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Developing a New Model for Church Planting in the Wisconsin Conference of Seventh-day Adventists

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Andrews University

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ABSTRACT

DEVELOPING A NEW MODEL FOR CHURCH PLANTING
IN THE WISCONSIN CONFERENCE OF
SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTISTS

by

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Adviser: Skip Bell

ABSTRACT OF GRADUATE STUDENT RESEARCH

Dissertation

Andrews University

Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary

Title: DEVELOPING A NEW MODEL FOR CHURCH PLANTING IN THE
WISCONSIN CONFERENCE OF SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTISTS

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The Problem

Both the Bible and the writings of Ellen White¹ emphasize church planting as an important outreach strategy. During the twentieth century the Seventh-day Adventist Church in North America has emphasized growing existing churches and institutions instead of developing new work. A new culture needs to be developed where church planting is a priority.

¹Along with the Bible this paper often presents research from the writings of Ellen White. While Seventh-day Adventists base their beliefs on the authority of scripture, the writings and counsels of Ellen White are sought to help apply biblical principles to modern times. Since Ellen White is believed by Adventists to have possessed the gift of prophecy these writings are an important part of research relating to the practice of the church and its members.

The Purpose

The Wisconsin Conference desires to develop a model that makes church planting a priority within its territory. This model would provide a structure of support enabling church planting to thrive even when resources are challenged.

The Method

The process followed was first to do a study of church planting in the Bible and the writings of Ellen White. Then a survey of pertinent literature followed. Five conferences which emphasize church planting were examined for best practices. Four other denominational organizations were also studied. A new model was presented along with an implementation and evaluation plan.

Conclusions

Adventist organizations who make church planting a priority usually find a way to give it support. On-going study needs to take place to discover best practices to support church planting in Adventist organizations. The Wisconsin Conference will possess a new spirit of mission when they embark in entering new frontiers for God.

Andrews University
Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary

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IN THE WISCONSIN CONFERENCE OF
SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTISTS

A Dissertation
Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Degree
Doctor of Ministry

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES	vi
Chapter	
1. INTRODUCTION	1
Purpose of the Project.....	5
Justification for the Project.....	5
Limitations of the Project	7
Methodology of the Project	7
2. THEOLOGY OF EMPOWERMENT FOR CHURCH PLANTING	10
Theological Foundations for Church Planting in the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy.....	10
Nature of the church.....	10
The Practice and Teachings of Jesus	13
The Practice of the Apostle Paul	20
Antioch in Acts 11 as a Model for Support in Church Planting.....	23
Innovation Brings Growth.....	24
Headquarter Support Results in Stabilization and Growth	26
Recruiting Leads to Multiplication	28
Training inspires empowerment.....	29
Concepts that Enhance Church Planting	30
Organism vs. Hierarchical organization.....	30
Incarnational vs. Institutional.....	32
Community vs. Independent	33
Coaching and Empowerment–Servant Model.....	34
The Blackaby Concept	36
Summary and Conclusion.....	36
3. LITERATURE REVIEW	39
Develop a Missional Culture to Inspire New Work	39
Literature Relating to Multiplication and Reproduction	43
Public Evangelism and Church Planting	46
Small Groups and Multiplication	48
Home Churches and Cell Churches Associated with Multiplication	51

Rural and Urban Considerations in Church Planting	53
Rural Considerations	53
Urban Considerations	55
Organization and Support to Empower Church Planting	56
Flexibility	57
Role of the Pastor	58
Finances	60
Change	62
Summary and Conclusion.....	63
4. SURVEY OF CHURCH PLANTING BEST PRACTISES.....	65
Wisconsin Church Planting Emphasis in the 1980s	65
The Results of the Church Planting Emphasis in the 1980s.....	68
Observations on Why the Church Planting Emphasis Ceased in the 1980s...	69
Survey of Adventist Conferences	70
Survey Results	71
A Study of other Denominational Organizations Regarding Church Planting.....	80
Church of the Nazarene	80
United Methodist Church	82
International Pentecostal Holiness Church IPHC.....	83
Presbyterian Church	84
Summary and Conclusion.....	85
5. A NEW MODEL FOR CHURCH PLANTING IN WISCONSIN	88
Developing a Church Planting Vision and Culture	88
Developing a Vision	89
Establishing a Church Planting Culture	91
Establishing Strategies for Church Planting in Wisconsin	92
Mission Teams and Territories	93
Parent Church Network (PCN).....	94
Leadership Assessment and Training	96
New Church Incubator	97
Application and Committee Process	98
Church Planter Recruitment	98
Rallies and SEEDS	99
Providing Support for the New Church Planting Emphasis	100
Coaching.....	101
Finance	103
Additional Resources.....	105
Leadership	106
Implementation and Evaluation of the New Model.....	107
Summary and Conclusion.....	109
6. SUMMARY.....	110

Appendix

A. MISSION STATEMENT OF THE WISCONSIN CONFERENCE.....	112
B. A CHURCH PLANTING SURVEY.....	114
C. METHODS OF CHURCH PLANTING.....	117
D. CHURCH PLANTING APPLICATION FORM.....	119
Bibliography	121
Vita	131

LIST OF TABLES

1. Growth of Church Plants in Relation to the Number of Churches	71
2. Conference Priority of Church Planting	73
3. Type of Plant and Rate of Growth	74
4. Church Planters and Conference Financial Support	75
5. Application Process and Approval Process of Planters	76
6. Type of Coaching Support	77
7. Other Forms of Support	78
8. Diversity of Style and Philosophy	79
9. Other Factors Not Highlighted in the Survey	80

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Seventh-day Adventist eschatology emphasizes that before Christ comes there will be an outpouring of the Holy Spirit in the Adventist Church similar to that of the early Christian church.² Since the evangelistic thrust to reach the world by the early church included a strong emphasis in starting new churches, there should be an expectation that a similar result will happen before Christ's return. With that expectation the church should be praying, planning and preparing for this renewed emphasis.

Before the world wide flood, Noah preached for one hundred and twenty years that a flood was coming. His credibility was enhanced through building a large ship to save people who would respond to his message. In a similar vein, if Adventists believe that there is going to be a huge harvest of people before Jesus comes and should prepare for this by adding new churches and revitalizing current churches to receive new people, its teachings will be more credible.

In their early history Adventists were passionate about starting new churches.³ In accessing the history of the Adventist Church in North America, Alfred McClure states, "Somewhere along the way we in North America lost the vision of church planting. We became content to keep the lights shining in existing churches, and we stopped lighting

²This is illustrated by the statement in the preface of the book, Ellen G White, *Acts of the Apostles* (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press, 1911), vi, which says "The work of the gospel is not to close with a lesser display of the Holy Spirit's power than marked its beginning."

³See the discussion on this topic in the chapter "The Rebirth of a Church Planting Movement: Early Adventism." Russell Burrill, *Rekindling a Lost Passion: Recreating a Church Planting Movement* (Fallbrook, CA: Hart Research Center, 1999), 47-81.

lights on new hills."⁴ McClure continued by saying, "But recent evidence shows that we are turning around—from being a division that was losing churches to a division planting churches at a rate of ten every month!"⁵

McClure's enthusiasm was based largely on a new resource and strategy in the North American Division to inspire church planting—SEEDS.⁶ No one strategy can be singled out as a reason for renewal, since this is the work of the Holy Spirit. Yet, SEEDS is an effective program for church planting renewal.

Seventh-day Adventists are not alone in seeing the need for planting new churches. Church growth specialist, Lyle Schaller writes, "An average of fifty to sixty congregations in American Protestantism choose to dissolve every week compared to perhaps five to ten that are able and willing to redefine their role."⁷ In commenting on the above statement along with others, Malphurs sees a more positive picture for the future. He states, "As a church planter, I predict that in the next twenty to thirty years North America will become the incubator for numerous churches all across the American landscape and ultimately the world."⁸ There is evidence that Malphur's dream is being fulfilled.⁹

⁴Ibid., v.

⁵Ibid., vi.

⁶SEEDS began in 1996 as a church-planting convention. It is a part of the strategy for evangelism developed by the North American Division Evangelism Institute within the Seventh-day Adventist church.

⁷Aubrey Malphurs, *Pouring New Wine into Old Wineskins: How to Change a Church without Destroying It* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 1993), 13.

⁸Ibid.

Ellen White, whose writings helped inspire the Adventist Church to become a mission driven movement, believed that churches need to be established in all people groups and in all regions of the world.¹⁰ She also strongly believed in having public evangelistic meetings as a way of helping people become acquainted with the message of Christ.¹¹ The church in its history has developed better practices and strategies for public evangelism than starting new churches. When the word evangelism is heard it generally refers to public meetings.¹² There needs to be a renewed emphasis to expand the work in new areas and people groups, along with public evangelism. Jesus encouraged an expansion mindset in the great commission and His final challenge to His disciples in the book of Acts.¹³

The work of Adventists in Wisconsin began similar to the work of the early Adventist church. In the first thirty years, 54 churches were started.¹⁴ If the work in the

⁹David Olson in his extensive research indicates that from 2000 to 2005 an estimated 4000 new churches were started in America each year. This is an increase over the 1990s, when the annual average was 3,600 new churches. See David T. Olson, *The American Church in Crisis* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2008), 145.

¹⁰See Ellen G. White, *Testimonies for the Church* (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press, 1948), 6: 24.

¹¹See her discussion on the public effort in Ellen white, *Evangelism* (Washington, DC: Review and Herald, 1946), 119-167.

¹²An example of this is the Wisconsin Conference where about \$200,000 annually is spent on public evangelistic meetings and less than \$20,000 on church planting. Yet the \$20,000 and some additional trust money of \$50,000 on a one time basis is more than has historically been given to church planting. Public evangelism is deserving of a strong priority but should be accompanied with a church planting emphasis.

¹³The great commission in Matthew 28: 18-20 says "make disciples of all nations," NKJV. In Acts 1:8 Christ says, "You shall be witnesses of me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth." Jesus showed here a concern for expanding to new areas and people groups in order to fulfill His mission of taking the gospel to the world.

¹⁴Based on the information found in *SDA Bible Encyclopedia* (1966), s.v. "Wisconsin Conference."

conference had continued at that rate today there would be 270 churches instead of 69 at the time of this writing. It is understandable that as work develops attention must be given to stabilizing the new work. So churches would not necessarily be planted at the same rate. However, it should also be kept in mind that as the work progresses there are more people and churches to fulfill the mission. This should somewhat offset the time and resources spent on solidifying the new work.

Church planting is only effective when mission-driven churches are established. Murray says, "Church planting cannot be equated with participation in *missio Dei* (the mission of God) unless these churches are communicating good news to the wider community and incarnating the good news that they are proclaiming."¹⁵

One great benefit of church planting is that it keeps the church prioritized on mission. When church planting is emphasized as a priority it is hard to have just an institutional and internal mindset. Murray states, "Church planting reminds ecclesiologists that mission is the primary task of the church. It is possible for local church leaders, denominational representatives, and ecclesiastical commissions to concentrate on other aspects of church life, . . . but to fail to relate these to the calling of the church to be a missionary community."¹⁶

¹⁵Stuart Murray, *Church Planting: Laying Foundations* (Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, 2001), 45. Explanation in parenthesis added.

¹⁶Ibid., 54.

Purpose of the Project¹⁷

The first purpose of this project is to develop a new model of church planting for the Wisconsin Conference. This model would provide a strategy that includes a renewed vision for church planting and an attempt, through the power of God, to instill church planting as a part of the culture of the conference. An important part in achieving this new model will be training leaders to make the church planting emphasis a success.

Secondly, through study and research in the Bible and the writings of Ellen White along with other publications, new convictions on church planting's importance will be sought. The surveying of five Adventist conferences along with four religious organizations other than Adventists will seek to reveal practices that are most effective in helping Wisconsin develop into a sustaining church planting movement.¹⁸

Justification for the Project

In stating their priorities the Wisconsin Conference has this statement regarding evangelism: "Reaching all people for Christ. Special emphasis on population centers and young adults."¹⁹ Church planting is an essential emphasis to reach this objective. Peter Wagner has provided one of the most frequently quoted statements in regard to church planting and evangelism, "The single most effective evangelistic methodology under heaven is planting new churches."²⁰ With this in mind, helping the conference to develop

¹⁷"The Project" will be used throughout the rest of this chapter to refer to the new model for church planting in the Wisconsin Conference that this paper is describing.

¹⁸The term church planting movement refers to an organization's structure, support and strategy for church planting that enables it to multiply churches throughout its territory.

¹⁹See Appendix A

a model that will keep church planting a priority and a structure that will provide support and empowerment for church planting is seen as an important reason for the project.

During the 1980s, an attempt was made to make church planting a priority in the Wisconsin Conference. This attempt lasted for less than two years. This attempt will be explored in more detail in this paper. The research and materials used in presenting the emphasis to the conference was well conceived. Existing factors at the time of presentation militated against their acceptance and implementation. This experience from the 1980s has served as a discouragement to church planting in the conference. “If it failed once, will it not fail again?” was the question of some members. Revisiting the importance of church planting and helping leaders to understand what happened in the 1980s will help overcome this barrier to a church planting emphasis.

The practice of the church has not matched its theology regarding church planting. The Adventist Church in North America is better known for its emphasis on public evangelism, Christian education, health outreach and stewardship than it is for church planting. Successful practices are not developed quickly. Experiences of various conferences involved in church planting must be studied so that learning can take place in how church planting thrives best in Adventist organizations. A lot of literature exists in church planting from other religious organizations, but many of these are congregational in their ecclesiology and are limited in their helpfulness as models to study for an Adventist application. Denominational organizations with a similar structure to Adventism are more helpful. These will be primarily used in this paper. So, while this project is primarily to benefit the Wisconsin Conference, it may contribute to the

²⁰C. Peter Wagner, *Church Planting for a Greater Harvest* (Ventura, CA: Regal, 1990), 11.

Adventist Church in North America in developing effective conference models for church planting.

Limitations of the Project

The new model being sought is designed primarily for the Wisconsin Conference. It is not laying down strategies to be followed by other conferences, unless they wish to learn from the Wisconsin experience. The study and surveys used in this paper are confined to five Adventist conferences and four other religious organizations that are not Adventist.

Methodology of the Project

The process followed in this project was first to do a theological study of church planting in the Bible and the writings of Ellen White. This beginning point is based on the belief that the practices of the church should always follow its theology. While Jesus was not known to be a church planter as was the apostle Paul, His teachings and theology were the inspiration behind the movement which followed. The Antioch experience is highlighted because it became a sending church which resulted in the great missionary journeys of Paul and Barnabas which revolutionized the Christian church. It is a powerful example for today.

Secondly, an examination was made of church planting and other church growth and leadership literature that would be relevant to the project. There is a lot of literature available on the practical issues of how to build and develop a church plant. This project concentrated its focus on literature relating to how organizations can best support church planting. Much of the literature studied is from authors who are not Seventh-day

Adventists. This was due to a lack of literature from Adventist authors. Russell Burrill's material is very helpful and a few other authors have provided useful articles, but this was a small percentage of the literature reviewed. The web provided a rich resource as the web-sites of churches could be viewed not only for the content of their articles but the profile given to church planting.

Thirdly, the survey of religious organizations provided the information needed to study best practices of church planting in Adventist and other organizations. The survey document was sent to five Adventist conferences. The experiences of these conferences in terms of voted priority for church planting, organizational support in finance and coaching, growth and leadership were studied. The results of these studies appear in tables in this paper. Other religious organizations were studied from the web. The information sought related to their vision, strategy and support for church planting. While some of the statistical data was not available, the insights gained through this part of the research were invaluable to the project.

During the development of this project prior to the writing of the paper, leadership resources were made available to the ministry of the Wisconsin Conference to enhance church planting. These included: a church planting coordinator; a church planting committee which developed policies for the organization and support of church planting; coaching training for pastors and lay leaders which is a helpful resource for church planting support; a lay pastor training program which has provided training for several lay church planters; a church planting fund which started with a one time contribution of \$50,000 and then receives 1/3 per cent of all tithe in the conference (this fund provides support for some stipend church planters and other types of church planting help);

constituency goals in church planting which provide quantitative objectives as well as inspiration for the development of work among different cultures (the development of the Hmong work is an example); rallies and seminars which provide ongoing education in church planting; pastoral coaching of church planters; and presentations to pastors and governing bodies. All of these, plus other contributions, helped to establish about 20 new church plants.

This paper includes strategies designed to take church planting in Wisconsin to another level. While the ministries highlighted above have been helpful, there are other important factors that need to be added to the conference to make it a sustained church planting movement. The recognition of the need of these new additions has been a result of the study of other organizations. These will be highlighted in the chapter entitled “A New Model for Church Planting in Wisconsin.”

It would not be proper to end the discussion on the methodology without highlighting the spiritual direction that will be sought to achieve success. Ongoing study in the Bible and the writings of Ellen White will be encouraged to be certain that God's will is followed. Much prayer at the times of study and implementation will permeate the strategic plan. Keeping in touch with church leaders at other levels of the church will enable the Conference to work in harmony with the church at large and be affected by their counsel.

CHAPTER 2

THEOLOGY OF EMPOWERMENT FOR CHURCH PLANTING

Church planting is vital in fulfilling the mission of God in the world.¹ Three important issues to help it succeed will be discussed in this chapter: (1) "Theological Foundations For Church Planting in the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy" will provide a mandate to prioritize church planting in the mission of the church, (2) "Antioch in Acts 11 as a Model for the Support of Church Planting" will give a Biblical model of how church planting was supported by the Jerusalem church, and (3) "Concepts that Enhance Church Planting" will explore other practices that enhance and empower church planting.

Theological Foundations for Church Planting in the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy

The Nature of the Church

Attitudes toward church planting can be influenced by a person's understanding of the nature of the church. One understanding is that the church is primarily for the needs and interests of the church itself and not so much for the world around them. In this understanding, Werning states that "the pastor and members concern themselves with questions like, 'What needs to be done in order to maintain this institution? What can we do to assure it will survive? How can we fill pews and how will bills be paid?' Intimacy

¹See the discussion of church planting and its relationship to "Missio Dei" (The mission of God) in Stuart Murray, *Church Planting: Laying Foundations*, 39-42.

is rare.”² With this understanding, there is seldom concern about planting more churches due to the preoccupation with maintaining the organization.

A contrasting understanding of the church is that it exists for mission. The church does not exist for itself but to fulfill the mission of God in the world. Miller states: “Mission is not a special function of a part of the church. It is the whole church in action. It is the body of Christ expressing Christ’s concern for the whole world. It is God’s people seeking to make all men members of the people of God. Mission is the function for which the church exists.”³ With this understanding church planting generally thrives because is a vital part of fulfilling the mission of God.⁴

The primary purpose of the church is to fulfill the commission of Christ: “Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age” (Matt 28:19-20).⁵

Planting new churches is a challenging work because it often involves working with new communities and people groups. People who commit themselves to plant new churches need to know that it is important to Christ. The gospel commission makes it clear that Jesus wants us to “go” and have the concern of all people on our heart. He says, “make disciples of all the nations.” (Matt 28:19).

²W.J. Werning, *The Seed Planting Church: Nurturing Churches to Health* (St. Charles, IL: Church Smart Resources, 2003), 29.

³D.G. Miller, *The Nature and Mission of the Church* (Richmond, VA: C.D.Deans, 1957), 69.

⁴C. Peter Wagner, *Church Planting for a Greater Harvest* (Ventura, CA: Regal Books, 1990), 11.

⁵Unless otherwise indicated the New King James Version will be used throughout the paper.

