



EPC

A Global Movement of Evangelical Presbyterian Churches

COMMITTEE REPORT

**Church Planting and
Revitalization Committee**
Report to the 38th General Assembly



Jeff Moore
Chair

Summary of Work, 2017-2018:

1. The Church Planting and Revitalization Committee works to give a platform for the activities of church planting and church revitalization in the EPC. We do this in three ways:
 - Interfacing with the GO Center and the Church Planting Team
 - Hosting an annual meeting of all presbytery Church Development Chairpersons for networking and sharing of best practices
 - Selecting the recipient of the Bart Hess Award.

Recommendations to the 2018 General Assembly:

1. **RECOMMENDATION 38-14:**
The Church Planting and Revitalization Committee recommends that the 38th General Assembly (2018) approve its request to be disbanded as a permanent committee.

Work of the Committee in 2017-2018:

1. GO Center CPR

Submitted by Ken Priddy, GO Center Director

The ministry of the national GO Center in fiscal year 2018 can be summarized in three developments:

1. Ongoing Expansion of Revitalization Ministry & Personnel
2. Design & Implementation of New Metrics
3. Shifts in Funding & Structure

Ongoing Expansion of Revitalization Ministry & Personnel

Since G.A. 2017, the GO Center has continued to serve the EPC through training, coaching, consulting and assessing in church revitalization, working with churches already engaged in the revitalization process while launching new churches into the process as well. This follow-up and expansion has been led by four national trainer consultants. Eleven of the EPC's fourteen presbyteries now have a volunteer serving as the GO Center Presbytery Coordinator, providing links between the GO Center and their respective presbyteries. In addition, thirty plus volunteers have been trained to serve as GO Center Vision Team Coaches that will come alongside Vision Teams formed in participating churches to encourage and assist those teams through implementation.

Design & Implementation of New Metrics

At the prompting of the EPC National Leadership Team, the GO Center has developed an inventory of relevant metric tools for assessing the health of participating churches and their progress through implementation of the revitalization process. These include the following, gathered under the heading of the Leadertown Assessment Suite:

- TRUPOINT Church Health & Vitality Assessment
- TRUPOINT Quick Assessment
- The Missional Posture Survey
- The Great Commission Matrix Assessment
- The Ideal Vitalization Pastor Assessment

The GO Center has also developed a reporting protocol for tracking and documenting its effectiveness that has recently been launched. The latest such report is included in this document on pages 3-5.

Shifts in Funding & Structure

As of fiscal year, 2019, beginning July 1, 2018, the GO Center will be operating through a new funding pathway. To date, the national ministry of the GO Center has been funded primarily by surplus funds allocated by the NLT and secondly through the G.A. operating budget as proposed by the NLT. The shift in funding will ultimately be to sustainable stand-

alone funding generated independently by the GO Center. Fiscal year, 2019, will be partially funded through the G.A., but new funding streams are being developed through fee-based ministry supported by donor funding raised through Church Coach Ministries and the EPC Foundation. Accompanying this funding shift is a shift in the structure of the GO Center. GO Center, Inc., will operate as a separate non-profit corporation with its own 501(c)(3) tax status.

2. Church Planting

Submitted by Tom Ricks

Introduction: Church planting continues to grow in the EPC. We have approximately 40 active church plants in 13 different states around the country. Our intention to plant new congregations in underserved neighborhoods and unreached areas in our nation continues to be a big part of our focus going forward. We continue to measure our success in church planting not just by how many churches are being planted but how many EPC churches are a parent, partner or patron of church planting. Below are some highlights of 2017-2018 EPC church planting

Some New Plants

Here is a small sampling of new EPC church plants.

- Nashville, Tennessee; Kirk and Deb Adkisson are planting a new congregation in the city of Nashville in an underserved community made up of an 80% minority population.
- Lake Forest Community Church in Charlotte, NC is planting an Hispanic speaking congregation with a church planter recruited from our partnership with the National Presbyterian Church of Mexico (INPM)
- Five EPC congregations in the presbytery of Mid-America have formed the St. Louis Region Church Planting Network whose chief aim is to plant churches in the city of St. Louis. The first church planter has been recruited, Sean Boone, who will be planting an African American congregation in the Fergusson / Florissant area of St. Louis.
- Church of the Resurrection in the city of New Orleans was launched in 2017 by the Gulf Coast Church Planting network.
- The Brooklyn Resurrection Church Planting Network continues to plant new congregations with Resurrection Brooklyn Heights being one of their newest congregations.
- Both the Presbytery of the Pacific Northwest and Florida and the Caribbean Presbytery are laying the groundwork to plant several churches in the next 3-5 years.
- Pastor Greg Graybill and his leadership team at First United Presbyterian Church in Moline, Illinois are working hard preparing to church plant in the next 2-3 years.

Resources:

- Bart Garrett (TE Pacific Southwest Presbytery) is leading our first ever church planting cohort with EPC planters from around the country in order to equip and encourage our active church planters.
- Our October Church Planting Retreat was attended by 60+ church planters and their spouses, network leaders, presbytery resource folks and our EPC church planting leadership team. Two full days of sharing, worship, training and rest were just what the doctor ordered!
- Ongoing one on one church planting coaching is taking place around the country via a host of church planting coaches.
- The Aspen Grove Church Planting Network hosted their annual church planting assessment center in April.

