DEVELOPING A CHURCH-BASED MODEL FOR TRAINING CHURCH PLANTERS AT AMBASSADOR CHURCH: A FIELD STUDY OF TWO CHURCH-BASED CHURCH PLANT RESIDENCY MODELS AND THEIR BEST PRACTICES

by

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A MAJOR PROJECT

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ABSTRACT

In the past twenty years, there has been a growing awareness and renewed focus on church planting in North America. This project examines one of the ways to increase effectiveness in church planting through the development and execution of a church-based church planting residency program. It examines the assessment, training, and support provided to church planters through case studies of two different types of church planting residency programs. These case studies outline the assessment and recruitment strategies, and then examine their training and equipping models. Finally, it describes how these planters are supported after completing their residency. The goal of this study is to assist Ambassador Church in developing a church-based church planting residency program.

A summary of the findings from the two case studies is found in eight best practices. First, the senior leader of the church must hold to the vision of church planting and be able to disseminate the vision to other key leaders. And, the passed down vision needs a clear missional focus. Second, financial investment is important in starting a church based residency program. Third, a qualified leader needs to oversee the program to guide the residents in recruitment, training and coaching. Fourth, a clear assessment process needs to be established in recruiting the best church planting candidates. Fifth, the best method of training church planters is through a combination of classroom learning and on the job training. Sixth, since each resident brings an unique background in experience, personality and spiritual gifts, the residency needs to be adaptable and flexible. Seventh, in addition to financial support,
other support systems such as coaching, emotional and spiritual support need to be a part of a long-term development of the resident. Finally, the two case study churches developed partnerships and cooperation with other churches and organizations to assist in their recruitment, training and support structures. This allowed the churches to use their resources.
To my family: my wife, Sun, my twin daughters,

Kristen and Karissa, and my parents,

David and Susan Chang
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Throughout this process, my parents were a constant encouragement as they urged me to complete what I started. Without their constant reminder, this project may have been one of those projects left on the shelf as a nice idea never realized. In addition to my parents, I want to thank Paul Sailhamer, my first pastoral mentor from First Evangelical Free Church of Fullerton, who took a risk and brought me in as a resident. This became a catalyst for my writing this dissertation. Also, I am indebted to the church planting director of EFCA, George Klippenes, for encouraging me with this project and supporting me with resources to make this dream a reality.

I also want to graciously thank my church for giving me the resources and the time to study and invest my time in this research. I want to express gratitude to my past and present lay leaders for their continual support during my doctoral studies. Each leader has been supportive by giving me time off to write. Also, I want to express gratitude to my current pastoral staff who filled in the gaps left by my absence. Also, in the church, there are several members who took the time to help edit and format this project. Their time and careful attention is appreciated.
A special thanks to the two churches, the directors, and the participants who gave of their time to speak with me about their program. Each one spoke frankly and openly about their ministry. It was refreshing to hear about their passion for seeing God’s kingdom expand through church planting and their willingness to help other churches.

I also want to express my deepest gratitude to my project mentor, Dr. Craig Ott, and program director, Dr. Martin Crain, who guided me through this process, clarified my thesis, and encouraged me to persevere when I wanted to give up.

Finally, I want to thank all my former residents who continually challenged me by their love for God and their stepping out in faith to work at Ambassador. May their tribes increase as our church steps out in faith at Ambassador.
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# LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BC</td>
<td>Bible Church</td>
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<tr>
<td>CC</td>
<td>Community Church</td>
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<td>CMC</td>
<td>Church Multiplication Center</td>
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<td>CPD</td>
<td>Church planting Director</td>
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<td>CP</td>
<td>Church Plant</td>
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<tr>
<td>CPC</td>
<td>Church Planting Center</td>
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<tr>
<td>CPR</td>
<td>Church Plant Residency</td>
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<tr>
<td>DiSC</td>
<td>Dominant, Influencing, Steadiness, Compliant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EFCA</td>
<td>Evangelical Free Church of America</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FEFC</td>
<td>First Evangelical Free Church of Fullerton</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MBTI</td>
<td>Myers-Brigg Type Indicator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SP</td>
<td>Senior Pastor</td>
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CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION TO THE PROJECT

As recently as twenty years ago, the quantity of literature on the subject of church planting was minimal. Not only was there little literature written on the topic, church planting was not an emphasis in North American churches. Churches with a burden for starting new churches in North America often planted them with very few resources to guide them along. At the same time, individuals who were called into church planting struggled to find churches that provided proper assessment, training, and support to assist them in fulfilling their vision of seeing a new church.

One of the by-products of a lack of a clear strategy and proper training for both churches and individuals has been church plant failures. We can learn some important organizational insights by studying previous church plant failures. Often, church plants have been compared to start-up businesses in their failure rates. We have seen the emergence of start-up companies in various industries in the business world, only to find almost 80% have failed within their first year. And among those that succeed, another 80% of those will have failed by year five (Gerber 1995, 2). However, on an encouraging note with regard to the emergence of church planting in recent years, the survivability rate of new church plants has increased. In the most recent study produced by Ed Stetzer and Philip Conner, Church Plant Survivability and Health Study, they note that after about four years, the survival rate for church plants is 68% (Stetzer and Conner 2007, 18).
Since the last twenty years, men like Bob Logan (Conservative Baptists) and Aubrey Malphurs (Dallas Theological Seminary) have written books to assist both churches and church planters to successfully plant churches. Logan’s *Church Planter’s Toolkit: A Self-Study Resource Kit for Church Planters and Those Who Supervise Them* (Logan and Ogne 1995) and Malphurs’ *Planting Growing Churches for the 21st Century: A Comprehensive Guide for New Churches and Those Desiring Renewal* (Malphur 1992) have both been used as primary texts for reversing the high casualty rate of church plants.

Not only has instructional literature been written to help church planters, but denominations like the Evangelical Free Church of America (EFCA) are also making great strides in systematically planting churches. The EFCA incorporates in its mission statement the phrase to “multiply healthy churches among all people.” In the past five years, to reverse the trend of more churches failing, the EFCA has implemented a seven-step system to assist church planters: Recruit, Assess, Coach, Train, Support, Launch and Reproduce. Prior to these past few years, it had been my experience as both a planter and church planting leader that an EFCA planter would find very little assistance in planting a church. Now with these systems in place, every church planter has a greater chance of succeeding and reversing the previous trends.

*Statement of Need*

While it is important that we encourage and recruit more church planters, one of the areas that needs to be researched and developed is a better system of training and supporting church planters once they have been recruited. Too often, it has been my observation that church planters are primarily trained by denominations or other para-church organizations
because the local church does not have structures or programs to assist them as church planters. There needs to be a better partnership with local churches to assist in developing church planters. Local churches of all sizes can play an integral role in developing future church planters.

Local churches can provide on-the-job training before the planter is released in the field, as well as provide the support that the planter will need to succeed once in the field. While church-based training is not new, using a local church-based model designed specifically for church planters is a relatively new and potentially more effective concept. Using this model, the local church and the planter can mutually benefit and ultimately succeed in planting more churches. My goal is for local churches to take a more active role in all phases of church planting.

**Topic Relationship to the Ministry of the Writer**

This topic relates to my ministry in several respects. Church planting is my passion in ministry. First, I have planted two churches within the EFCA in the last decade. The first one was launched in Northern Virginia, where we began with a small group that grew to an average attendance of 150 after a three-year period. My second church plant was in Southern California. This began with a core group of thirty to forty members, which now, after five years, numbers about 200 people. In both of these churches, I have seen how planting new churches is vital to reaching people who are not part of the body of Christ.

