

GCI-USA Church Planting Networks

Preparation and Planning Template

Church Planting Networks (CPNs) provide opportunities for groups of congregations (typically 5-8 congregations in a 75-100 mile radius) within GCI-US regions to partner with church plants. As partners, CPNs provide an array of support including prayer, encouragement and financial support. In addition to providing partial financial support for training and consultants for church planters, CPNs provide “seed money” for church plants that can be used for equipment, hall rental, advertising, etc.

GCI Church Multiplication Ministries (CMM) and your regional pastor will come alongside the CNP to help it develop. CMM will also be available for coaching and/or consultation for your CPN coordination team. The following steps are involved in developing a Church Planting Network:

Preparation

- Two or more pastors begin praying about forming a network.
- Select a network coordinator (preferably a non-pastor; the coordinator should have flexibility with time to vision cast and must champion church planting).
- Develop a network coordination team, including the network coordinator. The network team may be comprised of network pastors and/or members who grasp our GCI vision for church planting and have a passion for it. Your regional pastor should be a member of your network team.
- We recommend the network coordinator and team members become familiar with the basic principles and practices of church planting. They can do this by attending *ChurchNext Training*, the *Church Multiplication Summit* (both sponsored by CMM). We also recommend they read books recommended by CMM. This will help them relate to and provide guidance for the church planters they support.
- A functioning network will have a minimum of five participating network congregations fully committed to directly supporting/mothering a church plant.
- We recommend multiple CPNs within each region.

Finances

- Establish a Church Planting Network fund. We recommend naming the fund, “Church Planting Network Fund (or CPN Fund).” Funds should be managed according to guidelines provided in the GCI-USA Financial Management Manual.
- Donating congregations should consist primarily of those already committed to the network. (An initial donation from network churches is needed to fund the account, a monthly donation is recommended to grow the fund.)
- A church planting network account can be managed two ways:
 - As a line item within an established congregational account.
 - Through a separate checking account established under the umbrella of an established congregational account. In this case, a separate TIN/EIN is needed. Do not establish a separate charter for this fund.
- **Contact GCI treasurer Mat Morgan prior to establishing a fund.** Mat will provide guidance for fund establishment.
- Select a treasurer to manage the fund.
- Solicit an initial offering from participating congregations to fund the account.

- Develop a basic policy for how funds will be used. (See the attached recommended guidelines.)

Planning and Communication: Develop a plan for sharing the vision and gathering support for a Church Planting Network with pastors and congregations.

- The network coordinator should be the primary communicator on behalf of the network.
- Communicate the purpose for a district CPN to pastors and church members.
- Involve pastors in the planning process.
- Communicate the need for financial support and other forms of support (prayer, training, equipment, etc.)
- Provide multiple pathways for donations (finances, equipment, etc.)
- Communicate how finances will be accounted.
- Establish a financial reporting process to donating congregations.
- Develop a process for intentional prayer; reminding participating pastors and congregations to continually pray for church planters. Continually communicate prayer requests.
- Determine how communication will take place between the church planter and the network (communicating any progress and the needs of church planters to congregations).
- A functioning network will have a minimum of five participating network congregations fully committed to directly supporting/mothering a church plant.

Coordinate resources: As needs arise, facilitate and coordinate the flow of resources from the network churches to church plants.

Network Processes and support systems: Establish a close working relationship with the Regional Pastor and the CMM national coordinator. Use existing systems and resources, for ongoing support of church plants.

- Sponsoring assessment interviews for church planters.
- Sponsoring church planters to attend training events (Church-Next Training, Exponential conference and other training events).
- Sponsoring consultants and coaches for church planters.
- Work with the regional pastor to identify, recruit and develop potential church planters and church planting teams within GCI and outside sources.

Financial Guiding Document

- Network funds are to be used primarily in direct support of a church planter. (Support such as training, assessment, consulting and launching of a church.)
- Funds may be used to support the continued engagement and knowledge of the network coordinator in the church-planting world.
- Funds may be used for the recruitment of church planters.
- As a guide, a church-planting network should provide seed money to a church plant. We recommend a sum of \$10 - \$15,000.00 for launch related expenses including, but not limited to: equipment, facilities rental, launch team member training, preview services and marketing the church.
- In addition to seed money, we recommend that monthly donations be provided as needed once the church is planted for a duration of three years. ***Note: healthy support of a church plant should diminish yearly with the majority of the support in the first two years. We don't advocate co-dependency, but rather self-sufficiency.***
- As a general rule a network should not invest in excess of \$25,000.00 over a three-year period on a particular church plant.
- As a general rule networks do not support salary for church planters. Salaried church planters need to raise support outside the network.
- GCI's policy is "no unmatched funds", therefore, as a general rule always demand a matching percentage of donated funds. Church planters need to have multiple funding sources.