit with you is going to be one of Christ's more extravagant blessings. (MSG)

Scripture Reflection:

- What are Paul's missionary motivations?
- What were his travel plans?
- Did his plans work out?
- Was his desire fulfilled?

Content: 90 minutes

Homework Reflection: Report on Site Visits

- Use the token from your visit to tell a story about what you saw. Have each person/group share their observations.
- What did you learn?
- How were your observations similar?
- How were your observations different?
- What very specific details did you notice?
- How did you see the people and space through God's eyes?
- Try to remain open in this process and not promote a particular project at this time. This section may take over an hour. You have time. Listen to one another carefully.

Group Reflection:

- What has been happening during the visits?
- How has God been working in the members of the team?
- Let your mind quietly go over the different phases of the visits and descriptions. What feelings did you experience? What thoughts or reflections moved you (positively or negatively)? Do these movements tell you anything about how God was working in you and what God has been telling you? How have you responded?
- Based on the reports, which areas of ministry rise to the top? That is, how are the passions of the group aligning with where the Spirit of God is telling you to go? Pay particular attention not only to data, but to feelings, recurring ideas and thoughts, how you're being moved and why? What needs in the communities motivate you? What potentials excite you?

As a group, write down your top three to five potential ministries that could become new churches. Write them in order of urgency, beginning with the most urgent. If you are ambitious, you can list more for future projects. These are your vision areas.

Prayer: (In unison)

Provident God, thank you for all the ways you have blessed us this

day. You know us better than we know ourselves. Please help us to become more aware of how you have been working in us and around us during the past hours. We wish to respond to your call with love and faithfulness. We can do this only to the degree we recognize your guidance. Help us then to become more sensitive to your Spirit's direction and more conscious of the ways we fail to respond. We place this time in your hands.

Homework:

Look at your three to five potential new churches and assign members to discover the following.

- Who is already there doing the ministry?
- How is a particular people group being served?
- Identify the players and the ministries that are already there, Include churches and non-profit organizations that might become partners or impact your ministry.

Gathering Eight: Are We the Ones?

The purpose of this gathering will be to determine if you are the best ones to pursue the ministry in the areas you've identified.

Prayer: 20 minutes

Spend time today praying as a group for the three to five potential ministries. Pray as specifically as possible. Pray for the people who you saw on your site visits. Pray for the ministries that are already there. Pray for those who gather at the coffee shops, bars, strip clubs, schools, markets, and corners of the three to five ministry possibilities.

Bible Study and Reflection: 20 minutes

Read: 1 Corinthians 12:1-31

1-3 What I want to talk about now is the various ways God's Spirit gets worked into our lives. This is complex and often misunderstood, but I want you to be informed and knowledgeable. Remember how you were when you didn't know God, led from one phony god to another, never knowing what you were doing, just doing it because everybody else did it? It's different in this life. God wants us to use our intelligence, to seek to understand as well as we can. For instance, by using your heads, you know perfectly well that the Spirit of God would never prompt anyone to say "Jesus be damned!" Nor would anyone be inclined to say "Jesus is Master!" without the insight of the Holy Spirit.

4-11 God's various gifts are handed out everywhere; but they all originate in God's Spirit. God's various ministries are carried-out everywhere; but they all originate in God's Spirit. God's various expressions of power are in action everywhere; but God himself is behind it all. Each person is given something to do that shows who God is: Everyone gets in on it, everyone benefits. All kinds of things are handed out by the Spirit, and to all kinds of people! The variety is wonderful: wise counsel, clear understanding, simple trust, healing the sick, miraculous acts, proclamation, distinguishing between spirits, tongues, interpretation of tongues. All these gifts have a common origin, but are handed out one by one by the one Spirit of God. He decides who gets what, and when.

12-13 You can easily enough see how this kind of thing works by looking no further than your own body. Your body has many parts, limbs,

organs, cells—but no matter how many parts you can name, you're still one body. It's exactly the same with Christ. By means of his one Spirit, we all said good-bye to our partial and piecemeal lives. We each used to independently call our own shots, but then we entered into a large and integrated life in which he has the final say in everything. (This is what we proclaimed in word and action when we were baptized.) Each of us is now a part of his resurrection body, refreshed and sustained at one fountain—his Spirit—where we all come to drink. The old labels we once used to identify ourselves—labels like Jew or Greek, slave or free—are no longer useful. We need something larger, more comprehensive.

14-18 I want you to think about how all this makes you more significant, not less. A body isn't just a single part blown up into something huge. It's all the different-but-similar parts arranged and functioning together. If Foot said, "I'm not elegant like Hand, embellished with rings; I guess I don't belong to this body," would that make it so? If Ear said, "I'm not beautiful like Eye, limpid and expressive; I don't deserve a place on the head," would you want to remove it from the body? If the body was all eye, how could it hear? If all ear, how could it smell? As it is, we see that God has carefully placed each part of the body right where he wanted it.

19-24 But I also want you to think about how this keeps your significance from getting blown up into self-importance. For no matter how significant you are, it is only because of what you are a part of. An enormous eye or a gigantic hand wouldn't be a body, but a monster. What we have is one body with many parts, each its proper size and in its proper place. No part is important on its own. Can you imagine Eye telling Hand, "Get lost; I don't need you"? Or, Head telling Foot, "You're fired; your job has been phased out"? As a matter of fact, in practice it works the other way—the "lower" the part, the more basic, and therefore necessary. You can live without an eye, for instance, but not without a stomach. When it's a part of your own body you are concerned with, it makes no difference whether the part is visible or clothed, higher or lower. You give it dignity and honor just as it is, without comparisons. If anything, you have more concern for the lower parts than the higher. If you had to choose, wouldn't you prefer good digestion to full-bodied hair?

25-26 The way God designed our bodies is a model for understanding our lives together as a church: every part dependent on every other part, the parts we mention and the parts we don't, the parts we see and the parts we don't. If one part hurts, every other part is involved in the hurt, and in the healing. If one part flourishes, every other part enters into the exuberance.

27-31 You are Christ's body—that's who you are! You must never forget this. Only as you accept your part of that body does your "part" mean anything. You're familiar with some of the parts that God has formed in his church, which is his "body": apostles, prophets, teachers, healers, helpers, organizers those who pray in tongues. But it's obvious by now, isn't it, that Christ's church is a complete Body and not a gigantic, unidimensional Part? It's not all Apostle, not all Prophet, not all Miracle Worker, not all Healer, not all Prayer in Tongues, not all Interpreter of Tongues. And yet some of you keep competing for so-called "important" parts. But now I want to lay out a far better way for you. (MSG)

Reflections:

Everyone has gifts. What spiritual gift(s) do you believe God has equipped you with? (Help each other in naming them. Keep track of the gifts in the room.)

- Why are the gifts distributed so widely?
- What is the purpose of God distributing gifts?
- How do we keep from becoming "unidimensional" as a church?

Content: 1 hour

Purpose: To name the gifts we bring as individuals, a church, a Presbytery, a community to our designated vision areas.

Homework Reflection:

Consider the three to five sites/people groups you selected:

- Who is already doing ministry in the communities we've identified? List for each.
- What are the specific concerns of the community that are

being met by these ministries? List for each.

- Are there needs, concerns, challenges unmet by the current ministries? List for each.

Exercise: We are going to brainstorm existing gifts and resources in our vision areas. Give each vision area at least one piece of butcher paper. Use the categories of “people,” “places,” “money” and whatever else you consider a resource/gift. Brainstorm each category with this question:

- What people gifts/resources do we have for this particular vision area?

Do this for each category. Perhaps you have a group of people meeting and praying in the vision area. Maybe there is an existing church. You may have money reserves from a defunct congregation. Be exhaustive. God gives you what you need at present for the ministry you’ve been given.