Second, before planting these churches I had an opportunity to be in an one-year residency program at First Evangelical Free Church of Fullerton, California (FEFC). Through an intentional strategy of training and observation, I was given a hands-on
ministry to prepare me for full-time ministry. It is from this opportunity that I experienced firsthand the value of a church planting residency program in equipping leaders for ministry.

Third, I am currently coaching church planters in Southern California. As a former part-time director of church planting and as a member of the leadership team in the Evangelical Free Church of America West (EFCA West), I have oversight of several church plants. In addition, our church (Ambassador Church), which was itself a church plant, has since planted two churches and is in process of planting two more. My desire and calling is to help church planters learn valuable lessons from this study in order to help them become more effective church planters.

Fourth, I also serve in the EFCA denomination as member of its National Church Planting Team. This type of research will be a valuable reference in helping develop a model for churches to develop a church planting residency program so more churches can become mother churches—churches giving birth to other churches. This will provide a practical strategy to provide a foundation for intentional church planting training for local churches.

From this perspective, I see the value and need to develop a better system for developing church planters and seeing churches become multiplication centers. It is my vision to provide a model that will allow local churches to be more involved in the church planting process, as well as to provide better training for church planters. This research can help my church and others maximize their effectiveness and expand the kingdom of God through their training of the next generation of leaders.

Scope and Limitations

I have narrowed my field research to two case studies of churches with developed church-plant residency programs (CRP). My desire is to identify the best practices and principles
from these churches which can be transferred to other churches that want to establish a church planting residency program. The two churches surveyed are in two very different areas of the country. One is a church in a large metropolitan city in the Northeast. Another is a mid-sized city in a suburban context in the Southwest. I have conducted and recorded a one-hour personal interview with the two planting residency directors (CPD) on the areas pertaining to assessment, training, and support structures. Most of the research was conducted by personal recorded conversation with the directors and former residents, and examining written material from both churches.

Second, I will not examine other models, such as short-term training, seminary-based church planting, or denominationally based training. Doing so would encompass the scope of another research topic. Although, in many ways, these other programs may supplement and complement church planter training, the focus of my project will be a church-based residency model at Ambassador Church.

Third, I limit my examination to churches within North America. Factors such as language, history, tradition, or any other aspect of a different culture are not explored in this research project.

**Goals and Objectives**

The first goal was to explore the biblical basis and contemporary significance of a church-based church planting residency program. This was primarily done through a biblical survey of church planting as well as several training models in Scripture. In addition, contemporary literature and models of church-based training was studied for an overview.
The second goal of this project was to discover the best practices and principles of a church-based church planting residency model so other local churches can develop their own program of assessing, training, and supporting church planters. This research can help a church develop resources to either develop a similar model or adopt some of its principles to begin the process of planting churches. In addition, this research hopes to assist the EFCA churches and church planting leaders to implement this in their own regional districts, including EFCA West.

This goal was accomplished by studying two working models of a church-based church planting residency program for church planters. The two churches were examined based on their implementation of three criteria: the process of recruitment, training, and support. After careful examination, eight best practices learned from these two models were summarize and applied to Ambassador Church.

This research explored the assessment and recruitment process of the church plant residency programs and considered whether any formal assessment was done before bringing on church planting residents. Then the types of training and curriculum that were used to equip the church planter were examined. Training material and other materials used in the training process were gathered and recorded. Last, careful attention was given to support structures for the church planters during their residency and during their first few years of planting a church. The case study of the two churches was accomplished through the process of personal interviews of Church Planting Directors and a written or phone survey of former and current residents.
The third goal was to take all these practices and craft a strategic plan which can be applied to my local church, Ambassador Church. Currently, an informal residency program for church planters exists at Ambassador Church; however, through the process of examining the best practices of two case studies, I will be able to craft and implement a formal plan which will assist in better maximizing our resources to equip and train church planters and establish our church as a Church Planting Center (CPC).

Methodology

There were several stages in evaluating church-based church planting training programs. The first stage involved an overview and review of relevant literature. I examined articles, journals, books, and dissertations on this subject. In addition to reading material related to church-based training, I talked with church planting experts and others who are familiar with this model of church-based church planting program. In addition, I examined materials developed by other churches to facilitate the church planting process.

After a review of pertinent literature, the second stage involved selecting two churches with a church planting residency program. These churches needed to fit several criteria:

1. These churches must have a three-year track record in a residency program.
2. These churches must have a formal process of assessing (or recruiting), training, and supporting church planters.
3. These churches must have planted at least one church in the past year.
4. These churches must have someone who has the official role of developing the church planting residents.
The third stage of research involved an in-depth interview with the directors and surveys of former and current residents of the two target programs. Two directors of these programs were interviewed to get an overview of their program, as well as an analysis of their own program. Through the personal interviews, best practices were compiled on three major areas of their program: assessment, training, and support structures for the church planter. After the initial interview with the director, four residents, both former and current, were selected for a personal interview. The purpose of this interview was to get feedback on their experiences of participating in a residency program. After analyzing the survey responses, best practices and principles were compiled into eight best practices.

The final stage of the research synthesized all the readings, interviews, surveys, and observation into a summary of best practices in order to develop a practical strategy for development of a church planting residency model at Ambassador Church. While the focus of the research will be on two large churches with resources and staffing, churches of any size should be able to benefit from this study as well. The focus was to take the best practices and make this scalable for churches of any size.

**Definition of Terms**

For a comprehensive understanding of the major project, it will be important to explain the terms used in this paper.

1. **Church planting or CP**: A term to describe the process of starting new churches.
2. **Church plant**: A new church that has been started.
3. **Church planter**: A person starting a new church.
4. **Assessment:** The process of evaluating the potential planters through a series of tools, such as personal interviews and psychological, spiritual, and leadership tests, to measure whether they are qualified.

5. **Training:** The process of developing a potential church planter through classes, books, and hands-on experience so church planters will gain both the knowledge and experience to plant a church.

6. **Support:** The financial, emotional, spiritual, and ministry assistance given to the church planter as they begin their new church and afterward. This will vary based upon the needs, experiences, and personality of the church planter.

7. **Missional:** The Missio Dei, a Latin term meaning “the mission of God.” The word is used to describe the church community being sent on God’s mission for redeeming the world. In this paper, it is used to describe the missionary activity of the local church and every believer.

8. **DNA:** A term used to describe the unique genetic code of a local church. This is a borrowed concept from the world of biology representing deoxyribonucleic acid (DNA). However, in this context, it is used to describe the unique values and emphasis of a ministry.

9. **Residency or Fellows Program:** An on-site program designed for post seminary students to learn the process of church planting from a mother church. There may be financial compensation available for a resident or fellow, and they are treated as staff of the mother church. The knowledge gained of the resident is both theoretical and practical.
10. **Boot camp**: A term borrowed from the military to describe an intensive training event for church planters. It is often content driven and short in duration.

11. **Megachurch**: A term describing the size of a large church. There is question about what size makes a megachurch. In this paper, a megachurch is defined as a church of more than 2,000 attenders on any given Sunday.

12. **Vision and values**: These terms are used in the business context to describe the important specific mission of the organization and the priorities of the organization. In the church context, these words apply to God-given priorities for each individual church.