Jesus also makes clear that Christian workers need not be intimidated as they go forward to fulfill Christ's will. He states, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth." (Matt 28:18). Concerning the word authority, one commentary indicates that when Jesus was on earth He voluntarily limited His authority, but when He went back to heaven, He assumed the authority that He had before coming to this earth "to assume the limitations of humanity."⁶

Ellen White commenting on the gospel commission states

The great commission given to the disciples is given also to us. Today, as then, a crucified and risen Savior is to be uplifted before those who are without God and without hope in the world. The Lord calls for pastors, teachers, and evangelists. From door to door His servants are to proclaim the message of salvation. . . . The world needs to see in Christians an evidence of the power of Christianity. Not merely in a few places, but throughout the world, messages of mercy are needed.⁷

Ellen White states that planting churches is a prime way that this ever-widening influence of the gospel is to be achieved: "The vineyard includes the whole world, and every part of it is to be worked. . . . New churches must be established, new congregations organized. At this time there should be representatives of present truth in every city and in the remote parts of the earth. The whole earth is to be illuminated with the glory of God's truth."⁸

The Practice and Teachings of Jesus

The church is often portrayed in scripture as the body of Christ in the world to carry out His mission (See 1 Cor 12:12-31). Christ in His practice and teachings was

⁶"Matthew," *SDA Bible Commentary*, ed. F. D. Nichol (Washington, DC: Review and Herald Pub. Assn., 1953-57), 5:557.

⁷Ellen G. White, *Gospel Workers* (Takoma Park, DC: General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, 1947), 23.

⁸Ellen G. White, *Testimonies for the Church*, 6: 24.

continually involved in ministering to people to win them for His kingdom. The gospels portray His ministry in a three-fold dimension of preaching, teaching and healing. “Then Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every sickness and every disease among the people” (Matt 9:35). It is evident that Christ performed this ministry with the harvest in mind for a few verses later from the above quotation Christ states, “The harvest truly is plentiful, but the laborers are few. Therefore pray the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into His harvest” (Matt 9:37-38).

The harvest here is different from the harvest referred to in Matt 13, where the harvest is the end of the world and the reapers are the angels (See vv. 38-43). In Matt 9 the harvest is a present harvest and the laborers are men and women. Christ is calling His people to help other people to hear about Jesus. Jesus has a radical perspective on this harvest because He often sees the potential to win people for His kingdom when others do not. He thus can say the harvest is great even though it may not be obvious.⁹ This is a very motivational text for pioneer church planters because of the strong appeal of Jesus to enter the harvest field and work for souls for His kingdom.¹⁰

Jesus does not refer directly to church planting. He does present in His teaching inspiration for church planting to thrive. He teaches that His followers are to expand His kingdom. He often uses object lessons from nature to illustrate the kingdom growth. He says that the kingdom of God is like mustard seed “which indeed is the least of all the

⁹Derek Morris, *The Radical Prayer*. DVD (Tucson, AZ: 2007).

¹⁰According to Murray “Pioneer Planting refers to the practice of establishing churches in areas previously unreached by the gospel, but now being evangelized and discipled.” Murray, 88.

seeds; but when it is grown it is greater than the herbs and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and nest in its branches” (Matt 13:32). Ellen White comments “the mustard seed was to grow and spread forth its branches throughout the world. When the earthly kingdoms whose glory then filled the hearts of men should perish, the kingdom of Christ would remain a mighty and far-reaching power.”¹¹

Christ also used the parable of the sower and the seed to illustrate that we are to go forth to share the gospel with people who are receptive and those more difficult to reach. He states that the sower went out and scattered seed by the wayside, in stony places, among thorns and on good ground (See Matt 13:1-9). Ellen White in referring to the sower going forth to sow states “those who are called to unite with Christ must leave all, in order to follow Him. . . . In toil and tears, in solitude, and through sacrifice, must the seed be sown.”¹² White also states, in referring to the various types of soil where the seed is scattered, that the scattering should not be done haphazardly. Rather, “there is need of personal labor for the souls of the lost. . . . Their hearts may be as hard as the beaten highway, and apparently it may be a useless effort to present the Savior to them; but while logic may fail to move and argument be powerless to convince, the love of Christ, revealed in personal ministry, may soften the stony heart, so that the seed of truth can take root.”¹³

¹¹ Ellen White, *Christ's Object Lessons* (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald Publishing, 1941), 78.

¹²Ibid., 37.

¹³Ibid., 57.

Jesus' Use of Nature

Church planting and church growth specialists have gained much inspiration from Christ's teachings using illustrations from nature. The term church planting itself has an agricultural motif. The principles used in Natural Church Development have been a source of strength to church planters.¹⁴ Many of these principles use the study of nature and teachings of Christ.¹⁵ Werning states that God's church must be a seed-planting church, and he also uses principles and teachings from Jesus and Paul to undergird his emphasis in ministry. He contrasts a seed-planting church with a traditional harvest church. He states

God intended to build seed-planting, nurturing, mission churches, not institutional, organizational, maintenance, harvesting churches. This in no way belittles or is negative about "harvest theology" or "harvest evangelism," for the problem lies with a "harvest practice or strategy" which embodies and depends upon maintenance and technocratic strategies without seed-planting and nurturing as its basic focus.¹⁶

The Gospel Model or the Pauline Model

As previously stated, Jesus had a three fold emphasis in His ministry: preaching, teaching and healing. There are some church planters who feel that the gospels rather than Acts should be the guide for church planting.¹⁷ In the gospels there are no real specifics about the how of church planting but values are shared that are important issues of the kingdom of God and influence church planting.

¹⁴This study and strategy has been developed by Christian Schwarz. He has studied over twenty two thousand churches and found certain qualities that are common to healthy growing churches. He also includes biotic principles found in nature. Christian Schwarz, *Natural Church Development: A Guide to Eight Essential Qualities of Healthy churches* (Carol Stream, IL: Church Smart Resources, 1996).

¹⁵In particular the six biotic principles referred to in Schwarz's work.

¹⁶Werning, 15.

¹⁷Murray, 79.

Murray states,

Jesus' teaching about wealth, violence, and power are also of fundamental importance in church planting. Changing terminology, structures, and styles of worship are of far less significance than creating communities where new patterns of economic sharing, peacemaking, and servant leadership are developing, communities that are rooted in the teachings of Jesus and contextualized into diverse social contexts.¹⁸

Hesselgrave feels that it is Paul's example and practice that should be normative for church planters. Paul leads out in spreading the gospel and planting churches. He believes a social gospel emphasis is not warranted.

The biblical record leaves no room for thinking that either Paul or the members of his team were basically engaged in raising living standards, ameliorating social conditions, imparting secular knowledge, ministering to medical needs, or dispensing aid from previously established churches. There can be little doubt that allegiance to Christ on the part of converts in the churches entailed these effects as by-products of faith even to the sending of needed aid back to the Jerusalem church (a kind of reverse flow). That the missionaries were concerned about social relationships, and about minds and bodies as well as souls, is patently true. But Paul's primary mission was accomplished when the gospel was preached, people were converted, and churches were established. Obedience to the Great Commandment to love one's neighbor was part of the commission to teach all things Christ commanded.¹⁹

Hesselgrave has a convincing point when he indicates that Paul's primary mission was evangelizing and planting churches. Perhaps though, he has gone too far by stating that compassionate ministries are "by products." It appears that he has a burden to correct an emphasis of some who emphasize compassionate ministries and minimize evangelism and church planting. He states, "Whenever it is possible to proclaim the gospel and form churches, only those organizations that support evangelism and church planting in a significant way should be thought of as

¹⁸Ibid, 85.

¹⁹David J. Hesselgrave, *Planting Churches Cross-Culturally: North America and Beyond* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2000), 24.

missions. If they do not engage in or support evangelism and church planting, they are not only para-church, they are para-mission."²⁰

It would seem the gospels could help here by placing preaching, teaching and healing on an equal basis. All work together in mission. Any one divorced from the other could be “para-mission” but together are a legitimate part of the mission of the church.

Jesus' Counsel Regarding Use of Resources

In the parable of the talents Christ emphasizes that His “well done” exclamation at the end of time will be to those who use His gifts wisely for the advancement of His purposes (Matt 25:21).

Christ gives His people the privilege of working with Him for the salvation of souls. Their talents, gifts and resources are to be used wisely so as to advance His kingdom. They are not to be squandered on self. White comments, “The Lord designs that the means entrusted to us shall be used in building up His kingdom. His goods are entrusted to His stewards that they may be carefully traded upon, and bring back a revenue to Him in the saving of souls.”²¹

The above counsel should also be applied to organizations. Christ wants the resources entrusted to His people to be maximized for the benefit of expanding His kingdom. He does not want organizations to have showy structures, buildings and programs with very little productivity in souls added to His kingdom. Christ one day

²⁰Ibid., 26.

²¹Ellen White, *Counsels on Stewardship* (Takoma Park, MD: Review and Herald Publishing, 1941), 35.

put a curse on a fig tree that had leaves but no fruit (Matt 21:18-20). Folkenberg comments regarding this story, “The Lord did not condemn the tree’s foliage, but rather its fruitlessness—it’s lack of mission. Should we not evaluate the foliage-to-fruit (structure-to-mission) ratio in our own lives and in the church?”²²

Jesus gave His endorsement to the principle of tithing when He said to the religious leaders, “For you pay tithe of mint and anise and cummin, and have neglected the weightier matters of the law: justice and mercy and faith. These you ought to have done, without leaving the others undone” (Matt 23:23). Paul states in reference to Christ today, “Here mortal men receive tithes, but there He receives them, of whom it is witnessed that He lives” (Heb 7:8). It is clear in these references that the Lord wants us to prioritize our resources for the expansion of His work.

The tithe is also to be prioritized organizationally for the work of the support of the gospel ministry. It is not always easy to find the funds to support new work for the needs of existing structures are very demanding. Yet Ellen White has this counsel,

let the work no longer be hedged up because the tithe has been diverted into various channels other than the one to which the Lord has said it should go. Provision is to be made for these other lines of work. They are to be sustained, but not from the tithe. God has not changed; the tithe is still to be used for the support of the ministry.²³

Would the Adventist church be able to have a more aggressive work in church planting if this formula for the use of tithe was more carefully followed?

²²R.S.Folkenberg, “Church Structure: Servant or Master,” *Ministry*, June 1989, 4.

²³ White, *Counsels on Stewardship*, 102-103.

Jesus' Teaching Regarding Change

Church planting needs a positive atmosphere and attitude regarding change in order to flourish. Jesus laid the foundation for the dynamic growth of the church with His challenge to have new vision and new structures to contain the new vision. A key text demonstrating His attitude toward positive change is, “Nor do they put new wine into old wineskins, or else the wineskins break, the wine is spilled, and the wineskins are ruined. But they put new wine into new wineskins, and both are preserved” (Matt. 9:17).

It is important today in North America that the words of Christ concerning change are heeded concerning the multiplication of churches. In his landmark work on the state of the American church David Olson reports that only 17.3% of the population in the United States attends a Christian church on the weekend.²⁴ This is much lower than previously reported statistics that were about 50%.²⁵

The number of churches in relationship to population growth is also declining.²⁶ Since church planting is the most effective evangelistic tool then a change toward multiplying churches is needed for this time.²⁷ Having more churches is not only helpful geographically but meets the needs of people in regards to

²⁴David T. Olson, *The State of the American Church*, 2006, slide 17 slide presentation presented as a part of the American Church Research Project by Olson who is Director of Church Planting for the Evangelical Covenant church. The slide presentation is available for purchase on his website The AmericanChurch.org. Date accessed May 2, 2008.

²⁵Ibid.

²⁶Ibid., slide 96.

²⁷C. Peter Wagner, *Church Planting for a Greater Harvest* (Ventura, CA: Regal, 1990), 11.

diversity in culture, language and styles of ministry and worship. More churches could then be an important factor in reversing the trend of decline in relationship to churches and population.

Jesus' emphasis on change is important to the church at this time. It is easy to become so focused on maintaining what we have that we don't adequately provide for new vision and growth. Jesus said that new wineskins (structures) need to be provided for the new wine (vision) so that the work can be vibrant and productive.

The Practice of the Apostle Paul

The book of Acts records how Paul began churches in many places. For his first missionary journey he and Barnabas were ordained as the first Christian missionaries (Acts 13:1-3). During their travel to various places in Asia Minor, they won new converts to Christ and the book of Acts tells the story of some of these new converts such as the proconsul Sergius Paulus on the island of Cyprus (Acts 13:4-12).

Paul knew that these new converts needed stabilizing and the benefit of communities where their faith could be strengthened. Ellen White states that, “as an important factor in the spiritual growth of the new converts the apostles were careful to surround them with the safeguards of gospel order. Churches were duly organized in all places in Lycaonia and Pisidia where there were believers. Officers were appointed in each church, and proper order and system were established for the conduct of all the affairs pertaining to the spiritual welfare of the believers.”²⁸

²⁸Ellen G. White, *Acts of the Apostles*, (Mountain View, CA:, 1911), 185.

Ellen White further explains that organizing and planting churches was God's plan. "This was in harmony with the gospel plan of uniting in one body all believers in Christ, and this plan Paul was careful to follow throughout his ministry. Those who in any place were by his labor led to accept Christ as the Savior were at the proper time organized into a church. Even when the believers were but few in number, this was done."²⁹

Hesselgrave has developed what he labels, "Paul's master plan of evangelism."³⁰ In outline form this is the plan.

1. Missionaries Commissioned--Acts 13:1-4; 15:39-40
2. Audience Contacted-- Acts 13:14-16; 14:1; 16:13-15
3. Gospel Communicated--Acts 13:17-41; 16:31
4. Hearers Converted-- Acts 13:48; 16:14-15
5. Believers Congregated--Acts 13:43
6. Faith Confirmed-- Acts 14:21-22; 15:41
7. Leadership Consecrated-- Acts 14:23
8. Believers Commended-- Acts 14:23; 16:40
9. Relationships Continued-- Acts 15:36; 18:23
10. Sending Churches Convened-- Acts 14:26-27; 15:1-4.³¹

Neil Cole has discovered in his analysis of Paul's church planting experience and ministry that there was a progression and development in his practice that made him more effective. His analysis is as follows: During his first missionary journey they won converts, established churches and then moved on to other places. They would go back at a later time "with apostolic authority and appoint those who were indeed elders of each church."³²

²⁹ Ibid., 186-187.

³⁰Hesselgrave, 47.

³¹Ibid., 47-48.

In the second missionary journey Paul learned the strategy of developing disciples in one place and sending them out as church planters, thus multiplying his effectiveness. Cole states: “Paul found that the gospel’s influence could spread twice as far and twice as fast when he focused his energies on reproducing his leadership.”³³

Cole states about Paul’s third missionary journey,

Having learned this valuable lesson, Paul, on this next journey, invested himself completely to the task of mentoring and multiplying leaders from the harvest who could be deployed into the harvest. With this trip, only a one-man team was needed—Paul the multiplying mentor. Paul implemented a regional church planting saturation strategy from Ephesus for three years and in that time reached all of Asia with multiplication (Acts 19:8-10; 20:31).³⁴

Antioch in Acts 11 as a Model for Support in Church Planting

Jerusalem was the setting for the crucifixion, death, burial and resurrection of Jesus. It also became the location for the first group of believers following the ascension of Jesus. Bruce states, “The first five chapters of Acts present us with a series of pictures of the primitive Jerusalem community of believers in Jesus”³⁵

The early chapters of Acts also portray conflicts and persecution as the early Christians sought to share their faith. This came to a crisis point when Stephen, one of the seven deacons, was stoned to death for his defense of Christianity. White describes it this way, “After the death of Stephen there arose against the believers in Jerusalem a

³²Neil Cole, “A Fresh Perspective of Paul’s Missionary Strategies: The Mentoring for Multiplication Model,” 1998, <http://www.coachnet.org/drupalfiles/images/articles/paulstrategy.pdf> (2 July 2008), 1.

³³ Ibid., 3.

³⁴ Ibid., 6.

³⁵F.F.Bruce, *Commentary on the Book of the Acts*, The New International Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1968), 28.

persecution so relentless that they were all scattered abroad throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria.”³⁶

The early Christian believers traveled as far as Antioch in Syria, which at this time was the third largest city in the world behind Rome and Alexandria.³⁷ Because of its significance it would be an important center for Christians to penetrate in spreading the gospel and establishing a Christian presence. Several important lessons are learned from the beginnings of the church here that are elaborated under the headings below.

Innovation Brings Growth

The Bible indicates that as the early Christians spread out from Jerusalem and shared the gospel in other places, they were “preaching the word to no one but the Jews only” (Acts 11:19).

However, at Antioch some of the believers desired to reach out to another people group, they “spoke to the Hellenists, preaching the Lord Jesus. And the hand of the Lord was with them, and a great number believed and turned to the Lord” (Acts 11:20-21).

Antioch became the setting for the first breakthrough for the early Christians in terms of establishing the church in a largely Gentile context. The church that was planted here later became the base for the missionary work of the Apostle Paul.³⁸

It is significant that some of the group of early Christians who went to Antioch were bold enough to depart from the usual custom of preaching only to the Jews. In doing this they highlight an important practice for church planting, which is innovation.

³⁶White, *Acts of the Apostles*, 103.

³⁷Bruce, 238.

³⁸*SDA Bible Dictionary*, (1960), s.v. “Antioch.”

Reaching out to new locations and people groups requires adaptability, innovation and creative thought. The Apostle Paul believed in these practices, “For though I am free from all men, I have made myself a servant to all, that I might win the more; and to the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might win Jews; to those who are under the law, as under the law, that I might win those who are under the law” (1 Cor 9:19-20).

Successful church planters today also highlight the practice of innovation. The practice of innovation leads to the study of the culture of the area of a prospective church plant and makes adaptations that would make the outreach to that community more successful. Malphurs comments,

As our world changes, the evangelical church must change as it attempts to communicate the message of Jesus Christ. The cultural leap from the unchurched community to most American churches is too vast. Consequently, our planted churches must be culturally relevant if they’re to reach this and future unchurched generations for the Savior. They must be relevant when they begin, and they must remain relevant.³⁹

The Christians who first evangelized Antioch were courageous and creative. Antioch was a very immoral city and possessed a religion very different from Christian principles and values. Bruce states, “The city was proverbial for its lax sexual morals; this reputation was mainly due to the cult of Artemis and Apollo at Daphne, five miles distant, where the ancient Syrian worship of Astarte, with its ritual prostitution, was carried on under Greek nomenclature.”⁴⁰

³⁹Aubrey Malphurs, *Planting Growing Churches for the 21st Century* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 1998), 165.

⁴⁰Bruce, 238.

Eddie Gibbs believes the church today must be as courageous and creative as the early Christians in Antioch if we are to impact the current culture for God. He states,

there is an urgent need to engage in *critical contextualization* through ongoing dialogue with popular culture, which will bring questions, old and new, to the Scriptures. Such engagement will enable us to read the Bible in a new light as we seek insights in response to the challenges of ministry and mission in postmodern context. . . . They (pastors) are challenged not just to be able to think clearly but to have the nerve and faith to act decisively in navigating through stormy and uncharted waters.⁴¹

Headquarter Support Results in Stabilization and Growth

The responsiveness of the leaders in Jerusalem contributed greatly to the success of the Antioch outreach. The scripture records “Then news of these things came to the ears of the church in Jerusalem, and they sent out Barnabas to go as far as Antioch” (Acts 11:22).

Having a church structure that provides overseeing and support to new churches as well as established churches is a great benefit as long as the headquarters is responsive to the needs of the organizations they serve. It is felt by some authors that the Jerusalem church initially was focused on orthodoxy and only through persecution and the resulting opportunity for evangelism did the leaders of the church become mission focused. “The apostles, by contrast, seem to have gotten bogged down in Jerusalem and to have taken on maintenance roles rather than acting as mission leaders.”⁴²

⁴¹Eddie Gibbs, *Church Next: Quantum Changes in How We Do Ministry* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2000), 31-32. Brackets are supplied.