Once you have a grasp of who is already doing (or not doing) work in the areas you have selected, you need to ask the hard question, “Are we the ones to reach the target group/site?” In order to discern the answer, you need to compare what your gifts and resources are as an individual/church/Presbytery to what’s already happening in the selected area. Ask the question(s):

- In what vision areas are we uniquely gifted/resourced to do the ministry?
- Are there vision areas that we don’t have the resources or where others are better suited/situated?
- Are there vision areas where we have passion and need to find the resources to do the ministry?



COACHING POINT: Are there people who will champion this vision? Who are they?

Re-order your priorities according to the distribution of gifts and resources. Our vision area priorities are: (Add as many as you believe are discovered.)

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Is there agreement in the groups around pursuing these specific priorities? At this point are you planning to choose one area to pursue or all three? If all three, how will you expand the committee to accomplish this? If one, what is your plan or timeline for the other two?

Prayer: (In Unison)

Looking to the Future:

Faithful God, with hope we look to the future. You accept us the way that we are and call us to grow. You give us time and opportunity and grace. We place the time between now and our next gathering in your hands. We ask you to help us be more sensitive to the Spirit's presence and guidance. We ask your special help in discerning the mission we should undertake. God, with the Spirit within our hearts, we go forward with joy and trust. Amen.

Homework:

Each member of the team is to write one-paragraph on the “who” we are trying to reach, and then one paragraph on the “why” we need to reach the “who” for each vision area your team is feeling led by God to move forward to reach. The group's consensus on the “who” and “why” will become your Vision Statement that you will develop at the next gathering.

Gathering Nine: The Who and the Why

In this gathering you will develop your Vision Statement of “Who and Why.”

Prayer: 20 minutes

Pray together out loud:

My Lord God, I have no idea where I am going. I do not see the road ahead of me. I cannot know for certain where it will end. Nor do I really know myself, and the fact that I think that I am following your will does not mean that I am actually doing so. But I believe that the desire to please you does in fact please you. And I hope I have that desire in all that I am doing. I hope that I will never do anything apart from that desire. And I know that if I do this you will lead me by the right road though I may know nothing about it. Therefore will I trust you always though I may seem to be lost and in the shadow of death. I will not fear, for you are ever with me, and you will never leave me to face my perils alone.

— Thomas Merton, *Thoughts in Solitude*

Spend five minutes in silence.

Lead the group in prayer for this meeting time. Ask God for specific guidance as you explore your vision area possibilities.

Sharing: Name a surprise or new insight that you believe God has given you during this process.

Bible Study: 20 minutes

Read: Luke 4:14-30

14-15 Jesus returned to Galilee powerful in the Spirit. News that he was back spread through the countryside. He taught in their meeting places to everyone’s acclaim and pleasure.

16-21 He came to Nazareth where he had been reared. As he always did on the Sabbath, he went to the meeting place. When he stood up to read, he was handed the scroll of the prophet Isaiah. Unrolling the scroll, he found the place where it was written,

God’s Spirit is on me;

He’s chosen me to preach the Message of good news to the poor,

Sent me to announce pardon to prisoners and recovery of sight to the blind,

To set the burdened and battered free,

To announce, “This is God’s year to act!”

He rolled up the scroll, handed it back to the assistant, and sat down. Every eye in the place was on him, intent. Then he started in, “You’ve just heard Scripture make history. It came true just now in this place.”
22All who were there, watching and listening, were surprised at how well he spoke. But they also said, “Isn’t this Joseph’s son, the one we’ve known since he was a youngster?”

23-27He answered, “I suppose you’re going to quote the proverb, ‘Doctor, go heal yourself. Do here in your hometown what we heard you did in Capernaum.’ Well, let me tell you something: No prophet is ever welcomed in his hometown. Isn’t it a fact that there were many widows in Israel at the time of Elijah during that three and a half years of drought when famine devastated the land, but the only widow to whom Elijah was sent was in Sarepta in Sidon? And there were many lepers in Israel at the time of the prophet Elisha but the only one cleansed was Naaman the Syrian.”

28-30 That set everyone in the meeting place seething with anger. They threw him out, banishing him from the village, then took him to a mountain cliff at the edge of the village to throw him to his doom, but he gave them the slip and was on his way. (MSG)

Scripture Reflection:

- What are the “who” and “why” of Jesus’ mission?
- How was Jesus’ message received?
- Where will there be opposition to your announcement?

Content: 1 hour

- In the remainder of your time have everyone put their paragraphs from the homework on a piece of butcher paper. Put the “Who” paragraphs together in one area and the “Why” paragraphs in another. Divide the team in half and have one group work to synthesize the “Who” statements

into one paragraph they can agree on. The second group does the same with the “Why” paragraphs. When you are finished have each group present their work to the other.

- Develop a clear concise statement of who you are being called to reach and why we need to reach the who. This is your Vision Statement.
- If the group is working on multiple new churches simultaneously you will need multiple Vision Statements.

Pray:

Thank God for the vision and for help in making it a reality.

Homework:

Each member of the team is to make a list of “how” you would go about starting a new church with those in your vision statement.



COACHING POINT: This is a good opportunity to share where you are with your Church staff/Session, Presbytery Staff and Church Development Committee for conversation and feedback. It also may be a point where you will need Presbytery approval to move forward. Each Presbytery is different. You want to make sure that once you have selected an area in which you will start a new church, that you make other Presbyterian churches in that area (if any) aware of your interest in planting a church there. This should be done as diplomatically as possible yet in a way that doesn't seek their approval as much as their partnership.

If you are working as a Presbytery Church Development Committee, this may be the point where you begin to hand off the potential sites to task Groups for continued development in which they would begin this process with one site in mind. Much of this depends of the size and resources of the Presbytery. For some, one new church at a time is plenty of work. For other, there is capacity to do multiple new churches at once. How you proceed from here also depends on your Presbytery structure. Is there a racial/ethnic or immigrant area that the New Church Committee would partner with to reach a potential site? What other areas of the Presbytery

need to be involved at this point? If a Presbytery New Church Committee “hands off” at this point or at some point in the next few gatherings, some care should be taken to review the first three gatherings to ensure agreement with your Foundational Statement and “absolutes” concerning this process.



The Third Task: Develop a Mission Plan

Gatherings 10-13

The third task is to develop a one- or two-page statement that lists the core values, the ministry plan, the outreach plan, and the leadership plan for the new church. This is when the team discerns together how this new church will look, act, and fulfill her God-given mission. This is the team's best thinking of what it will take to start a church that will impact the people in the vision statement. This is when the team counts the human, financial, and other costs for this new church to start and continue.



COACHING POINT: For almost 9 gatherings one team had been complaining to their coach that they still hadn't found the perfect model for this new church. They started to demand that the coach reveal to them the model, the hidden truth of how to start a church that will lead to "success." They were sure this New Church Coach was holding back from them. Finally they completed Gathering Nine and while they were reviewing their final Vision Statement the team started to reflect, saying things like, "there is no way we can start this church without a recovery program" and "the students here need to have some alternatives." They were allowing the Holy Spirit to work through them to identify what needed to be done in this community. They were discerning the unique ministry, not the model, God wanted for this new church. Use the many exciting new churches that exist in the world to help you dream, but develop your mission plan with your eyes on God and the unique people God has placed on your heart.

Gathering Ten: Beginning a Mission Plan

In this gathering you will begin to develop your Mission Plan.

Bible Study and Prayer: 30 minutes

Read Acts 17:16-34 once out loud and then give everyone a chance to read it quietly on their own. Have the group circle key words and phrases that “jump out” to them in either the quiet reading or when it was read out loud.

