

Western Jurisdictional Plan for Starting New Churches 2013-2024

**A Western Jurisdiction Plan for Starting New Churches
In the Next Three Quadrenniums 2013-2024
July 2012**

Forward

Starting new churches is the most effective evangelistic tool we have as United Methodists! This has been proven true in every generation going back to the early days of John Wesley. In other words, planting new churches is the best means we have for making disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world. As simple as that sounds, it is far from simple to do. In fact, successfully starting new churches is an extremely difficult undertaking! Therefore the requirements are that it be the highest of priorities in terms of focusing and designating the full range of resources the conference has to offer in the areas of leadership, equipping, financing and planning.

Each of our conferences in the Western Jurisdiction then will need to allocate the above resources in order to “find” the best leaders, “equip” them for fruitfulness, “plant” them in the most favorable places in faithfulness and compel them to “multiply” for growth. In many cases this will mean a “re-allocation” of conference resources including the use of those funds and assets from the sale of previously closed churches as well as the future closing of churches. Additionally, each conference will need to designate one person to give oversight to this and create a new church start ministry team made of 5-6 persons who are very passionate about starting new churches.

This means that the Bishop, district superintendents and the conference leadership all need to be on the same page when it comes to starting new churches. Each of these entities will need to hold each other accountable for making new church starts the conferences highest priority and for keeping it there. At every turn, this team of leaders needs to be asking at least these two questions; “How are we doing?” and “What are our next steps?” in the planting of new churches.

In addition to each conference having a “developer” and a passionate “new church start team”, they will also need to set their own goals. These goals can be “conference wide” goals and /or they can be “district” goals. In either case, the district superintendent will need to be responsible for achieving those goals in her or his district! These goals should be obtainable and reasonable but also worthy of the conference’s best resources.

There will always be several good models to choose from and very likely each conference will use more than one model. By in large, the most successful and fruitful models are the ones where “existing churches start new churches” or in other words, the use of a “multiplication” model. The book “Exponential” by Ferguson & Ferguson is the best one I know when it comes to using a successful “multiplication” model. Two other good books are “Be Fruitful and Multiply” by Robert Logan and “Planting New Churches in a Post Modern Age” by Ed Stetzer.

“In the church at Antioch there were prophets and teachers: Barnabas, Simeon called Niger, Lucius of Cyrene, Manaen (who had been brought up with Herod the Tetrarch) and Saul. While they were worshipping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, ‘Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them.’ So after they had fasted and prayed, they placed their hands on them and sent them off.”

To be “sent out” to birth new churches... this is the work we've now been called to do in the Western Jurisdiction. In an “evangelistic” way, this demonstrates the Christian value of “**spiritual parenting**” both in raising new leaders and in launching new churches.

Definition of a New Church

In order to allow for maximum creativity and movement of the Spirit, the Western Jurisdiction joins Path 1 in defining new churches in terms of key characteristics instead of strategies or models. We believe a new church is **more than a mission project, new worship service or a new building**. For us it is a newly organized faith community that is committed to making disciples of Jesus Christ *and*:

- Includes regular community worship and regular celebration of sacraments
- Practices Wesleyan theology within a United Methodist identity and commitment
- Has an effective discipling system
- Receives new members
- Demonstrates faithful stewardship
- Is deeply involved in community transformation
- Is willing to plant a new church in its first decade

Within these broad characteristics United Methodist churches find freedom to partner in creative ways to begin new congregations.

Our Mission: “Make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.”

Rationale: One of the very best ways to make disciples is by starting new congregations because they reach **new people, more people, more young people and more diverse people**. In other words, new people of all categories are more likely to join new churches. For “fifty years” between 1870 and 1920 the Methodists averaged one new church start a day and by so doing became the largest and strongest denomination in our country.

Today it's even more crucial to start new churches for the following reasons:

- In the last fifty years the population has dramatically “grown” and “shifted” in the United States. Many of those churches planted earlier are not close to where the people now live. It's been estimated that about 75 percent of our existing churches are not located in our most populated communities.