As the work spread to areas such as Antioch, the Jerusalem church became an important source for encouragement, coaching and guidance. Regarding Paul's seeking guidance from the leaders in Jerusalem, Ellen White writes,

Notwithstanding the fact that Paul was personally taught by God, he had no strained ideas of individual responsibility. While looking to God for direct guidance, he was ever ready to recognize the authority vested in the body of believers united in church fellowship. He felt the need of counsel, and when matters of importance arose, he was glad to lay these before the church and to unite with his brethren in seeking God for wisdom to make right decisions.⁴³

Church planters today often testify of the importance of responsiveness and help provided by mission-minded church headquarters. A church planter writes,

my denomination (Foursquare) works very hard to support church planters. It provides a great financial package along with a basic education program for each new church. This is always a welcome enhancement to the work that we do from a local parenting church. Without the denominational funds we would find it impossible to plant as many churches as we do.⁴⁴

The Jerusalem church became an important resource for a growing and expanding church but was not hierarchical in its structure which might stifle or detract from the development of new churches in the field. George Knight states that this must be true of church organizational structures today if an aggressive evangelistic outreach is maintained in the work of God. He states "While it is true that we need to develop strategic battle plans, it is also true that any organization can cripple itself through unlimited proliferation of management and middle

⁴² Stuart, 76.

⁴³White, *Acts of the Apostles*, 200.

⁴⁴Ralph Moore, *Starting a New Church, The Church Planters Guide to Success* (Ventura, CA: Regal Books, 2002), 56.

management. In short, too much organization could actually frustrate the mission of the church rather than facilitate it.”⁴⁵

Recruiting Leads to Multiplication

When Barnabas arrived in Antioch and saw the result of the witness of the pioneer Christians, scripture says, “he was glad, and encouraged them all that with purpose of heart they should continue with the Lord” (Acts 11:23). The selection of Barnabas by the Jerusalem church was a wise choice, for the work flourished when this spiritual man arrived. Scripture says, “for he was a good man full of the Holy Spirit and of faith. And a great many people were added to the Lord” (Acts 11:24).

Barnabas is not one of the most known personalities of the New Testament but one of the most effective leaders in knowing how to empower people. His example would be a good one for church planters to consider as they seek to provide people resources for their new work. There are several qualities of Barnabas that contributed to the progress of the work in Antioch and other areas where he worked. First, he was a spiritual man with integrity (See Acts 11:24). In church work and in the business world, one of the highest values a person can have is to be trusted. Kouzes and Posner state, “In almost every survey we’ve conducted, honesty has been selected more often than any other leadership characteristic; overall, it emerges as the single most important ingredient in the leader-constituent relationship.”⁴⁶

Second, Barnabas was an encourager, in fact, his name means “Son of

⁴⁵George Knight, *Organizing to Beat the Devil: The Development of Adventist Church Structure* (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 2001), 169.

⁴⁶James Kouzes and Barry Posner, *The Leadership Challenge* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2002), 27.

Encouragement” (Acts 4:36). Bruce states, “The exact etymology of Joseph’s additional name Barnabas is a matter of debate, but in all that we know about him he proved himself a true ‘son of encouragement’.”⁴⁷ Kouzes and Posner state that “encouragement is a form of feedback: wonderful, personal feedback. It’s positive information that tells us that we’re making progress, that we’re on the right track, that we’re living up to the standards. Giving encouragement requires us to get close to people and show that we care.”⁴⁸

Third, Barnabas was a recruiter. It was he who sought out Paul the apostle and brought him into the work of the church (Acts 11:25). Barnabas also saw possibilities in people whom others rejected.⁴⁹ Kevin Mannoia states that “recruitment is, perhaps, the most important of any district priority. As you know, leadership is the single most important factor in the success or failure of an organization.”⁵⁰

Training Inspires Empowerment

The Paul and Barnabas team in Antioch made a “dynamic duo.” Antioch became a strong church and the base for Paul’s missionary’s journeys. In order to have a strong church plant there needs to be time spent to train and develop the new

⁴⁷Bruce, 109.

⁴⁸Kouzes and Posner, 321.

⁴⁹This was the case with Barnabas’ cousin John Mark. In Acts 15:36-41 it tells the story of the contention between Paul and Barnabas over John Mark. Paul did not want John Mark to go with them and Barnabas insisted that he would go. The disagreement caused a separation of way between Paul and Barnabas. There was a positive outcome however, for two missionary teams were formed—Paul and Silas and Barnabas and John Mark.

⁵⁰Kevin Mannoia, *Church Planting, The Next Generation: Introducing the Century 21 Church Planting System* (Indianapolis, IN: Light and Life Press, 1994), 86.

members. Paul and Barnabas spent a year in Antioch “and taught a great many people” (Acts 11:26).

It is amazing that the church would be willing to send these two effective people to other areas. Scripture records that after one year in Antioch the leaders of the church after fasting and praying “laid hands on them and sent them away” (Acts 13:3).

This scripture illustrates that training members to be resourceful and competent to do the work of God helps expand the work of God in other areas. Concerning training, Russell Burrill states, “It’s time, therefore, to return to a role for pastors in harmony with Adventist heritage. That role must be mission-driven. When clergy work with existing churches, their role should be that of the trainer/equiper (Eph 4:11-12).”⁵¹

On the importance of training, Ellen White states,

In laboring where there are already some in the faith, the minister should at first seek not so much to convert unbelievers, as to train the church members for acceptable co-operation. Let him labor for them individually, endeavoring to arouse them to seek for a deeper experience themselves, and to work for others. When they are prepared to sustain the minister by their prayers and labors, greater success will attend his efforts.⁵²

Concepts that Enhance Church Planting

Organism vs. Hierarchical Organization

The term hierarchical is used in this section with a meaning of dependence on structure and institutional organization. The church must not be an institution that

⁵¹Russell Burrill, “Reprioritizing our Resources for the Harvest,” *Ministry*, October 1999, 10.

⁵²Ellen White, *Christian Service* (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald, 1947), 70.

just runs on human machinery. It is designed to be a body of believers that is indwelt by Christ through His Spirit. Ogden writes, “The church in its most fundamental essence is nothing less than *an interdependent, life-pulsating people who are indwelled by the presence of a resurrected and reigning Christ.*”⁵³

The Seventh-day Adventist Church has a structure that is effective for providing support for every part of the world work. However, there is always need to ensure that the organization is functioning with vibrancy and does not get institutional or bureaucratic. Folkenberg writes,

While we have an outstanding system of church government, even the best of organizations deserves periodic self-evaluation. Robert Michels, a German sociologist, found that over time an organization tends to be motivated less and less by its original sense of mission, and that it becomes increasingly bureaucratic. The preservation of the structure gradually overtakes mission as its predominant concern. He called this phenomenon the “iron law of oligarchy.”⁵⁴

Gibbs says,

If denominational structures are in place primarily as instruments of control, then the identity problem is probably insurmountable. But if these vertical structures can be dismantled to provide financial and personnel resources by which local churches can be effectively serviced, their diversity celebrated and a variety of models assessed, then structures can play an important role.⁵⁵

⁵³ This quote is taken from Greg Ogden, *Unfinished Business: Returning the Ministry to the People of God* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2003) and appears in an article by Sue Daley, "Equipping Ministry." available <http://cmsadmin.bearcreekweb.com/clientfiles/rpc/docs/Ministry%20Statements/EM%20Biblical%20Basis.pdf> (8 March 2010).

⁵⁴ Folkenberg, 4-9.

⁵⁵ Gibbs, 67.

Incarnational vs. Institutional

The concern of this section is that parent churches and church plants do not become focused on themselves but exist to minister to the community in which they are located. In recent years a term is used to describe this type of church—

“missional”. A description of the missional church is as follows:

Missional church is radical only in the sense that radical means root,” he says. “The missional church is rooted in not just the New Testament church of Acts, but in the mission of Jesus Himself. A missional church lives out the church's three-dimensional calling: to be upwardly focused on God in worship that is passionate; to be inwardly focused on community among believers that is demonstrated in relationships of love and compassion; and to be outwardly focused on a world that does not yet know God.⁵⁶

Hall elaborates further by stating that he believes that two distractions deter churches from being truly missional. The first is self preservation and the other church growth.⁵⁷ It may seem surprising that he would include church growth as a deterrent from being missional, but he sees it in the sense that instead of going to the world it is expected for the world to come to the church.

If the church is to be functioning as the body of Christ in the world, then Christ's example of ministry must be visible. Jesus gave a description of His work when He said,

The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because He has anointed Me to preach the gospel to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed; to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord (Luke 4:18-19).

Jesus desires His church to be a source of hope and healing for the world.

Ellen White states, “Hearts that respond to the influence of the Holy Spirit are the

⁵⁶Chad Hall, “Missional Possible,” *Leadership*, Winter 2007, 34.

⁵⁷Ibid.

channels through which God's blessings flow. . . . But if Christians are such in name only, they are like the salt that has lost its savor. They have no influence for good in the world."⁵⁸

Community vs. Independent

Church planting is accomplished most successfully when the established church sees itself as part of a network or community of churches. The church at Antioch as we noted previously was strengthened because of its association with the church at Jerusalem.

The term "koinonia" is often understood to refer to Christians sharing together in a local church fellowship. Hunter states, "Kenneth Scott Latourette, in the first volume of his *History of the Expansion of Christianity*, contends that the early church probably attracted as many people to the faith through the inclusiveness, support, and power of its contagious fellowship as it did through its preaching."⁵⁹

Koinonia is also used in the New Testament to refer to churches helping one another as in the distribution of food to other churches.⁶⁰ One Bible dictionary states that "in addition to its usual meaning, koinonia was used by the early church to describe the act of sharing one's temporal blessings with fellow believers (2 Cor 8:4): as such, it may appropriately be translated 'contribution' (Rom 15:26; 2 Cor 9:13, RSV)."⁶¹

⁵⁸White, *Christian Service*, 22.

⁵⁹George G. Hunter III, *The Contagious Congregation: Frontiers in Evangelism and Church Growth* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1979), 29-30.

⁶⁰SDA Bible Dictionary (1960), s.v. "fellowship."

The concept of koinonia among churches is important to church growth and development today. Logan writes,

for church multiplication movements to thrive, people need to be in relationship with one another—communicating, exchanging ideas, and challenging one another. Planters need to have regular contact with other planters and coaches with other coaches. Providing networks for all groups involved in the multiplication effort will strengthen the movement's overall cohesiveness.⁶²

The word “network” is popular today, and it is especially true for church planting. Success depends on the relationships with other churches and denominational leadership for support and resources. The spirit of independence lessens the chance of success in developing new work.

Coaching and Empowering—Servant Model

A recent book on coaching states, “Coaching isn't just for experts and specialists. The basic methods are simple and anyone can learn them. We all need someone to spur us on toward love and good deeds, toward realizing the fullest potential that God has for us. And we all need to consider how we can help others along that path.”⁶³

Church planting is very dependent on the support and guidance of those who have spiritual power and experience. Mannoia has developed what is known as the Century 21 Church Planting System.⁶⁴ This system is a comprehensive and cohesive strategy for

⁶¹Ibid.

⁶²Robert E. Logan, *Be Fruitful and Multiply: Embracing God's Heart for Church Multiplication* (St. Charles, IL: ChurchSmart Resources, 2006), 155.

⁶³Robert E. Logan and Sherilyn Carlton, *Coaching 101: Discover the Power of Coaching* (St. Charles, IL: ChurchSmart Resources, 2003), 30.

⁶⁴Mannoia,, 51-52.

developing a regional church planting movement. There are ten strategies listed. Several of these are dependent on coaching and mentoring to achieve success.

The third strategy in Mannoia's system is that of a "New Church Incubator." He writes that this strategy, "provides a supportive environment, skill training and coaching relationships for planters, their spouses and key lay leaders from conception through the first year after public worship begins."⁶⁵ It is evident that coaching is a part of empowering new church planters.

Another strategy that is listed is the "pastor factory." This "trains proven lay leaders to become founding pastors and lifelong learners through internship, mentoring and biblical study with small group interaction."⁶⁶ These are two examples in Mannoia's system of how coaching is integral to the success of church planting. It is a key tool in empowering church planting leaders.

Another example of the importance of coaching to church planting is found in the strategy of the Presbyterian Church of America. Their church renewal and church planting strategy is called "Mission, North America" (MNA).⁶⁷ In an article the author states that

the goal of church renewal is two-fold: (1) to assist in the planting of biblically healthy churches and to keep them healthy by providing intensive, effective training and coaching for church planters; and (2) to offer direct services and referral to resources that address the needs of existing churches—those who want to ensure an ongoing vitality, as well as those two have plateaued or are in decline.⁶⁸

⁶⁵Ibid., 51.

⁶⁶Ibid.

⁶⁷ "Welcome." *MNA Church Renewal*, June, 2008. <http://www.pca-mna.org/churchrenewal/index.php> (30 June 2008).

⁶⁸ Ibid.

The Presbyterian Church, which has developed a commendable national strategy for church planting, understands the importance of training and coaching for empowering their church planters. Coaching can be understood as a servant model because its goal is to help others succeed.

The Blackaby Concept

Henry Blackaby presents an important concept for successful church planting. His teaching is to watch where God is working, then join Him in His work. He explains,

If you are going to join God in His work, you need to know where He is working. The Scriptures tell us some things that only God can do. Learn to identify these; and when you see something happen that only God can do, you will know it is God's activity. This does not deny God's initiative because unless God opens your spiritual eyes, you will not know it is Him at work. But when God does invite you, He will be able to convince you that He is the One working.⁶⁹

When we are doing God's work it is important that we are keeping in close communion with God so we can understand His will. Planting churches where His work is especially evident will lead to much greater success.

Summary and Conclusion

Three main sections were highlighted in this chapter. The first emphasizes that the bible and the writings of Ellen White prioritize church planting. This section first presented that the church by its nature is a missionary organization. When a local church fulfils its mandate by having a missionary spirit, church planting generally thrives. The practice and teaching of Jesus were examined to see how they empowered church planting. It was noted that Jesus never referred to church planting, but His messages are

⁶⁹ Henry T. Blackaby and Claude V. King, *Experiencing God: How to Live the Full Adventure of Knowing and Doing the Will of God* (Nashville, TN: Broadman and Holman Publishers, 1998), 122.

frequently cited as the inspiration for starting new work. His illustrations from nature such as seed planting, nurture and harvest are terms that permeate the church planting community. Some authors suggest that Jesus and the gospels are the inspiration behind the incarnational model of church planting, and that Acts and Paul are the inspiration for the evangelistic model. Paul progressed in effectiveness from his first to his third missionary journey. At the beginning he was directly involved in the establishing of the church plants and setting up its leadership. Later he trained others to go out and do this work. In the third missionary journey he organized a church planting saturation strategy from Ephesus which led to more teams and more evangelism and church planting.

Acts 11 was studied as a model for empowering church planting. This chapter tells the story of the establishing of the church in Antioch which became a center for the early church. Early disciples here decided to reach out to other people groups beside Jews, and their success was a lesson to the church. The Jerusalem church saw itself as a basis of support for the growing work in Antioch. Their selection of Barnabas who served as a coach and encourager to the new group was pivotal to their success. Barnabas then recruited Paul to help mobilize and train the new group. They became a dynamic duo for leadership in this new community and later were the first Christian missionary team.

As a part of this “Theology of Empowerment for Church Planting” chapter, other concepts were explored. The church is an organism where its life is the power of the Holy Spirit and not driven primarily by a hierarchical body. A proper balance needs to be achieved between structure and mission. An organization needs to continually evaluate itself to ensure that it doesn't spend too much of its resources on self preservation. Church planting is enhanced when networking among church exists to support new work. The

term “koinonia” was used in the New Testament to describe fellowship among churches as well as within a local church. In determining where church planting should take place, the Blackaby concept was highlighted, which lays the challenge to watch where God is working and then join Him in His work.

This chapter demonstrates that the teachings of the New Testament and the writings of Ellen White are very mission focused and provide the inspiration and authority for reaching out and the planting of new churches. The Antioch model shows how a centralized church system as the Seventh-day Adventist Church can be advantageous to the support and coaching of new church plants. Other concepts developed in the study of church planting point to the importance of prioritizing resources in the development of new work. The church is a missionary organization and when its focus is too much on its own needs it is in effect denying its charter.

CHAPTER 3

LITERATURE REVIEW

In this chapter, literature relating to church planting will be reviewed under four headings: first, developing a missional culture to inspire new work; second, the benefit of a multiplication and reproduction emphasis for church planting development; third, the advantages and disadvantages of urban and rural church planting; and fourth, organizational support and change needed to enhance church planting.

Developing a Missional Culture to Inspire New Work

Derek Morris, an Adventist pastor and author, challenges his readers to gain from Jesus a radical perspective of the harvest.¹ This perspective is based on Jesus' statement in Luke 10:2, "The harvest truly is great, but the laborers are few; therefore pray the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into His harvest."

Morris suggests that in numerous Bible citations, Jesus sees great opportunity for the work of the gospel but the people around Him see little opportunity. He challenges Christians and the church to see the world from Christ's radical perspective.²

¹ Derek J. Morris, *The Radical Prayer* (Hagerstown, MD: Autumn House Publishing, 2008), 14.

² *Ibid.*, 23.

Morris' encouragement to see the world through Christ's eyes and heart is an emphasis shared by other Christian writers and leaders. McNeal, a church growth researcher with a Baptist faith background, writes,

the church was created to be the people of God to join him in his redemptive mission in the world. The church was never intended to exist for itself. It was and is the chosen instrument of God to expand his kingdom. The church is the bride of Christ. Its union with him is designed for reproduction, the growth of the kingdom. Jesus does not teach his disciples to pray, "Thy church come." The kingdom is the destination. In its institutional preoccupation the church has abandoned its real identity and reason for existence.³

McNeal's challenge to the church may make some church people uncomfortable. However, there are others who are saying similar things about the role of the church in society. Bob Roberts, whose leadership has helped inspire over one hundred church plants both locally and globally, says,

Missional simply means the kingdom flowing out of us wherever we are. It's living beyond ourselves and beyond what we can control. It's serving unexpectedly in places and spheres we never imagined. It's not relying on ourselves to do a human strategy that we can accomplish in our own strength. It's driven by a God who opens doors that we never could open.⁴

The concept of the church not existing for itself but serving the needs of others is conveyed in the writings of Ellen White. She states, "Whenever a church is established, all the members should engage actively in missionary work. They should visit every family in the neighborhood, and know their spiritual condition."⁵ She also describes the practice of Christians in their community as that of mingling. She writes, "Christ's

³Reggie McNeal, *The Present Future: Six Tough Questions for the Church* (San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 2003), 16.

⁴Bob Roberts Jr., *The Multiplying Church: The New Math for Starting New Churches* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2008), 74,

⁵Ellen G. White, *Christian Service*, 12.

method alone will give true success in reaching the people. The Saviour mingled with men as one who desired their good. . . .”⁶ Too often churches are preoccupied with their own issues and concerns rather than the needs of those about them. Christians mingling with the people of their community to determine the needs are faithfully following the example of Jesus Christ.

Church planting gives a new opportunity to focus the church on mission instead of primarily focusing on itself. Murray states, “Church planting is an opportunity for the church to recover its challenging commission to be a “church for others,” a community that exists to serve others before itself. . . . Practices and assumptions that seemed acceptable for the church in “maintenance mode” can no longer go unchallenged as the church moves into “mission mode.”⁷

Murray emphasizes, that if a church swarms from a parent church, cloning the parent church should not necessarily be the goal.⁸ Cloning in this case could prevent a church plant from studying and responding to the needs of the community in which it locates.

