

Preview Phase and 4 STEP(s) Defined:

Season of Discernment
Time of Confirmation
Evaluation of Opportunity
Plant the Church

Preview Phase

Are there obvious considerations that would keep the MNA Committee from enthusiastic endorsement of further work on this proposal? If so, these need to be communicated to the people involved before they invest more efforts in this endeavor.

4 STEP Process

The purpose of these steps is to carefully evaluate an opportunity to plant a church in Vermont, New Hampshire & Maine. It is our hope by following this process that God will be glorified and we will follow His leading in reaching Northern New England.

Season of Discernment

*Seek the LORD and His strength;
Seek His face continually. - 1 Chronicles 16:11*

*“Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you.” -
Matthew 7:7*

Duration: 3-6 Months

Summary: The purpose of this time is to consider the will and plan of God and to get to know the community in which the church would be planted. Those parties interested in the church plant should commit to prayer and study to determine if God is leading the PCA to plant a church in this particular location at this time. The MNA Committee will join them in this activity as well.

Action Items:

- Spend a Season in Prayer. Spend at least 3 months just praying. How is God leading? What is He doing / revealing?
- MNA Committee, Presbytery, Outside Supporters, Other PCA Churches are encouraged to pray for God's leading, for the people & ministers involved in the church planting opportunity.
- Input from closest PCA Sessions
- Input from OPC Home Missions Contacts
 1. We must respect the fact that the OPC is led by God.

2. We do not want to draw people who would be a part of an OPC or other reformed or bible believing church.

Time of Confirmation

*Without consultation, plans are frustrated,
But with many counselors they succeed. - Proverbs 15:22*

*'For I know the plans that I have for you,' declares the LORD,
'plans for welfare and not for calamity to give you a future and a hope. - Jeremiah 29:11*

Duration: At Least 3-4 Months

Summary: Attempt to seek input from all interested parties and evaluate the providential opportunity to plant a church. This is a very important step and the MNA Committee should be attentive, thoughtful and methodical in its approach to a church planting opportunity. It should also be careful not to quench the Spirit.

Action Items:

- Evaluation of core group leader / church planter / teaching & ruling elders involved
 1. Are they agreeable to the Doctrine and Standards of the PCA?
 2. Do they have a kingdom vision? Is there a clear desire to reach out and NOT be merely another Reformed Outpost?
 3. Will they work with and submit to the governing authority? Is there clear evidence of an attitude of submission?
- Has the church planter been through the assessment center? What was determined?
- Network – After above and approval of the MNA Committee, we want the group / leaders spend several months networking. Set up a study, not preaching, that is outreach oriented. Use Christianity Explored, or some other appropriate study. Work the network of relationships. Is God in this? Are there people being drawn, not unhappy or disgruntled people from other churches, but people with a clear kingdom focus? Can they be sent off with the blessing of their home churches? A possible evidence of God being in this is the presence of un-believers in whom God is working to be a part of this new mission church, and the presence of believers who have grown in their faith, love, and service as a result of being together.
- Vision / Mission – Toward the end of this stage there should be a clear mission / vision for the community. Unity should be evident amongst those who want to see a church planted.

Evaluation of Opportunity

*Commit your works to the LORD
And your plans will be established. - Proverbs 16:3*

The apostles and the elders came together to look into this matter – Acts 15:6

Duration: 3 Months

Summary: This part of the process is to make a final decision and recommendation to the Presbytery. This step is will include the necessary steps and communications that need to be made in order to move forward in planting a church.

Action Items:

- Presentation of Church Planting Vision & Mission Statement to the MNA Committee including:
 1. Statements / Goals / Objectives
 2. Overview of Church Planting Location (why plant a church here?)
 3. Proposed Action Steps
 4. Financial Budget
- Meet as a Committee for prayer and discussion
- MNA Committee Action Options
 1. Recommend to Presbytery
 2. Bring to Presbytery without opinion
 3. Do not recommend but inform Presbytery.
 4. Do not recommend and bring no motion to Presbytery.
 - any presbyter could still bring a motion if desired
- Inform all parties involved the decision of the MNA Committee
- Contact Clerk of Presbytery if necessary for action to be taken on the floor of Presbytery.
- Secure Presbytery Approval

Plant the Church

And Jesus came up and spoke to them, saying, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. "Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age." - Matthew 28:18-20

Action Items:

- KEEP PRAYING!!!!
- Proceed with the plan, staying connected to the Presbytery throughout.
- Revise plan as the Lord's way becomes clearer

submitted by,

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