**Summary**

This research project is designed to be a biblically based and practically focused church planting research into the best practices of a church planting residency model. My overarching goal is to encourage churches to continue the work of the Great Commission: making disciples of all nationalities by planting churches. My desire is to see churches of all sizes work with our seminaries, denominations, and other organization to become CPCs. This project’s intent is to assist local churches of all sizes participate in church planting by assisting them to apply the best practices of other church planting churches. As this project will demonstrate, the principles and best practices are scalable. The key is to begin with a vision of desiring to see the Kingdom of God advance through the planting of new churches.
CHAPTER 2
BIBLICAL-THEOLOGICAL BASIS
AND LITERATURE REVIEW

We are living in rapidly changing times. From all aspects of life, major cultural shifts are taking place. There has been a philosophical shift from a modern to postmodern and post-Christian worldview. There has been a shift economically from a regional marketplace to a global marketplace. And, there has been a shift technologically from an electronic age to information age, where information is gathered, disseminated, and processed at the speed of light.

Another major cultural shift is the role of church in Western culture, particularly in the United States. This has some wondering if Christianity will be relevant in the new millennium. Recently, Newsweek magazine used the headline “The Decline of Christian America” in their April 13, 2009, edition. The article cites the American Religious Identification Survey statistic of a decline of more than 10% within the past decade in the number of self-identified Christians. Based on this observation, some would be led to believe that Christianity is becoming more marginalized or less influential in American culture.

In a recent book by David Olson called The American Church in Crisis, Olson surveyed more than 200,000 churches in the United States and found that only about 17.5% of the U.S. population attend church on a given Sunday. Within the last sixteen years, the total number of church attendees has not changed. It is currently around 52 million. Yet, during
the same time the U.S. population grew by an additional 52 million people who were not attending church. In other words, as a proportion of the population, the church is losing ground. Also, every state except for Hawaii saw a decrease in church attendance (Olson 2008, 32-39)

While some may debate the impact of the declining influence of Christianity in culture, without the start of new churches, Christianity will continue its decline. Consequently, the work of planting new churches becomes more necessary in presenting the Gospel of Jesus Christ and spread of Christianity in the United States. No doubt, it will become much harder in a currently “post-Christian” culture, to present the good news. But the work of starting new churches is critical to fulfilling the task of world evangelization, especially in North America.

This begs the question, how can we effectively plant more churches? The answer may lie in better recruiting, assessing and training church planters. Without church planters, rapidly multiplying church plants will be impossible. This challenge poses an opportunity for the local church to play a role in developing church planters. It also allows both denominations and other Christian associations to widen the scope of recruiting, training and supporting future church planters in partnership with local churches. By these entities working together, church planting provides an opportunity to expand the kingdom of God.

Church planting is no longer an ignored subject in many local churches. It has become somewhat fashionable to talk about and participate in the discussion in church planting partly due to the success and influence of church planters like Mark Driscoll of Mars Hill Church in Seattle, Washington and conferences such as Exponential Conference, an annual
conference of church planters in Orlando, Florida. While church planting may be a current topic of discussion, it is more essential to understand a biblical and theological historical perspective.

_Biblical and Theological Basis_

In recent years, there has been a growing number of church planting books written. However, most of these books are written from a practical, pragmatic or biographical perspective and lack a clear articulation of biblical theology on church planting. As stated in Richard Yates Hibbert’s article _The Place of Church planting in Mission: Towards a Theological Framework_, Hibbert notes the shortage of a clear biblical foundation. He writes:

> The biblical and theological foundation for the planting of churches has generally been assumed rather than explicitly articulated ... While insights from the history of mission and the social sciences are extremely helpful in shaping church planting practice, a biblical and theological foundation is essential if church planting is to fulfill God’s purposes for it. (Hibbert 2009, 316)

One of the books that tries to fill the void of theology is Stuart Murray’s _Church planting: Laying Foundations_. He gives balance to the majority of the pragmatic books by his thoughtful caution. He warns: “An inadequate theological basis [for church planting] will not necessarily hinder short-term growth, or result in widespread heresy among newly planted churches. But it will limit the long-term impact of church planting, and may result in dangerous distortions of the way in which the mission of the church is misunderstood” (Murray 2001, 39).

Therefore, an important aspect of developing a model for training future church planters is to first examine a biblical and theological basis for church planting and church-based leadership development. The biblical basis and theology of church planting will serve as a foundation on why we need to train leaders to plant churches. And ultimately, training
church planters to be more effective in planting churches through a church-based strategy needs to be examined.

Biblical Basis for Church Planting

The first time the word “church” is found in the New Testament is in Matt 16:18. It is significant that Matthew is the only Gospel writer to use this term twice. The other instance is found in Matt 18:17. The first instance of the word “church” comes at a critical juncture in the writing of the Gospel of Matthew. As Michael Wilkins notes in his commentary: “Chapter 16 is a pivotal chapter in Matthew. After the increasing opposition of the Jewish religious leaders to his messianic ministry and the increasing threat of the local political machine, Jesus has been turning his disciples to help them to understand more clearly his unique identity and ministry” (Wilkins 2004, 553).

Two things come together in Chapter 16: Jesus’ identity and mission. Based upon Jesus’ identity and mission, he passes on the mission of expanding the church to Peter. Peter is given a foundational role of bearing the mission of Jesus in building a new community. This new community is a continuation of the old assembly but also is now expanding on the concept of the Old Testament assembly mentioned in Deut 23:3 (Wilkins 2007, 564). This new “assembly/community” is then defined as the “church.”

George Ladd in his Theology of the New Testament expands on the idea of an assembly to something more specific based upon a community that is founded upon Jesus himself. While this assembly doesn’t replace the Old Testament idea of assembly, it defines the community in the light of Jesus’ identity. Rather than replacing the Old Testament understanding of community, it is really a continuity of it. Ladd writes:
However, Jesus showed no purpose of establishing a separate synagogue. Jesus could have looked at the fellowship of his disciples as true Israel within the disobedient nation and not as a separatistic or “closed” fellowship. ... The distinctive element is that this *ekklesia* is in a peculiar way the *ekklesia* of Jesus: “My *ekklesia.*” That is, the true Israel now finds its specific identity in its relationship to Jesus. (Ladd 1974, 110)

This is now the new covenant community, or people of God, which is established by the Messiah.

Several important truths are established in this first use of the word “church.” The church will continue with the mission described by Jesus through Peter and the disciples. This mission is ultimately defined as the mission of salvation from sin and death. In this passage, the mission is described as conquering “Hades” or death. In addition, Jesus makes the promise that death will not conquer his church, but rather the church advances to the gates of death. Therefore, a case can be made that the establishment of the church plays a critical role in the mission to spare people from the consequence of death and hell.

Another important role for the church is the role it plays in bringing forgiveness of sin and avoidance of the negative consequences of death. The other time the word “church” is mentioned is found in Matt 18:17-18. Both Matt 16:19 and 18:18 relate the idea of “loosing and binding” to forgiveness of sin. As Michael Wilkins points out, “As parallel statements, these sayings of Jesus are the basis from the kingdom (16:19) and the local church (18:18).” Both sayings relate to forgiveness of sin (Wilkins 2007, 567). With these verses, the New Testament ushers the word “church” as a new assembly of God’s people based on Jesus’ death. This assembly carries out his mission to offer the world access to God’s forgiveness through Jesus. In other words, the church becomes a gateway to fulfill God’s mission and expand God’s kingdom.
However, the concept of “church” as an organizational body starting and multiplying was not established until the book of Acts. In Acts 2, we see the first glimpse of expansion of the assembly through the manifestation of languages or “tongues” to the Jewish Diaspora gathered in Jerusalem after the Pentecost (Acts 2:5-11). Later on in Acts 2:40-47, we begin to see the rapid expansion of the people of God through conversion (Acts 2:47). We also see the community taking form with teaching, fellowship, breaking of bread, and prayer (Acts 2:42).

