



*Church
Planting
out from
Redemption*

*Fruitful multiplication
of gospel-centered
kingdom-embassies*

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A Vision of Planting Churches

From the days before Redemption City Church began, its leadership envisioned a church that plants other churches. To reach a diverse city requires multiple churches with a diversity of gifts and emphases, not one large monolithic church with a single vision.

Planting multiple churches has many practical benefits. 1) New churches reach different people. They have different styles, different skills, and different connections in the city. 2) New churches reach more people. Young churches feel the importance of reaching new people to have a future much more than an established church. 3) As a corollary, new churches challenge and strengthen other churches to remain focused on the primary mission of the gospel. 4) New churches complement existing churches by filling gaps that the existing ministry was unable to address. 5) New churches promote more member engagement. Young churches require all hands on deck to survive. Every member is vital for the health of the body. People who could easily be spectators in a larger, established church are challenged to rise into positions of leadership. 6) New churches testify to a unity among churches. Planting helps our witness by overcoming a tendency to become tribalistic and territorial. We need to work together for the good of the city and the health of our shared mission.

Purpose of this Guide

Despite the need for a diverse witness in a city or region, there are still core principles that define every church. God's manifold wisdom in Christ is displayed through his church (Ephesians 3:10). Jesus gave the keys of authority in Christ's kingdom to the church (Matthew 16:17–19; 18:18–20; 1 Cor. 5:1–5). These are big responsibilities that come with every congregation and must be priorities kept in the forefront by every leader.

This guide intends to provide potential planters out of Redemption City Church a guide to immerse themselves in these truths through practical training efforts including: reading, assessments, elder interviews, and teaching opportunities.

The goal is that through this deliberate process future church planters can know what is expected of them and the church has a clear and common tool to evaluate their progress.

While we affirm that there are many other faithful churches outside of our doctrinal distinctives, our intent is to intentionally train up daughter churches that will leave the home of Redemption City Church carrying on the family name in their shared core theological commitments. We delight in many churches being planted by other churches, but this guide represents the way we intend to send out healthy church families that exalt Christ in the gospel through his locally gathered disciples.

Outline

The gospel is the announcement that Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the perfect Son of Man, died on the cross as a substitute for sinners, and rose from the dead to defeat death and build his church, the new covenant kingdom citizens of the New Creation. The gospel creates an assembly of servants of King Jesus who represent his authority on earth until he returns.

This proposed process only intends to provide a structure for future planters to grow in that truth and be evaluated by it. It is not this plan that creates churches, but the gospel creates churches.

So the following is not THE official law for planting churches, but a strategic plan for examining gospel fruit in a potential church planter and team.

The following steps lead from early examination of gospel calling to a public, church-endorsed team sending.

1. Fruit Inspection (Application Process)
2. Farming Apprenticeship (Church Planting Residency)
3. Homestead Vision (Planting Proposal and Evaluation)
4. Tenant Farming (Early Implementation within the Church)
5. Cultivation and Planting (Going Public and Sending)

Training and Evaluating Potential Planters

The following explanation details the process for training and evaluating potential church planters at Redemption City Church. Each step contains milestones to stop for elder (and sometimes church) evaluation prior to moving onto the next step.

Each church planter must show a willingness to submit to the authority Christ gave to the local church before engaging in the planting mission. Though the candidate may feel a call to a planting, a call is not certain until it is affirmed by a local church. Even the Apostle Paul, who had a divine vision to call him to proclaim the gospel to the gentiles, still submitted himself to local churches for 17 years (Galatians 1:11–2:2). It wasn't until the Spirit confirmed that calling through a local church that Paul finally was sent on this divine mission (Acts 13:1–3).

This process gives the candidate and the church a guide to discern and approve the work of God's Spirit in the potential planter. Each step requires certain milestones to be met before taking the next steps. The first three steps will be mostly internal work within the church before taking the vision public to begin marketing, networking, fundraising, and recruiting to implement the vision.