- It's very difficult for long established churches to adapt to fundamental demographic shifts in their communities so that their membership, worship attendance and ministries reflect today's mission needs and not those of bygone eras. In other words we need new places for new faces.
- New churches are more open to all kinds of people inclusive of race, sexual identity, ethnicity, socioeconomic class, nationality and gender.
- New churches find it easier than established churches to live out new models of mission and ministry.
- "Evangelistic intensity" tends to decrease as the age of the congregation increases. New churches know they must attract new people every week.
- All churches have a life cycle of birth, infancy, adolescence, maturity, declining years and death. Therefore churches need to have an intentional plan to multiply while they are still very much alive and healthy.

A Developing Plan for the Vision of Starting New Churches in the Western Jurisdiction using primarily a Multiplication Model

The following are initial steps to take in the development of a new plan for churches that want to multiply themselves.

- Challenge United Methodist Churches in the Western Jurisdiction to multiply themselves. This challenge comes from the Bishops, the District Superintendents, the Pastors, Developers and the Conferences New Church Start Teams.
- Call upon God and the Holy Spirit to bless this endeavor in a "season of prayer."
- Assemble a New Church Ministries Team in the Conference (or one in each District if a district model is chosen) that is composed of only those persons who have a high passion for starting new churches. This team will assist in visioning, leading, supporting and coordinating all new church start endeavors. The team will also assist in site selection, resourcing and assessment issues as well as benchmarking.
- Make sure there is great clarity about who directs the new church start process. In other words, what person is responsible for waking up each morning and thinking about how to start new churches in the conference? Who gives direction for determining sites, finding and assessing planters and potential partner churches, developing a planter pool, funding considerations etc.? Clarify who that person is for you and greatly support that person.
- When churches say "yes" to multiplication, there are two basic steps to take. First, contact the DS who informs the Conference New Church Ministry Team (or informs the district team if that model is chosen) which will then give support and coordination to the multiplication project. Second, within the church itself, assemble two new teams: a "Prayer Team" to pray weekly for the success of the multiplication because nothing substantial happens in the way of changed lives without the work of the Holy Spirit.

Also assemble a “New Church Start Development Team” led by the pastor to devise their particular plan for implementation including timeline.

- District and conference celebration of the church’s launching of a new church.

Church Planting in the Western Jurisdiction

Conference Goals 2013-2024:

	Hispanic/Latino	Anglo	Racial/Ethnic	Multicultural	Total
California Nevada	20	20	10	12	62
California Pacific	20	20	10	12	62
Desert Southwest	20	20	3	6	49
Oregon/Idaho	15	15	3	3	36
Pacific Northwest	20	12	12	4	48
Rocky Mountain	12	20	4	4	40
Yellowstone	2	4	1	1	8
	109	111	43	42	305

The following guidelines are for Hispanic/Latino new church starts but may also apply to other new church starts as well.

Size

- 5% of the new churches will have at least 300 giving units (one in each episcopal area)
- 20% will have 200 giving units
- 75% will have 100 giving units
- For chartering, it seems the congregation would need to have at least 100 giving units

Sustainable churches

We want Hispanic/Latino congregations that are multi-generational-cultural-economical, deeply grounded in a United Methodist identity

Hispanic/Latino diversity

We agreed that diversity is a given when talking about Hispanic/Latino ministry because “Hispanic/Latino” includes a great many of cultures, but we are also open to Hispanic congregations becoming diverse in the common meaning of multi-ethnic/culture. Every congregation in our jurisdiction is encouraged to be an inclusive/hospitable-to-all church.

Hispanic/Models

- Mother/daughter giving birth
- Church within a church
- Partnership or multi-partners giving birth
- Marriage – adoption of a non-UMC church into the UM tradition (pre-marriage counseling will be needed). Not seen as a dominate model
- Parachute
- Faith communities being combined
- LMPN model

Hispanic/Latino Strategy

- Have a church planting coordinator/coach for the jurisdiction.
- Focus on extending the work, training of lay and pastoral leaders who have it in their DNA to plant
- How can we share best practices
- Strategies for identifying planters
- Have a jurisdiction event for people in established churches to go through the Pentecostal Journey program
- Each annual conference will have a strategic plan for starting Hispanic/Latino congregations by June 2013
- Develop coaches

Proposed models for those seeking to use a “Multiplication” model

There are at least seven possible models: multi-sites, mother-daughter, cross-cultural churches within a church, multi-ethnic, various house church models, second and third campuses and a new church within an existing church model. Each church can select one of these models, adapt one, or come up with its own new model for multiplying.