As the church becomes more established, the problems and opportunities also expand. For example, persecution against the leaders of the church begins to increase (Acts 3). Also, various problems begin to rise, such as the deception of leaders (Acts 5:1-10); the lack of food distribution to the Grecian widows and the selection of new leaders (Acts 6:5). At this point, the church was primarily based in Jerusalem; however, later in Acts 8:1, we see the persecution breaking out in Jerusalem, which scatters the church. But at the same time, the church then expands to the Samaria and Galilee regions in Acts 9:31. Following the expansion to these two areas, the primary center of the missionary activity of the church shifts to Antioch where the disciples were referred to as “Christians” (Acts 11:26) and later where Paul and Barnabas were later commissioned as missionaries (Acts 13:1-4).

In the rest of the book of Acts, we see the establishment of new churches starting with missionary trips by Peter, Paul, and Barnabas (Allen 1962, 6). The community of God furthers the mission of God through its very presence and expansion. Throughout the rest of the book of Acts, there is a description of how the church expands God’s kingdom.
In the epistles, important theological truths regarding the nature of the church begin to unfold. From the book of Ephesians, the church plays a critical role in revealing God’s mystery of salvation, for “through the church, the manifold wisdom of God should be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly realms, according to his eternal purpose which he accomplished in Christ Jesus our Lord” (Ephesians 3:10-11). Not only does the church communicate the message of God’s mystery, it also acts as a reconciling agent in the world. It breaks down boundaries of race, gender, and class (Colossians 3:11).

This message of a new multi-racial community is now the makeup of this community called the church. As Kostenberger and O’Brien write, “The presence of the church itself is the manifestation of the hidden secret” (Kostenberger and O’Brien 2001, 167). This magnifies the importance of establishing the church to be a visible manifestation of God’s mystery (Ephesians 3:10).

In surveying the church in the New Testament, the church plays a central place in God’s plan for redemption. Therefore, we can deduce that, by planting and starting new churches, we are carrying out God’s mission and message and in turn expanding God’s rule and kingdom on earth.

In Charles Van Engen’s book, God’s Missionary People, he elaborates on this concept by emphasizing historically, biblically and theologically that the church is always on mission as the Body of Christ. The church’s purpose is to be an incarnate missionary as a community. He writes:

Mission seeks to strengthen the implications of that apostolicity. As the apostles are sent by Jesus, the Church is sent by her Lord. And it is in the going, in the sentness itself, that the Church emerges toward the world and toward the continuing office of the apostolate ... —not as an optional matter,
but as an essential element of the Church’s being ... The Church becomes mission in the following the Lord as an apostolic community that is in constant, dynamic movement, proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom of light in the midst of the kingdom of darkness. (Van Engen 1991, 78)

As the church is on mission, its mission is expressed in activities like preaching and church planting. The church also plays a central role in evangelism, especially in relationship to Paul’s proclamation of the gospel. When Paul makes the statement in Romans 15:19, “I have fully proclaimed the gospel of Christ,” he is stating more than just activity of preaching. Rather, as Kostenberg and O’Brien clearly point out, it concludes with Paul establishing churches.

Proclaiming the gospel meant for Paul not simply an initial preaching or with it the reaping of converts; it included also a whole range of nurturing and strengthening activities which led to the firm establishment of congregations. ... To conclude, then: the activities in which Paul engaged as he sought to fulfill his missionary commission included not only primary evangelism, through which men and women were converted, but also the founding of churches and the bringing of believers to full maturity in Christ. (Kostenberg and O’Brien 2001, 184)

If fulfillment of proclamation is the establishment of new churches, then throughout the book of Acts, this can be seen as Paul’s normative strategy. As one missiologist, Ed Stetzer, summarizes in his book:

The accounts and details we’ve considered in Acts demonstrate that Paul and other early Christians believe in and practiced church planting as a normal part of their lives—and specifically in response to the commands of Jesus. Planting new churches was not a novel or unique concept for zealous believers. Rather, church starting was normal expression of New Testament missiology. (Stetzer 2006, 52)

Since establishing new churches was a normative missiological practice for the early church in the New Testament from a descriptive point of view, the next point to examine is the theological foundations and rationale for starting new churches. In Stuart Murray’s book, *Church Planting: Laying Foundations*, he gives three theological principles
on which church planting is founded. The three theological concepts can be summarized in
the concept of the “Mission of God, Incarnation and the Kingdom of God” (Murray 2001).

_The Church Is on Mission to Restore All
Creation and Redeem All Mankind_

The Mission of God (Missio Dei) is an important theological concept. Mission
flows from very nature of God. As Murray states:

> Historically, the term *mission* was first used by theologians to refer to the acts
of God ... God is the Missionary, who sent his Son and sends his Spirit into
the world, and whose missionary purposes are cosmic in scope, concerned
with the “restoration of all things,” the establishment of shalom, the renewal
of creation, and the coming of the kingdom of God, as well as the redemption
of fallen humanity and the building of the church. (Murray 2001, 39)

This is a major theme woven through all of Scripture. A recent work by
Christopher Wright, *The Mission of God: Unlocking the Bible’s Grand Narrative* (Wright
2006), has expanded this idea of mission. The church is engaged in God’s greater mission.
When we plant churches, we are participating in God’s ultimate purpose.

> So when the church is doing “missions,” it is simply doing the work of God.

The terms “missions” and “mission” have been used interchangeably. However, as Eckhard
Schnabel notes in his book, *Paul the Missionary: Realities, Strategies and Methods* (Schnabel
2008) some use the terms differently.

> The purpose of the church and its “missionaries” is clearly to carry out God’s
mission of doing three things (Schnabel 2008, 28):

1. Missionaries communicate the good news of Jesus the Messiah and Savior to people
   who have not heard or accepted this news.
2. Missionaries communicate a new life that replaces, at least partially, the social norms and the behavioral patterns of the society in which the new believers have been converted.

3. Missionaries integrate the new believers into a new community.

So the task of the church is to carry out God’s mission and the primary way to do this is through the establishment of the church. Hibbert notes in his article on church planting in agreement with George Ladd that “while it is not the full expression of the kingdom, is nevertheless the primary manifestation of the kingdom in the world today” (Hibbert 2009, 32). Therefore, the establishing of new churches plays a critical role in both advancing God’s kingdom and fulfilling God’s mission.

Some, like Stuart Murray, have raised some concerns that this view of the churches role in Missio Dei does not inflate the church’s importance to where planting churches become an end to itself. Murray writes: “All that the church does in mission must be related to the missionary work of God. The church has a vital role in mission Dei, but it dare not allow its status as a mission agent to result in an inflated view of its own importance. ... Church planting is not an end in itself, because the church is an agent of God’s mission” (Murray 2001, 39-40).

While Murray provides an important caution to consider, Hibbert nonetheless emphasizes and stresses the primary importance of planting churches as part of God’s mission. He continues by writing, “The church is, then, not only an instrument of God’s purposes, but an end itself, and even the central goal of what God in Christ is doing in the world. The church
is at the heart of God’s purposes and Christ’s saving work, and is therefore also at the heart of the mission of God” (Hibbert 2009, 324).