16 While Paul was waiting for them in Athens, he was deeply distressed to see that the city was full of idols. 17 So he argued in the synagogue with the Jews and the devout persons, and also in the marketplace every day with those who happened to be there. 18 Also some Epicurean and Stoic philosophers debated with him. Some said, “What does this babbler want to say?” Others said, “He seems to be a proclaimer of foreign divinities.” (This was because he was telling the good news about Jesus and the resurrection.) 19 So they took him and brought him to the Areopagus and asked him, “May we know what this new teaching is that you are presenting? 20 It sounds rather strange to us, so we would like to know what it means.” 21 Now all the Athenians and the foreigners living there would spend their time in nothing but telling or hearing something new.

22 Then Paul stood in front of the Areopagus and said, “Athenians, I see how extremely religious you are in every way. 23 For as I went through the city and looked carefully at the objects of your worship, I found among them an altar with the inscription, ‘To an unknown god.’ What therefore you worship as unknown, this I proclaim to you.

24 The God who made the world and everything in it, he who is Lord of heaven and earth, does not live in shrines made by human hands, 25 nor is he served by human hands, as though he needed anything, since he himself gives to all mortals life and breath and all things. 26 From one ancestor he made all nations to inhabit the whole earth, and he allotted the times of their existence and the boundaries of the places where they would live, 27 so that they would search for God and perhaps grope for him and find him—though indeed he is not far from each one of us. 28 For ‘In him we live and move and have our being’; as even some of your own poets have said, ‘For we too are his offspring.’

29 Since we are God's offspring, we ought not to think that the deity is like gold, or silver, or stone, an image formed by the art and imagination of mortals. 30 While God has overlooked the times of human ignorance, now he commands all people everywhere to repent, 31 because he has fixed a day on which he will have the world judged in righteousness by a man whom he has appointed, and of this he has given assurance to all by raising him from the dead."

32 When they heard of the resurrection of the dead, some scoffed; but others said, "We will hear you again about this." 33 At that point Paul left them. 34 But some of them joined him and became believers, including Dionysius the Areopagite and a woman named Damaris, and others with them. (NRSV)

- How would you describe Paul's mission plan to the Athenians? What were some of the key values and concepts that you should consider in your mission plan?
- How did Paul develop his vision for who lived in Athens? How did his approach change according to who he was trying to reach?
- How well did he know the people? How was that evident in this passage?
- How did Paul go about starting a new church in Athens?
- How did Paul's Mission Plan use context and culture?
- How was Paul's Mission Plan successful? How was his mission plan unsuccessful?

Content: 1 hour

Brainstorm: How can we connect the "who" of our Vision Statement with our Foundation Statement?

This is the beginning of the Mission Plan. Read as a group your Foundational Statement from Gathering Three. Write so all can see your brainstorm ideas around the question "What are some possible ways for establishing a new church with those identified in the Vision Statement?" Consider:

- How could those in the vision statement be introduced to Jesus?

- What could be the outreach strategy of this new church?
- What needs to happen to “keep it real”?
- What would be some core values and actions of this church?
- When would worship begin and what happens in worship?
What does worship look like, feel like? Who leads worship?
- How would people in this church care for one another?
- Who would lead this church?
- What key leaders would be needed to begin this church?
- How would the decisions be made in this church?

Brainstorm Reflection: 30 minutes

John Nevius in the 1850s suggested a model for world missions, the work of starting new churches with new people groups, that said all new mission plans should:

“Trust the Holy Spirit and the converts the Spirit presents to quickly lead the church;

“Trust the Holy Spirit and the converts the Spirit presents to quickly plan the evangelism of the church;” and

“Trust the Holy Spirit and the converts the Spirit presents to quickly to own their own finances.”

The Moffetts adopted this criteria for their early work in beginning new churches in Korea. This was a radical departure from the missionary- and mission organization-centered approach of many others looking to begin new churches. What we can glean from this is that a Mission Plan for starting a new church must take seriously local leadership and local evangelism, as well as the self-sustainability of the new churches. Considering Nevius’s three points, reflect on our Mission

Plan brainstorm and ask:

- Does this mission plan trust the Holy Spirit and the “new converts” to quickly lead this new church?
- Does this mission plan trust the Holy Spirit and the “new converts” to quickly make their own plans for evangelism for this new church?
- Does this mission plan trust the Holy Spirit and the “new converts” to quickly own the finances of this new church?

Homework:

Have one person record all of the responses and brainstorm ideas and email that information to the entire group by the end of the week. Have each member research a way to start a new church. You can go to www.presbygrow.net or call 1.888.728.7228, ext. 5246 and ask the GA for some contacts. You can also search “new church models” on Google or Yahoo and find some interesting resources there. Realize that a true model does not exist because churches are organic—planted in different soils, responding to unique conditions.

Gathering Eleven: How Many Ways Could We Do this New Church?

In this gathering you will determine the possible ways to begin a new church to reach those you identified in your Vision Statement.

Bible Study: 30 minutes

Read: 1 Corinthians 9:22:

To the weak I became weak, so that I might win the weak. I have become all things to all people, that I might by all means save some.
(NRSV)

- How many ways can we do this?
- In what ways do you think Paul became all things?
- What was Paul's motivation?
- How might you become all things without compromising Jesus?
- How many churches have you belonged to?
- How were they alike?
- How were they different?
- In what ways did they match their communities well?
- In what ways were they mismatched in their communities?

Pray:

Pray for those churches you have been involved in: for their pastors, Sunday school teachers, youth leaders, elders, deacons, and members. Remember them by name. Thank God for the gifts given to you through them. Ask God to use those gifts now to create a new church.

Content: 90 minutes

Have each person share their particular way to start a new church from their homework assignment. Feel free to expand, ask questions and explore each way until the group is comfortable with the definitions. Write your descriptions so all can see them.

Review your brainstorm ideas from the last gathering.

Next, read together your Foundational Statement and your Vision Statement. Begin to discuss the pros and cons of each way to start a church as it relates to your foundational and vision statements. Consider the context of each vision area, who you are reaching and why. Review again the resources you have identified in each area. After discussing each one thoroughly write down as many models as you believe apply to a particular vision area and why.

Outcome:

As a group, discuss:

- What plans rise to the top for you?
- What ways to start a church resonate with you?
- What ways to start a church would you not attempt, given your Vision Statement?
- You may also want to keep a list of other ways you found to share with other churches going through this process or with the Presbytery. You might also think of sharing your research at www.presbygrow.net. This would also be another opportune time to share your direction with Session/ church staff, Presbytery staff and/or Church Development Committee.

Pray:

That to the Lord to send laborers into the harvest.

Homework:

Write a page that describes a way for starting a new church that will introduce Jesus to the “Who” you identified in your Vision Statement. Keep in mind your Foundational Statement from Gathering Three as you write.

Break your mission plan down into:

- What are the specifics of how Jesus will be introduced to the community?
- Who will be needed to lead this plan?
- What resources will be needed to implement this plan?

Gathering Twelve: The Mission Plan

In this gathering you will develop the Mission Plan.

Bible Study: 20 minutes

Read: Acts 6:1-7

1Now during those days, when the disciples were increasing in number, the Hellenists complained against the Hebrews because their widows were being neglected in the daily distribution of food. 2And the twelve called together the whole community of the disciples and said, 'It is not right that we should neglect the word of God in order to wait at tables. 3Therefore, friends, select from among yourselves seven men of good standing, full of the Spirit and of wisdom, whom we may appoint to this task, 4while we, for our part, will devote ourselves to prayer and to serving the word.'

5What they said pleased the whole community, and they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and the Holy Spirit, together with Philip, Prochorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas, and Nicolaus, a proselyte of Antioch. 6They had these men stand before the apostles, who prayed and laid their hands on them.