1. Fruit Inspection (Application)

The goal of this first step is simply to examine in the life of the potential planter a love for Jesus and his church. Has the seed planted in his life borne fruit of the Spirit (Gal. 5:22–23), fruit of repentance (Matt. 3:8), fruit of light of goodness (Eph. 5:9), fruit of righteousness (Phil. 1:11; Heb. 12:11), fruit of speaking lips (Heb. 13:15), and fruit of peace (James 3:17–18) and patience (James 5:7)? These are fruits that *will* grow in every believer, but one who is to lead a church must exhibit them in abundance for the good of the church (1 Timothy 3:1–7).

The candidate will submit an application (Appendix 1) summarizing the current call on his life and persuasively communicating his conversion, defining the gospel, and articulating a biblical theology of the church. Throughout this application we are looking for a deep-seated, genuine, infectious love for Jesus and his gathered people in order that we can trust Christ’s plan to display his manifold wisdom through the church (Eph. 3:10) will be a priority throughout the planting journey, and a willingness to submit to the church in its evaluation of and preparation for the work of the gospel. We’re not just looking for men with great organizational skills or inspiring leadership abilities, but a man with a character transformed by the love of Jesus and a heart for Christ’s mission through the church.

Redemption City Church will give the approval of this candidate to begin the journey of exploring and preparing for a future church plant.

- Submit application
 - Understanding of the gospel
 - Biblical defense of the church and God’s mission in and through the church
 - Elder Qualifications
 - Cultural Background and Perceived Calling
 - NAMB Application
 - Church Planting Initial Assessment
- Elder Interview
- Elder Approval
- Presentation to the Church for Approval to explore planting

2. Farming Apprenticeship (Church Planting Residency)

Once we see that there is a Spirit-wrought love for Christ and his bride, we will begin an individualized training and practice program. Some call this an apprenticeship, internship, or residency. It is becoming a farm hand for the good of the harvest at Redemption while gaining skills and experience to one day begin his own harvest.

Not every apprenticeship will be the same as the experience, gifting, and calling will vary from person to person. At the beginning we will work with the planter to shape this intentional training period: what kind of study, training, and reporting will be beneficial; opportunities to get before the church to teach and display the work of the

Spirit; following along with the pastors to interact in real life ministry situations; and building wider ministry connections with denominational, network, and local church leaders.

□ Residency Plan

- Elder Approval
- Periodic Check-In Updates to the Elders
- Growth Plan
 - NAMB Pipeline
 - Preaching
 - Teach Adult Sunday School
 - Teach Children’s Sunday School
 - Attend Community Groups
 - Teach at least once in 4 different Community Groups
 - Counseling
 - Local Pastors Gathering
 - Denominational Gathering
 - Network Gathering
 - Attend Elder Meetings
 - Lead Membership Class
 - Plan and Lead Worship
 - Visitor Follow-Up
 - Read Books/Write Reviews
 - Monthly Summary Updates to give to church (newsletter, business meetings)

- Elder Approval for Preparation to Begin Vision Planning

3. Homestead Vision (Building a Proposal and Elder Evaluation)

The final phase of the apprenticeship is developing a vision for beginning a separate gospel harvest. This work will produce a proposal that summarizes the location, people of the community, the vision and values of the proposed church, a core team and leadership structure, a launch schedule, and funding plan.

This step is not entirely disconnected from the previous phase. Much of the work of the residency is being done in order to build a vision proposal for future work. During the residency the candidate will be gathering ideas and organizing them to be portrayed in the proposal.

During this vision phase the candidate will submit to at least one denominational and/or church planting network assessment to allow mature, Spirit-filled leaders outside of Redemption City Church to give honest feedback and suggest further training prior to recommending the candidate for elder approval.

After sufficient work to prepare the candidate and his proposal—*prior to any public communication of the vision*—the apprentice will present his proposal to the

elders for approval to communicate beyond the church and move into an execution phase of the vision.

- Proposal
 - Name and Logo
 - Leadership Structure
 - Core Team description
 - Vision and Values
 - Schedule
 - Funding Plan
- Website
- Giving Platform
- Business Stationery
- Denominational/Network Assessments
 - North American Mission Board (NAMB)
 - Treasuring Christ Together (TCT Network)
 - Pillar Network
 - Fulfill necessary recommendations
- Present Proposal to Elders for feedback and approval to go public
 - Up until this point, the work of the planter is mostly private, internal to Redemption City Church. Marketing, networking, and recruiting must not happen until the elders have given full support to the work.