Leadership for these models will come from predominant sources 1) the existing staff of a church which may include clergy (full, part-time, or retired) and 2) the laity of the church. In either case, additional equipping (teaching and training) will be needed for both the existing church and the new church start leadership. Examples of this training are: Boot Camp, Readiness to Plant document, Lay Missionary Planting Network or the New Church Leaders Institute.

Leaders for church planting should possess many of the following characteristics: hard-working, entrepreneurial, self-starters, passionate, and have previous experiences starting new ventures. It will also be very important to match leadership with the mission field. This is called the “affinity” issue. The key question for the affinity match is “Will the people in the targeted mission field be attracted to this person?” and not “Does this person like the people in the mission field?”

Examples of how the models may be used by churches that choose to multiply themselves are the following:

- Mother-daughter plant A --the parent church gives birth to a new church start from within and maintains relationship with mother church through infancy, adolescence, and adulthood.
- Mother-daughter plant B--the parent church stays with the new church only through infancy then develops its own identity in adolescence.
- Monastic-house church A- has 10 to 15 people meeting together on a regular basis once a week or more for worship, Bible study and outreach into the community. These churches are connected to an anchor church.
- Monastic house church B—six to ten people that live in a house and commit themselves to rules of life such as “do no harm, do good, stay in love with God” and work at community transformation each week. These churches as well are connected to a larger anchor church.
- House church plant C--several house churches gather monthly who have own identity, weekly intentional faith development, and do community outreach, but agree to divide when individually they reach twenty members. The monthly gatherings can be at an anchor church.
- Intentional cross cultural new church plant--the leadership reflects two or more main cultures of the targeted mission field. For example if you have an existing Hispanic-Latino church in an area that also has a high percentage of African Americans, then you would want to start a new church for them in the current facilities with African American leadership.
- Multi-site church plant--an existing church decides to have additional but different worship services in other areas of their mission field or city.
- Second or third campus plant--an existing church decides to conduct similar worship experiences in different areas of their mission field or city.
- Church within a church plant--an aging and declining church with good facilities offers to host a new church making its primary resources of time and buildings available so the fledging church can grow to adulthood.
- Multi-racial plant – this is where the leadership from the very beginning is multi-racial in its make-up. At least 20% of the congregation must be of a different race or nationality to be considered a multi-racial congregation.
- Cross cultural church--existing church decides to start a new church for a particular demographic group i.e. a “cowboy” church.

Responsibilities of the Local Church

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| Step 1 | Develop a “Prayer Team” to pray unceasingly for the success of the multiplication effort. |
| Step 2 | Choose a model. Responsibilities of the local church will depend upon the model chosen which will dictate whether it is leadership, members, financial, facilities or any combination of these. |

- Step 3 In any of the models chosen, the use of the "Readiness 360" material is vitally important. This material looks at the churches capacity for fruitful planting in five key areas; "leadership readiness", "vision alignment" "evangelistic aptitude," "passionate spirituality," and "cultural openness."
- Step 4 Contact the District Superintendent when a decision is made to multiply in order to work with the Conference New Church Start Ministry Team (or the district team if that model is chosen) for coordination and support.
- Step 5 Assemble within the church a New Church Start Development Team of passionate lay persons led by the pastor to devise a plan for implementation with timeline. Suggested books to read: "Exponential" by Dave & Jon Ferguson, "Be Fruitful & Multiply" by Robert Logan and "Planting New Churches in a Post Modern Age" by Ed Stetzer

Responsibilities of the Districts (if the district model is chosen the following pertains to them, if not these are to be applied to the conference team):