Hence, the best way in carrying out God’s mission is by planting communities called churches. Our role, therefore, is to fulfill God’s mission to start churches through proclamation of the gospel to the lost, training up believers and finally, establishing them into churches.

*The Church Bears the Incarnation in Its Witness to the World*

The second theological foundation in the church is the doctrine of Incarnation. Incarnation is the doctrine of God the Son becoming human. This is demonstrated through the incarnation of Jesus in Hebrews 1:1-3.

In the past God spoke to our forefathers through the prophets at many times and in various ways, but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, and through whom he made the universe. The Son is the radiance of God’s glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by his powerful word. After he had provided purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty in heaven.

(Heb 1:1, NIV)

Through the incarnation, Jesus fulfills the mission of God by becoming man and “is the one who defines authoritatively the scope and purpose of God’s mission and the one through whom this mission will be fulfilled” (Murray 2001, 42). Reflecting on the concept of the incarnation with God’s mission, the church now bears the role of extending the mission of God. The church becomes “flesh” as it proclaims Christ’s message.

Therefore, new churches embody the life of Christ. As stated in 1 Cor 12:7, “we are the body of Christ.” An incarnational presence has many applications. When a new
church incarnates Christ in a community, it is contextual. It takes on the culture of the people that it is reaching. It is adaptable. Second, it extends more than words; it also extends Christ’s mercy and compassion in tangible ways. Third, new churches incarnate the good news and show the world what a redeemed community looks like—a physical, visual picture of wholeness and forgiveness.

The idea of an incarnational community is a biblical idea, yet it goes contrary to an individualistic western culture, as well our western evangelical subculture. In chapter on church planting in *Multiplying Churches*, Tim Chester states: “By making a personal relationship with God its touchstone, evangelical theology has struggled to give the communion of God’s people the importance it receives in the biblical narrative” (Timmis 2001, 27). In other words, the communion or community of the body is more emphasized in Scripture than our emphasis of individualism in our culture.

Calling people to an incarnational community is an essential part of preaching the gospel. Hibbert writes, “The gathering of believers into churches is essential because God’s salvation is communal. God’s purposes throughout the Bible are not focused on many unrelated individuals, but on his people” (Hibbert 2009, 328). Therefore, the doctrine of incarnation and the incarnation of Christ’s body, the church are foundational to starting new churches.

*The Church Plays an Important Role in Advancing God’s Kingdom.*

Finally, the third theological foundation is the kingdom of God. The kingdom of God is not the church. The kingdom of God is simply God’s rule on earth. As George Ladd
defines it, “The kingdom is God’s kingly rule. It has two moments: a fulfillment of the Old Testament promises in the historical mission of Jesus, and a consummation at the end of the age, inaugurating the Age to Come” (Ladd 1974, 90-91). Yet the church plays an important role in advancing God’s rule.

As Murray states, there are several key distinctions between the kingdom and the church. He says the “church is community, whereas the kingdom is activity”; “kingdom is broader than the church” and the “kingdom rather than the church defines the scope of God’s mission” (Murray 2001, 48-50). Yet, the church does play a significant role in kingdom work.

The church advances God’s rule by becoming a visible testimony of God’s kingdom rule. As David Shenk and Ervin Stutzman write, “The good news is that God’s rule is being established on earth. His righteousness, justice, love and grace are demonstrated through Jesus and his followers! ... The kingdom of God becomes the visible in any community where clusters of people gather in Jesus’ name” (Shenk and Stutzman 1988, 23).

When the visible community is fulfilling its role, then God’s rule is advanced. Murray continues:

Some church planting may significantly advance the cause of the kingdom: as communities of Christians incarnate the values and lifestyle of the kingdom in new ways and in new locations; as holistic evangelism takes place; and as these churches function as salt and light in society, bringing a prophetic insight into their context, confronting injustice, championing the cause of the poor and marginalized, working with others to rebuild broken lives, and playing their part in the healing of individuals and communities. (Murray 2001, 51)

When new churches are planted, the church advances the kingdom of God. And the church embodies and demonstrates the values of God by its presence. This is a significant reason why, from a theological framework, churches need to be planted.
From both a biblical and theological basis, we see a rationale for church planting. But planting churches does not happen in a vacuum. Churches need people to start churches, and selecting the right people is central to planting churches. In the next section, we will briefly survey how in the New Testament people are developed into leaders and, more specifically, how the church was involved in the process of training.

Leadership Training

As the need for more churches increases, church planters also need to be developed. But what is the best way to develop and train leaders? Throughout Scripture, foundational principles of leadership development demonstrate the method of hands-on training.

Unlike our current model of classroom education and earning degrees for qualification, the model for learning found in Scripture was primarily through observation and experience. Hands-on training was a key tool in equipping leaders. Joshua was given leadership after spending time with Moses (Deuteronomy 31). Elisha became Elijah’s attendant before taking on his prophetic role (1 Kings 19:21). The disciples spent three years observing and learning from Jesus before he sent them to do ministry (Matt 10, 28:19-20). Also, whenever Paul went on a missionary journey he took along with him young men like Timothy and Silas (Acts 16:1-5) as attendants for the purpose of their learning and eventually leading churches themselves (1 Tim 1:2).

This model was the primary way Jesus developed and trained his disciples. After he selected the twelve, he spent three years with them with a combination of learning by doing. His lessons were formal, non-formal, and informal. As noted by Schnabel, “the
The paradigm of training for missionary ministry in the New Testament is thus both informal (unintentional learning through the daily events of life), non-formal (intentional learning outside of a formal school setting) and formal (intentional learning in a formal school setting)” (Schnabel 2008, 389).

Malphur’s and Mancini’s book *Building Leaders* develops Jesus’ leadership development model in more detail. The authors outline a simple process of how Jesus moved through three phases of development: Phase 1: From Seeking to Believing; Phase 2: From Believing to Following; Phase 3: From Following to Leading (Malphurs and Mancini 2004, 64-68). Then in the following chapters, the authors examine a four-step process. They write, “It may be even more helpful to note that it consisted of four basic steps: recruitment, selection, training and deployment of leaders” (Malphurs and Mancini 2004, 68).

In regards to recruitment and selection, Jesus recruited his disciples in two ways. First, he would recruit disciples from those who wanted to follow him. An example is when Andrew seeks Jesus out (John 1:35-40). This was the typical way for disciples to follow a rabbi or teacher. “The practice was typical of the rabbi-disciple relationship of the first century. A pupil who desired to train with a particular rabbi would ask to be allowed to follow him” (Malphurs and Mancini 2004, 68). But Jesus also sought out followers like Philip (John 1:43) and Andrew, Peter, James and John (Mark 1:16-19). The recruitment was such an important part of Jesus’ ministry, he spends the night in prayer before he designates the twelve as his apostles in training (Luke 6:12-15).

We see Jesus’ methodology of training his disciples. After Jesus recruited his disciples, he spent extensive time with his disciples before training and deploying them.
Before he sent them out, he would teach them (Matthew 10:5). But then when they came back, Jesus would teach them again. Learning was more than just observing or studying; it was also participating with Jesus in the proclamation of the kingdom. While partial deployment happened as part of the training, the full deployment happened after the resurrection. Jesus deploys them to “go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you” (Matthew 28:19-20). This becomes the mandate for the deployment.

In summary, Leadership development is a key component in handing off the mission to the next generation. From Moses to Joshua to Elijah to Elisha and from Jesus to his disciples, leadership development was critical. We see this further developed in Paul’s strategy of developing leaders.

