

## **THE EMERGENT MODEL OF STARTING NEW FAITH COMMUNITIES POLICIES AND GUIDELINES**

As with all other models of starting new churches, The District Superintendent determines when/if/how an emerging model faith community begins within her/his district. However, the Cabinet acknowledges its limitations in understanding and implementing this new form of ministry.

Therefore, before any type of emergent faith community can be started, the potential planter must submit a proposal to the DS and the Director of Congregational Development for review and comments. They in turn will offer commentary and recommendations to the potential planter, and the Cabinet.

Emergent Models may include (but not limited to)

1. Monastic Micro-faith communities (a small group of individuals living together, following a rigorous religious order in the Wesleyan Way, engaging in neighborhood service and hospitality)
2. House Churches (people meeting in homes for worship, study, fellowship, mission, service, etc.)
3. Coffee Shop (or other non-traditional venue) in which people meet for organized worship and study...sometimes a healthy mother church owns the venue and proceeds go to support the ministry
4. Others as the Spirit and creativity rise up

Emergent Faith Communities are not just “trendy” ways to do church differently. They spring from a deep theological foundation that gives rise to a significantly different way of looking at what it means for a faith community to be the incarnate Christ.

Because the model is so different and so new, the standards of measurement cannot be the same as those listed previously for monitoring the fruitfulness of a project. Instead, clear benchmarks must be agreed upon in advance of launching by the planter, DS, CDT and the Cabinet. Most of the time, the pastoral leadership of an emergent model project will be bi-vocational. Additional ministry costs are minimal compared to a more standard model of plant.

This section was adapted for CDT from:

### **THE OFFICE OF NEW CHURCH DEVELOPMENT AND TRANSFORMATION *THE SOUTHWEST TEXAS CONFERENCE OF THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH***

Well, the biggest issue may be finding a model of sustainability in case their numbers do not bust 100 quickly. 100 or less millennials cannot pay for a church by UM norms. They will need to find cheap leadership model, cheap or borrowed facility.

There needs to be growth in stewardship, and teaching of percentage giving, as well as developing a cadre of leaders who can own the cause, so that something is left standing when pastors change. Leaders for small

groups especially.

The categories that seem important for this kind of church (to measure) are:

1. New people signing on (per month or per quarter)
2. Small group development and participation
3. Leaders in formation and deployed
4. Ministry teams i.e. flash mobs for missions; non-formal worship events; prayer ministry development; care teams
5. Stewardship growth; measure \$ given annually per capita for average worship attendance. (We know that a midrange church in our conference gives \$1500 or so per worshipper per year) 100 worshippers will collect \$150k on average. So let's see how fast we can get the church of 75 millennials average attendance to \$500 per worshipper as a first mile post. That is \$37,500 a year, and a big deal, signaling that something is happening. Then lets move them up to \$750 and so forth. It will be a long road to get them to the same level of financial support that older congregations have. Urban Village has done the best of any young adult church in nation with young adult stewardship. 400 worshippers will give about \$750k this year. It is just shy of \$2000 a head. Good by UM standards even for silent generation churches. New church pastor must be giving at least a tithe and sharing this with leaders.
6. Watch for conversions, adult baptisms - as these grow, be patient with extending financial subsidy. We need to see a culture of evangelism. There was a church with 35 annual professions of faith that closed in one of our conferences because worship was only 75 after two years. I just hated to see this. They led their district in evangelism and we closed them. This underlines the need to find alternative budget paradigms to make such churches doable without ongoing conference money poured in.
7. Early on, pre worship launch, it is good for planters to keep journals of names of contacts with a pace of 80-100 a month expected. That is intense, but this is not easy work, and contacts are critical.
8. Full time New Church start pastor's 50-hour work schedule. Where is he/she spending their time and energy?

**This section was from a conversation with Paul Nixon**

## **What type of benchmarks are we looking at with more traditional plants:**

After one year:

Evangelism: how many contacts are we making both in person and in other media venues—the leadership team should be doing 50 a week. Contacts should be placed in a data bank for future use.

We should see 20 conversions in the first year. This number should be increasing as the critical mass increases.

Leadership development: the planter must have gathered a core (6-12) of individual disciples from the target group to train and equip to create their own small group of disciples within the first three months. The vision/mission of the new church start must be known by everyone in the group.

Small Groups: After one year, there should be 10 to 12 small groups functioning. These could be led by the leadership team as well as adding new small group leaders. Such groups can be affinity based, Bible study, etc.

Mission teams must be created. Two major outreach ministries must be developed by the end of the first year. 50 people from the target area must have participated in these events.

Pre-formal worship: Celebration gatherings should be held monthly. This would be a gathering of all groups and ministries of the new church start. These events should be tailored to the target group. Once the critical mass reaches 120 then a formal worship service can be planned. By the end of the first year, 40 people should be attending these celebration gatherings.

Stewardship: Opportunities to teach classes on stewardship should find their ways into the small group setting. I would measure \$ given annually per capita for average worship attendance. (We know that a midrange church in our conference gives \$1500 or so per worshipper per year. 100 worshippers will collect \$150k on average.

Prayer Ministry Development: prayer teams and prayer partners must be in place within the first year.

Care Ministry must be implemented in the first year. Each person who becomes involved must be taught how to care for each other—i.e. hospital visits, covered dish meals for births, sickness, deaths; support in time of need.

New Church Start Pastors spiritual development is critical. We expect this person to be involved in daily devotions of prayer and Bible study of not less than one hour. We expect this person to involve his/her spouse in this time, too. An outside peer group for this person must be found. Finally, a coach must be given to him/her.

At least two workshops a year must be attended to continue to develop his/her skills in growing the new church. Leadership from the new church start should be joining in these workshops.

Time commitment of ministry as a full time new church pastor should be 50 hours a week. Balance of time and energy for a healthy personal life, family life and pastoral life must be found.

Monthly accountability of time will be reported to the CDT. A form will be emailed to the new church start pastor.

Second, third, fourth, and fifth years benchmarks will be determined at the end of the first year.