How best can we fulfill the mission of Christ in this world? Many feel that the multiplication of churches is key to accomplishing the great commission of Matthew 28: 19-20. Roberts says, “multiplication is the hope of the future and the potential base from

⁶Ellen G. white, *Ministry of Healing* (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press, 1942),143.

⁷Murray, 125.

⁸Ibid., 119.

which the church will expand globally. Without multiplication, the movement cannot be sustained and the institution will die."⁹

In Canada an initiative of 39 denominations was launched in 1997 to disciple the nation of Canada. The main strategy to accomplish this was planting new churches. The goal was to plant 10,000 new churches by 2015.¹⁰ The belief of this group known as "Vision Canada" is made clear:

The clear intention of the Lord Jesus is that the Great Commission not only be pursued but also completed by His disciples before His return. Saturation church planting is the best means under heaven given for doing so. We believe the whole church has the resources to establish the presence of the Lord Jesus in every people group and neighbourhood of the whole nation."¹¹

This would mean that about 555 new churches would be needed each year. In the first five year report they averaged only about 100 new churches per year quite a bit below hopes.¹² This organization continues to pursue their vision.

McNeal believes that churches are only the answer to accomplish God's will if they are truly missional in their character. The multiplication of churches will be effective only if the churches seek to transform their communities.¹³ The multiplication of churches will truly disciple a nation when their members are mingling and ministering in the communities in which they exist.

⁹Roberts, 60.

¹⁰ Clarence Hendersen, ed. *Transforming Our Nation* (Richmond, BC: Church Leadership Library, 1998), 43.

¹¹ Ibid., 44.

¹² "Discipling the Whole Nation," *Outreach Canada Research Summary*, 2008. Available <http://en.outreach.ca/WhatWeDo/ChurchPlanting/DAWNResearch/tabid/138/Default.aspx> (26 May 2009).

¹³ McNeal, 26.

Literature Relating to Multiplication and Reproduction

The new model for church planting sought for in the Wisconsin Conference is a multiplication system which, as Burrill describes, has reproduction as a goal for every aspect of the church.¹⁴ This reproduction means that church leaders seek to develop other church leaders, small groups work to produce other small groups, and churches seek to produce other churches. Natural growth takes place at every level when this practice is adopted. Thus when new churches are planted they already have leaders because these leaders have been trained through the reproduction process.

The motivation for this emphasis springs from the observation of some authors that within the Seventh-day Adventist denomination in North America there is more of an emphasis on maintenance and nurture of existing churches rather than strategies and processes to reach out in establishing new work.¹⁵

Although multiplication is desired, Christian Schwarz emphasizes the need for qualitative growth.¹⁶ He believes that if the emphasis is on keeping the organization healthy, growth will become automatic. One of the biotic principles that he highlights as important in a healthy church is that of multiplication. His emphasis on this subject is the most pointed and impacting of any of the literature that I have read. He says, “the true

¹⁴Russell Burrill, *Rekindling a Lost Passion: Recreating a Church Planting Movement* (Fallbrook, CA: HART, 1999), 234.

¹⁵ I cite three authors: Burrill, *Ibid.*, v. Folkenberg, 5 in his “fruit” to “foliage” analogy. George Knight, *The Fat Lady and the Kingdom* (Boise, ID: Pacific Press, 1995), 49. Knight in a dialogue with Trevor Lloyd indicates his belief that the church structure needs to be changed to have greater impact on mission.

¹⁶Christian Schwarz, *Natural Church Development: A guide to Eight Essential Qualities of Healthy Churches* (Barcelona, Spain: M.C.E. Horeb, 1996), 14.

fruit of a small group is not a new Christian, but another group: the true fruit of a church is not a new group, but a new church; the true fruit of a leader is not a follower, but a new leader."¹⁷ He believes that the concept of multiplication is the most important motive for planting a new congregation.¹⁸

Floyd McClung, a church planting specialist who served as the international Executive Director of YWAM says, "it is not enough to do evangelism or to plant a single congregation. We have not done our job unless a movement of fully indigenous, mission-minded, multiplying churches is planted in a people group. Then they can evangelize their own people, city or nation."¹⁹ The church planting resource material on the YWAM website is illustrative of many websites where helpful material is found for their organization's church planters. Many denominations have church planting strategies on the internet that can be accessed by any interested person²⁰.

Robert Logan, a church planting consultant in North America, has this to say about church multiplication,

Because I care deeply about the expansion of God's kingdom through the church, I have devoted much of my life's work to aiding the multiplication of churches in one form or another. . . . Church planting isn't enough. If one church is planted and then the process is over, that won't be enough to fulfill the great commission. Jesus called us to go and make disciples of all the nations. That means not just a few more churches, but many more . . . exponentially more. I've become

¹⁷Ibid., 68.

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ Floyd McClung "Guiding Principles: Multiplying Churches Among the Unreached," in *Church Planting Coaches*, 2008. <http://www.cpcoaches.com/ywamcpcoaches/guidingprinciples/gp1.html> (3 July 2008). YWAM stands for Youth With a Mission. This organization operates in 130 countries. It began in 1960 and now spans the globe. Its ministries are evangelism, mercy ministries, training and discipleship.

²⁰Examples of this are the Presbyterian Website, www.pca-mna.org/churchplanting/faqs.php; the United Methodist website, <http://www.umc.org>; and the International Pentecostal Holiness church, www.iphc.org/r3p3/plant3.html.

increasing convinced of God's call on the church to engage in church multiplication—those great movements of God where churches plant churches that plant more churches that plant more churches.²¹

Logan is seen as an innovator in multiplication movements and has provided helpful resources to Seventh-day Adventists in that field. One illustration of this help is the Seventh-day Adventist network on *Coachnet*.²² He has written extensively and also helps coach denominational organizations desiring to develop church multiplication movements.²³

Seventh-day Adventists have widely read the writings of Russell Burrill. His passion for church planting and multiplication has been impacting the Seventh-day Adventist Church organization. Burrill recommends a church multiplication structure and says,

Once this basic structure is in place, church planting will begin to multiply throughout Adventism. However, more is involved here than simply structure, for underlying all that has been mentioned here is the power of the Holy Spirit, poured out upon a church that is serious enough about the harvest to change its structure and thus facilitate the gathering of earth's final harvest. Let's begin now!²⁴

Public Evangelism and Church Planting

Cyril Miller, while evangelism coordinator of the North American Division of Seventh-day Adventists, published two documents designed to encourage multiplication

²¹Logan, *Be Fruitful and Multiply*, 13-14.

²²*Coachnet* is a web-based resource designed to help leaders in areas such as church planting, coaching and Natural Church Development. The website can be accessed at www.coachnet.org.

²³Logan was a key presenter at the first SEEDS conference in the North American Division of Seventh-day Adventists and has been a resource to the church since that time.

²⁴ Burrill, *Rekindling a Lost Passion*, 243. Burrill has written other books on the renewal of the church; *Revolution in the Church, Radical Disciples for Revolutionary Churches*; and *The Revolutionized Church of the 21st Century*. He also led out in developing the annual SEEDS conference to help inspire a church planting movement within the Adventist Church.

of churches in the North American Division.²⁵ Miller states that “rapid conference growth will happen if an aggressive conference-wide evangelism strategy is conducted simultaneously with a planned movement to raise up new congregations. It is very surprising to see how fast a conference will grow when evangelism and church swarming strategies are worked together over a period of time.”²⁶

One experiment to combine evangelism and church planting was the Chesapeake Conference. “The Chesapeake Conference launched a new church swarming initiative during a 5 year period in the 1960s while Bill May was evangelism coordinator and later president. One of the objectives was to organize a new church in the city of Baltimore every year. The conference-wide church swarming resulted in raising up a total of 15 new churches.”²⁷

A more recent experiment in evangelism and church planting is the Texas Conference. From 2002 to 2008, eighty-five church groups were planted. During this same period the conference membership grew from 34, 698 to 42,683.²⁸ Some would argue that the Texas Conference should naturally grow because of the multi-cultural nature of its constituency. It cannot then claim that church planting is the vital factor in its growth. In an article challenging the church planting emphasis as a worthy component

²⁵ Cyril Miller, *How to Organize New Churches* (Silver Springs, Maryland: Home Study International Press, n.d.). *Faith Community Fellowship: Exciting New Model for New Churches* (Silver Spring, MD: Office of Evangelism and Global Mission, North American Division, n.d.). These documents were produced to encourage a church planting movement within the North American Division of Seventh-day Adventist church during the 1990s while Cyril Miller was director of Evangelism.

²⁶ Cyril Miller, *How to Organize Churches*, 4.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, 1.

²⁸ Statistics cited online at http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Texas_Conference_membership.png. (31 July 2009).

to evangelistic growth Robert T. Johnson believes the church is better advised to give emphasis to building up existing churches and let church planting be more of a by-product.²⁹

In an article responding to Johnson's challenges and interpretation of statistics, Russell Burrill makes the following statement in his conclusion:

In conclusion, church growth is a very complicated process, with many factors contributing to its success. Clearly, one of these is church planting. The statistical data overwhelmingly indicates that there is a relationship between church growth and church planting. Church plants are not weeds, as Johnston suggests; they are the vital energy that is helping the Adventist Church in North America to continue to grow. Most Christian churches in America have ceased to grow or experienced declines, and if we neglect church planting we will quickly join them in this regard. Church planting continues to be a vital ingredient in the church-growth mix of the Adventist denomination. As church growth guru Peter Wagner stated, "The single most effective evangelistic methodology under heaven is planting new churches." Adventists must not be left out.³⁰

One example of the effectiveness of church planting in Texas is in the city of Richardson. In 1999 there was one church and the attendance was 450 with a membership of 654. In 2007 there were 10 churches with an attendance of 1800 and a membership of 1992. During this time there was a 182% increase in tithe compared to the rest of the conference, where 61% was experienced. Similar results can be cited for the city of Austin where church planting was emphasized.³¹ The urban

²⁹ This argument was presented by Robert Johnson in *Adventist Today* where he challenged the claim that church planting and evangelistic growth were positively related. See Robert T. Johnson, "Church Plants: SEEDS or Weeds?" *Adventist Today*, September/October 2006, 9-13.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, 15.

³¹ These statistics can be viewed on a powerpoint presentation on the Texas Conference website. <http://texasadventist.org/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=UwHRgNhhIm8%3d&tabid=132#280,9,Slides 7-24>. (22 November 2009). This presentation can be found under the church planting section in a seminar titled "Harvest Impact Texas PowerPoint."

centers of Texas where church planting have been emphasized demonstrate that church planting is key to the growth they have experienced.

Small Groups and Multiplication

Christian Schwarz found in his study of over 1,000 churches around the world that multiplication of small groups through cell division is the most important principle for the health and growth of the church. This was in comparison with the eight factors highlighted in his book.³²

Miguel Cerna provides an insight as to why the small groups as a contributor to the multiplication process are vital in a church. He says, “when a large group divides into small ones, each individual can receive better care and more personal attention from group leaders and other members. Each person also gets more individualized recognition and his or her soul-winning abilities can be developed and channeled into creative witnessing activities.”³³ The inspiration of his book *The Power of Small Groups in the Church* has made a great impact among the Spanish speaking members of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

One reason why small groups flourish is the materials available to resource small groups. This has led to the empowerment of small group leaders. It can greatly contribute to the multiplication process of small groups. One resource that has enabled many leaders in sharing on biblical materials is the Serendipity Bible.³⁴ The Bible text is surrounded by

³² Schwarz, *Natural Church Development*, 33.

³³ Miguel Angel Cerna, *The Power of Small Groups in the Church* (Newbury Park, CA: El Camino Publishing, 1991), 21.

³⁴ Lyman Coleman, ed., *Serendipity Bible for Groups, fourth ed.* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1998).

suggestions for small group leaders on how to lead discussions with the section of the Bible under consideration.

Another source that has enabled groups to flourish is the internet. One example of the sources available is through the “Christianity Today” site. On the site, Krejcir states why small groups are integral to the growth and multiplication of churches,

The people in your church live in a disconnected and stress filled world. Relationships are few and fragile and His word is rarely applied. Without small groups, you cannot effectively grow your church or effectively or efficiently care for your people. Your church will not have depth, maturity, or much community impact without the caring, prayers, and support of its people.³⁵

Beside books and electronic sources, there are many magazine articles and publications that provide help to small group ministries and thus to the multiplication of groups. One article that is helpful explains why the Wesley class meeting was successful and how this concept could benefit the church today. Based on an interview with Tom Albin, Stafford writes, “I now understand Christian spiritual formation and discipleship to involve three interrelated dimensions: knowledge, experience, and a small group that can support me as I grow in grace and discover my place in the body of Christ.”³⁶

Adventists received renewed encouragement to be involved in small groups through the book *The Revolutionized Church of the 21st Century* by Russell Burrill. In this book, he argues for a relational church where true koinonia can be experienced. He believes that the restoration of community is essential in disciple making in the twenty-first century. He writes,

³⁵ Richard J. Krejcir, *Getting to Know You: All About Small Groups!* Accessed from http://www.Christianity.com/partner/Article_Display_Page/0 (April, 2005). Richard Krejcir is the Director of “Into Thy Word Ministries,” a missions and discipling ministry. His materials can be accessed at his website www.intothyword.org.

³⁶ Tim Stafford, “Finding God in Small Groups,” *Christianity Today*, August 2003, 42.

This is the call of God at the end of the twentieth century. We have followed the pattern of the institutional church, organized by Constantine in the fourth century, long enough. It doesn't work. It is time to create a church built on biblical foundations. . . . Not only must these truths be lived out in our lives, but God has called us also to live our lives in community with others. Sadly, we have built our church on American individualism rather than on biblical community. It is time to forsake our individualism in favor of establishing biblical community. Let's begin now!³⁷

One pastor who has responded to Burrill's appeal within the Adventist Church and is making an impact throughout North America is Milton Adams. His material on growth groups³⁸ is helping people understand how they can better organize and be involved in groups. Milton writes,

Every Christian should be involved in the sowing and reaping cycle, including pastors, church staff, and leaders. Using your growth group as a place to invite people and build friendships with secular people, set a personal goal of 8, 10, or 12 people to lead to Jesus each year. They pray for a harvest. Jesus tells us that His harvest is ripe but the workers are few. Trust God, prepare for hard work, for spiritual warfare, and reap His harvest.³⁹

Seventh-day Adventists have been commissioned to have small groups as a part of their church ministry through the inspired writings of Ellen White. She gives this vision to the church:

The formation of small companies as a basis of Christian effort has been presented to me by One who cannot err. If there is a large number in the church, let the members be formed into small companies, to work not only for the church members, but for unbelievers. If in one place there are only two or three who know the truth, let them form themselves into a band of workers. Let them keep their bond of union unbroken, pressing together in love and unity, encouraging one another to advance, and gaining courage and strength from the assistance of others. . . . Let them labor in Christlike love for those outside the fold, forgetting self in their endeavor to help others. As they work and pray in Christ's name,

³⁷ Russell Burrill, *The Revolutionized Church of the 21st Century* (Fallbrook, CA: Hart Research Center, 1997), 156-157.

³⁸ His materials can be accessed at <http://www.growthgroups.us/>

³⁹ Milton Adams, "Growth Groups," A syllabus prepared to accompany his presentations at his seminars. This can be down loaded from his website referred to above.

their numbers will increase, for the Saviour says: "If two of you shall agree on earth as touching anything that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of My Father which is in heaven. Matthew 18:19.⁴⁰

Home Churches and Cell Churches Associated with Church Multiplication

Small groups can be seeds for the planting of churches. This can be especially true with the holistic small groups. These groups contain all the DNA that the church body is to possess. Don James, who is an associate at the North American Division Evangelism Institute, was a strong advocate of holistic small groups. He writes:

Holistic Small Groups are not merely "small groups." While "small groups" can be task oriented, study oriented, prayer oriented, service oriented, etc., holistic groups contain all the functions of a church. However, strong accountability keeps them from becoming independent house churches. Small groups are:

- A. Strong community, with God and people
- B. Intentional relational evangelistic focus as a way of life
- C. Leaders raised up from within the group to lead more groups
- D. Accountability and ministry partner on every level
- E. Equipping/discipling each member in spiritual maturity and service.⁴¹

Don James has demonstrated the evangelistic effectiveness of cell churches. In 2004 the Seventh-day Adventist church in North America had a baptismal gain of 4% (not considering the losses) throughout the territory; during the same time thirty-five cell churches that were studied for effectiveness had a baptismal rate of 11%. These cell churches were in mainland North America and not including Hawaii. Cell

⁴⁰ Ellen G. White, *Testimonies for the Church*, vol 7 (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press, 1948), 21-22.

⁴¹ Don James, "How Holistic Small Groups Raise NCD Characteristics," A syllabus accompanying his seminar at Westfield Wisconsin on August, 2005.

churches demonstrated effectiveness with the number of pre-Seventh day Adventists attending.⁴²

Cell churches have a strong advocate in William Beckham. He advocates that the church of the New Testament was a “two winged” church where corporate gatherings and small groups were both integral to the church. He explains, “The Creator once created a church with two wings: one-wing was for large group celebration, the other wing was for small group community. Using both wings the church could soar high into the heavens, entering into His presence and do His will over all the earth.”⁴³ Beckham goes on in the same section to describe how the church lost the small group wing and has tried to fly with only the wing of the congregational celebration. It has lost much effectiveness by doing this. God is trying to restore the other wing.

Due to the need for relationships in our society, there is a movement toward house churches. The New Testament refers to many churches that met in homes.⁴⁴ Is this a wave of the future to contribute to the multiplication of churches? Is this an effective method for Seventh-day Adventists today?

Recently an article appeared in *Ministry* exploring the concept of house churches. The author writes, “Is the house church an option for Adventist work in the big cities of today? This account shows that in principle the house church is functional or ‘doable.’”

⁴²Don James, “The Development and Implementation of Intensive Training for Planting and/or Transitioning to Cell Church Models Within the Seventh-day Adventist Church” (DMin dissertation, Andrews University), 68.

⁴³William A. Beckham, *The Second Reformation: Reshaping the Church for the 21st Century* (Houston, TX: TOUCH Publications, 1995), 25-26.

⁴⁴ See 1 Corinthians 16:19; Romans 16:3,5; Philemon 1-2; Colossians 4:15.

Indeed, a house church could be a powerful corrective to the impersonal life of modern cities, and thus a catalyst for evangelism, not to mention the potential monetary savings that can be made."⁴⁵ Donkor, the author, goes on in the same section to ask questions as to whether it is an effective and appropriate methodology for Adventist mission in today's world. These questions deserve to be answered.

Milton Adams, who fosters growth groups, discussed in the previous section of this paper, also features "Simple Church" on his website.⁴⁶ This describes a movement taking place within the Adventist Church of house churches. This may be a methodology which can establish Adventist presence in areas not before considered feasible.

Rural and Urban Considerations in Church Planting

Rural Considerations

When church denominational headquarters decided to prioritize church planting, where should it begin? Should it look to large population centers or small town and rural areas? Many articles have been written on the great needs of the cities and the benefits to plant new churches in these areas. Tom Nebel argues for giving priority in the small town and rural areas for church planting. The following quotation identifies one reason as to why he gave this priority.

However, in some cases church planters with growing (though not developed) skill sets, or those with limited resources bases (financial, talent, and otherwise) will find that the environmental challenges of urban/suburban church planting add enough risk

⁴⁵ Kwabena Donkor, "New Testament House Churches: A Model for today's complex world." *Ministry*, April 2008. Accessed <http://www.ministrymagazine.org/archive/2008/April/new-testament-house-churches.html> (29 May, 2009).