Paul’s Strategy for Developing Leaders

At this point, it might be good to examine some historical and missiological overview of training church planters. Roland Allen’s book, *Missionary Methods: St. Paul or Ours?*, makes the case that Paul’s method of training was to establish churches. He writes, “... St. Paul did not go about as a missionary preacher merely to convert individuals: he went to establish churches from which light might radiate throughout the whole country round” (Allen 1962, 81). The only place this could happen was by on the job training versus a purely formal academic context. Paul had a basic outline in his training process. Allen points out four important things Paul used in his training.

Four things, then, we see St. Paul deemed necessary for the establishment of his churches, and only four. A tradition or elementary Creed, the Sacraments of Baptism and the Holy Communion, Orders and the Holy Scriptures. He
trained his converts in the simplest and most practical form. ... He knew the essential elements, and he trained his converts in those and in those alone, and he trained them by teaching them to use what he gave them. (Allen 1962, 107)

We see from his observation that Paul had a strategy in winning converts and then training them. The training part was a combination of content and practice. All these were done with a simple goal in mind to establish churches.

In *Paul the Missionary*, Schnabel emphasizes the role his coworkers had in Paul’s missionary activity. Not only were coworkers being trained as they were working alongside Paul, but these new churches also became the primary recruiting ground for Paul’s missionary work. Schnabel notes that “Paul repeatedly mentions coworkers who teach and preach in the local congregations and who establish churches in the surrounding area. It can be safely assumed that Paul trained these local coworkers during his initial stay in the city ... The majority of Paul’s coworkers came from the new churches that he had established” (Schnabel 2008, 254-55).

With his training model, Paul had specific goals. If we closely examine Paul’s strategy, we can see that his training model had a specific purpose in mind. As Craig Ott states in his dissertation, *The Training of Lay Leaders in West German Free Church*: “The objective of Paul’s training was essentially the same as that of Jesus: to reproduce not merely reliable bearers of tradition, but mature followers of Christ able to build the church and reproduce themselves in others” (Ott 1991, 65).

In Schnabel’s work, *Early Christian Mission*, he also discusses the intentionality of his missionary initiatives, especially in the selection of coworkers and training them in the model of working together for planting churches. He notes, “Paul surrounded himself with a
circle of coworkers. ... of the approximately one hundred names that are connected with Paul in the book of Acts and in the Pauline letters, thirty-eight people are coworkers of the apostle” (Schnabel 2004, 1425).

Without a doubt, one of Paul’s strategies was recruiting younger leaders and taking them on his missionary journeys. Leadership was learned as they did missionary work with Paul. In addition, we see that Paul had a method of multiplying himself to others as well as encouraging others to multiply themselves (2 Tim 2:2).

In summary, we see that the role of the church is to grow and multiply based upon Christ’s command to “go and make disciples of all nationalities.” We see that one of the church’s primary missions is to expand God’s kingdom by preaching the gospel and making disciples. This is done by planting churches and growing the church, thereby sending out more of Christ’s ambassadors (2 Cor 5:20) to continue the cycle of expansion of God’s kingdom.

Finally, the way God expands the church is through calling people who are trained and equipped by other seasoned leaders and are trained on the job. Through the example of Jesus and Paul, we see that the best way to hand down the mission of God is through the investment and training up of young leaders in the context of the local church.

*Issues from Related Contemporary Literature*

Prior to the 1980s, there was very little written on church planting and local church-based training. Most of the material on church planting was cross-cultural, overseas church planting. While the principles were transferable, some of these books did not deal with the unique North American context. In this section, I will highlight some contemporary literature pertaining to my topic of church planting and leadership development.
One of the most important works on cross-cultural church planting is a book by David Hesselgrave, *Planting Churches Cross-Culturally*. He notes that while the message of Paul was normative, the methods may not be normative. We can learn much from the Pauline strategy. Hesselgrave lists the 10 steps of the Pauline Cycle in his book:

7. Leadership Consecrated—Acts 14:23
(Hesselgrave 2000, 47-48).

One of the keys to establishing a church planting movement is the “missionary commissioned” or workers sent out who will plant churches. This is the selection of the leaders who will plant churches. In many ways, the early local church played an important role in the selection and the equipping of church planters (Acts 13:1-4). This contributed to the fast multiplication of churches in the first century.

One of the first popular church planting books for North America was a book by Peter Wagner, *Church Planting for a Greater Harvest: A Comprehensive Guide*. It is in Wagner’s book where the often-quoted church planting apologetic is stated: “The single most effective evangelistic methodology under heaven is planting new churches” (Wagner 1990, 11). Wagner gives a simple outline and structure on how to plant churches, from developing an apologetic to the actual process of planting a new church. He concludes with a chapter on growing a church plant, which is often neglected in many church planting resources. Though
this book is a great primer for the individual church planter, it does not address how local churches can be a part of the process of developing the planter.

Another classic among church planting books is the book by Charles Chaney, *Church Planting at the End of the Twentieth Century*. This book deals with the various contexts for planting churches such as regional strategy, inner-city, and urban transitional contexts. Pertinent to this study is the chapter on developing a congregational strategy for church planting. One of the important ideas in Chaney’s book is that “church planting is primarily the task of the local church” (Chaney 1992, 63). He challenges local congregations to begin creating a climate for church planting.

Moving from the twentieth century to the twenty-first century, we have seen other books written on church planting. One of the most popular has been Aubrey Malphurs’ book, *Planting Growing Churches for the 21st Century* (Malphurs 1992). The four-step method he develops consists of preparation, personnel, principles, and process. This is one of the most practical books on church planting designed for the on-the-field church planter. From conception to reproduction, he walks the planter through all the major steps. Issues such as calling, finances, and ministry structure are all covered. Malphurs’ book is a standard text used in many Church Planting Centers or CPCs.

The final section of the book focuses on the topic of church reproduction. It is an important critical part of the church planting process. He states that few churches have the vision to reproduce in North America. However, he goes back to the early church in Antioch to show us a model of churches planting churches. He notes a few modern examples, such as Saddleback Church, Willow Creek, and Calvary Chapel. However, Malphurs does deal with
the process of planting churches but not developing church planters in detail. When discussing a church’s role in selecting and equipping a team, he writes as follows:

One approach is to set up an internship program. This could be arranged in conjunction with a Christian college or seminary. This would be a good approach for a smaller church that has only limited funds available. ... Another approach is to place potential planters in staff positions in the sponsoring church. They would serve the church in a full-time capacity, including preparation for church planting. They would be paid full-time and could recruit a team from among the congregation. Once they leave, other church planters could take their places. (Malphurs 1992, 353)

If Malphurs’ book is a classic text borne of the last decade, then new books by Ed Stetzer are the texts for this decade. In many ways, Stetzer has become the leading modern missiologist in church planting movements in the United States. His first book on church planting, *Planting New Churches in a Postmodern Age* (Stetzer 2003), is an overview of church planting that covers the basics of church planting and the models and provides a practical how-to guide on planting a new church.

While Malphurs deals with one primary model, Stetzer surveys some of the more recent models, from emerging churches to multi-ethnic churches to organic churches. His practical section is helpful for any church planter interested in deciphering which model fits his or her gifts and passions. He also discusses issues such as name, logo, small groups, worship, and children (to name a few) with respect to the models he outlines.