7The word of God continued to spread; the number of the disciples increased greatly in Jerusalem, and a great many of the priests became obedient to the faith. (NRSV)

Pentecost has happened. The church is growing. Miracles, dangers, all kinds of exciting and scary things are happening fast. And now, they've reached a situation where some organization is needed.

Examine what's going on in Acts 6:1-7:

- Look at where the church is at this point.
- Who is staffing it?
- What are the needs? Where are the holes?
- How will new servants be chosen? What kinds of people are these new servants?
- What will they be doing?
- How did their actions match their faith in Jesus?
- What were the results?
- What was their Mission Plan?

Content: 90 minutes

How do you combine the “who” and the “why” with the “what”?
Share again the Foundational Statement from Gathering Three.
Share again the Vision Statement (Who and Why) from Gathering Nine.

Take each of the homework pages (describing a plan for introducing Jesus to the “who” you identified in the 9th gathering that will lead to the establishment of a new church). Write them so all can see.
Have each team member read and describe their page.

- What patterns do you see? Can any pages be combined?
Can duplications be removed to become one page?

Spend time discussing what you see.

Is there a pattern?

A common idea?

Can you agree on a unified plan that comes from the ideas of each team member?

Name the particulars in your plan:

- What are the specific ideas for taking Jesus out to the community?
- What kinds of leaders are needed?
- Who else is needed on the team to start this church?
- What ministry gifts will be required of the leaders?
- What ministry gifts will be required of the rest of the team?
- What are the responsibilities of the leaders? The team?
- What tangibles will be required in terms of communication tools, space, hospitality resources, worship resources?
- What financial resources it take?
- Does this communicate your Foundational Statements or “absolutes”?
- What are the absolutes about this plan? What are the possibilities?

Separate the absolutes and the possibilities. Take a step back and review which is which. Example: Is X an absolute or a possibility?

Agree upon and write a one-page Mission Plan based on this exercise.

At this point you should have a:

- Foundational Statement (Gathering Three)
- Vision Statement of “who and why” (Gathering Nine)
- Mission Plan (Gathering Twelve)

Invite a new church coach to review your materials up to this point for feedback. You should share this information with your church staff and session, your Presbytery committee, or Presbytery leadership.

Pray:

God reveal to us the ways you want to work in the community you have given to us. Give us eyes to see and ears to hear.

Homework:

Before the next Gathering, write five things that you believe would define success for this new church. Also, write five things that would illustrate that this new church was not working. Bring these pieces to your next meeting.

Gathering Thirteen: Define “Success” & When to Shake Off the Dust...

During this gathering you will clarify how you will assess and measure success.

Bible Study and Prayer: 10 minutes

Give everyone a smooth river stone to hold as the scripture is read and discussed.

Read: Acts 11:19

Now those who had been scattered by the persecution in connection with Stephen traveled as far as Phoenicia, Cyprus and Antioch, telling the message only to Jews. Some of them, however, people from Cyprus and Cyrene, went to Antioch and began to speak to Greeks also, telling them the good news about the Lord Jesus. The Lord’s hand was with them and a great number of people believed and turned to the Lord.
(NIV)

We find here circumstances of discomfort and comfort:

There is persecution of Christians but there is also the sharing of faith because of that persecution.

Some Jews do not want to hear/receive the good news but there are also Greeks who are receptive.

Pray:

As team members hold their river stones, share names/groups of people who are persecuted today because of their faith. Then pray for them by name, placing the river stones in the center of the table/space as their names are mentioned.

Content: 90 minutes

Share your homework by contributing it to this discussion especially during the brainstorm on success and the discussion of benchmarks for “shaking off the dust.”

1. First, brainstorm the ways that “success” is measured in the world. (*Write so all can see*)
2. Second, brainstorm the ways that “success” is measured in the church.

- Compare the two lists and spend a little time reflecting on the similarities and differences.
- Provide scriptural examples to support your measures of church success.
- What are the “absolute measures” we need to have? List.
- Are these numbers:
 - In worship?
 - In participation?
 - In bible studies?
 - In membership?
 - Of people who can recite the mission statement?
 - Of disciples made?
 - Of adult baptisms?
 - Of people in service?
- Use your imagination of what needs to be measured.
- How would you measure that which is not easy to measure...energy, spiritual growth, etc?
- What are our benchmarks for the NCD?

3. Create a third list so all can see, answer the following:

- What would be happening in a “successful” new church after:
 - The first year?
 - The second year?
 - The fifth year?
 - How do these “markers” compare to your absolutes in your Foundational Statement?

“Shaking off the Dust”

Determine what “measures” and “benchmarks” will be used to determine success for the new church. List them for each year. Include:

- Attendance growth
- Leadership growth
- Participation in non-worship activities
- Financial Support
- Spiritual development

- Service to the world
- Other

It is not an accident that Jesus talked about “shaking off the dust” before sending the disciples into a new town. It is much easier to determine how much time, energy and money should be invested into a new work when it is still theoretical and before the leaders become personally involved. Based on your measures and benchmarks, write a paragraph describing how you would intervene or end the project if benchmarks are not being reached for each year after the first three years. Add both your measures and benchmarks and your plan of action if they are not met to your mission plan. Share your final mission plan with your session, Presbytery team, and other appropriate people for feedback. If your mission plan is going to require financial support, now is the time to present that to the appropriate funding sources.

Homework:

- Do some research on what makes a good NCD Pastor/ Church Planter. If you do a Google/Yahoo search make sure to enter terms such as church planter characteristics, NCD pastor, etc.
- Interview new church development leaders (lay and clergy) in your Presbytery or nearby Presbytery.



The Fourth Task: Develop a Missionary Plan

Gatherings 14-17

The fourth task is to develop a one- or two-page description of the people needed to start and lead this new church. The key to this task is to identify the skills and attributes needed to reach those in the Vision Statement, not the skills and attributes the team would like if the missionary team was sent to them. The leaders may or may not be ordained.



COACHING POINT: Occasionally the missionary team comes together quickly but that seems to be the exception rather than the rule. We have seen teams become weary at this point and “settle” for the leadership available rather than wait for the right team. One church delayed their hire three times because they had not found the person who matched the missionary plan. After a three-year delay the team finally found a person who truly matched the missionary plan as the leader. The amazing thing the team discovered a few years after this church was up and running was the delayed start was actually perfect timing! God was in the delay. Trust God, trust God’s timing of when all the pieces come together.

Gathering Fourteen: Who Will Go For Us?

During this gathering you will define both the kinds of leaders needed to begin your new church as well as the gifts, skills, and characteristics needed in them.

Bible Study: 30 minutes

Read: Ephesians 4:11-16

¹¹Now these are the gifts Christ gave to the church: the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, and the pastors and teachers. ¹²Their responsibility is to equip God's people to do his work and build up the church, the body of Christ. ¹³This will continue until we all come to such unity in our faith and knowledge of God's Son that we will be mature in the Lord, measuring up to the full and complete standard of Christ.

¹⁴Then we will no longer be immature like children. We won't be tossed and blown about by every wind of new teaching. We will not be influenced when people try to trick us with lies so clever they sound like the truth. ¹⁵Instead, we will speak the truth in love, growing in every way more and more like Christ, who is the head of his body, the church. ¹⁶He makes the whole body fit together perfectly. As each part does its own special work, it helps the other parts grow, so that the whole body is healthy and growing and full of love. (NLT)

Biblical Reflection:

- What kinds of leaders does Paul list here? What kinds of gifts do they represent?
- What kinds of leaders would you add to Paul's list to make it more complete?
- What is the task of leadership?
- What is the desired result of this kind of shared leadership?