- Each district has a new church ministry team of 4-6 leaders who are passionate and committed to reaching new people through starting new churches with at least one younger person.
- Persons on this team should have: a deep commitment to Christ Jesus, The United Methodist Church and the making of disciples for Jesus; previous experience in new church starts; potential for raising funds for new church starts and be part of growing church.
- The purpose of which is to develop and execute strategic plans for starting new churches including: the mission field location, leadership requirements and assessments, the "affinity" issue, benchmarking, mentoring and coaching, timing and launching, the church's readiness to plant, ministry partners and resourcing. This team serves as a connecting point for all individuals, churches, conference and general work in church planting in the district.
- Is accountable to the District Superintendent/Cabinet and resourced by the Conferences Developer.

Responsibilities of the Conference:

The conference will be a partner in these new church starts by providing collaboration, demographic information, guidance, supervision, leadership and other appropriate resources.

1. Have a line item in the conference budget for New Church Starts that is significant to the priority that it carries.
2. There should be in place a policy for closing and selling existing churches where the volume of meaningful ministry is very low. The closing of those churches should be done according to the Book of Discipline and before the facilities have deteriorated and lost

their value. These churches can be considered to be "Elijah" or "Legacy" churches as these assets can be used to start new churches.

3. The Conference develops an assessment team led by the Developer with a clearly defined assessment process including where to "find" high potential clergy and laity planters.
 - The purpose of which is to find, evaluate and assess potential church planters for general ability and affinity to specific church planting projects, report and make available a pool of potential church planters to the Appointive Cabinet as well as potential sites for church planting.
4. Create a pool of pre-screened potential church planters
 - Make use of the Lay Missionary Planting Network (LMPN)* in helping to establish this pool.
 - 10-20 lay or clergy leaders who have been assessed for fitness and trained in the basics of starting a new church.
 - Leaders in this pool would be given preference in appointment to new churches and to churches that are starting new churches.
 - The pool would be evaluated annually and receive ongoing training.

The Conferences New Church Start Team

- Coordinates, revises and resources this plan in collaboration with the Bishop/Appointive Cabinet and Director of New Faith Communities.
- This plan should also present a clear process for "Finding", "Equipping", "Planting" and "Multiplying".
- If the model of District Teams are used, the chair (or representative) of each District New Church Ministry Team serves as a member of the Conference New Church Start Team.

Responsibilities of the Planter

- Planters are expected to raise a significant portion of funds for the success of the church plant.
- Planters are to assist in the pre-planting bench marking stage.
- Planters are encouraged to find a certified United Methodist coach or equivalent to help them.
- Planters are expected to provide monthly reports on attendance offerings and small group participation etc.....

***LMPN-** a new approach to starting churches through the assigning of passionate, talented and trained lay persons, drawing us back to our Wesleyan roots. The belief is that gifted and called lay people can and will effectively lead new congregations. This approach also involves "Anchor" and "Partner" churches (See Addendum).

Responsibilities of the Western Jurisdiction

- Keep funding in place for bringing in resources and helping to offset expenses for hosting new church start events.
- Keep funding in place to have at least one face to face jurisdictional meeting of developers to share best practices around planting new church churches.

Responsibilities of the General Church

Our United Methodist Strategy Team for starting new churches named "Path 1" is available for the following:

- Contextualized Conference Strategic Planning
- Jurisdictional and National Equipping Events for the "training and teaching" of new church planters
- New church start multiplication training for existing churches
- Use of a cadre of "certified" United Methodist new church start mentor coaches for each new church start planter
- Providing resources for assisting in the successful " launch" of a new church start

Path 1 is eager to build relationships with conferences and jurisdictions that may make funds or additional leadership available in the future for the planting of new churches.

A Word about Funding

There should be a line item in the conference budget that gives significant importance to planting new churches.

Funds can also come from the assets of closed churches and there should be procedures in place as to how this happens.

A capital campaign for funding new church starts should be conducted "after" a couple of quick wins.

New church starts can give "a tithe" to help start another new church.

Internal Steps and Dates:

1. Build district teams capable of launching at least 2 new churches each year.
 - District Superintendents identify and recruit district-level leadership (By the end of 2012 and ongoing).