Like Malphurs, Stetzer also appeals to churches playing an active role in planting other churches in chapter 28 of *Planting New Churches in a Postmodern Age* (Stetzer 2003). This chapter is an apologetic on churches planting churches but also discusses how the mother church can help in the process of parenting a church. He does mention that the church can sponsor a planter by properly assessing whether the potential planter has the necessary qualities
to be successful. This section, however, serves as more of a caveat than as a discussion of the process of training and developing a church planter.

A newly revised version of the book previously mentioned is now entitled *Planting Missional Churches* (Stetzer 2006). The main revision in this book is that Stetzer leaves out some sections on the various models of church planting and moves away from the terminology of postmodern toward more “missional” churches. There is also an annotated bibliography for anyone wanting to do more church planting research.

In addition to a general overview and strategy on church planting, there have been a few books written on the various models of church planting. For example, Steve Sjogren’s book *Community of Kindness* is a church planting book that employs servant evangelism as a model. Sjogren describes how he grew his church using kindness as a core strategy (Sjogren and Lewin 2003). Ron Sylvia’s book *Starting New Churches on Purpose* is designed for planters wanting to plant large attractional churches (Sylvia 2006). Neil Cole’s book *Organic Church* looks at the organic or house church movement (Cole 2007). Although different models of church planting exist, all these books have one common theme: church planting must be missional in their intent.

**Church-Based Training Church Planters**

Church planting models can add tremendous insight on church planting. However, there have been very few theological or historical works on church planting. The most important work in recent years is a book by Stuart Murray, *Church Planting: Laying Foundations*. This book gives more than just a practical manual. In it, he examines the theological and historical
framework for church planting. One of the practices he examines is the training of church planters in history. He writes:

Some church planting movements have given little attention to leadership training, and second generation churches have suffered from the consequence of this neglect. The Anabaptist movement took many years to recover from the effects of failing to provide adequate training for congregational leaders. By contrasts, the training provided for Celtic church planters was a significant component in the vibrancy of this movement. (Murray 2004, 226)

While all these books are important and essential tools for any church planter, a model not written about nor discussed in detail is the apprenticeship model of church planting. This is generally a church-based model versus a model where the planter learns in an institution outside the local church, such as in a seminary.

Church-based training is not a new concept: It can be seen throughout the New Testament with Paul training his disciples. However, in recent times, church planting movements like Calvary Chapel and the Vineyard have used a very simple model of training from existing churches and launching planters. While the church planting movement illustrated by these churches is very organic in nature, their planters often get hands-on experience with very little formal training.

One well-developed church-based training is from the organization BILD International. BILD is an acronym for Biblical Institute for Leadership Development. BILD has a curriculum of church-based training to train leaders as well as plant churches. In their training material, they outline a four-part master plan. Of particular interest is Parts 2 and 3 of their plan, stated as following on their website:

Antioch School of Church planting and Leadership Development. BILD University’s Antioch-based school for assisting church leaders in training future leaders in the context of their churches. The primary motivation for
the school is to raise a future generation of church planters. ... Antioch Initiative—North America BILD has initiated North American church planting movement with ... the goal of 20,000 churches planted from leaders train in the Antioch School. (BILD 2007)

Similar to the vision of church-based leadership is the Center for Church Based Training. Recently, they published a book entitled *The Leadership Baton* by Rowland Forman, Jeff Jones and Bruce Miller in 2004. They develop and expand the vision for church-based leadership training. While the focus is not specifically on developing church planters, the book defines their model as: “Developing all believers to maturity and many to leadership in the local church, under the authority of the local church leadership, with other churches, through an apprenticeship, on-the-job approach, for Christ’s mission of multiplying churches worldwide to God’s glory” (Forman, Jones, and Miller 2004, 54).

The book shows how churches can develop a strategic plan for multiplying leaders and eventually churches. The importance of a church-based training program is that it involves more than the passing of information. Rather, it is developed in a community with a strong emphasis on spiritual character development. They continue by adding, “the church-based training movement seeks to develop community and a spiritual advisor (pastor) is significantly involved in the process ... church-based training focuses on developing professional skill and specialized knowledge for ministry-specific responsibilities (Forman, Jones, and Miller 2004, 52).

While seminaries and other learning contexts are important, a church-based training has the added benefit of focusing on training in the context of relationships and personal spiritual development. In part two of *The Leadership Baton*, the emphasis is on the process of “a whole-life approach” (Forman, Jones, and Miller 2004, 59). Part three’s emphasis is summarized with the words: head (leaders with godly wisdom), heart (leaders with godly character) and
hands (servant leaders who equip others). These are three areas developed in context of three step process:

First, the course is designed as “Wisdom-Based Learning.” The focus is beyond the knowledge base to focus on application of knowledge in the context of ministry. While each student learns the concepts and theory, the goal is to move toward obedience. In a church-based training, emphasis can place on the outcomes in practice. Second, the community is in a “Relational-Learning Process.” In other words, the training is done not only with a mentor but with fellow cohorts. They are learning together as they are doing life together and sharpen one another. Third, mentoring is a “Personal-Learning Process.” The mentor plays the role of coach, teacher, example talent scout and team player in the life of the apprentice. This training is personalized to the training needs of the follower. This is the three step process summarized from the book (Forman, Jones, and Miller 2004, 71-113).

Another helpful resource is Aubrey Malphurs and Will Mancini’s book Building Leaders. While this book is not a specific model of church-based training, the book describes a variety of ways that churches can develop leaders in the local church. This book does a comprehensive analysis of some of the best practices of church-based training throughout Scripture, as well as in varying contexts like a small church versus a large church (Malphurs and Mancini 2004).

One model of learning is expanded in the section on Apprenticing in Chapter 10. They define apprenticing as “when an individual performs a ministry leadership function, in a learning role, under the direct supervision of an experienced leader” (Malphurs and Mancini 2004, 164). They give a compelling argument for the importance of an apprenticing model in a church-based context. The authors write:
Every church should seriously consider apprenticing as a training venue. The great thing about apprenticing is that it can take place anytime ministry is occurring. In other words, every event and activity that your church is currently doing provides a built-in opportunity for apprenticing. Therefore, no extra time or cost commitment is required. Also, apprenticing is unique in its ability to touch on all four levels of learning (knowledge, skills, character, and emotions) as a result of the life-on-life context. It is particularly effective for learning skills. (Malphurs and Mancini 2004, 164)

One of the most helpful resources is a recent publication by Leadership Network in Dallas, Texas. They put together a series of papers on the subject of church planting. One of their recent papers is entitled, *Models for Raising Up Church Planters: How Churches Become More Effective Through Intentional Leadership Development*. Written by Glenn Smith, a veteran church planter and President of New Church Initiative, this paper focuses on training models for church planters in a church-based environment (Smith 2007).

He lists several kinds of training for church planters. First is the Intensive Approach. This is often around an intense boot camp—a two- to four-day experience where church planters get all their information in a short period of time. Various organizations like Acts 29 Network (Mark Driscoll) and the EFCA utilize boot camps with this approach. Another approach is the use of weekly training classes. Here the emphasis is on training over several months rather than one intensive week. Churches like West Ridge Church in Atlanta, Georgia; and Columbia Crossroads Church in Columbia, South Carolina, use this approach where the focus is on long-term relationships and training. The third model is called the Internship Model. Here, the emphasis is a church planter who is on-site for an extended period of time, such as nine months. Two churches focus on this method: Northwood Church in Keller, Texas; and CrossPointe Church in Orlando, Florida. The interns can be at any stage of the church planting process and are generally learning as they are doing. The final is the Residency Approach. This
approach focuses on more prepared planters who are ready to plant but need some training, experience, and support. Often they are treated as staff with full-time salaries. A good example of this model would be Perimeter Church in Atlanta, Georgia and Bethlehem Baptist Church in Minneapolis, Minnesota (Smith 2007, 1-9).