Content: 90 minutes

Homework Reflection:

- Share the results of your interviews. What were the characteristics/types of effective leaders you questioned? What else did you find in your research?

- Record these on a whiteboard so you can all see them. Look for common traits and unique characteristics and skills.
- Review the following mission developer characteristics identified by Gallup research and compare them to what you have recorded.

Gallup SRI Mission Developer Definitions (also available in Appendix 6)

Motivation

Internal and external drivers motivate an individual to strive, to win, and to take risks. A certain restlessness - sometimes obvious and sometimes not - propels an individual to ever-higher levels of productivity, mastery, service, and excellence. A person's continuous quest to improve distinguishes the motivated person from others.

Influence

With the force of conviction and the power of persuasion, an individual inspires others to move toward desired goals sooner rather than later. Resistance is squarely met and overcome. This person counters arguments with reason, and he or she confidently communicates in a manner that is concise, clear, and to the point.

Work-style

A person's ability to set goals, devise plans, attend to details, meet deadlines, and organize materials defines his or her work-style. This individual handles multiple tasks with ease and knows when to delegate assignments to others. This person thrives in a busy, productive atmosphere. He or she automatically sees what needs to be done and does it. Work is a source of satisfaction and pleasure for this individual.

Relationships

Within the give-and-take of human relationships, an individual gains keen insights into him or herself and others. In many encounters, trust is nurtured, understanding is ensured, and loyalty is strengthened. Appreciation enhances cooperation, cooperation enhances teamwork, and teamwork enhances the quality and quantity of outcomes.

Thought Process

Decision-making, problem solving, creativity, and innovation grow out of a person's thought processes. And thought processes differ. Divergent thinking leads to the generation of options, alternatives, and solutions. Convergent thinking allows an individual to identify patterns, trends, possibilities, and potential problems in numerical data and information. Meaningful performance measurements intrigue this person.

Mission Plan Reflection:

Looking at your potential new church, brainstorm the questions below. Put your answers up so all can see.

- The missionaries – Are they: Lay people? Pastors? Certified Lay Ministers? Educators? Musicians? Media people? Paid? Volunteer? Foreign missionaries?
- List as many kinds of leaders you think would apply to each new church project. The point of this is to think beyond merely hiring a pastor. That may not be the only or best place to begin. You may also need to think of a team concept more often than not.
- When you have this list, mark the kinds of missionaries best suited to your ministry context.
- What are the skills/gifts needed in your missionary leaders? Pay particular attention to Ephesians 4 – the purpose of leadership is to equip the church for ministry. You can use the skill/gift inventory from the Church Information Form (CIF) of the PC(USA) as a place to start but don't allow this to restrict your list.
- What are the personal qualities/characteristics needed in your missionary leaders?
- This missionary plan reflection exercise should result in you having three lists.

The type of missionary leaders you need, both lay and clergy. The skills needed in your leaders, perhaps shared among a team. The personal characteristics you need in your missionaries that will fit your ministry context.

You will use these in writing your leadership position descriptions and if needed you Church Information Form, or CIF.



COACHING POINT: A note on the CIF – you will be limited in the number of qualifications you can list online. Don't allow this to keep you from have an expanded CIF that is available directly from you. The more information others have about your vision, the better to find the right fit.

Pray:

Take time to pray that God would be preparing the hearts and minds of those needed to lead your new church(es).

Homework:

Commit to a regular time of prayer each day between now and your next gathering. Pray that God will provide the leadership needed for your new church development. Pray that God will call to mind those within your midst who would be qualified to be part of your core leadership.

Gathering Fifteen: Writing Position and Project Descriptions

At this gathering you will write position descriptions for each leadership role you are seeking to fill. Along with this you will write a project description that will describe the ministry opportunity you are inviting people to consider leading. You can use these as part of the Church Information Form (CIF) if you choose to look candidates through Church Leadership Connection. (<http://gamc.pcusa.org/ministries/clc>)

Pray:

Enter a time of thanksgiving in your prayer: for each other, for your context, for the work, for the future, for doing a new work in your midst.

Bible Study: 20 minutes

Read again: Ephesians 4:11-16 (from Gathering Fourteen). Have this in mind as you read

¹¹Now these are the gifts Christ gave to the church: the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, and the pastors and teachers. ¹²Their responsibility is to equip God's people to do his work and build up the church, the body of Christ. ¹³This will continue until we all come to such unity in our faith and knowledge of God's Son that we will be mature in the Lord, measuring up to the full and complete standard of Christ.

¹⁴Then we will no longer be immature like children. We won't be tossed and blown about by every wind of new teaching. We will not be influenced when people try to trick us with lies so clever they sound like the truth. ¹⁵Instead, we will speak the truth in love, growing in every way more and more like Christ, who is the head of his body, the church. ¹⁶He makes the whole body fit together perfectly. As each part does its own special work, it helps the other parts grow, so that the whole body is healthy and growing and full of love. (NLT)

Content: 60 minutes

Homework Reflection:

Before we begin naming those we believe to be qualified and called to lead our new church(es), we need to reflect on how the Spirit

of God is leading. You were asked to pray daily that God would provide the leadership needed. Let's check our spiritual barometer. First, are you hopeful of finding the leadership you need? Why or why not? Do you believe the scope of the project is still what God is asking you to do? Are the projects in the right order? How are you sensing the work of God in you personally and as a group? What do you believe God's Spirit wants to say to the group?

For this gathering, you will need all the writing pieces you have completed-- the who, what, when, where, and why of the future new church, your Foundational Statement, your Mission Statement, and your Vision Plan. You may also need to download a copy of the CIF form from the PC(USA) website (<http://gamc.pcusa.org/ministries/clc>)

if you are going to hire an ordained person. Have enough copies for everyone. Don't try to do this online. If you are going to post this, you will need permission from your Committee on Ministry and your Stated Clerk. **What is your Presbytery process for hiring?** Get this up front. You may wish to do things differently but you need to know the accepted practices before you ask for exceptions.

With these things in hand, write the following:

1. Project Description: Write a project description that is a few sentences to two paragraphs that summarize your Foundational Statement, Vision Statement and Mission Plan. Consider what are the few key ideas, concepts, or things you would want any prospective volunteer or future employee to know about this new church.

2. Position Description(s): Write a position description for each person you are seeking to lead the new church even if the position is volunteer or non-ordained.

As a group:

- List the position(s) needed to start this new church.
- Create a title for each position.

- List and describe the responsibilities for each position, review your gifts and skills lists. Be creative. Be descriptive. Don't have too many responsibilities. Be realistic.
- Identify the one to three leadership positions.
- Write a description of personal characteristics for each key leadership position. (If you are seeking to gather a team, maybe the key leader you're seeking is something like "lead pastor or lead planter" if they are going to be the one accountable for drawing together the leadership core and making sure they accomplish their work.)
- Write a description of accountability relationships for each position, i.e. who reports to whom. There are some formal accountability relationships prescribed by the Book of Order and your presbytery for ordained persons.
- Determine compensation for each position.
- Review your determined compensation with the budget needed in the Mission Plan and make the necessary adjustments to either your Mission Plan or your positions.

Pray:

Take time to pray that God would be preparing the hearts and minds of those needed to lead your new church(es).

Homework:

Have each member write out a paragraph on what kind training you would like the leadership to have as they begin this new church. Review "**Sample Interview Questions**" in Appendix 5 These will be the basis for your interviews with candidates.

Gathering Sixteen: The Missionary Plan

During this gathering you will develop a one-page or two-page description of the people needed to start and lead this new church. The team will also develop a timeline bridging the gap from where the team is now until the first “missionaries” begin to start this new church.