⁴⁶ See <http://www.growthgroups.us/>

to their ventures to make them fail. It will be shown that these same planters very well may have succeeded in small town or rural effort.⁴⁷

John Edgell suggests that rural church plants are important because there doesn't tend to be the variety of churches that people could find in an urban center. He suggests, "although many rural communities already have a church, often that church has its roots in a mainline denomination that is no longer fundamental. Some of these churches have closed. Some have become community churches with unacceptable doctrinal diversity, while others are still mainline, and proclaim error."⁴⁸

The rural environment is based on relationships and trust. Church planting must possess these qualities to be successful. In an interview with rural church planters these observations were made.

One of our major challenges has been a traditional religious spirit. People may not have been to church in 30 years, but they claim a denominational loyalty. In a small town, it's important to have a building. Some people think, they won't last because they don't have a building. This is a credibility issue. Along with this is a lack of history in a community. We came to Byron in 1996, but didn't start the church until 1998. We spent 2 years building trust. Some people go to a small town and expect to start a church in 3 months. But you have to build trust.⁴⁹

Rural church planting is challenging due to fewer people and resources but testimonies as cited above show that the work in these areas is important and can be successful.

⁴⁷ Tom Nebel, *Big Dreams in Small Places, Church Planting in Smaller Communities* (St. Charles, IL: ChurchSmart Resources, 2002), 41.

⁴⁸ John Edgell, "The Rural Challenge" April, 2005 accessed from: <http://www.ifea.org/voice/00Mar-Apr/edgell.htm> (12 December, 2007).

⁴⁹ Interview with Steve Larson, Dennis Dickson, Christ Gray and Dennis Widner, "Church Planting in the Small Community." In *Enrichment Journal: A Journal For Pentecostal Ministry*. Fall, 2000. Accessed, http://enrichmentjournal.ag.org/200004/056_small_community.cfm (29 May 2009).

Urban Considerations

Much has been written on the need and benefit of planting churches in urban settings. Conn states, “What does this mean for urban church planting? It means that when we plant a church that throbs with biblical vitality we introduce into urban life a force for good, for justice and reconciliation. It happens when churches pursue the agenda of the kingdom of God as Jesus did.”⁵⁰

The early Adventist Church was developed primarily as a rural movement. Ellen White appealed to the church during the last years of her life to focus on the cities; however, judging by today's performance that appeal has not been taken seriously. Burrill writes on this issue, “. . . therefore at the beginning of the twenty-first century, the Adventist Church continues to be primarily a rural church, especially in its Anglo membership. In fact, if all non-Anglo groups were eliminated from the cities, the Adventist presence in most cities would be non-existent. . . . Here is an urgent need for aggressive church planting.”⁵¹

One of the reasons that church planting is needed in urban centers is to meet the needs of growing ethnic communities. It is projected that by 2050 almost half of the U.S. population will be ethnic or racial minority.⁵² Urban church planting will result in great growth of churches if the minority population is reached. As Espinoza states, “The lyrics of a song declare, ‘You can count all the seeds in the apple, but you can't count all the

⁵⁰ Harvie Conn, ed. *Planting and Growing Urban Churches: From Dream to Reality* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1997), 22.

⁵¹ Burrill, *Renewing a Lost Passion*, 85.

⁵² Efraim Espinoza “New Church Planting: The Cutting-Edge Ministry in Ethnic Language Group.” In *Enrichment Journal: A Journal for Pentecostal Ministry*, fall, 2000. Accessed, <http://enrichmentjournal.ag.org/200004/index.cfm> (2 December, 2007).

apples in a seed.’ We can count all of the churches in the United States, but only God can reveal all of the potential churches in the pockets of unreached people in America . . . especially among our growing multicultural population.”⁵³

Organization and Support to Empower Church Planting

There is a tension between church planting and church maintenance. The resources are often exhausted just maintaining the current program and church planting is considered a drain on the resources. The structure of the church should be for facilitating the mission of the church and not provide a barrier to its accomplishment. George Knight expresses this concern, “While it is true that we need to develop strategic battle plans, it is also true that any organization can cripple itself through unlimited proliferation of management and middle management. In short, too much organization could actually frustrate the mission of the church rather than facilitate it.”⁵⁴

The following are issues in organization and support of church structure and a review of related literature.

Flexibility

While order and structure are important for the well being of the church, it is important that flexibility be achieved so developing needs can be responded to. Gibbs states,

If denominational structures are in place primarily as instruments of control, then the identity problem is probably insurmountable. But if these vertical structures can be

⁵³ Ibid.

⁵⁴ George Knight, *Organizing to Beat the Devil: The Development of Adventist Church Structure* (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 2001), 169.

dismantled to provide financial and personnel resources by which local churches can be effectively serviced, their diversity celebrated and a variety of models assessed, then structures can play an important role.⁵⁵

Gibb's book seeks to influence churches to be mission driven and spiritually vibrant. It is a call away from institutional religion to incarnational ministry where the heart beat of Jesus can be felt as Christians get close to their community.

Christian Schwarz lists “effective structures” as one of the eight quality characteristics of healthy churches. While the importance of this characteristic is acknowledged, it is the most controversial of the eight.⁵⁶ Traditionalists want to hold on to the form and structure in their organization and relational people tend to emphasize function. Church planting thrives best when flexible structures exist which encourage and empower new work.

Robert Greenleaf in his landmark work on servant leadership writes this about organization change to be more flexible for mission.

When the infrastructure shifts everything rumbles. Well, everything is rumbling because the old rules of traditional, hierarchical, high-external-control, top-down management are being dismantled; they simply aren't working any longer. They are being replaced by a new form of “control” that the chaos theory proponents call the “strange attractor”—a sense of vision that people are drawn to, and united in, that enables them to be driven by motivation inside them toward achieving a common purpose. This has changed the role of manager from one who derives results and motivation from external stimulation, to one who seeks to draw out, inspire, and develop the best and highest within people—from the inside out.”⁵⁷

⁵⁵ Eddie Gibbs, *Church Next; Quantum Changes in How We Do Ministry* (Downers Grove, ILL: InterVarsity Press, 2000), 67-68.

⁵⁶ Schwarz, *Natural Church Development*, 28.

⁵⁷ Robert K. Greenleaf, *Servant Leadership: A Journey into the Nature of Legitimate Power and Greatness* (Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 1977), 2-3.

Kevin Mannoia developed an effective system for multiplying and supporting church plants for the Presbyterian Church. His work is an influential one in developing a church planting movement. He states regarding structure and flexibility,

In reality, synergy in mission is our collective goal. Individual “compartments” or committees must adopt a new paradigm wherein their very identity is defined relative to the greater mission. Each committee understands the holistic and integrated nature of the total institution. Rather than territorial competition, all segments begin to pull together for the common, mission-driven good.⁵⁸

Role of the Pastor

In recent years a change has taken place in the role of the pastor. Christian churches for many years have experienced what is titled the “pastor dependency model.” This model does not serve well for church growth and church planting. If pastors are seeking to establish new work, lay members need to care for much of the ministry of the church. Ogden states, “If the pastor under the dependency model is akin to an unhealthy parent who does not want the children to grow up, then what is the role of pastor in the *interdependency* model that fosters an every-member ministry? In chapter 6 I quoted Elton Trueblood as saying that the primary role of the pastor is ‘to help other men and women practice any ministry to which they are called.’”⁵⁹ Ogden's book *Unfinished Business* is a powerful appeal to give ministry back to the laity and pastors serve as leaders and equippers of their people.

⁵⁸ Mannoia, *Church Planting: The Next Generation*, 16.

⁵⁹ Greg Ogden, *Unfinished Business: Returning the Ministry to the People of God* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2003), 158-159.

In his class “Spiritual and Theological Foundations for Ministry,” Dr. Kidder gives the difference between the old paradigm (pastor dependent) and the new paradigm (the equipping pastor).⁶⁰ This would be the job description of the old paradigm: preaching/teaching/bible study, visitation/counseling/care giving, administration baby dedication, wedding/funerals. The new paradigm pastor would have these emphases: visionary leader, organization engineer, agent of change, missiologist, and leadership developer. While the pastor may do some of the old paradigm job description, his emphasis is different in the church. This new paradigm is much more empowering for church planting as it provides opportunity to focus on new work.

Aubrey Malphurs believes that pastoral leadership is key to having positive church growth in both existing churches and church plants.⁶¹ He does not feel that part time leadership or lay leadership results in as strong church. The church needs the leadership of well trained and financially supported pastoral leaders to help the church make an impact in the community. He states:

New or established churches should be led by professional staff pastors who are equivalent to the first-century elders. These leaders are given the power and authority to lead and direct the ministries of the churches. They have the time and the training to do the job most effectively, as opposed to a group of part-time lay co-leaders. This would enable them to exert the strong pastoral leadership that is needed in so many of our floundering churches at the end of the twentieth century. This is also critical to planting churches, especially in the early stages where strong leadership is key to the growth and survival of the new church.⁶²

⁶⁰ Joseph Kidder, Course outline for GSEM 706 DMIN. Leadership Cohort, Theological Seminary, Andrews University, Berrien Springs, Michigan, 2004, 1. Andrews University Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary, Berrien Springs, Michigan, 2004.

⁶¹Aubrey Malphurs, *Planting Growing Churches for the 21st Century* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 1992, 1998), 145.

⁶²Ibid., 145-146.

Finances

Finances are often considered a barrier to foster church planting. There is hardly enough money to care for maintaining existing work, how can funds be found to foster new work? Ron Gladden in an article offers these suggestions:

Adopt a financial plan that enables us to start churches without disrupting the other good things the church is doing. This can be done with a two-step process.

1. Each conference and/or union commits seed money for church planting. How much? The more the better, but the amount really doesn't matter. Ideally, each conference will have at least enough to hire one full-time church planter.

2. Each conference and union invests some of the "fruit" from each new church into future church planting projects. Once the system is set up, the principle of the harvest takes over and assures future funding.

Our greatest impact comes, not from the number of seeds we plant, but what we do with the seeds we have. Tracking tithe from a new church separately and investing an equivalent amount into future church plants will assure that church planting will never lack for funding."⁶³

While Gladden's proposals may generate more funds for raising new churches, caution must be raised to ensure that pastor-centered church plants are not generated.

Tom Nebel has been successful as a church planting leader in fundraising for church planting. He works through a church planting system. He gives this counsel about funding church planting.

On the regional level, church planting movements need to expand their funding base in order to build a growing infrastructure to sustain and expand the work. There will be growing personnel needs and financial pressures to assist church planters and their new churches. Fundraising for district church planting movements is varied. "Solicitations" refers to general appeals for financial help, either through churches, individuals or corporate sponsors, and can include

⁶³ Ron Gladden, "Evangelism and Church Planting," *Ministry*, June 1999, 5.

annual fundraising drives, church dues, banquets, golf events, bequests, and the like.⁶⁴

Robert Logan has addressed the funding issue many times as he works to support church planting. In one of the most helpful books on church multiplication, he states regarding finances, “Once the fruitfulness of a ministry becomes apparent in the community, unexpected opportunities often present themselves. Faithfulness demonstrated seems to attract the necessary resources at the right time. Pastor after pastor and planter after planter has found that when they stepped out on faith and needed the money, it was there.”⁶⁵

In the first SEEDS conference in 1996, Logan commended and challenged the Seventh-day Adventist church in regards to stewardship. He indicated they get an A in the way church members give their stewardship but a D- in the way the church manages it for harvest-centered activities.⁶⁶ His statement in this presentation was in reference to the amount spent internally on church ministry and not giving sufficient priority to the harvest. He called Adventists back to their roots in terms of giving priority to planting new churches.

Change

Many authors and church leaders are calling for change in the way we practice in the twenty-first century. Here is a sampling of the kind of change that is being proposed.

⁶⁴ Nebel, *Big Dreams in Small Places*, 115.

⁶⁵ Logan, *Be Fruitful and Multiply*, 175.

⁶⁶Bob Logan, “Challenges for Adventists in the 21st century” in SEEDS 96 video collection, 1996, video cassette.

Reggie McNeal argues for a new paradigm of thinking if the church is to be successful today. He believes that people want a transformation experience and are not satisfied with just supporting a religious organization. He says, “A growing number of people are leaving the institutional church for a new reason. They are not leaving because they have lost faith. They are leaving the church to preserve their faith.”⁶⁷

How can a church which is embedded in years of traditional ministry have the courage and creativity to address needed change? One book that seeks to provide an answer to this question is *Leading Congregational Change*. This book states, “God is still eager and able to re-create both people and congregations. Furthermore, the principles of leading transformation can be learned by most church leaders in ordinary congregation.”⁶⁸

An approach that can be helpful in making church planting effective is that of transforming society's culture through people who are already a part of the culture instead of through more religious workers. Roberts says, “Instead of attempting to change society by more religious vocational workers, we ought to focus on utilizing people who are already on the ‘inside’ secular markets who are sitting in our pews.”⁶⁹

⁶⁷Reggie McNeal, *The Present Future: Six Tough Questions for the Church* (San Francisco: Jossey Bass, 2003), 4.

⁶⁸Jim Herrington, Mike Bonem, James H. Furr, *Leading Congregational Change* (San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 2000), 1.

⁶⁹Bob Roberts, *Transformation: How Glocal Churches Transform Lives and the World* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2006), 49.

Summary and Conclusion

The review of literature in this chapter referenced research relating to four aspects of church planting. The first is “developing a missional culture to inspire new work.” A new emphasis is emerging in discussions about the role of the church in society. Instead of considering itself first, the new emphasis indicates that society, and its needs, should take first place. The church exists to minister to the people and culture that surrounds it. It does not exist for itself. This new emphasis is often called “missional” because it has an outward instead of an inward focus of ministry.

The second was “the benefit of a multiplication and reproduction emphasis for church planting development.” If the church is to keep abreast of a growing and changing world population, it needs strategies and practices that help its work expand. There are several processes highlighted in the chapter that contribute to multiplication of churches. Evangelism in terms of evangelistic meetings should not be considered independent of church planting. They go together effectively. Small groups are important in the development of new work. They establish a presence in new areas as well as with new people groups. House churches are also gaining strength in recent years. Multiplication of churches is enhanced through structures that support and enhance new work. Denominations that are doing creative things in multiplying churches were referenced as well as para-church ministries.

The third section is “the advantages and disadvantages of urban and rural church planting.” Church planting is often thought of as an urban phenomenon. Rural church planting doesn't seem too feasible because of lack of people. Church planters have demonstrated that rural church planting can be effective because it is easier to make an

impact on the community when it is smaller. Also it can be more relational instead of focusing on the many ways to get people's attention. The expectation is different in a city than a country. The city requires a more developed and high-profile ministry to compete in the “market-place.”

The last section is on organizational support and change needed to enhance church planting. Those in church planting need support when they are endeavoring to do a front line work. They need flexible structures that will be enhancers and not barriers from their parent church and conference organization. Financial help is always needed and ways that the basic needs of the planter and church plant can be met. The role of the pastor will need to change. Instead of the expectation that the pastor is there mainly to shepherd existing members, the pastor becomes an enabler and one who empowers. Many changes will need to be made in order for the developing of new work to occur. With church leaders committed to the development of new church and church planting it will have a much greater chance of success.

CHAPTER 4

SURVEY OF CHURCH PLANTING BEST PRACTICES

To gain an understanding of church planting's best practices this chapter is divided into three sections: first, the Wisconsin church planting emphasis in the 1980s, second, the survey of Adventist conferences and third, the study of other denominational organizations. The rationale and methodology for each study is presented in the respective section.

Wisconsin Church Planting Emphasis in the 1980s

The Wisconsin Conference had a strong emphasis in church planting for about one and one-half years during the 1980s. This section will present how the emphasis was launched and its results. The information was gained mostly through a study of existing files in the Wisconsin Conference office archives.

In 1988 a church planting proposal made by the Wisconsin Conference administration to the executive committee made a passionate appeal to move forward with a church planting emphasis:

The leaders of the Wisconsin Conference have a concern. They believe that every one of Wisconsin's 4.8 million residents deserve an invitation to embrace this last-days message. Yet past and present growth of the Church here can at best be described as static. The average annual growth rate during the last 20 years is under 0.9% per year. During those 20 years, seven new churches have sprung up. Since their beginnings, their membership has expanded at an average rate of 24.4 percent each year. It is astonishing that seven churches are responsible for nearly 60 per cent of Wisconsin's growth! . . . Hence, the Wisconsin Conference is

ready to move forward. During this summer we have organized two new companies, one of which is meeting in one of our 21 dark counties.¹

The proposal contained several analyses to help the conference members understand why church planting was needed. One aspect of the study demonstrated church presence compared to community population. It states, “Of the 80 churches and companies, 41 are in cities having a population of less than 9000. There are 52 cities larger than 9000 population which have no SDA church.”²

The proposal also included an analysis of the growth pattern of each church over a twenty year period. One key conclusion from this analysis is that newer churches tend to grow faster than older more established churches. It states, “7 new churches existed for a total of 294 quarters, an average of 42 quarters each. They existed for only 52.5% of the 20 year study period, yet accounted for 33.9% of the growth. The corrected growth contribution of these 7 churches to the Conference during the 20 years is 64.6%.”³

Concerning older churches the proposal states, “of the 69 churches which have been in continuous operation for the last 20 years, 27 have fewer members now than in 1967. 38 have fewer members now than in 1977.”⁴

One of the challenges in church planting is to develop resources to foster new work while maintaining existing work. The new church planting director employed by

¹ Jere Wallack, “Wisconsin Conference Church Planting Proposal,” A document for presentation to Wisconsin Conference executive committee, 1988.

² Ibid.,4. This paging is from the main proposal. The document includes other articles which have their own paging.

³ Ibid., 17.

⁴ Ibid.

the Wisconsin Conference during the 1980s was Ron Gladden. His proposal to deal with the needed resources to foster church planting is as follows:

I envision a conference or a union hiring on a full-time pastor who will supervise the simultaneous planting of three to five new churches. These churches would be launched in cities which have an existing church that is not able to evangelize all of its territory. The people in the mother church would set their support behind the work of spawning a new church. It would be one of their personal ministries projects to give birth to a new church.

The new congregations would be staffed by task-force workers or laymen or even “tent-makers.” The salaried pastor would support, train, encourage and give direction to the leaders (pastors) of the new groups. Based on what our church is doing in other countries and other churches are doing here, I think this idea deserves consideration and experimentation.⁵

Ron Gladden also produced a manual to help foster church planting while working in the Wisconsin Conference.⁶ This manual is rich with practical suggestions to church planters and church leaders in how to make church planting successful. He gives this challenge to the readers,

The single most significant decision you can make as you begin this adventure is to approach the task with a sharp axe. Determine to learn and put into motion strategies and methods which tend towards success. It is God, of course, who causes the woodpile to grow. But you “are laborers together with Him” in the awesome work of saving souls. It is incumbent upon you to work wisely and energetically. As you do, He will bless.⁷

The conference proposal included a goal of starting six new churches in 1988. This would be an ambitious goal for one year since the previous twenty years had only

⁵Ron Gladden, “The Excitement of New Church Evangelism,” A document included in the proposal to the Wisconsin Conference being referenced in this chapter. 7. This statement and the thrust of this article also appeared in *Ministry* magazine under a new title, Ron Gladden, “Church Planting: key to growth,” *Ministry*, October 1988, 6.

⁶Ron Gladden, “Planting Churches: A manual for Planting and Growing Adventist churches,” This manual does not include information about date or publication. It is available in the archives of the Wisconsin Conference.