- Train district teams and DS's (2012 and ongoing) and have the team read & study materials on new church starts such as "Exponential" and "Be Fruitful and Multiply".
- Train all clergy and key lay persons about multiplication.
- Have a training event for local congregations: Developing a Church Planting Proposal
- Resource district teams with encouragement and attention (ongoing).
- Have ongoing coaching (new church pastors, etc.).
- Quarterly reporting to Bishop and Extended Cabinet.

Resourcing the Local Church

Possible approaches:

- Large Church Pastors meeting/Mid-size
- LMPN training
- Receive ideas on how it could happen here?
- Marketing Tools
- Demographic information, which would include what other denominations are present
- Collaborative work with other denominations
- Develop a web-presence in each district on resources for starting new churches

Conclusion: A Tale of Two Churches by Ed Stetzer

A study of Acts reveals that laypersons affected early church planting (8:1, 4). They performed mass evangelism (8:5-6, 12) as well as village evangelism ((8:25). Through this lay movement, churches multiplied (9:31) and salvation reached increasing numbers of Gentiles (10:44-48). Later, lay Christians from Jerusalem witnessed about Christ and planted a Gentile-Jewish church in Antioch (Acts 11:20-21).

The founding of the Antioch church may be the most important moment in church planting history. Antioch would send missionaries throughout the world. Under the leadership of the Holy Spirit, the Antioch church became the first great missionary-sending church (Acts 13:3). On the other hand, the Jerusalem church turned increasingly inward and lost much of its vision, finally disappearing like the Judaizers of the early Christian movement. In contrast, the Antioch congregation reached the world by becoming the first church planting church! They did this by sending out their very best leaders and by contributing 'significant' amounts of money for the establishment of new congregations.

All of the above information is aimed at providing the framework for those that want to be the multiplying "Antioch" churches of our day and helping them achieve great success.

" They fasted and prayed; they placed their hands on them and sent them off". Acts 13:3

ADDENDUM

The Lay Missionary Planting Network in The United Methodist Denomination

Love God, Love Your Neighbors, Go Make Disciples of All Nations

The Council of Bishops and the “developers” of our annual conferences have called on us to find even better ways to reach all people for Jesus Christ by planting new churches. Many of us realize that our current approaches limit our ability to plant the number of new churches we need and to plant them in as many different places as we need.

The Lay Missionary Planting Network (LMPN) is a new approach to starting churches through the assigning of passionate, talented, and trained lay persons. Actually, the LMPN draws us back to our roots with John Wesley in his use of competent and accountable lay persons who later became “circuit riders” that were instrumental in successfully developing and leading our earliest Methodist churches.

Again today, we believe that this intentional multiplication of ministry enables us to respond to God’s call to love our neighbors as ourselves and to form disciples. Furthermore, we believe that gifted and called lay people can and will effectively lead new congregations. In being committed to this we will reach more people, more young people and more diverse people. Specifically we seek to find and equip lay people to reach the Hispanic/Latino community.

To this end we are partnering with Path 1, our denomination’s New Church Start Strategy Team, which will provide the following:

- Curriculum for ten sessions covering : “Church Planting 101”, “The Basics of Wesley”, “United Methodism 101”, “Preaching & Teaching”, “Engaging the Community”, “Discipling & Mentoring Leaders”, “Pastoral Care”, “Growing & Multiplying” and “Christian Stewardship”
- Co-branded Recruitment Materials and Strategies
- Specialized Training at The School of Congregational Development Events
- Assessment of Participants for best fit: Planter, Launch Team or Facilitator
- Funding?

Conference will provide:

- A place for the teaching sessions (a local church can be used for this)
- Leadership- Coordinator (Developer), Mentors (elders), Anchor & Partner Churches
- Feedback
- Intentional assignments for “qualified” lay missionaries to start new churches in targeted populations

Lay persons that qualify for this are: passionate about the Gospel, compassionate towards God’s people, persons who have started new activities that attract and engage people, eager to share Christ with their Latino community and able to support themselves financially.