Bible Study and Prayer: 10 minutes

Read: Acts 14:21-23

After (Paul and Barnabas) had proclaimed the good news to that city and had made many disciples, they returned to Lystra, then on to Iconium and Antioch. There they strengthened the souls of the disciples and encouraged them to continue in the faith, saying, ‘It is through many persecutions that we must enter the kingdom of God.’ And after they had appointed elders for them in each church, with prayer and fasting they entrusted them to the Lord in whom they had come to believe. (NRSV)

- What characteristics did the missionaries in this passage have?
- What were the circumstances for those in the new church?
- How were the new churches in Derbe, Lystra, Iconium, and Antioch coached for ministry?

Pray:

Remember that God gives us all we need to serve. And pray for the missionaries already “out there” whom God is preparing to serve in this new church development. Pray for eyes to see the missionaries already on the field.

Content: 60 minutes

Review your Position Descriptions from Gathering 15 and share your paragraphs from your homework, “What kind of training would you like the leadership to have as they begin this new church?” Using your Position Descriptions and your homework reflections list together:

Human Resources: The Missionaries

- What Leadership positions are needed?
- When does each position start?
- Which positions are crucial for start up and which positions could be added later?
- Are there any ordained positions that require a PNC?
- What is the order in which leadership positions are filled?
- How many of the leadership positions already have people identified for them?
- How many of the positions will a “search” be required?
- Identify for each position if the search needs to be national or local?
- Are there any positions that will require a Church Information Form?
- Are there any searches that will require involvement and approval by the Committee on Ministry (check with your Presbytery if you are unsure)?
- What is the order in which leadership positions are filled?

Pray:

Take all the work that you have done to this point and place it before your team. Pray over the entire project. Pray that God would reveal to you things you haven't seen, raise up leaders you've not met, equip those God is calling to this work, and continue to provide the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

Homework:

Assign someone to write the rough draft of the Missionary Plan. The Plan should begin with the Project Description from Gathering 15 followed by a synopsis of your work together in Gathering 16. It should list the key leadership positions needed, the training required for each of those positions, and include a summary of the questions from Gathering 16 content. Have the writer of the rough draft send a copy to the team to review before Gathering 17.

Gathering Seventeen: Finishing Well, Beginning Well

During this gathering you will wrap up the discernment process and begin the transition into the implementation of the work of a new church.

Bible Study: 30 minutes

Read Acts 2:37-42

[37] Now when they heard this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and to the other apostles, “Brothers, what should we do?”

[38] Peter said to them, “Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ so that your sins may be forgiven; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. [39] For the promise is for you, for your children, and for all who are far away, everyone whom the Lord our God calls to him.” [40] And he testified with many other arguments and exhorted them, saying, “Save yourselves from this corrupt generation.” [41] So those who welcomed his message were baptized, and that day about three thousand persons were added.

[42] They devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers.

Reflections:

- List the events and the delays that took place that lead up to the people asking, “What should we do?”
- List the events and the delays that have taken place for your team to be at the here at the end of the discernment process.
- What are some ways that Acts 2:37-42 is both a finale and a beginning?
- What are some ways that your discernment process is both a finale and a beginning?

Content: 60 minutes

Review the rough draft of the missionary plan and make any necessary additions or corrections. Have someone read the final Missionary plan out loud. Ask:

- After hearing the plan read to you, what are you feeling now?

- What are the major tasks that must be completed that will lead to that plan to be fulfilled?
- Who will complete or oversee that each task will be completed? (write down the names of the person responsible for each task)

Develop as a group a timeline from here. The timeline is not to be used as a hard and set rule but as a guide. The timeline is most useful to assure that the team from here has not missed any important steps. Be sure to include:

- The person who will complete or oversee that each task will be completed?
- A list of the major steps in your Mission Plan and a projected date of completion for each step.
- A recruitment plan for each position and a target date for each step.
- A plan for getting the word out: PCUSA website? Advertising in publications/internet? Create your own website? Word-of-mouth? All of the above?
- The target date for the Search Team to be in place and the key activities related to each search (advertising, resume or PIF acceptance and selection, initial interviews, final interviews).
- How will you receive resumes and/or Personal Information Forms (PIFs)?
- The financial resources yet to be raised and when they need to be in place.
- All necessary Presbytery or Session Approvals (Has Presbytery approved the Mission Plan for the starting of a new church? Has Presbytery approved a process for hiring ordained positions?).

Review the timeline as a group.

Are the right **Search Resources** in place?

1. How many serach team are needed to recruit the missionaries?

2. Who will make up the Search team(s)? Will you find a primary leader to be a part of the search team? Who from the discernment team needs to be on the search team? (If one or more of the positions to fill requires someone who is ordained, you will need to work with your Presbytery COM to answer some of these questions).

Are the right *Spiritual Resources* in place?

1. What intentional prayer support do you have?
2. Are your key leaders engaged in spiritual direction, prayer groups, or other spiritual support?

Are the right *Coaching Resources* in place?

1. Who else will be needed to help resource the new church team?
2. Do we need to find a Mentor? Expert? Counselor? Consultant? Community organizer? Professional coach? PC (USA) coach?

Are the right *Oversight Resources* in place?

1. Who will encourage and support the team once it gets started?
2. Who will hold the team accountable, helping to discern and celebrate when “success” has taken place and when “it is time to shake off the dust?”

Does this new church start require an ordained position? If “yes” we strongly recommend:

- **Gallup Mission Developer:** We suggest you use our Gallup Mission Developer online assessment on those candidates you believe you will interview. This assessment would be PRIOR to talking with them. There are three conclusions from the assessment. Those who score in the lowest third of the assessment should not be considered as candidates for lead positions. It’s a well-tested and proven assessment at this level. Those who score in the middle or upper two-

thirds are possible candidates. To use Gallup call the Office of Church Growth (888) 728-7228 ext. 5247, or check the www.presbygrow.net website for more information.

- **Extended Assessment:** It is also strongly advised that once you have narrowed your list down to a couple of candidates, you send them through a more extensive assessment of their church planting skills. Check www.presbygrow.net for extended assessment processes that are available. Getting the right leadership is critical to the success of the new church. This is not a place to cut corners.



COACHING POINT: At this time there is a natural moment to pass the work on and/or to own it by the discernment team. Ask and answer: Are there members of the discernment team who are willing to go forward and be part of this church plant? Are we going to wait for the core group to be recruited by the Missionary Leadership? Have we identified the champions who will make sure this moves forward? Do we have folks from the identified people group on our team?

Homework:

Begin the leadership recruitment in your planned order

Start the ministry

Praise Jesus

Appendix 1: Forming the Discernment Team

How to Choose a New Church Development (NCD) Discernment Team

It is the task of the group to discern God's leading among a particular people and/or place as the group considers beginning a new church in a new area. This is a process by which the team will not make a right or wrong decision but will discern the moving presence of God's Spirit. We believe that God goes before the team and the team, through the Spirit, moves to where God is moving.

How many members on the Discernment Team?

We would like to see a mix. People for the most part need to be either part of the community where we are seeking to plant a church or from one of the congregations nearby who are engaged in supporting the work. Hopefully, both. There needs to be a mixture of both lay and clergy participants. They may or may not become part of the new church. Pastors and staff from the supportive congregations can provide one or two names each for the Discernment Team.

Along with the commitment to discernment, what other qualities are needed for the Discernment Team?

Experts say that in non-profit organizations, board members have to have two of the following three qualities: Work, Wisdom, and Wealth. We're not creating a board of directors, so instead of wealth, we suggest spiritual gifts and talents. Some of the specific gifts/talents will be things like writing, research, group organization, ability to engage others, time, language skills, communication skills, vision, faith. People need to bring two of the three: Work, Wisdom, and Gifts. It will be important to have people who represent the area in which you are considering to plant your new church.

