

New Congregation Plan

Reformed Church in America

The New Congregation Plan gives church planters, churches, classes, and regional synods the opportunity to strategically think through the steps needed to take a new church start from conception to launch and eventual reproduction. The New Congregation Plan is part of the RCA Church Multiplication system and allows new congregations access to grants, new construction loans, RCA communication, and inclusion as part of the church multiplication movement.

The completion of the New Congregation Plan is a prayerful process of seeking and confirming God's direction for the starting of a new church. The following three Book of Church Order definitions may give a helpful distinction between terms:

- A congregation is a body of baptized Christians meeting regularly in a particular place of worship
- A local church is a congregation properly organized, and it is served and governed by a regularly constituted consistory.
- A collegiate church is two or more congregations served and governed by a single consistory, constituting one church organization.

(See Book of Church Order, page 11, Article 1, Sec.1)

The goal is an organized church that is self supporting, self governing and self-reproducing. If you are starting a house church network, cell church, satellite or multi-site congregation you may find some questions are not an easy fit. Do the best you can for your unique situation and attach any additional documentation you feel would help the Church Multiplication Team understand your direction and potential.

Background Information

Date: _____, **20**____

Name of Congregation: _____

Address/Location of Congregation: _____

Name of Lead Church Planter: _____

Planter Contact information: Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____ Phone _____

Email _____

Please circle descriptions that apply to the Church Planter:

Ordained Elder Lay-person Commissioned Pastor

Denominational Affiliation: _____

Parent Church or Directive Partner for the New Congregation:

_____ City _____ State _____

Classis: _____

Regional Synod: _____

New Congregation Plan Prepared By: _____

Phone: _____ email: _____

Prayer/Spiritual Empowerment

1. What prayer strategies have been used to discern the selection of location and/or church planter in the starting of this new congregation?

2. What prayer strategies will be used to ensure a foundation of spiritual empowerment and intercession in the launching of this new congregation?

3. Has the church planter, regional synod and classis worked together to identify at least 25 personal intercessors for this new congregation?

Evaluation

1. What assessment processes (Gallup, Ridley, Other) were used to evaluate the gifting, skills, and competencies of the church planter?

The church planter is:

_____ Recommended

_____ Conditionally Recommended

_____ Not Recommended

2. What evaluation tools were used to determine the feasibility of starting a new congregation in the location chosen?
3. What are the compelling reasons for the starting of a new congregation in this location?

Equipping

1. What learning and growth experiences will be provided for the church planter and spouse prior to the starting of this new congregation?
2. How will a personal growth plan be developed for the church planter that will encourage lifelong learning and continued equipping for ministry effectiveness?
3. How will performance reviews and annual evaluations of the church planter and the new congregation be achieved?

Empowering

1. Who will be the coach of the church planter?
(Please provide name, address, and email for the coach)

What training has been provided for the coach?

2. What is the plan to include the church planter in a network with other church planters?

3. What will be the accountability structure for this new congregation?

Expanding

1. What is the vision for reproduction for this new congregation?
2. To what supporting agency will the new congregation commit 10% of its offerings?

Funding

1. What is the proposed funding plan for the new congregation? *(Please list all sources from the "harvest" itself and all partners. Budget may be attached.)*
2. If all sources of funding are not fulfilled, what contingency plan will be instituted?
3. Is the compensation package of the church planter fair and mutually agreeable to all parties?
4. How will the congregation become a self-sustaining church? What is the timeframe? If planting a multi-site or satellite congregation, please explain.

The classis and regional synod in approving this plan commit themselves to insure that the following paragraph is included in the congregation's organizational documents:

Notwithstanding anything to the contrary contained in this [insert description of organizational document], this [corporation/organization] is a member congregation in the Reformed Church in America, is (and at all times shall be) subject to and governed in accordance with the Constitution of the Reformed Church in America, and agrees that the provisions of this [article/chapter/paragraph] shall not be amended or modified in any manner without the prior written consent of the classis of which this [corporation/organization] is a member;

APPROVALS:

This New Congregation Plan was approved by the classis church multiplication team of

_____ on _____ 20_____.

_____ and / or
Church Multiplication Chair (or other responsible Classis Leader)

Stated Clerk

This New Congregation Plan was approved by the Regional Synod of

_____ on _____ 20_____.

Regional Synod Staff Person

(The goal of these approvals on local, classis, regional and denominational levels is for clear communication, partnership and accountability. Each classis and region has some flexibility in how these approvals happen, so please adapt the titles as needed.)