



# The Society of St. Patrick and St. Aidan

## FIVE STEPS TO PLANTING A CHURCH

*Please see our Abbey Church Model for a specific model of networked church planting that bridges traditional and house/niche churches.*

The following outline was prepared to help you begin to think your way through the church planting process. The Society and your Church Planting Coach can help you through the detailed process of church planting.

### **Step One: Personal Self-Assessment of Your Desire to Plant a Church**

- Assess your motive(s)
  - Why do you want to plant a church?
    - Your motives need to be positive; rather than negative.
- Assess the need of your desire to plant a church
  - Are other churches or ministries already meeting the niche you want to fill with a new church plant? If so, why not work with one of those churches?
- Assess your call
  - Does your spouse believe that you have the calling and ability to plant a church? If not...why not?
  - Are others asking you to plant a church? If not... why not?
  - Ask two mature Christian leaders, who know you well and are older than you, to pray with you and then honestly assess your desire to plant a church. If you don't know two mature Christian leaders... that is probably an indication you are not ready to plant a church.
- Assess your Abilities and Experience. Are you a credible leader in the eyes of others?
  - Have you ever been part of a church plant?
  - Do you have a track record of starting, building, organizations from the ground up? Coach, Educator, Entrepreneur...?
  - Do you have a track record of evangelizing lost people?
  - Do you have a track record of equipping and unleashing leaders for Christ?
  - Do you have the skills to be a lead planter or would you serve better as part of a church planting team?
    - Different church planting models may entail different abilities.

- You may want to consider working with the Society to find a church planting pastor to come and help you.
  - Do you have the biblical, theological, and pastoral knowledge and training to plant and lead a church?
- Increase your Knowledge: Throughout the self-assessment period you need to do a lot of reading and research about church planting. The Society can materials.

## **Step Two: Begin Working with The Society to Articulate God’s Call and Vision**

- Contact the Society and begin exploring your church planting journey.
  - Enlist a Church Planting Coach and meet monthly
  - Enlist a Spiritual Mentor/Director and meet monthly
  - You’ll need to be able to clearly and concisely communicate to others what God is calling you to do and how it will look when it is established.
    - Be able to explain what is motivating you to start a church
    - Be able to explain how you will start the church
      - What will be your church planting model?
        - House Church?
        - Abbey Church Model?
        - Traditional Church?
          - Co-vocational: most people will have to work a job as they plant a church.
            - Realize that most denominations and church planting groups are not offering large sums of money upfront.
              - Divine Providence, Prayer, and Spirit Filled/Gifted people will be your most important resources.
- What Method?
  - Starting from the ground up?
    - You and your family. Are they ready for this long journey?
  - Starting from a “hive off” of another church?
    - Make sure you have the blessing of your mother church.
    - Make sure you have “influencers”, “leaders”, and people who are committed to your leadership; rather than malcontents.
  - Starting from a Church Planting team?
    - The Society highly recommends starting with a church planting team if you plan on starting a traditional church.
- Where and Who?
  - A geographical community?
  - A niche community?

- Demographically, who are you trying to reach? Or even better, “Who can you reach”?

### **Step Three for a Traditional Church: Gather Your Church Planting Team**

- The lead planter(s). Gifting in building an organization from the ground up. Effective in teaching, equipping, training, and releasing new leaders.
- The worship music leader(s). For better or for worse... music plays a significant role in traditional church plants. You'll need to find an anointed worship music leader who other musicians will respect and want to play with. He/She needs the ability to recruit, train, and shepherd musicians. These kinds of leaders are usually very hard to find. Offering a stipend to pay this person's expenses might help you find this person. However, avoid musical mercenaries.
- Children's Leader. Most traditional church plants will be reaching young families. You'll need someone who is passionate about ministering to children and is able to teach and train other children's workers.
- Evangelist and Influencers. If you do not have the gift of personal evangelism, ask the Lord help you find someone who has that gift. They don't have to be a mature Christian. Often, new believers are better connected to non-believers.
- Other People: Spiritually mature people who are gifted in discipling, prophetic/prayer, and Finances/Bookkeeping are helpful.
- Spend quality time with your team getting to know each other. Pray, worship, vision cast, strategize, train and equip each other. Be a loving shepherd to your team and they will pass it on to others.
- Write down your detailed plan on the specifics of When, Where, and How you will start your church.
  - Especially have a plan for reaching people to be part of your core group.

### **Step Four: Gather a Core Group**

- Prioritize reaching influencers! Influencers are other people who influence and bring other people.
  - Influencers don't need to be Christians when you first reach them.
- Expect MASSIVE amounts of rejection. Successful church planters are people that will not be overwhelmed by people telling them “Not interested”.

- Don't agonize over the people who reject your overture. MOVE ON to others who are, or will be, receptive.
- Ask for commitment.
  - Articulate what kind of commitment you are wanting.
  - Invest your time and emotional energy in people who will give you commitment; rather than those who won't.
- Lovingly shepherd, equip, and release your core group to minister and reach others.

### **Step Five: Worship Services**

- House/Niche Churches begin regular worship services.
  - Hopefully you can network with an Abbey Church
- Traditional Churches:
  - Begin unpublicized Worship Services while you gather your core group and reach a critical mass. It's best if there are 50 to 70 people in your critical mass of worshipers. Less than 50, it will be difficult to move forward in a traditional worship context.
    - Exhaust the possibility of partnering with an existing church. Sometimes, long established churches may have an interest in church planting, but lack the knowledge or motivation to do it by themselves. If you are offering a convergent worship experience, probably unlike anything are they offering, it may incentivize them to help you.
    - Invite others during this time, but make sure that your folks know that your future plans are to eventually hold publicized worship services.
  - How will you "launch" your publicized worship services?
- House/Niche Church: When you reach a critical mass of people what will you do?
  - Critical mass is usually 10 adults.
    - Divide; Hive off half your group at a new location.
    - Multiply by sending out a leader(s) and a host home leader to start new a new house church.
      - This will focus on mentoring leaders.
      - This will motivate the new group to reach new people for their new House/Niche Church.
        - The Society recommends this method as being the most productive to reaching new people.
- Periodically review and rework your plan with your Church Planting Team and your Church Planting Coach.

### **Other Methods of Church Planting?**

Be sure to visit The Society's "Abbey Church Model of Church Planting". Also, contact the Society for more information on other models of church planting. Please let us know if you have an idea you would like to discuss with the Society. We are always eager to learn about news ways of planting churches.

May the Lord be with you!

Bishop Wayne Boosahda and Father Jon Aamodt