The Future:

- We will begin putting more time, attention and resources into recruiting the next generation of church planters from seminaries around the country
- We continue to offer our church planting leadership diagnostic for church plant launch teams, church sessions or planting networks who need support in beginning church planting.
- Our Tuesday leadership summit offering this year at General Assembly will focus on planting in underserved neighborhoods and include a private tour of the Civil Rights Museum in Memphis.

Conclusion: As we look to the future we will continue challenging every congregation in our denomination to be active on some level in church planting. Today over 55% of our congregations are participating, but we have a long way to go. We will be aggressive in finding new church planters to meet the growing opportunities while working hard to take good care of our current church planting pastors and their families.

3. National Gathering of the Church Development Network

Over October 11 and 12, 2018, sixteen representatives from ten presbyteries met at the EPC offices in Orlando to report and be resourced on the activities of church planting and church revitalization. The first day was comprised of each presbytery giving a 20 minute report on the planting and revitalization efforts being made in the presbytery. A list of discussion items was generated from those reports, including the role of transitional pastors, commissioned pastors, issues around the multi-site church model and EPC ordination requirements, and the various presbytery church planting network models that exist in the EPC. We engaged in an extended time of prayer for our presbyteries and churches.

The second day was devoted to resourcing. Tom Ricks, representing the EPC Church Planting Leadership team addresses presbytery CDC's on EPC church planting resources,

assessments, and emerging emphasis on planting among unreached and under-serviced communities. Bill Rasch presented on the opportunities for revitalization the GO Center provides all churches in the EPC, including a number of assessment tools found in the Truepoint Assessment that has been developed the GO Center. Ken Priddy joined the meeting via Zoom Meeting and presented on: 1. The Great Commission Matrix Assessment, 2. The Ideal Vitalization Pastor Assessment, and 3. The Go Center Protocol including a. Assessment, b. Training, c. Coaching, and d. Documentation.

4. The 2018 Bart Hess Award

The Church Planting and Revitalization Committee is pleased to announce the recipient of the 2018 Bart Hess Award is the Restoration Church of Munford, TN. Restoration is led by Pastor Mike Gibson.

Recommendations to the 2018 General Assembly:

RECOMMENDATION 38-14:

1. Church Planting and Revitalization Committee

Motion to Disband

Motion: The Church Planting and Revitalization Committee recommends that the 38th General Assembly (2018) approve its request to be disbanded as a permanent committee.

Rationale: The Church Planting and Revitalization Committee (CP&R) is the permanent committee charged with the following duties:

- “a. To coordinate, encourage and provide resources for church planting, evangelism, and church development efforts of presbyteries and churches.
- b. To coordinate, encourage, develop and provide resources for church revitalization efforts of presbyteries and churches.” (*Rules for Assembly*, 10-1C)

Since 2009 CP&R (known then as the National Outreach Committee) fulfilled these duties primarily by supporting and resourcing the church development ministry of our presbyteries. This ministry is led by the chairs of our presbytery church development committees. The National Outreach Committee hosted the presbytery church development chairs twice a year in the General Assembly Office. At these meetings successes and struggles in church planting and church revitalization were shared as well as best practices and other lessons learned. The role of the National Outreach Committee in these meetings was to listen, encourage and explore how NOC help, given the limited funds at its disposal.

Responding to a request by those chairs for help with church planting in 2012, the National Outreach Committee was instrumental in launching the Church Planting Team, led by Tom Ricks. Responding to a request for help with church revitalization in 2013, the CP&R launched the Church Revitalization Team (now known as the Go Center), led by Ken Priddy.

The National Outreach Committee served the church development efforts of our presbyteries by launching these teams, it was also the platform from which the Church Planting Team and Church Revitalization Team (Go Center) grew in its impact in their respective areas in the EPC. One result of this “Team approach” has been the creation of networks that have improved the effectiveness of our presbyteries in their church planting and church revitalization work. With seven percent of our churches church plants, we are a church planting movement. Over 200 churches have been exposed to church revitalization seminars, with more than 70 pursuing church revitalization.

The 37th General Assembly (2017) signaled its support for the ongoing work of this team approach to church planting and church revitalization by inserting these ministries into its annual budget. With the success of these Teams and their tie to the Office of the General Assembly through the EPC budget, the Church Planting and Revitalization Committee believes a permanent committee to oversee these network ministries is superfluous and no longer necessary.

If our recommendation is approved, we would propose that at our annual General Assembly, separate Church Planting and Church Revitalization standing committees would receive the reports of these Teams.

Committee Members:

TE Jeff Moore (Chair), Presbytery of the Rivers and Lakes
RE Franklin Carter, Presbytery of the Mid-Atlantic
RE Sean Garland, Presbytery of the Central South

Committee Meeting Dates:

July 25, 2017 via teleconference
October 11 and 12, 2017 EPC offices, Orlando, FL
February 8, 2018 via teleconference
February 23, 2018 via teleconference
March 14, 2018 via email vote

Respectfully submitted,



Jeff Moore
Chairman

June 2018