⁷*Ibid.*, 1.

developed seven new churches⁸ The proposal also included the objective of starting nine new churches in 1989, six in 1990 and ten in 1991. The document implies that these cities were targeted by conference leadership through their study of the demographics of the state and the location of Adventist churches at that time.⁹

In order to ensure success in this new church planting initiative, as mentioned previously, a church planting coordinator, Ron Gladden, was employed. An experienced consultant, Cyril Miller, was engaged who had led the Texas Conference in a strong church planting initiative.¹⁰

The Results of the Wisconsin Church Planting Emphasis in the 1980s

In 1988 the results of church planting exceeded the projection. In the September 27 president's report, it was indicated that five new churches and three new companies were developed in 1988.¹¹ In that same report there is noted an increase of baptisms year to date and a 10.1% increase in tithe. So it would seem that the church planting emphasis was off to a good start.

At this time in the history of the Wisconsin Conference, there were constituency meetings every three years. A constituency meeting was scheduled for April of 1989. At

⁸See page 7.

⁹The conclusion that conference leadership determined where the church plants would be located is from the language of the proposal. It says, "The Wisconsin Conference has targeted ten cities for new churches in 1988." P 7. Four of these had groups already started which is the reason why the proposal mentions only six new plants.

¹⁰Proposal 4.

¹¹Taken from the Wisconsin conference executive committee minutes September 27, 1988. Located in conference archives.

the constituency meeting when the officers were presented for election, the president, secretary and treasurer were not re-elected.

With the president no longer in place who had led in the church planting initiative, the program was in jeopardy. The church planting director continued serving in the conference as a pastor and ministerial director. There is no evidence through the conference records that the church planting initiative continued as presented in the proposal. In surveying the minutes of the next couple years there is virtually no mention of church planting. The strong emphasis of about one year came to an abrupt halt.

Observations on Why the Church Planting Initiative Ceased in Wisconsin in the 1980s

1. The first and foremost reason is that the administrator that was providing the inspiration for the initiative was not re-elected to office. Since the church planting emphasis was the key strategy for Harvest 90 in Wisconsin,¹² it appears that the constituency did not support that emphasis.

2. The church planting initiative was too short-lived to have become a part of the culture of the conference. The author of this paper is an administrator of the Wisconsin Conference and knows that some of the people involved in the church plants that were started in the 1980s were enthused about the church planting outreach.

3. 1987 was a year of struggle for the conference financially. It was also not a good year for growth. In presenting the budget for 1988 many cuts had to be made in light of a \$419,184 deficit.¹³ Since church planting would require additional funding for

¹²In the September 22, 1987 executive committee minutes it states "Church Planting-- Major part of Wisconsin's Harvest 90 thrust is church planting."

new plants, it is possible that many considered this new initiative a threat to existing programs.

4. It is my opinion that the study and the ideas behind the strategy for church planting designed by the president and church planting coordinator were commendable. However, the perception of a top-down rather than a bottom-up strategy for implementation may have brought resistance to the plan.¹⁴

Survey of Adventist Conferences

Five conferences were surveyed.¹⁵ These conferences were first sent a letter requesting approval to be surveyed. They were then sent the survey for completion. These conferences were chosen due to the interest they manifested in church planting.

The survey results are given in each section which begins with the survey questions (or the question summarized). A brief summary of the data is presented in each section. However, the more complete summary and conclusion will appear at the end of the survey results.

¹³The recommendations to balancing the budget are in the January 19, 1988 executive committee minutes.

¹⁴The experience from the 1980s has been studied by the current leaders in the Wisconsin Conference. Efforts are being made to have buy-in at various levels of leadership to instill church planting into the thinking and culture of the conference. In Chapter 5 strategies are presented to gain a wide base of support for church planting so the emphasis will not be halted when a change in leaders take place.

¹⁵See Appendix B for a copy of the survey and a sample of the letter sent to each conference

Survey Results

Question 1. Church planting in your conference has had the following experience during the last five years: Grow 20%, 10%, or less than 10% in a five year period in relationship to the number of churches in the conference?

Table 1 shows that each of the churches surveyed had a growth rate of 20% or more. The Texas Conference gave their results in six years which would be a factor in their higher average. The church plants included here are in three categories: fellowship groups, companies and organized churches. Further tables will show the percentage each conference has in each category.

TABLE 1
GROWTH OF CHURCH PLANTS IN RELATION TO THE NUMBER OF
CHURCHES

Alberta	27%
Georgia-Cumberland	31%
Pennsylvania	20%
Texas	40% (6 years)
Wisconsin	20%

Question 2. Does your organization consider church planting a priority? How does it demonstrate support?

In Table 2 each conference indicates how the conference relates to the church planting program. In the case of Alberta, although there is no formally approved program in the conference with developed strategies, there is a church planting coordinator who is quite active. The conference has had a good number of plants develop. This has happened more spontaneously than through a formal process. The Pennsylvania and the Wisconsin Conferences have both put one time contributions in their church planting fund along with a percentage of tithe. The Georgia-Cumberland Conference puts emphasis in the employment of coordinators for their field. They also put extra evangelism dollars toward church planting. The Texas Conference puts a lot of their financial support in field work with the hiring of church planters and evangelism dollars.

TABLE 2

CONFERENCE PRIORITY OF CHURCH PLANTING

<i>DESCRIPTION</i>	<i>ALBERTA</i>	<i>GEORGIA-CUMBERLAND</i>	<i>PENNSYLVANIA</i>	<i>TEXAS</i>	<i>WISCONSIN</i>
Voted Conference Priority	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Strategies Developed	Informal strategies related to other programs as evangelism and small groups	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Financial support	50% of facility rent for first year Evangelism budget	\$60,000 appropriation per year from evangelism	\$25,000 one time contribution and 10% of tithe from every conference mission group	Higher support for evangelism than regular church Hire one full time planter per year for 6 years	\$50,000 one time contribution and 1/3 percent of all tithe received
Leadership support	Conference personnel visit for encouragement and support	1 coordinator and 1 assistant fully salaried	1 coordinator	1 Coordinator conference wide with regional coordinators Strong plant coaching support	One coordinator who is not fully funded Pastoral coaching support

Question 3 What is the type of plant and the rate of growth?

In Table 3 the two smallest conferences—Wisconsin and Pennsylvania, have fewer members in their groups. This could reflect lower immigrant population which often increases the size of new churches. Texas has a high standard for becoming a church—they require 50 members. They also have a strong coaching emphasis which no doubt contributes to their having good growth. Alberta is rather surprising in that they have a large number of groups organized into companies and groups with the least formally developed conference support. Wisconsin has quite a few churches organized but they tend to be smaller. Their requirement for organizing a church is 30 members. Georgia-Cumberland has good growth in their plants. Their formula is 60 for church members and 30 for a company. Quite a few of the plants are in urban centers and they also have good conference church planting leadership which makes a difference.

TABLE 3

TYPE OF PLANT AND RATE OF GROWTH¹⁶

<i>DESCRIPTION OF MAJORITY</i>	<i>ALBERTA</i>	<i>PENNSYLVANIA</i>	<i>GEORGIA-CUMBERLAND</i>	<i>TEXAS</i>	<i>WISCONSIN</i>
Fully organized churches 50+ and growing < 5%			16 churches of < 50 members growing 5% and 20 companies with > 50 growing at 5%	Majority in this category	
Fully organized church 50+ and growing > 5%	Out of 15 congregations: 7 organized in churches and six into companies with 2 in groups				
Groups less than 30 not organized in church status		17 mission groups and companies with the majority as groups under 30.	12 groups with less than 30		18 plants: 4 organized as churches; 4 as a companies and 10 as churches

¹⁶The five year period referenced here was 2003-2008.

Questions 4 and 5 The type of church planters and the conference support of each.

In Table 4 questions 4 and 5 of the survey are combined as they give very similar information. There is great variety in how each conference provides leadership to the church plants. There is also considerable difference in the amount of financial support that conferences provide to the planters. The Texas Conference is taking the lead with financial support of full time church planters. Their emphasis in the conference on planting new churches should help these pastor-led church plants not to become pastor dependent. The pastors are usually coaches to other lay-led plants. The Texas Conference has also been the recent pioneer in lay-led church plants. Georgia-Cumberland and Pennsylvania have the highest percentage of their church plants lay-led. Alberta Conference has not appeared to have much emphasis in lay-led plants but have had good success with pastors who share other responsibilities. Wisconsin has a combination of both, with the majority of plants being salaried pastors with other responsibilities.

TABLE 4

CHURCH PLANTERS AND CONFERENCE FINANCIAL SUPPORT

<i>DESCRIPTION</i>	<i>ALBERTA</i>	<i>GEORGIA CUMBERLAND</i>	<i>PENNSYLVANIA</i>	<i>TEXAS</i>	<i>WISCONSIN</i>
FINANCIAL SUPPORT	All fully salaried workers	75% of church planters receive a stipend of 50% or less of full salary 25% self-supporting	One paid church planter	7 full time planters; 33 who are pastors with other assignments and 40 are lay volunteers	66 percent are full time pastors with other assignments and 33 percent are lay volunteers
TYPE OF PLANTERS	All salaried pastors with other churches	Church planters are stipend or self-supporting	One paid church planter and all the rest are self-supporting	See above	See above

Question 6 Is there an application process and how are the church planters selected?

In Table 5 it indicates that each conference has an application process to have church plants approved. Alberta is the exception. In the decision making process for church planting leadership, two conferences—Pennsylvania and Wisconsin use the church planting committee. Alberta and Georgia-Cumberland use their personnel committee. Texas did not indicate what body does their selection but the initiative is through the church planting coordinator.

TABLE 5

APPLICATION PROCESS AND APPROVAL PROCESS OF PLANTERS

<i>DESCRIPTON</i>	<i>ALBERTA</i>	<i>GEORGIA-CUMBERLAND</i>	<i>PENNSYLVANIA</i>	<i>TEXAS</i>	<i>WISCONSIN</i>
APPLICATION PROCESS	No process	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
CHURCH PLANTER SELECTION	Pastors assigned by conference personnel committee	Selected by conference pastoral placement process	Planters are sought at church planting events and approved by recommendation of the church planting committee to the executive committee	Church planting coordinator takes the initiative in seeking church planters	Salaried pastors who lead out in plants are assigned by conference personnel committee Lay volunteers are approved through the church planting committee to the conference executive committee

Question 7 What type of coaching support is provided to the church planters?

In Table 6 there is an indication of how three of the conferences are gaining strength in church planting—through trained coaches. The three are Texas, which takes the lead in this area, Georgia-Cumberland, and Pennsylvania. Especially where there are lay-led plants, the trained coaching is vital. Through trained coaching there can be a lay-led church planting program and still have success. It also is not just that coaches are available but how they are used. Texas has a prescribed plan as to the frequency of meetings with the coach and church planter.

TABLE 6

TYPE OF COACHING SUPPORT

<i>DESCRIPTION</i>	<i>ALBERTA</i>	<i>GEORGIA CUMBERLAND</i>	<i>PENNSYLVANIA</i>	<i>TEXAS</i>	<i>WISCONSIN</i>
COACHING SUPPORT	No trained coaching support	45% of plants have trained coaches; 30% have pastoral support but not trained coaches and 25% have other specialized help	50% have trained coaches and 50% have pastoral support but not trained coaches	90+% have trained coaches	75% have pastoral coaching support (Conference conducted a coaching program for pastors) and 10% have specialized help

Questions 8 What other forms of support does the conference provide to church plants?

In Table 7 each conference except Alberta has church planting gatherings. Georgia-Cumberland has the most frequent large meetings. Texas indicates annual meetings with monthly coaching. However they have their annual meetings in various locations so they have many meetings each year.

Wisconsin has their monthly meetings by conference call. It appears that no conference has a formal assessment process as is done by many evangelical denominations. There is parent church encouragement by the conferences but none indicated a parent church network which many denominations are finding helpful. Many church planting leaders say that good parent churches are the most significant factor in a developing church planting movement. The Texas Conference indicates that pastoral leadership in support of church planting is the most important factor in those parent churches.

TABLE 7

OTHER FORMS OF SUPPORT

<i>DESCRIPTON</i>	<i>ALBERTA</i>	<i>GEORGIA-CUMBERLAND</i>	<i>PENNSYLVANIA</i>	<i>TEXAS</i>	<i>WISCONSIN</i>
SUPPORT MEETINGS	None indicated	Quarterly	Annually	Annual and monthly meetings with coach	Annual meeting with monthly conference calls
ASSESSMENT PROCESS	None indicated	Through personnel committee	Conference assigns planters with involvement by church plants	Conference assigns planters with involvement by church plants	Church planting coordinator in conjunction with conference administration
PARENT CHURCH NETWORK	None indicated	Encourages churches to be parent churches	Encourages churches to be parent churches	Encourages parent church support but finds the key is the attitude and leadership of the pastor	Encourages parent church support.

Question 9 Does the conference provide for diversity of style and philosophy in their church plants?

In Table 8 the conferences indicate that they approve and encourage diversity. Several wish to indicate that they want to make sure that the plants are truly Adventist. The diversity can provide various approaches to ministry as long as they are authentically Adventist.

TABLE 8

DIVERSITY OF STYLE AND PHILOSOPHY

<i>DESCRIPTION</i>	<i>ALBERTA</i>	<i>GEORGIA-CUMBERLAND</i>	<i>PENNSYLVANIA</i>	<i>TEXAS</i>	<i>WISCONSIN</i>
DIVERSITY	No information	Yes	Diversity but mirror a traditional S.D.A church	Adventist but approach ministry in a variety of ways	Adventist but approach ministry in a variety of ways

Questions10 Other factors of conference support not highlighted in the survey

In Table 9 there are a number of ways the conferences support church planting other than highlighted in the survey. It is important that each conference share the ways it is achieving success in its program. We then learn from each other. A network among conferences who emphasize church planting could be helpful.

TABLE 9

OTHER FACTORS NOT HIGHLIGHTED IN THE SURVEY

<i>DESCRIPTION</i>	<i>ALBERTA</i>	<i>GEORGIA-CUMBERLAND</i>	<i>PENNSYLVANIA</i>	<i>TEXAS</i>	<i>WISCONSIN</i>
OTHER FACTORS	Gives strong small group support which helps in the formation of church plants	All plants demonstrate solid lay leadership structure before considering conference leadership support. They want to make sure these plants are not pastor-centric.	The plants are evaluated at regular intervals as spelled out by the church planting policy. This serves to keep their focus. The church planting coordinator makes visits at other times for encouragement and empowerment	An annual lay planter/coaches recognition event	A camp meeting gathering with church planters is a key time to generate enthusiasm and support

**A Study of Other Denominational Organizations
Regarding Church Planting**

In this section four denominational church organizations were studied to understand how they inspire and design support for church planting. The source for this study was largely drawn from information that exists on the website of each organization. Each church study was organized under three headings: Vision, Strategy, and Support.

Church of the Nazarene

Vision

The church planting emphasis is entitled “Mission Strategy” and has the following vision statement: “Mission Strategy is responsible for creating awareness throughout the Church of the Nazarene in the USA and Canada for starting new churches, for extending the ministry of the church to all portions of society and for encouraging an

increase in compassionate ministries."¹⁷ Three words follow this statement: communicating, cooperating and coordinating. There is another subtitle, "Resourcing and developing missional disciples and leaders."

Strategy

One aspect of their strategy is to plant more churches in urban settings. Oliver Phillips, Director of Mission Strategy United States and Canada, says, "The office of Mission Strategy USA/Canada recognizes the sparse representation of the Church of the Nazarene in our major cities. We must increase the evangelistic strategic planning for ministry in the urban context."¹⁸

The documents states that 80% of Americans live in urban centers but only 30% of the Church of the Nazarene denomination are in these areas.¹⁹ The document, "The Urban Imperative" from which Oliver Phillips is quoted, is a comprehensive look on how the Church of the Nazarene might fulfill the mission of Christ in the cities. It discusses both theological considerations and practical suggestions of ministry to the city. It is a strong appeal to the church.

¹⁷Taken from the "Mission Strategy website, www.Missionstrategy.org/missionstrategy/urbanchurchplanting/tabid/205/Default.aspx (June 30, 2008).

¹⁸ David M. Best, ed., "The Urban Imperative." A document of Mission Strategy designed to promote Urban Outreach in the Church of the Nazarene, 10. Accessed <http://www.missionstrategy.org/missionstrategy/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=cGVHx%2bjTOzs%3d&tabid=339> (2 August 2009).

¹⁹Ibid., 36,

Support

What is the counsel to churches in the Nazarene fellowship as to how church planting is supported? The following appears on the website of the New England district:

- A local church will serve as the sponsoring agency for church plants.
- A church planter will serve on the staff of the sponsoring local church.
- Leadership Development Ministry will cooperate with this board to provide ongoing training and support to church plants and sponsoring churches.
- One year investment grants will be available to church plants who apply through the sponsoring church and who are approved by the designated "Investment Grant Task Force".
- Awarding of the investment grants will be based on the following criteria. . . .
- Has the ministry already been initiated?
- Is the ministry showing signs of growth?
- Is there a growth plan for the ministry?
- At what level is the sponsoring church demonstrating involvement in the ministry?²⁰

United Methodist Church

Vision

Linda Green writes, "Since the most effective evangelism is through new churches, The United Methodist Church wants to start 650 new congregations with 63,000 members by 2012 as part of a new emphasis."²¹

²⁰Accessed from the website of the New England district of the church of the Nazarene. Located under the Church planting label.
http://www.nednaz.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=category&layout=blog&id=26&Itemid=38 (2 August 2009).

²¹Linda Green, "United Methodist Plan emphasizes New Church Plants," Nashville: UMC News Service, 2007.
<http://www.umc.org/site/apps/nlnet/content3.aspx?c=lwL4KnN1LtH&b=2433457&ct=3999417> (2 August 2009).

At present the denomination averages one church start every 7.6 days, according to statistics from the United Methodist Council on Finance and Administration. That compares with the 50 year period beginning in 1870 when Butcher says Methodists “were at our best” and started one new church a day.²²

Strategy and Support

The United Methodist Church has a new vision strategy for starting new congregations called Path One. Here are some components of that strategy which includes elements of visualized church support.

- Create a national assessment tool for use with church planters;
- Support new church pastors through regional training, internships, mentoring and web material;
- Build a system for orienting and training bishops and district superintendents to support new congregational starts;
- Create a database and decision-making calculators that allow conference leaders to make effective decisions for church plantings and closures; and
- Develop modular curriculum for starting congregations that is biblically based and helps congregations prepare for their role in new church starts.²³

International Pentecostal Holiness Church, IPHC

Vision

IPHC has a three pronged focus for growing the kingdom of God. The first is Reach 3 which is a friendship evangelism emphasis for every member to reach three new people for Christ. The second is Plant 3 which is a church planting emphasis for each church to start three new churches; one a Judean-Type (one like yourself), second a

²²Ibid

²³Ibid.

Samaritan-type (cross-cultural) and the other a world-type church (trans-national). The third is a prayer emphasis called The Lighthouse Strategy.²⁴

Strategy

For each type of church planting the Plant 3 strategy is outlined. This section will present only a digest of the strategy for one type of church plant—the Judean type. There are five parts to the strategy (with detailed content): selecting your strategy, analyzing your resources, building a time line, training and organizing workers, developing a budget, planning opening service and beyond.

Support

IPHC presents a strong vision for the church members to work within. They also have an application process to give guidance to prospective planters and they provide grants to parent churches (up to \$1500.00), which support a daughter church. IPHC mostly provides their support through the local church.²⁵

Presbyterian Church

Vision

That God, by His Grace and for His own glory, will transform the PCA into a grassroots church planting culture that is: exponentially reproducing a growing number of biblically healthy churches; seeing these churches characterized by significant conversion growth and ministries of mercy and reaching the diverse communities and people groups of North America.²⁶

²⁴"Reach 3 Plant3," A document by the International Pentecostal Holiness Church. Oklahoma City, OK: IPHC, 2000). 2.1-3.22. <http://www.iphc.org/files/celebrate/Celebrate.pdf> (4 August 2009).

