Church Planting Styles

Introduction

New churches start in a variety of ways and leaders begin with a diversity of gifts. One style of church doesn’t fit all. At Converge Northwest we embrace a variety of styles of new church ministries. **The one we like best is the one that fits the leader and place the best.** Some church planting models fit emerging leaders who may require more on the job training. Other models are more focused and make the most of a leader with previous planting experience.

The support systems also vary depending on the style of plant. Finances, Coaching, Launch Teams and Boards need to be shaped to fit the start up ministry. **Funding for a new church will come from a variety of sources.** When the church planting leader develops their game plan, they will also factor in the style of start up method they intend to use and the kind of resources they will need. Keep in mind, financial investments also come with commitments from both sides. For this reason, the planting partners must work to develop alignment between themselves and their financial expectations.

It is hoped that the description of these church planting models alongside of potential funding strategies will aid planters and their sending partners to be more explicit about the church planting strategy and expectations. **The greater the alignment the greater the confidence, the greater the confidence the greater the trust for taking risks to extend the Kingdom and move beyond ordinary expansion into God sized opportunities.**

Some Questions to Consider:

- What church planting models are you considering?
- How was consensus developed between the sending partner and the planter?
- What has been done to surface areas of disagreement?
- How have those issues been resolved?
- How will a plan be approved, monitored and celebrated?
- Who are the responsible stewards of the resources?
- What reporting methods have been agreed upon?
- How will funds be received and dispersed?
- How will the planter and team be supported, encouraged and equipped?
The Styles for Planting...
Invitational

Invitational planting is the most similar to a traditional approach to Church Planting. It prioritizes objectives related to the opening of a Sunday morning worship service with a variety of programming typically for families. Church planters in this model will be responsible for gathering a Launch Team and equipping them for their missional assignment. The team may come from existing churches as well as willing participants in the target city. This strategy will most often be used where a strong parent Church supports the activities with an emerging congregation. Other options include places where the supporting churches exist along with a well developed relationship and ministry partnerships in a city. The planter will still be required to equip a Launch Team for missional ministries and create connections with the target location.

Metaphor: Jesus sends the 72... Feeds 5,000.

LEADERSHIP

- Strengths Required – Mobilizing volunteers, Program Design, Public Communication, Organization, comfortable with delegation...
- Ministry Experience – Preaching, Family Ministries, Board Formation, Proficient leading traditional church programs

STRATEGY

- Develop a Launch Team from existing churches
- Equip Christians in Evangelism and church programs
- Start groups and ministries
- Develop Sunday Worship Ministries: Sermons, Worship, Child Care, etc

INVESTMENT IDEA

- Denomination – Pre-Launch Grant and Matching Funds
- Churches –Church Planter’s Salary/Benefits
- Planter – Raises Start up Programming Funds
- New congregation – Grand Opening and beyond

BENCHMARK IDEAS

- Evangelism and Marketing – 1st Month
- Launch Team Development – 1st to 6th Month
- Organization Systems – 1st to 12th month
- Public Launch – 6 to 9 Months (120 to 200 in Attendance)
- Assimilation and Mid-Week Programming – 6 to 12 month
- Sustainable with full-time pastor - 3 years
- Next church planting leader on board – 1st year

Neil Tibbott - 2011
Incarnational

Incarnational Planting begins with ministry in a target city or neighborhood. The Planter will most likely start with a team committed to serving the needs of a city and gathering likeminded believers and new Christians. The Launch Team forms later. The corporate gathering will emerge gradually and may or may not meet initially on Sunday. The worship expression will be more shaped by the context than tradition, or what Christians are used to. Ministry activities will be determined by the context. In most cases it will be decentralized, organic and highly dependent on leadership development. This model seeks to enflesh (incarnate) the Gospel first, then gather the church.

Metaphor: Jesus sends the 12... Ministry begins in households (Acts 10).

LEADERSHIP

• Strengths Required – Personal Evangelism and Discipleship, Networking, decentralized communication, hospitality
• Ministry Experience – Small Groups, Missions, Familiar with Context

STRATEGY

• Begin Ministry with a team
• Connect with host culture – Discern Ministry Opportunities
• Begin Serving and Proclaiming
• Involve ministry partners
• Mobilize committed team or teams
• Develop Worship Gathering

INVESTMENT IDEA

• Housing and Expenses for Planter, not a salary
• Matching Grant for offerings from Core Team
• Matching Block Grants for Strategic initiatives
• Contributions from ministry partners
• Bi-vocational employment

BENCHMARK IDEAS...

• Evangelism and Community Service – 1st Month
• Missional Community Formation – 1st to Ongoing
• Public Launch – 12 to 24 months (50 to 100 in Attendance)
• Multiple Communities growing – original community multiplied along with leadership
• Multiplication of Mid-Week Ministries – 1 to 3 months
• Sustainable with Missional Team - 3 years

Neil Tibbott - 2011
Experimental

Experimental planting begins primarily with the vision of a leader for a particular community. The ministry team will emerge from the context. In some cases the leader will be familiar with the context and have pre-existing relationships in the neighborhood. Ministry will emerge as the missional leader understands the context and becomes known. Experimental planters will not presume to know their ministry plan prior to developing relationships. Rather, they will do the work of discerning how and when to worship in their context. A worshipping community is still anticipated, but may not emerge until sufficient time passes for the leadership and discipleship to mature. An Experimental ministry plan may transition to a Missional plant after a period of discovery is completed, or not!

Metaphor: Jesus sends the disciples out 2 by 2… Andrew reaches his brother, Phillip the Eunuch.

LEADERSHIP

- Strengths Required – Discernment, Personal Evangelism and Discipleship, Perseverance, Ministry Experience – Community Development, Evangelism, Commercially compatible vocation

STRATEGY

- Develop relationships with influencers and networks in the context
- Equip Christians for service and evangelism
- Start Missional community and ministries
- Mobilize ministry partners
- Develop contextualized gatherings

INVESTMENT IDEA

- Denomination – training and supportive relationships
- Churches – volunteers and supportive relationships
- Planter – personal donor funding and employment
- Emerging Missional Community – fund ministry needs

BENCHMARK IDEAS...

- Evangelism and Discipleship – 1st Month
- Missional Team Formation – 1st to 6th Month
- Contextualized Ministries – 3 to 6 Months
- Multiplication Leaders and Groups – 6 to 12 month
- Public Launch – depends on context
- Sustainable – depends on model
Strengths for All Church Planters:
- Vision Casting
- Prayer
- Character
- Time and Resource Management
- Coachable

Funding Sources:
- Outside Employment (ministry or marketplace)
- Personal Investments
- Denominational Grants
- Matching Grants
- Churches
- Individuals
- Miraculous Provision

Three Priorities
1. Empower Leaders First
   a. Match passion with place
   b. Leverage the Leader’s support base
2. Fund Effective Ministry
   a. Create Plans that utilize strengths and previous fruitfulness
   b. Reward accountable leaders who focus their ministry and get results
   c. Suspend support for ineffective ministry plans
3. Develop Sustainable Ministry... that keeps the planting cycle going.
   a. Developing leaders
   b. Organize the church

For Discussing your next steps contact:

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