Who calls the Discernment Team together?

There needs to be a point person, one who convenes the team. If you are a church doing this, then it should be someone who is called by the pastor or the session or the mission committee. If

you are a presbytery, then whoever is responsible for new church development should nominate the aforementioned.

Making the Invitation

We are not looking for people to simply “fill out” a committee. We are looking for highly skilled and highly motivated people. We are looking for Christian people. We are engaged in a spiritual task. This will take time, sacrifice, and faith. The invitation by the convener is to a 16 gathering process called “Starting a New Church.” The guidelines for these gatherings are available at www.PresbyGrow.net. The guidelines give a suggested process and schedule. We strongly suggest that the conveners familiarize themselves with the process before they extend an invitation to others to join in. We recommend the process include all 16 gatherings. When done, if we decide a new church is what God is asking of us, the team will have completed all the work needed for mission grants and to call the appropriate leadership for the new church.

Things to remember as the Discernment Team forms:

1. Clear Expectations -- Do team members know what is expected of their performance? Do they know the expected potential outcomes of their work together?

2. Clear Content-- Do team members know why they have been included on the team? Does the team understand where its work fits in the total context of the presbytery’s goals, principles, vision, and values?

3. Commitment -- Again, make sure that people know the expectations of their participation up front. This is work. Joyful and creative work, but work nonetheless. Teams are supported when all involved make the time to be with each other.

4. Communication -- Make sure all team members and the appropriate decision making bodies are clearly kept in the loop. There are junctures in “Starting a New Church” where you will be asked to communicate your accumulated work to all who need to know.

5. Questions -- Ask for help along the way. The team doesn’t have to go-it-alone!

(From the *12 C’s of Team Building* by Susan M. Heathfield, <http://humanresources.about.com>)

Appendix 2: Beginning with an Organizing Pastor

If you have already hired an organizing or lead pastor for the new church, it is important that a core leadership team is gathered to do the work found here in Starting New Churches. While the leader may do these things naturally, most of us need some sort of guidance to create as complete a plan as possible. Again, this booklet is organized in a linear fashion, knowing full well that starting a church is not a linear process. The four tasks:

1. A Foundational Statement: Having a clear understanding of Jesus and the church,
2. A Vision Statement: Who has God placed on our hearts to reach,
3. A Mission Plan: How might we go about reaching this particular group of people,
4. A Missionary Plan: Who should lead this?

...are necessary to any good work we might want to do.

If you are beginning with an organizing pastor, you will still need to gather a core team with an eye of whom on that team can and will fill out the various leadership positions needed for the new church.

The organizing pastor cannot assume that those they gather for the leadership core are on the same page theologically or that they have the same view of church and mission that the initial leader has. It is extremely critical for the group to own the ministry.

The above is especially true if the new church is being planted by a parent congregation. Parent churches are often intending to extend their “DNA” or core values through this new church. But like all children, the new church will need to own its own life. Therefore it is important for them to consciously choose how they intend to speak of and live out their faith in Jesus Christ for themselves in a new context. Often the parent church is planting a new church because they are trying to reach a new people group that is not

part of their existing church. That said, the new church may carry many of the same core beliefs and values as the parent church but in different and various ways. New wine for new wineskins is a good biblical metaphor here.

The organizing pastor would do well to consider who should be on their core discernment team in the light of the kind of skills they themselves have and don't have. All this should be done in the light of the mission they've been given.

Appendix 3: Guidelines for the Discernment Team

Essential Attitudes for the Journey

NCD Discernment Team members will need to share the following attitudes:

1. An Expectation that God desires to guide us.

The church's practice of discernment rests on God's identity as a self-revealing God, One who wants to be made known. Not elusive or capricious, the God who created us has not abandoned us but desires to be in an ongoing relationship with us. God loves us passionately and promises over and over again, "I will be your God; you will be my people." In the incarnation of Jesus Christ, we see how God feels and thinks and how God acts. In the Holy Spirit, who is the presence of the Risen Christ among us, we are promised a guide and companion who will show us the truth (John 16:13). Thus our practice of discernment is rooted in a belief in the Triune God who is present with us and will reveal what is needed for the church to be faithful.

2. A Willingness to Listen

Recognizing that we are created in God's image and for fellowship with God, we believe we have an ability to hear and respond to God. Thus a basic capacity required for discernment is a willingness to listen, a readiness to be open to the inner and outer prompting of God's Spirit. Though we also have a capacity to deceive ourselves, we can trust the Spirit dwelling within us and within our sisters and brothers to help us remain honest, open, and alert.

3. A Commitment to Spiritual Practices

Christians through the centuries have nurtured their capacity to listen to God by a variety of spiritual practices. Personal prayer, scripture meditation, silence, journal-keeping, spiritual direction, fasting, and corporate worship have all proven helpful. Beyond these individual practices, leadership groups who desire to find and follow God's current must also engage in communal spiritual practices as a way of nurturing the entire group's capacity to listen to God.

4. A Response of Obedience

Because discernment is where prayer and action meet, it is necessary for those who listen to God to respond with obedience. After a group has done its best to discern God's way and has received a shared sense of God's leading, it can move forward with confidence. Even though the entire way may not be clear, the group can move toward the future, trusting that God will make further revelations or corrections as needed.

(Information in italics is taken from "Discernment: A River Runs Through It" by Marlene Kropf, Congregational and Ministerial Leadership, Mennonite Church USA)

Appendix 4: Site Visit Guide

This is intended to be a subjective view of your potential ministry areas. The first set of questions you answer by watching and observing people in the area. It's what some people call a "windshield" survey. It's what you see from your car or as you walk around. The second set of questions gets you "into" the neighborhood or ministry area. Together you will find this one of the most energizing experiences for your team. Don't skip this part! Demographic reports don't motivate or define. This will both intimidate your team and motivate your team.

Site Visit Observations: A Windshield Survey as you are making your way into the area.

- Who is there?
- What are they doing?
- What are they talking about?
- What are their ages, genders, races?
- What language are they speaking?
- How are they dressed? Notice details: jewelry, shoes, hairstyles, nametags, tech toys.
- Can you imagine what they might do for work?
- Do they live in the area? Work in the area?
- Do they seem in transient?
- Do they come and go as if they are on a tight schedule?
- Is their manner leisurely?
- What sounds do you hear in the distance?
- What levels of car/bus/foot traffic do you observe?
- Are there sidewalks? Streetlights? Signage?
- What do the people you're observing already have?
- What do they need?
- What else do you notice?
- What is your visceral response to this site?

Site Visit Activities: Three Actions

- Have a drink or something to eat in a local establishment.

- Talk with at least one person in the potential ministry area.
- Bring back a token. Something that symbolizes what you saw and heard that helps you tell the story of the area.

Site Visit Interview Questions: Casual Community Conversations

Find places where people gather and look for opportunities to ask people questions.

Look for a variety of people. If you go into a business, you might want to be sensitive to the fact that unless you are a patron, you're interrupting their work. Also note, that as soon as you ask about church the conversation will switch. If they ask, "Why do you want to know?" be honest and say what you're doing. But you may want to put the church questions off for later. Be courteous and non-threatening. Don't have more than two people at the most asking questions. Be sensitive to your context. Are there religious groups that do this regularly? Avoid having a similar approach and dress.

- "Excuse me, do you work or live in the area?"
- "If I were to move here, what do I need to know?"
- "What do people do for work here?"
- "Who lives here?" (What age groups, race, class, families, singles, etc.)
- "What do people in the area do for recreation?"
- "Do you like living/working here?"
- "Do people live/work here for a long time?"
- "What are the problems in the area?"
- "What could make this community better?"
- "What churches are in the area?"
- "Do you think this area could use another church?"