²⁵"Welcome to Quest: the church planting ministry of IPHC." A brochure indicating the support for church planting. Oklahoma City, OK: IPHC, 2009. <http://evusa.iphc.org/chrplant.html> (4 August 2009).

Strategy and Support

First, MNA leaders have formulated a unifying vision, which can be implemented at all levels of church planting ministry in the denomination. Second, MNA provides services to those seeking to be church planting catalysts (church planting networks, presbyteries, individual churches) or those seeking to pursue church planting. MNA's experienced and increasingly specialized staff provide on a denominational level services such as church planter development and recruiting, assessment, assistance with placement, training, coaching, and fundraising consultation.²⁷

With each of these four denominations there is an evident burden to see the kingdom of God expanded through church planting. They illustrate how denominational organizations can be helpful in facilitating the support of church planting growth.

Summary and Conclusion

This chapter has looked for best practices in church planting in three areas. The first is a review of the church planting emphasis in Wisconsin in the 1980s. The concepts developed for implementation at that time were commendable and worthy of further study. However aspects of the implementation strategy appear flawed. The emphasis was presented for implementation in a time of cutbacks in other programs; the leadership approach was top-down rather than bottom up, and it had not yet become a part of the thinking and culture of the conference.

The survey of Adventist Conferences shows various approaches and strategies in the support of church planting that can bring success. The Texas

²⁶Contained in a letter from Ted Powers on the MNA church planting website, 22 August 2007. <http://www.pca-mna.org/churchplanting/index.php> (4 August 2009). MNA stands for Mission North America, a church planting initiative of the Presbyterian church in North America.

²⁷Article on the MNA church planting website. <http://www.pca-mna.org/churchplanting/faqs.php> (4 August 2009).

Conference emphasizes a lay-led and pastor-coached model. This seems to work well. The Alberta Conference on the other hand has mainly full-time pastors who have other responsibilities. They too have good results. The Georgia-Cumberland Conference puts much of their financial investment into church planting conference leadership, while the Pennsylvania and Wisconsin Conferences emphasize support through funding a church planting fund. Most of the Conferences allow for diversity of style and methodology in worship and ministry. Three of five Conferences stated that it was important to them to retain commitment to traditional Adventist values.

The study of other denominational organizations reveals a priority for church planting. The Church of the Nazarene strongly emphasizes the work in urban settings. This denomination works through parent churches to help a church plant succeed. The United Methodist Church wants to get back to the practice of their roots when they were planting one new church per day. At present there is one church started every 7.6 days. The International Pentecostal Holiness Church has a compelling strategy which is for every church in their denomination to plant three new churches per year: one a Judean type, one a Samaritan type, and the other a world type plant. The Presbyterian Church is providing many aspects of support to enhance their planting: recruiting, assessment, assistance with placement, training, and coaching and fundraising consultation.

There are varied ways in the Adventist conferences and other denominations to support church planting. The most important factor is the vision and determination to develop a strong church planting program. Many approaches seem to work if there is passion and support to undergird the emphasis in the church organizations.

CHAPTER 5

A NEW MODEL FOR CHURCH PLANTING IN WISCONSIN

This paper has sought to show that church planting is a vital part of Christ's plan to expand His kingdom. The paper has also indicated that the Seventh-day Adventist Church in North America has struggled to maintain its current program and at the same time provide resources for developing new work. This chapter seeks to show how new work can be developed even while resources are limited to foster it. The chapter is divided into four sections: the first, “Developing a Church Planting Vision and Culture”; second, “Establishing Strategies for Church Planting in Wisconsin”; third, “Providing Support for the New Church Planting Emphasis”; and, finally, “Implementation and Evaluation of the New Model”.

Developing a Church Planting Vision and Culture

In the survey of church planting's best practices in the previous chapter it is evident that in order for any church organization to succeed in developing a church planting movement, church planting must be made a priority. There must be an intentional effort to set a new vision and change the established culture. Leaders in Wisconsin made an attempt in the 1980s to have an aggressive church planting emphasis but it was halted after a brief period. One of the reasons is that too few people saw it as a priority to justify the resources expended.

Since 2002 a new emphasis in church planting has resulted in the establishment of about 20 church plants. A church planting coordinator has been a catalyst in achieving this result. Providing adequate support to the church planters has been challenging as well as achieving growth in the church plants. Thus there is a need for a more comprehensive approach to support church planting.

Developing a Vision

The church that developed at Antioch in the book of Acts was a model for future centuries on how to develop a church planting movement. In Wisconsin, the vision is to try to recapture the Antioch vision and spirit. The vision title proposed is “Operation Antioch”, and the theme statement is “Establishing New Frontiers for God.”

Antioch has been chosen as a Biblical model for the following reasons. First, when the first Christian missionaries entered Antioch, some of them started a cross-cultural work. This became an important reason for its success (Acts 11: 20-21). Second, the church became a strong sending or parent church to establish many new church bodies (Acts 14: 26, 27). Third, it became a center of leadership development as they sent out the first Christian missionaries. The church was not pastor dependent (Acts 13:1-3). Fourth, it championed the coaching model. Barnabas was sent by the church at Jerusalem to coach the new church plant (Acts 11:22). Fifth, Antioch was a healthy, growing church which emphasized not letting distracting factors such as conflict deter it from its mission (Acts 15).

A key aspect in developing an Antioch model of church planting is to have mission-driven churches. If people are looking to the church mainly to have their needs

met, then the Antioch model will not work. The church at Antioch, even in its formative period, was willing to send Paul and Barnabas out to new frontiers of mission. Russell Burrill states that “the first step in moving North American Adventism to a reproducible system is the creation of a mission mindset in the churches of North America.”¹⁸⁶ When members are urgent and passionate about sharing Jesus with their community, then the context is right for new work to start. The focus is on those who need to hear the gospel preached and not just on those who are already followers of Christ.

A part of the Antioch vision is making the development of new work a priority. New work may not always be a church plant, but that would be a priority in their planning. Each area of the Conference will be challenged to establish a new church each year. This would mean that several churches would collaborate to launch and support a new plant. Another aspect of the vision would be the types of churches planted. Antioch was successful because it had a multi-faceted vision. In Acts 1:8 Jesus gives a vision that challenges all Christians to have that multi-faceted vision. He says to be witnesses of Him in “Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.” (Acts 1:8)

Having a strong “Jerusalem” church means that the parent church is kept healthy, growing and missional in its nature. Witnessing in Judea is interpreted by some as planting a church similar to your own.¹⁸⁷ Witnessing in Samaria refers to developing cross-cultural work and “to the ends of the earth” refers to developing trans-national churches.

¹⁸⁶Burrill, *Rekindling a Lost Passion*, 238.

¹⁸⁷This material was referenced in the previous chapter as that developed by the International Pentecostal Holiness church under the heading “Reach 3 Plant3,” Oklahoma City, OK: IPHC, 2000). 2.1-3.22. <http://www.iphc.org/files/celebrate/Celebrate.pdf> (18 August 2009).

In Wisconsin, the challenge to plant a church in each area of the Conference would be to choose one of these church planting types that align with the direction of the leading of the Holy Spirit. There are many types of church plants that can be highlighted beside the ones just mentioned.¹⁸⁸

It may not be possible immediately to start a new church in each area each year but this would be a goal to reach. Once that level is reached new goals can be established. In Wisconsin the Conference territory is divided into five areas. This would mean that five new churches would be developed each year. The current goal before the Wisconsin constituency (2006-2010) was ten churches in four years.

Establishing a Church Planting Culture

When the vision of “Operation Antioch” is adopted by the constituency, how is it entrenched in the culture of the Conference? The following is a series of proposed steps to help entrench the vision in the culture.

1. All leaders—pastors, teachers, Conference officers, executive committee members, and lay leaders—will be invited to participate in studying the vision of “Operation Antioch.” This will be accomplished through a document that will be prepared summarizing the plan. Also, a power-point presentation will be developed. The leaders will be asked to pray that God's Spirit will help them to understand how they can be mission focused in all aspects of their work.
2. The Conference website will highlight “Operation Antioch.” The vision will be described and the challenge kept before the constituency.

¹⁸⁸See Appendix C

3. A series of articles will be presented in the “Lamp Letter” which is the Conference newsletter. This periodical is sent to all members of the Conference and will expose them to the developing vision.

4. Operation Antioch will be an agenda item presented to the 2010 Wisconsin conference constituency meeting. When the constituency votes a direction at its quadrennial session, church members are more inclined to feel that it is a vital part of the mission of the Conference.

5. Each church and church member will be invited to participate in the theme of 2011–“Establishing New Frontiers for God.” In 2010 a three year emphasis in evangelism will be completed. In 2011 new and established members will be encouraged to be mission focused. Establishing new frontiers may involve establishing small groups in new areas, working with new people groups, opening new ministries in new geographical areas, as well as beginning new churches.

Once the Conference membership is committed to the vision of “Operation Antioch,” the challenges presented in establishing new work can more easily be overcome.

Establishing Strategies for Church Planting in Wisconsin

Church organizations have found that to develop a multiplying movement in church planting, a systems approach is needed. One church planting leader, who designed such a plan for his denomination, described it this way:

And so Century 21 Church Planting is a system that invades existing structures and modifies the priorities of institutions to reposition the district as a church planting movement. It's like a bookshelf that organizes resources developed independently by qualified experts. These individual “books” allow the

bookshelf to integrate them into a cooperative and ordered system to help district growth. It begins not as a program to be implemented but as an attitude to be adopted. . . . It need not be fully operational before planners will see benefit because movement, any movement, is energy that can be channeled and guided by the Holy Spirit to accomplish His mission for the church.¹⁸⁹

Those organizations that have worked with church planting for a long time will have developed components that enhance the development and support of new work. The following sections are proposed for the Wisconsin field.

Mission Teams and Territories

To help generate mission focus in the constituency a Church Works¹⁹⁰ weekend will be conducted. This will be for the purpose of gathering leadership teams from each church and help them focus on mission. This mission focus is an essential part in starting a church planting movement. A part of the Church Works emphasis is to encourage the Conference to clarify each church's territory so it is clear on its mission field. Church leaders can then involve their membership in praying about where new work should start.

Prayer helps clarify the mission field because it helps to enable church members to see where God is working. Blackaby says, “The Holy Spirit and the Word of God will instruct you and help you know when and where God is working.

¹⁸⁹Mannoia, *Church Planting*, 14.

¹⁹⁰Church Works has been developed by the North American Division Evangelism institute. It is an official meeting of a local conference for pastors and a mission-focused leadership team of 10-12 from each church or district. These teams work together around tables creating a skeleton strategy, and upon returning home, are able to create and share the vision and continue to develop their plan for reaching every person in their territory for God.

Once you know where He is working, you can adjust your life to join Him where He is working."¹⁹¹

The Church Works weekend accomplishes other results that are essential to an effective church planting emphasis. The conference administrative and departmental leadership must be involved in helping pastors and church leaders develop the mission focus of their church. Discussion will take place about resources, funding, and consultation enabling church planting and other outreach emphases to thrive. Gathering in teams from local churches is important not only for strategizing at the weekend meeting but also for returning to the church and having inspired people to work with. The team approach also helps in accountability since team members encourage one another to be faithful.

Parent Church Network (PCN)

It is important at this juncture to reiterate an earlier point in this paper and that is that churches start churches. Bob Roberts says, "Networks, denominations, and church planting organizations all have their place—that of servicing local churches. However, we must be absolutely clear about this, churches start churches."¹⁹²

While Roberts makes a good point that parent churches are important in giving birth to new churches, it should not be concluded from this quotation that only churches can start churches. The Wisconsin Conference recognizes applications to

¹⁹¹Blackaby, *Experiencing God*, 72.

¹⁹²Roberts, *Multiplying Church*, 54.

the church planting committee from: the Conference; areas within the Conference; pastors, parent churches and lay members.¹⁹³

Churches that become effective parent churches are mission focused and are lay-led by a mission-driven pastor. It is difficult to have a mission-focused church seeking to establish new churches if they don't have a mission-led pastor.

Once a church is desirous of reaching out in its territory to start new work, then it is helpful to network with other churches who have the same goal. Church Works will help teams and churches become acquainted with other mission-focused churches. Conference church planting leaders will help network churches and church leaders who are seeking to give birth to new congregations.

Mannoia says that the conference or district role in PCN is to “simply recognize the raw church planting interest in a local church and honestly position the district to help that church become what it wants to become—a parent. The district is not a demanding force, but a supporting force; not an institution to be served, but a system to serve.”¹⁹⁴ The Wisconsin Conference leadership will seek to bring the pastors and lay leaders of parent churches together once a quarter to learn from one another. There will also be electronic networking to keep abreast of what is happening in the experiences of each group.

¹⁹³The church planting document prepared by the Wisconsin Conference entitled, “Church Planting” designed to accompany the application form is in APPENDIX D.

¹⁹⁴Mannoia, *Church Planting*, 61-62.

Leadership assessment and training

A new component to help church planters have better success is an assessment process. Church planting can be very demanding; so much preparation is needed to assure success. The current practice in Wisconsin is: when an application for a new plant is made to the church planting committee, the prospective church planting leader is interviewed by the church planting committee. There has not been a very formal process of assessment and training provided to the planter.

In some cases the pastoral leader of a plant is the district pastor. There would already have been some assessment given to this person when he/she came to the Conference. However, many of the planters are lay people and these have not had the same opportunity of assessment. There often are three components to the assessment: personality, performance and skills.¹⁹⁵ At present there is no assessment instrument developed by NADEI¹⁹⁶ which serves the division as the resource for church planting.¹⁹⁷

There are quite a few helpful assessments instruments available from various denominational organizations that can be adapted. This is an area where it appears more development is needed in the Adventist Church. The plan in Wisconsin is to adapt available instruments on denominational websites as free downloads. These will be used as a self-assessment prior to the face-to-face interview with the planter.¹⁹⁸

¹⁹⁵Ibid., 68.

¹⁹⁶North American Division Evangelism Institute

¹⁹⁷This statement is based on an inquiry to the NADEI office, August 21, 2009.

¹⁹⁸Available instruments can be found on the Evangelical Free website:
<http://www.churchplanting4me.com/pdf/efcaassessment.pdf> (21 August 2009). If preferred a church

Church planter training is another important area. The Wisconsin Conference has a two year lay pastor training program that has been helpful to many church planters. The Conference has not made it mandatory to go through this program but some have found it to be a great advantage. There are other bible training programs available within North America that can be helpful. Perhaps the greatest help is the on-the-job training that will be provided by the pastor-coach. This program will be described later in this chapter.

New Church Incubator

Having good support for church planters, spouses and lay leaders is critical to their success. This is especially true in the first year of their church's ministry. However, support should be beyond the first year.

The plan in Wisconsin to fulfill this role is to have coaches available in every area of the Conference. In fact every lay planter will be assigned a pastor coach. This arrangement will be described more fully in the next section of the paper. The monthly meeting with the pastor-coach with the accompanying resources and training is a large part of the New Church Incubator support. The new church also is associated with the parent church and often encouragement is provided through the membership and the meetings of the parent church.

organization can make arrangement with Church Planters Profile to have their prospective church planters assessed free of charge. This website is accessed at <http://www.churchplanterprofiles.com/cake/> (21 August 2009).

Application and Committee Process

A church planting committee has provided guidance and decision making for church planting for about six years in Wisconsin. This committee serves to consider applications to establish new church plants. It also considers applications for resources and support for the church plant. At the time the church planting committee was established, a church planting fund also was established. The next section of the paper will enlarge on financial support to church plants.

A document is provided to the prospective planter which explains some of the policies and practices of the conference regarding church planting. An application form accompanies this document.¹⁹⁹

As church planting develops better organizational structure and support, the committee will be enlarged to include planters from the field. At present the committee is made up of the church planting coordinator, the Hispanic coordinator along with the Conference president, the Conference secretary-treasurer and the ministerial director. This committee has been important to the development of church planting in Wisconsin in recent years.

Church Planter Recruitment

Since the growth in church planting is an important part of kingdom growth, developing leaders for these new churches is an important factor. The words of Jesus are always true, “The harvest truly is plentiful, but the laborers are few.” (Matt 9:37) More churches are going to require effective leaders. Thus more full-time and lay pastors will be needed to meet the growing needs in Wisconsin.

¹⁹⁹ See Appendix D

A recruitment plan is needed to attract people to ministry. Mannoia, who has been involved in developing recruitment networks says, "If your district is not constantly recruiting leaders and strengthening the leadership team, it will eventually deteriorate. The most important task for the overseer is recruitment."²⁰⁰

One way this will be attempted in Wisconsin is through rallies and special events featuring church planting. Both at the annual church planting rally and camp meeting, stories and opportunities will be presented regarding church planting. A church planter response form will be designed to help in the recruiting process. Also at the lay pastor meetings these church planter response forms will be available.

At present the majority of church planters in Wisconsin are pastored by a district pastor who added another church to his responsibilities. As lay-led church plants become more of an emphasis, church planters will be needed. Thus the recruitment process will be necessary.

Rallies and *SEEDS*²⁰¹

Over the last six years annual church planting rallies have been conducted. They have been organized by the church planting coordinator and advertised throughout the conference. These rallies are held in locations where church planting is currently emphasized or where there is a need for planting. The Texas Conference has provided the resource people for these events.

²⁰⁰Mannoia, *Church Planting*, 86.

²⁰¹*SEEDS* is an annual North American Division training event started in 1996 to foster and support church planting and other aspects of church growth.

Rallies are important for the encouragement of current church planters and for the recruitment of future planters. Therefore annual church planting rallies will be continued as a part of the new emphasis. In addition, a meeting will continue to be held at camp meeting each year. The Sunday afternoon meeting at camp meeting could be expanded in its scope to help inspire more people to take up church planting.

Area rallies could also be effective when church planting takes on a significant profile in the area.

Another important component of inspiring, training and recruiting church planters is having them attend the SEEDS Conference at Andrews University. Each year those interested in and those involved in church planting are encouraged to attend. Funds are made available from the church planting fund. The rallies are also financially supported through the church planting fund. There are several other components that will be a part of the strategy for a more successful church planting movement in Wisconsin but these are highlighted in the next section under support.

Providing Support for the New Church Planting Emphasis

There are four special areas of support that will help assure success in the “Operation Antioch,” church planting emphasis in Wisconsin.

Coaching

A change is occurring in the way we train and support leaders in North America. In years past a top-down methodology resulted in productivity and it was generally thought to be the most effective leadership style. The top-down style was effective in industry when overseeing many workers on an assembly line. Today, in the information

age, a more relational style is employed. Stoltzfus says, “leadership coaching is the discipline of using relational influence to develop and empower adult leaders.”²⁰² The new relational emphasis has often resulted in working as teams to give support and guidance. Coaching has helped church planters develop a new sense of encouragement and support because they are not alone.

Wisconsin is planning to rely heavily on the experience and resources of the Texas Conference. Church planting leaders from Texas have come to Wisconsin annually for four years to conduct a church planting rally. The Texas leaders provided coaching to many of the planters in attendance. In addition some of the Texas group continued their coaching support throughout the year. Here are some steps employed by the Texas Conference that are planned for Wisconsin.

