

Parenting Church Resource Packet

2009

In the following pages, you will find a compass to some of the pathways and tools you need to move into church multiplication within the Reformed Church of America. May it speed your vision and action steps. Some of these resources are found online at www.rca.org under the Multiply tab, “Resources” link. Check there for ongoing updates.

- ✓ New Church Plan
- ✓ RCA Grant Criteria and Application
- ✓ Financial Support Considerations

The RCA’s Church Multiplication Team is committed to developing with you all aspects of an effective church multiplication movement. Some key steps are laid out below for your ease of travel down this road, toward becoming a church that plants churches.

1.) **Strengthen Spiritual Dynamics:** mobilize prayer for church planting, passion for the lost, fasting for discernment of the Lord’s voice. Reconnect with the power of the whole Gospel message. Use the “Prayer and Spiritual Empowerment” guidesheet online. Paul Vroom of Frankfort, IL, is a strong example here as a planter: challenged by an elder to develop 100 intercessors for the church being planted by their church, he has an excellent webpage with regular prayer updates for every stage in the development of the church.

2.) **Cultivate Shared Vision:** use the “16 Ways of Planting” as a worksheet with your consistory and key opinion leaders, weighing the advantages of each model. See if you can develop a plan for the next two to four years that includes one to four of these planting strategies for your church and community. Tulare Community Church (Tulare, CA) has a 2004 Vision Expansion document that lays out specific strategies for the coming years of church planting and deploys a Church Planting Team that reports to the consistory to oversee the many planting efforts already underway. To date, they have helped start 24 churches in 12 years, with great diversity as well.

3.) **Mobilize Church Planters:** the success of church planting rests heavily on the leadership chosen for the work. Consider providing ministry interns a place in your church context to grow with the church and later be sent by your church into the “fields white for harvest.” Then A.C.T. with wisdom by:

- Assessing candidates well: Visit the Emerging leaders section of www.rca.org Multiply/resources tab. Four pre-screening tools can be taken online for planters, in two languages, free to RCA parenting churches or potential planters. They are the Starter Survey, assessme.org, the Gallup SRI “Mission Developer” profile,

and the APEST (Ephesians 4:11 equipping functions.) All are accessed by sending an email to Sketcham@rca.org (Susan Ketcham, Emerging Leaders team leader for the RCA Church Multiplication Team.) A final level of assessment of a potential planter is completed with two live assessors with either the 360 Profile or the Ridley assessment, which take 4-6 hours for the planter and spouse. These are arranged following the pre-screening assessments. A qualified assessment center experience is excellent too, which generally cost more and take 3 days, and are available in the RCA and CRC circles several times a year.

- Coaching planters well: foundational coach training is offered regionally by revitalization leaders Ken Eriks, Vicki Menning and Rodger Price. Visit www.rca.org under the Revitalization tab for times and places. Explore www.CoachNet.org (\$75 annual membership) as an online resource for church planting and coaching relationships, especially when the physical distance grows between the planter and parent church. (some churches plant three hours away or more.) Coaching logbooks work great from ChurchSmart (1 800-253-4276) for face to face interaction. Coaching 101 by Bob Logan is a book resource and “Transformissional Coaching” by Steve Ogne are both good.
- Training planters well: *Thrive* is a 4 day annual RCA/CRC training event for the planter and key team members, including the spouse and coach. Offered approximately every six months around the country. Brochure, dates and costs available by email at Sketcham@rca.org . Other “bootcamp” experiences can help prepare the planter with a strategic plan, clear vision and values, and a realistic match to the context of the mission. See:

[Church Multiplication Training Center online](#) or [CoachNet New Toolkit Seminars](#) offered regionally and throughout the year. Helping planters find a network with other planters in their area is also a good investment.

4.) **Anchor Planting into the Organizational Culture:** As a parenting pastor or planting leader in your church, join a “Coached Multiplying Network” in your classis or broader geographical area based on affinity networks. The “Cultivating Church Multiplication Movements” (C2M2) material from CoachNet or ChurchSmart will provide transformational learning. Find a wealth of ways to help the planting process go well and bring the whole congregation on board. Build a new wineskin (structure, team, budget) for the new wine (growth/values of planting churches and harvesting among the lost.) Anticipate “pushback” from spiritual forces of evil as you invade ground and lives in your community long claimed by them. Celebrate “wins” along the way every chance you can. Keep communicating the vision and the fruit of the work!

Financial Stewardship of Church Planting

The call to reach the lost and make disciples of the nations falls to every Christian and every church. A balance for financial resources must be found between the sending body and the apostolic team being sent, who will self-support in some ways and ultimately raise the resources “from the harvest.” We have great examples of this kind of giving in the Scriptures. (Mark 15:40; Acts 4:36-37, 13:3, 20:34; 2 Cor. 9:6-12)

Sufficient support for each unique church plant must be found to catalyze the new congregation through the early growth stages until it can become self-supporting, self-governing, and self-propagating (reproducing). Too little support can cause constriction of ministry; too much can cause over-dependence and delayed maturity in the new plant. Likewise, too short of timeframe on support can jeopardize the new work, and too long can retard responsibility among the new believers. A range of “sending” support from 1 to 5 years is normal, with three years being optimal in many planting situations to strike the needed balance. This should be carefully thought through and agreed upon (in writing) by all partners involved from the outset. Adjustments can always be made to extend partial support an additional year, but by then you will have a much clearer idea of the progress and potential of the particular church plant in question.

The cost for each church plant effort varies dramatically, based on model, location, leadership team, cost for facility rental (if any), bi-vocational leadership, number of participants in the plant, and so on.

- For example, to plant a house church network in a nearby community or another people group within your community, using homes and local elders, could be virtually cost free in terms of outside support. The resources can be raised from within the “harvest”.
- To deploy a bi-vocational planter to reach cross-culturally in your own community, using worship and office space on your current church campus, could cost \$30,000 a year for three years of outside support to get a good work moving.
- To hive off 20-200 adults from your existing church for another body of believers to reach a new demographic or language group, with full-time staff (1-2), could cost \$70,000 in first year “parent church” support but become self-sufficient by the second year.
- To parachute a planter and family into a new territory to begin a work from scratch may cost over \$85,000 a year in outside support (various grants and partners) and take a four year declining scale of support to be effective.
- For creating two effective satellite ministry sites with the intent to spin off as maturity comes, could require an additional staff leader on your church’s team

and \$25,000 a year in facility and equipment costs. Since administration is centralized still and existing staff lead the way on the development of these new sites, much of the eventual costs for planting can emerge “from the harvest.”

- To release a catalytic church planting missionary into the harvest from your church full-time to start a series of churches year after year and mobilize leaders could require a commitment of \$120,000 annually and further support for each plant successfully launched.

You can see the variations are limitless. Check around to learn from others in the area who have gone before you. The graph below shows a scenario for one possible church plant, let’s say, hiving off 25 adult members from your existing church to be sent with a qualified and assessed youth pastor from your staff. Year One involves the first six months on staff with the parent church still, phasing out from ministry staff there while building the core group momentum. You can see the total giving increasing every year on track with the local giving of the new membership of the church plant. Four year direct “parent church” support: \$65,000. Denominational grant decreases over three years in this case, \$15K, \$10K, and \$5K. Classis support steady for three years at \$15,000 each. It is a New Testament value that those receiving the ministry should support the ministry financially. But you may also note that for every dollar of “outside support” sown into church planting, another three dollars of harvest resources are raised.