The list is *not* exhaustive. This should give you a starting point.

Beyond Site Visits: What more can we learn?

What questions have not been asked? The following are some things that can help you understand your ministry area better.

- Repeat the site visit at different locations and times to get a

broader feel for the community.

- Who else needs to be interviewed? Law enforcement officials, educators, city officials, business people, social services, non-profit groups, and others should be consulted. You can use some of the questions above. By now you know the questions that haven't been answered and still need to be asked.
- Use your demographic studies to supplement your local knowledge.



COACHING POINT: Ask for your eyes to become like Jesus' eyes. Offer your comments and try to avoid stereotypes. You may need to make repeat visits to the neighborhoods, on different days and times, in order to get a 360° view.

- Pray silently for the people you see, for the neighborhood, for the businesses, the people who live in the homes, etc. Ask God to reveal if this might be where we are called to “do a new thing” in Jesus' name.
- Come together and share your reflections together. How were your observations similar? How were they different? What very specific details did you notice? How did you see the people and the space through God's eyes?

Appendix 5: Sample Interview Questions:

(Questions from Ann Steigerwald, HR Director for Christian Associates Intl. UBP)

Share your personal faith story.

Leadership style, entrepreneurial capacity, ability to overcome obstacles

- Provide two (or three) examples of something you have started in your life. How did you go about this?
 1. What obstacles or challenges did you need to overcome? How did you tackle them?
 2. How did you get other people excited about joining you in this project?
 3. What lessons did you learn in starting this (ministry/business/project)?
 4. What is happening with the (ministry/business/project/group) now?

Team-ability, ability to work with others

- How have you benefited in working with other people?
- What activities excite you and give you energy? What takes it away?
- How have you gone about recruiting others? How did you get them involved in what you were doing?
- Based on your ministry experience, who do you need around you to be successful in church planting?
- Can you tell us an example of a poor team experience? What happened?

Personality, family history

- What three adjectives would people who know you use to describe you?
- What would those same people say about your 'areas of growth'?
- Tell us a little bit about your family history. How has this impacted your ministry work so far?
- What makes you believe you can handle this position?

Relational skills

- Who do you consider your closest friends? When did you meet them? How often do you see them?

- Do you have any non – Christian friendships? How did you meet them?
- How do you talk to people outside the church about your call to ministry?
- How easy do you find it to meet new people?
- What kind of people do you find the most challenging to relate to?

Missional practice

- In your current context describe how your life and community interact with the local community.
- What are effective ways to bring ‘good news’ to those around you? How did you determine this?
- What difficulties do you experience in representing Christ? How do you overcome these difficulties?
- Tell of a time when you have personally lead someone to Jesus Christ.

Emotional resilience, self care

- How do you typically deal with conflict? Give us two examples
- When have you encountered failure personally and how did you deal with it?
- How does your family or close friends know when you are stressed? What does it look like?
- What steps do you take to manage stress in your life?

Marriage and social base

- How does your spouse feel about you exploring new church development?
- What concerns does she/he have about you moving forward?
- How do you maintain a good balance between the demands of work and family life?
- What are the areas of your marriage are you currently working on?
- When did you last take a vacation together?



COACHING POINT: You don't have to ask all these questions. You may have received answers to questions you haven't yet asked. Try to fill in the gaps of what is missing that is significant to your search.

Appendix 6: Gallup SRI Mission Developer Definitions

Motivation

Internal and external drivers motivate an individual to strive, to win, and to take risks. A certain restlessness - sometimes obvious and sometimes not - propels an individual to ever-higher levels of productivity, mastery, service, and excellence. A person's continuous quest to improve distinguishes the motivated person from others.

Influence

With the force of conviction and the power of persuasion, an individual inspires others to move toward desired goals sooner rather than later. Resistance is squarely met and overcome. This person counters arguments with reason, and he or she confidently communicates in a manner that is concise, clear, and to the point.

Work-style

A person's ability to set goals, devise plans, attend to details, meet deadlines, and organize materials defines his or her work-style. This individual handles multiple tasks with ease and knows when to delegate assignments to others. This person thrives in a busy, productive atmosphere. He or she automatically sees what needs to be done and does it. Work is a source of satisfaction and pleasure for this individual.

Relationships

Within the give-and-take of human relationships, an individual gains keen insights into him or herself and others. In many encounters, trust is nurtured, understanding is ensured, and loyalty is strengthened. Appreciation enhances cooperation, cooperation enhances teamwork, and teamwork enhances the quality and quantity of outcomes.

Thought Process

Decision-making, problem solving, creativity, and innovation grow out of a person's thought processes. And thought processes differ. Divergent thinking leads to the generation of options, alternatives,

and solutions. Convergent thinking allows an individual to identify patterns, trends, possibilities, and potential problems in numerical data and information. Meaningful performance measurements intrigue this person.

Appendix 7: Demographic Information:

- **MissionInsite:** (www.MissionInsite.com) Your Presbytery might have a contract with this group. Contact your Presbytery executive to determine if you have access. If you do not have access, call the Office of Church Growth, 888-728-7228, ext. 5266 or 5247.
- There are also a few places you might find this information at no cost. Realtors are very good at tracking demographic information. Your local School District will also have done a significant study on where the population is moving and the ages of the shift. Make an appointment with your local city planners; they are usually up on the latest trends. The Association of Religious Data can also be helpful. www.thearda.com.
- The PCUSA Research Services has a site that will also allow you to access neighborhood information. <http://www.pcusa.org/research/help2.htm>
- You can also do a Yahoo (www.yahoo.com) or Google (www.google.com) search on specific groups and demographic data and explore that way. Use Google Maps and zip codes to find out some information.

Appendix 8: Bibles Used

- MSG: The Message, copyright ©1993, 1994, 1995, 1996, 2000, 2001, 2002 by Eugene H. Peterson. All rights reserved.
- NSRV: New Revised Standard Version of the Bible, copyrighted 1989 by the Division of Christian Education of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the United States of America. All rights reserved.
- NIV: Holy Bible, New International Version Copyright 1973, 1978, 1984 by International Bible Society. All rights reserved.
- NLT: Holy Bible, New Living Translation, copyright 1996, 2004. Used by permission of Tyndale House Publishers, Inc., Wheaton, Illinois 60189. All rights reserved.

New church development is not the implementation of successful models and techniques; it is the faithful discernment of God's leading and the faithful implementation of God's mission.

Starting a new church is not rocket science; it is much more complicated! A new church is the work of the Holy Spirit, which immediately puts this task way beyond our understanding.

"Starting New Churches" is a linear series of 17 gatherings that include assignments and steps that can take you from zero to a new church. Each of the 17 gatherings includes a Bible study and an extended time of prayer. Unfortunately, starting a new church is not linear. It is organic, contextual, and based on relationships between God and people. It is reformed and always reforming.

We provide you with a process that addresses the key aspects of starting a new church and encourages you to listen to the sometimes still voice of God, rather than ours or anyone else's. While discernment does not guarantee success, we do believe it will help keep you focused on the one who starts new churches.

Only God knows what God wants to accomplish through you and the new church the Holy Spirit is placing on your heart. Trust God. Strive to be faithful rather than successful. Faithfulness brings a success beyond our imagination and wildest dreams.

As you proceed through these 17 gatherings, wrestle with the scriptures, listen and discern, fall on your knees in humility and wait for God's right time.

**Starting New Churches:
A Process of Discernment is for:**

- Church Development Committees
- An existing church desiring to start a new church(es)
- An individual led to start a new church



A leader's pack with a DVD of all needed materials is available by calling 1-888-728-7228, ext. 5427.

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