1. Every lay-led church planter should be coached by a full time pastor or conference person. This will require the training of pastors in coaching. This training began in 2007 when 12 pastors went through the first level of coaching training. The main tool for teaching this course is the book by Bob Logan and Sherilyn Carlton.²⁰³ Another tool that is used in coaching training is “Coachnet,”²⁰⁴ a web-based resource that allows for interactive coaching sessions.

²⁰²Tony Stoltzfus, *Leadership Coaching: The Discipline, Skills and Heat of a Christian Coach* (Virginia Beach, VA:Tony Stoltzfus, 2005), vii-viii.

²⁰³Robert Logan and Sherilyn Carlton, *Coaching 101: Discover the Power of Coaching* (St. Charles, IL: Church Smart Resources, 2003). There are two helpful handbooks that go with the book that help provide excellent training for coaching.

²⁰⁴This site can be accessed at: <http://coachnet.org/en/>. In order to use the resource a membership is required.

2. The coach meets on a monthly basis with the church planter. The purpose of this meeting is for listening, prayer, reporting, visioning, accountability and development of long term planning.

3. Monthly interaction takes place between the pastor-coach and the church planting group. This meeting is for the purpose of observation, training and support.

4. Annual evangelistic reaping meetings will be conducted by the pastor-coach with the church plant group. This is for growth of the church plant spiritually and numerically.

5. Annual church planting rally is to be for all church plants, pastor-coaches and lay-pastors.

The Seventh-day Adventist Church organization is designed to support a world work. The structure allows for a connected work throughout the world. The giving also reflects the world church thinking. The members' tithe involves giving to aspects of the church outside of North America. This is helpful to the world work but at times presents challenges for additional funding for full time planters. Therefore many lay planters are involved who don't have pastoral training. The need then is to provide trained coaches for the lay led plants and planters.

Finance

Many consider finance a big obstacle in starting new work. It is a challenge to find adequate funding but the most important factor in having a successful church multiplication movement is leaders and constituents in a church organization that are focused on mission and saving the lost. Funds will be found if the development of new

work is a priority. That being said, it takes strategic planning to have adequate support for church planting.

Aubrey Malphurs gives six sources to fund a new church plant: a mother church, a core group (this is the group that is starting the plant), interested friends and acquaintances, a denomination or organization, and personal employment.²⁰⁵ In this section, Malphurs also suggests that within three years the church plant should be able to be mostly self-sufficient financially.

Logan makes the following suggestions about denominational financing of church planting.²⁰⁶ First, work with existing funds. If the funding source is too rigid in the appropriation procedure then it may not be as useful. This does not mean that review and accountability are not in place but to make sure that funds can be quickly and readily disbursed. Second, evaluate the sources of funding available for ministries. If there are programs that are not contributing significantly to the mission of the organization then they should be shut down to make funds available for the development of new work. Third, stop subsidies for unfruitful plants. It is not only ineffective programs that need pruning, but also unfruitful church plants. Fourth, encourage new churches to contribute. If churches don't get in the habit of giving early, they sometimes don't get in the habit at all. Fifth, increase the financial resources. Many times when people see a new vision being implemented, monies are made available by resource people who believe in the project.

²⁰⁵Malphurs, *Planting Growing Churches*, 50-52.

²⁰⁶These suggestions come from chapter ten in the book, Logan, *Be Fruitful and Multiply*, 167-178.

In the Wisconsin Conference an attempt has been made to develop financial resources to develop church planting. A church planting fund has been established and a percentage of all tithe goes into this fund. At present this is not a large amount—one third of one percent (which could increase in the future).²⁰⁷ When the church planting fund was set up, \$50,000 went into the fund. Each Adventist conference has a different way of financially supporting church planting.²⁰⁸

The Adventist Church organization is set up differently from many denominations. The Adventist Church is a world church and the tithe, which is the main source of funding, is shared with the world field. This has led to a strong world movement. However, it may not provide for as much funds locally for the development of new work.

In Wisconsin most church plants are under the leadership of pastors who have added to their district responsibilities. When having a current pastor providing leadership doesn't seem the best answer, lay-led church plants are seen as an answer. These can be financially viable and start up costs can be supported from the church planting fund. In fact some church plants have begun without the first consideration of being salaried-pastor-led. It seemed the best approach from the start. When several of these lay-led plants begin in geographical proximity then perhaps there would be sufficient tithe

²⁰⁷Some Adventist conferences return a percentage of tithe back to the church plant to meet expenses. The Wisconsin Conference has established the practice of placing in the church planting fund a percentage of all tithe. This gives all churches and church members an opportunity to participate in the development of new work. It also means that all church tithe is related to in the same way whether a church plant or an established church.

²⁰⁸See the discussion of conference funding from the previous chapter. Pennsylvania contributed \$25,000 to their church planting fund initially and return 10% of the tithe of the church plants to them; Alberta conference pays 50% of the rent in the first year; Georgia-Cumberland Conference puts \$60,000 per year from evangelism funds and Texas gives extra evangelism dollars in church plants and hires one new church planter per year to the conference from its tithe fund. This has been achieved by re-prioritizing programming in the conference.

generated to have a pastor-coach hired to provide leadership support. This may not be the only responsibility of the salaried pastor but an important part of his/her responsibility. Lay-led plants are being encouraged not to become pastor dependent; so having a pastor coach can be a good solution. The overseas model works well in having many churches pastored by a pastor-coach who trains and equips them but leaves them to do the shepherding.

The Wisconsin Conference will continue to study ways to provide financial support to church planting. Trust funds can be made available. Evangelism funds may be used to help with church planting projects. The concept of Russell Burrill²⁰⁹ to have additional churches added to current pastoral responsibilities to make room for church planting coaches and leadership is one that is worthy of study.

Additional Resources

The Texas Conference is seen as a leader within the Adventist Church in North America.²¹⁰ The Texas Conference has found that three additional emphases give strength to church planting.²¹¹ The three are public evangelism, small groups and Natural Church Development.

It is not the purpose of this section to explain why and how these programs help church planting but to highlight that they are a part of the growth plan in Wisconsin.

²⁰⁹See Burrill, *Rekindling a Lost Passion*, 237.

²¹⁰The leadership of Texas is not only because they have the most church plants developed. They also are developing the most leaders in church planting. The conference is giving church planting a priority in their operation. They have also developed strategies that are being sought by other fields. One example of their influence is that they are the key presenters in Church Planting at the SEEDS conference each year.

²¹¹Texas conference leaders have met with Wisconsin Conference leaders for several years and have made shared how evangelism, small groups, Natural Church Development are important components of a church planting emphasis.

Leadership

In putting “leadership” in this last section, it is not to be concluded that it is least important. John Maxwell's now famous quote, “everything rises and falls on leadership”²¹² is certainly true in church planting. Wisconsin Conference leaders have given support to a church planting emphasis and also for six years a conference church planting coordinator has been key to its development. This has been mostly volunteered by a part time worker but has been effective. This person is now not able to serve in that leadership role and so another coordinator for the conference is being sought.

Area coaching leadership needs to be developed as well as pastor-coaches. In Acts 11 the developing church plant at Antioch was sent Barnabas. He became a coach to the fledging plant. Scriptures says, “when he came and had seen the grace of God, he was glad, and encouraged them all that with purpose of heart they should continue with the Lord, . . . and a great many people were added to the Lord.” (Acts 11:23-24).

As has been previously stated, the new emphasis in church planting in Wisconsin is called “Operation Antioch.” A key part of that is the Barnabas factor. This would be supportive and encouraging coaches that will enable and empower the new plants. As new workers come to the Conference, the issue of coaching will be an important factor in their selection.

²¹²John C. Maxwell, *Developing the Leader Within You* (Nashville: Nelson Business, 1993), viii.

Implementation and Evaluation of the New Model

Many new concepts that seem good and viable never are implemented because there is not an implementation plan. While church planting is becoming an emphasis in Wisconsin, the following steps are being recommended as an implementation plan.

1. The concepts will be presented to the long range planning emphasis of Wisconsin Conference leaders in August of 2009.
2. The plan will have an initial presentation to the Conference Executive Committee and in September 2009 and a more complete presentation in November 2009 when it will be presented for adoption.
3. If adopted by the Conference, it would become a major agenda item for the constituency meeting in October, 2010.
4. During the spring of 2010 there will be pre-session delegate meetings where the plan will be highlighted as an agenda item. This will be for the orientation of the delegates.
5. At the November 2009 pastors' meeting, an overview of the plan will be shared for discussion and input.

The model presented has been the result of much field testing and discussion. Church planting has had success over the last seven years in the conference. The intent of this paper is to develop plans and ideas that will take church planting to a new level. Many of the points have been discussed with pastors and conference leaders but more input will be achieved when broader exposure is given.

The above implementation strategy is seen as a shared vision model instead of a top-down implementation strategy. The previous attempt at church planting referred to in

Chapter 4 may have suffered from expecting too quick results and having the plan exposed to too few people.

Another supporting element to the plan proposed for Wisconsin is presentations to the leadership at the Lake Union and North American Division. A truly successful conference program necessitates the support of the church at other organizational levels. The success of the other denominational organizations cited in chapter 4 is that they were based on a national strategy. It is the conviction of the author of this paper that a national strategy for church planting is needed. Currently church planting is not mentioned on the North American Division website. Church planting is an emphasis of the North American Division Evangelism Institute. This organization is seen by many as a resource to help the church achieve its mission but not the main strategy setting body for the Division. When a strategy for the North American Division for church planting is established, then local conferences can tie into this aspect of the mission more readily.

Evaluation of this plan will be provided by making it a regular item of discussion at each executive meeting. Reports will be given by the president or church planting coordinator to the executive committee.

There will be quarterly meetings with area coordinators and reports will be requested by conference leaders of the church planting emphasis. The effectiveness of this emphasis will be discussed and suggestions sought for more effectiveness.

Summary and Conclusion

Chapter five is organized in four sections. First, "Developing a Church Planting Vision and Culture." This vision is based on the New Testament Antioch church which was very dynamic in producing leaders and support for church planting.

Second, “Establishing Strategies for Church Planting in Wisconsin.” This section highlights strategies that are being found effective in church planting movements both with the Adventist Church and in other denominations. Third, “Providing Support for the New Church Planting Emphasis.” There are critical areas of support to make church planting successful in a conference such as leadership, coaching and finance. These were highlighted in this section. Fourth, “Implementation and Evaluation of the New Model.” Many plants fail not because they were not well conceived but because they were not implemented well. An implementation and evaluation process is proposed in this section.

In conclusion, church planting is a vital part of the growth of a church organization. There are many components to making it work successfully. The most important is a certainty that God's plan is followed. The “Operation Antioch” model was selected because it is biblically-based. Another important factor is mission-focused, passionate people who are willing to be lead by God. When these two factors are in place many other aspects of developing a church planting movement will follow.

CHAPTER 6

SUMMARY

The Bible and the writings of Ellen White mandate church planting as essential in expanding God's Kingdom. Seventh-day Adventists in North America began with a strong church planting emphasis. During much of the twentieth century church planting was not made a priority in most areas of North America within the Adventist Church. The Wisconsin Conference's experience was like the rest of North America.

As Adventists plan for the “latter rain” of the Holy Spirit, it is important to have more churches to welcome and disciple new believers. Church planting is an important part of Adventist eschatology.

Today Adventists need new models and strategies to help make church planting strong in their conferences. A new vision and culture needs to be developed for this important work. Often church planting is not given priority because maintaining the current operation utilizes all the resources. Yet it must be given a priority.

This paper has presented the new model for church planting in Wisconsin. This new model seeks to present a renewed vision of church planting before the leaders and members of the conference. It seeks to make church planting a way of life in Wisconsin. The new model desires to create a church planting movement where strategies and structures would be in place to help support and encourage the multiplication of churches.

It is hoped that this support would enable church planting to be an established emphasis of the conference and a part of its evangelism strategy.

In order for a church planting movement to be developed, conference leaders need to possess conviction about its importance. In the Wisconsin Conference leaders have studied the principles outlined in this paper. Presentations have been made to administration and departmental leaders along with the conference executive committee and pastors. There is agreement on the importance of planting new churches. Steps described in this chapter are being taken to embed church planting in the thinking and culture of the whole constituency.

This new model is not seen as just another project for the conference but putting into place an essential part of God's final thrust in taking the gospel to the world.

APPENDIX A

MISSION STATEMENT OF THE WISCONSIN CONFERENCE

Vision Statement

Living and Sharing God's Love

Mission Statement

Seventh-day Adventists in Wisconsin seek to uplift Jesus as the Way, the Truth, and the Life.

- **As the Way** by introducing people to their Savior, Jesus Christ
- **As the Truth** by sharing the truth about God and the plan of salvation as revealed in the Bible and taught by Jesus and by proclaiming the message of present truth found in Revelation 14:6-11. This is Christ's last message of warning and appeal prior to His return.
- **As the Life** by living to honor and glorify God, which includes: loving people for Jesus, reflecting Him in all aspects of our life and witness, and possessing the qualities of trusting and obedience (Revelation 14:12).

Our Priorities

Education: Providing quality Christian education available to all students. This education will inspire students to a personal commitment to Jesus and train and involve them in Service

Community: Seeking to be the salt and light to the world by being an positive presence. Our neighborhoods will become enlightened and enriched by our presence.

Family: Building homes where Christ is central with commitment to values such as mutual love, honor, respect, and responsibility.

Congregations: Encouraging congregations to continue to grow as loving, vibrant centers of fellowship, service, outreach, and worship.

Evangelism: Reaching all people for Christ. Special emphasis on population centers and young adults.

Spirituality: Inspiring members to experience spiritual intimacy with Christ through prayer and bible study.

Stewardship: Honoring Christ by giving Him priority in our time, talents, and possessions. Faithfulness in tithing and sacrificial giving of offerings will be each member's response in these pivotal times.

Youth: Providing youth with an atmosphere of love and acceptance in our churches. Youth are encouraged to make a personal commitment to Jesus Christ as their Savior and be involved significantly in the life and ministry of the church.

Values

- Faithfulness to the Bible message and counsels of the Spirit of Prophecy is fundamental.
- Christ and the cross must be central to all beliefs and practices.
- All people belong to God and should be treated with respect and dignity.
- Lost people matter to God.
- Every person's gifts and talents are to be employed in fulfilling Christ's mission.
- The Adventist message is vital and is to be lived and shared before Christ comes.
- Christ's character of love, unity, and service must be reflected in His body, the church.
- The people of God are to be stewards of all His heavenly treasure.
- Youth are vital and must be inspired and involved in ministry.
- The Lord's business is to be conducted in an ethical manner with financial responsibility.

-
- b. Are fully organized churches with less than 50 members and are growing at less than 5% per year. Further explanation_____
-
- c. Are groups of less than 30 members but not organized into a congregations as yet. Further explanation _____
-
4. The denomination supports the church plants financially by (Please circle which of these are true of your organization and provide the additional information indicated)
- a. Providing 100% of the salary of the planter (% of church plants_____).
- b. Providing help to the church plant with an amount of 50% or less of a salary (% of church plants_____).
- c. Each church plant must be self supporting and the denomination gives occasional help.
5. What type of church planters lead your church plants? (Circle which is true in your organization and provide the further information requested).
- a. Full Salaried pastors (% of church plants _____).
- b. Bi-Vocation pastors (% of church plants_____).
- c. Lay volunteer pastors (% of church plants _____).
6. Is there an application process to become a church plant? How are the church planters selected?
7. The denomination provides leadership support by (Please circle and indicate %)
- a. Providing trained church planting coaches (% of plants_____).

- b. Providing pastoral support but not trained coaches (% of plants_____).
 - c. Specialized help other than coaching and pastoral (% of plants_____)
8. The denomination provides support to the church plant (Please circle which applies to your organization in a, b, c. (Provide additional information as indicated).
- a. Church planter's support meeting (weekly, monthly, quarterly, annually—circle one)
 - b. Church planters assessment process—This is to determine the effectiveness of church plant leadership. Who makes the final decision on church planting leadership in your organization? _____.
 - c. Parent church network—Since Parent Churches are so important to church planting some organization have a network of leaders of churches desiring to or are currently involved in planting a church. (If this is true of your organization please circle.)
9. Would the Denomination encourage Church Plants to look and feel alike or does it encourage diversity of style and philosophy among the church plants? Please explain.
10. Other factors in your organization's empowerment of church plants not highlighted in this survey.

APPENDIX C²¹³

METHODS OF CHURCH PLANTING

House church. An attempt to get back to New Testament roots and experience how Christianity began. Some are finding this method effective in a time when people are desiring a deeper personal experience in Christ.

Cell church. Where all aspects of the church are done in cells. It is different from a church that has small groups as a part of its program.

Spinning off. Using members from the mother church to form the core group of a new church in the same community.

Colonizing. Using members from the mother church to form the core group of a new church in a different community.

Seeding. Taking advantage of natural relocation of key leaders to start a new church in new communities.

Adopting. Provide leadership and other assistance for core groups and/or struggling churches that approach the conference for help.

Partnering. A cooperative effort between several churches and the district, conference or national office to help plant a new church.

Satellites. Similar to spinning off, except in this case, the daughter and mother maintain a working relationship. Pastor of mother church serves as senior pastor of daughter churches.

Multi-congregational. Minister to several different ethnic groups. They usually share facilities and maintain their autonomy. Others share the facilities and staff.

Catalyzing. An apostolic-type leader whose ministry is planting churches. Does not remain to pastor, but moves on to plant another church.

²¹³Adapted from the IPHC material on the Judean type of church plant. Accessed http://www.iphc.org/r3p3/p3_judean.html (23 August 2009).

Mission Team. A group of specialists sponsored by a church planting agency (local church, conference or national office) to plant a new church.

Founding pastor. Similar to the catalytic planter, but stays on to pastor the church for an indefinite time.

APPENDIX D

CHURCH PLANTING APPLICATION FORM

A. PLANNING STAGE (If you are in the conceptual stage, versus already organized and meeting weekly, please fill out A 1-3, C 9-11, & D)

1. Vision and Mission of Church Plant _____

2. Type of group planned or organized: (Please circle one)
Fellowship Group, Company or Church.

Parent Church _____

Does the new church plant have the blessing and support of the parent church? _____

Supporting Pastor _____

3. Location of church plant meetings _____

4. Approximate expected attendance _____

B. ORGANIZING STAGE (If you have already organized as a fellowship group, company or church, please fill out all A through D)

5. Please list attendees on separate sheet

6. Leadership:

Name of Leader _____

Treasurer _____

Clerk _____

Does the group have leadership potential? Describe _____

7. Pastoral Leadership: (Circle One)
Volunteer, Stipend, Salaried pastor who carries the responsibilities of other churches.

8. What is the projected annual tithe base? _____

C. REQUEST FOR FUNDING (Feel free to add attachments if more room is needed to share goals, projected costs, etc.)

9. The need of the church plant for funding is as follows: _____

10. The amount requested this calendar year \$ _____

11. When are the funds are needed? _____

D. AUTHORIZATION

The request was made by a decision of which body? _____

Date _____

Person making request _____

Position _____

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- C. Children:
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 - 2. Rhonda Michelle Muchiutti - age 38
 - 3. Brian Scott Corkum - 37

Educational Information

- A. BA Theology, Atlantic Union College, 1965
- B. MDiv, Andrews University, 1970

Professional Experience

- A. Pastor-Evangelist, Maritime Conference of Seventh-day Adventists
Fredericton District, August 1966 - August 1969
Moncton District, August 1970 - August 1974
Evangelist, August 1974 - August 1975
- B. Pastor and Conference worker, Alberta Conference
Edmonton South District, August 1975 - August 1978
College Heights, August 1978 - December 1984

Personal Ministries and Sabbath School, December 1984 - December 1987

President, December 1987- January 1996.

- C. President, Wisconsin Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, January 1996 - Present (September, 2009)