4. Tenant Farming (Early Implementation within the Church)

Tenant farming is an agricultural system in which a landowner rents a portion of his land and other farming capital to a tenant who uses his own labor to gain a profit for himself and the owner. It has provided opportunities for new farmers to gain experience, earn a living, and eventually step into land ownership themselves.

This is the final phase of planting training at Redemption City Church. God has designed that families beget families and churches plant churches. Just as children are raised to be adults within the home, churches are raised to be mature within the church.

Our desire is to see clearly defined leadership and a committed team willing to make the move to the new church. This team will remain under the authority of Redemption City Church, working for her benefit, bringing other laborers into her harvest, until the Spirit-appointed time to begin another harvest as a separate church.

It is necessary for this stage to communicate clearly the identity of the team so the church is not confused who is expected to join this work. The church needs to know who is staying and who is being sent and what role each side has. While we are happy to send our members out to join new works, uncertainty wondering whether they are being asked to go or stay causes a member to be useful for neither.

This phase of the journey is meant to solidify the identity of a new group of people who will become a new church (though they are not yet) by identifying people and finalizing administrative details so the church can stand on its own feet at sending.

- Begin Core Group as new Community Group under Redemption City Church (or one of our partner churches)
 - (Other consideration necessary for planting visions outside our region)
 - Bring each proposed member of core group to elders to help discern fit.
- Go Public – Vision Casting Dinner
- Work on Legal Details
 - Constitution/ByLaws
 - 501c3 incorporation
 - Tax Exemption
 - Payroll/Accounting
 - Three Year Budget
- Elder Approval of Assessment and Core Team
- Church Vote to Approve Sending New Church

5. Cultivation and Planting (Going Public and Sending)

When the Holy Spirit unifies the church and the planter in the calling vision, it is time to send him and the team out to begin their own work. Paul waited for this step himself

(Acts 13:1–3) and carried on the practice in calling Timothy to lead the church at Ephesus (1 Timothy 1:18; 4:14; 2 Timothy 1:6). It is this calling that strengthens and encourages the new pastor for when difficult times come as he can endure knowing that an entire Spirit-filled church body affirmed that call on his life (1 Timothy 6:12). Through this process both the church and the new planter can be certain that we were not too hasty with affirming his call, but patiently waited for the Spirit to unify the church in starting a new mission.

With this unified certainty, the church will officially recognize this work of the Spirit through ordination and a final Sunday sending service.

- Ordination
 - Gather local pastors/elders to interview and affirm the planter’s calling.
- Sending – Final Sunday at Redemption
 - Special message to celebrate God’s work among us and remind ourselves of the mission to always be training and sending.
 - Elders lay hands on and pray for team.

Appendix 1 – Residency Application

To obtain a full application, please send the following information to the pastors at:
elders@redemptionrochester.com

Personal Information

Name of Applicant: _____

Date: _____

Mailing Address: _____

Phone: _____

Email Address: _____

Date of Birth: _____

Citizenship/Immigration Status: _____

Languages Spoken: _____

Appendix 2 – Books for Planter Growth

Leeman, Jonathan. *Don't Fire Your Church Members: the Case for Congregationalism*. Nashville: Broadman & Holman Academic, 2016.

Vanhoozer, Kevin J. *Hearers and Doers: A Pastor's Guide to Growing Disciples Through Scripture and Doctrine*. Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2019.

Keller, Timothy. *Preaching: Communicating Faith in an Age of Skepticism*. New York: Viking, 2015.

Miller, Paul. *A Praying Life Publisher: NavPress*. Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale House, 2014.

Dever. *The Gospel & Personal Evangelism*. Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2007.

Lane, Timothy S., and Paul David Tripp. *How People Change*. Greensboro, NC: New Growth Press, 2008.

Tripp, Paul David. *Dangerous Calling: Confronting the Unique Challenges of Pastoral Ministry*. Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2015.

Appendix 3 – Sample Proposal

Ask pastors for examples from previous church plants.

Appendix 4 – Potential Residency Funding Sources

Small check from Redemption upon start

MWBC State Missions Fund – early start of \$500 /mo

Redemption families provide housing

After NAMB assessment approval: ~\$12,000