Smith concludes by stating:

A church planting residency can be a deeply enriching experience for prospective church planters. It may give planters the best opportunity to explore, research, and learn as they prepare for their church planting venture. Like internships, the personalized mentoring and the opportunity to learn within a dynamic, thriving church environment are great advantages (Smith 2007, 9)

The giftedness of the church planter, level of experience and readiness to plant are all factors in determining what type of training best suits the person. For a church that is ready to plant, developing a residency model is the best approach. The mother church could mobilize and maximize its resources by bringing on a resident who will be ready to plant almost immediately.

Conclusion

From this condensed survey of biblical texts and contemporary literature, a few key points can be emphasized. First, all believers are called to participate in the mission of God. Second, the mission of God is seen in three areas: proclamation of the good news, training of believers and leaders, and establishing of churches. Throughout the book of Acts, we see this being played out in Paul’s ministry. As Paul reformulates his missionary calling, he does not do this alone. Rather he takes young men and women and trains them to continue the mission by taking them along and training them formally and informally to establish churches.
This seems to be a good way for churches in our day and age to continue in the work of church planting by using a church-based leadership development strategy.
CHAPTER 3
CASE STUDY OF COMMUNITY CHURCH

In this chapter, the first case study of Community Church’s residency program is studied. This is a mega-church in a major urban center. It is currently affiliated with an Evangelical denomination with influence that extends beyond to a broader Evangelical community. This church is currently recognized by Outreach Magazine as one of the leading church planting churches in the nation. The history of church planting goes back to the founding of the church. In the first section, we will see the correlation between their residency program and the history of how the church begins. After the history is examined, the interviews with the director and former participants will be summarized. Before further examining the history, it will be important to establish the methodology of the case study done on Community Church.

Methodology

The initial selection process of selecting the church was narrowed to two churches after researching the leading church planting churches on the internet. The Church Planting Director (CPD) of the Evangelical Free Church of America, George Klippenes, as well as other regional church planting leaders, were consulted for their specific recommendations on churches that had developed a church-based training and residency program. From a broad list that resulted, the two churches were selected based on at least a five-year history and successfully training church planting residents. Each of the CPD for these two churches was
contacted based on the willingness to participate in the research. Upon their responses, the two churches were finalized.

The initial primary communication was by email. The directors were contacted for an hour-long interview. Community Church CPD was then emailed a CPD questionnaire (appendix 3) to prepare for the interview. The interview was conducted on the phone and recorded using a computer on October 24, 2008 at 2:01 p.m. (PST). The interview lasted 51 minutes and 40 seconds. Then it was manually transcribed to a Microsoft Word document. After the interview with the CPD, a list of names of former residents was requested. The CPD emailed a list of names, and four were selected based on their willingness to participate on this study. The four residents were then emailed a set of questions (appendix 4), and a phone interview appointment was set. The four interviews were conducted in the month of November 2008 through the phone and recorded on a computer. Later, each of the interviews was transcribed to a Microsoft Word document.

In addition to the interviews, other applicable information was gathered. First, the CPD emailed several documents detailing the background and origin of their program. Second, additional materials were gathered from the website. Third, the CP Center made a church planting manual available for purchase on their website, which was used in this chapter.

This chapter is a description of the program from the sources listed above. The primary sources are the transcribed interviews by the CPD and former residents.

*The History of Community Church*

The original vision to plant Community Church in Metropolitan City began with a conversation from the Church Planting Director (CPD) of a major Evangelical
denomination with a pastor from the East Coast. The director proposed to the pastor a vision for an urban church plant that would become a focal point for planting new churches. The proposed strategy would be an “inside-out” strategy. Rather than a suburban church trying to reach the city (“outside-in” strategy), the urban church can be a “strong center-city church providing access to communities and people groups all over the metro area for the planting of new churches.”

Initially, the pastor resisted. In his own words, he indicated he was 10% open to the idea. He sought counsel from his accountability group, and God began to stir the pastor’s heart. During a denominational gathering in New York, the denominational leaders present began to further discuss the idea of reaching people who would be more intellectual and secular.

During this time, a para-church outreach called the House began to reach young professional intellectuals but found a difficult time finding adequate churches for these converts. Sadly, only two churches qualified in all of Metropolitan City to disciple these new converts—one an Episcopalian Church and the other a Baptist Church.

After much discussion, the pastor agreed with the denominational leader that a church was needed in the heart of Metropolitan City. During the fall months, the pastor would go up to Metropolitan City and meet with potential core members. Initially, three couples agreed to be a part of the core. But the lingering question of who the church planter would be kept surfacing.

Still reluctant, the pastor had recently begun teaching at a seminary and did not feel free to leave the school. Once a week, the pastor drove up to Metropolitan City to research the culture and meet with people to ask two questions:
1. What kind of church would really help and appeal to the people here in Metropolitan City?

2. Do you know of anyone else who could give me more information and might be interested in this new church?

During the interview process, the pastor realized that the most valuable person to reach the city was a new Christian who did not have the negative history from previous church experiences and who still had many relationships with nonbelievers. During this time, the city was becoming stratified with professional elites, new immigrants, and the poor while the middle class was shrinking in size. Sadly, the churches were largely based on the shrinking middle class.

The following spring, after researching the city, the pastor tried to recruit the best church planter he could find to come to this new plant. A few of his colleagues came and visited. Yet, one by one, each chose not to join the new church plant. Finally, the Spirit of God confirmed to both the pastor and his wife the call to come to Metropolitan City to plant Community Church.

One of the major hurdles in planting a church in a large urban city was the cost involved. Some estimates ranged from two to three times the budget of a typical church plant in the suburbs. However, God’s calling was again confirmed when several churches from the denomination rallied together and raised nearly $225,000. With this sum, the pastor moved to the center of the city. With the additional funding, the pastor had enough resources to hire another full-time staff member as soon as the growth was evident.
With the vision and funds provided for, the next step for Community Church was to locate a facility where the church could worship. A Seventh Day Adventist Church in the heart of the city happened to be available during this time, and with the low cost, Community Church was able to grow numerically and financially during the first four years.

In the early years, the formative mission and values of Community Church began to take shape. Three key core convictions were established at Community Church:

1. We want to be not just a congregation for ourselves, but also for our friends who do not yet believe in Christ.
2. We want to be not just a ministry for ourselves, but also for the peace and benefit of the entire city. Our aim is not a greater church, but a greater city.
3. We want to be not just a single church but also a movement of the gospel serving all churches and planting new churches.

In the following years, the church grew from a small church plant to a thriving mega-church. They were able to hire an executive pastor, and with the hiring of this pastor, the church began to focus on becoming a movement to reach the city through planting new churches. Becoming a fast-growing church also brought additional challenges. As people came from all parts of the city, the leadership began to envision multi-site campuses, where they would have multiple locations with one senior pastor (SP); however, each site would have an on-site pastor, or what is sometimes called a “campus pastor,” to assist in reaching their community.

Out of the need to expand the church into a movement, the church founded the Church Planting Center (CPC), where they could assess, train, and supervise church planters.
Eventually, the CPC would not only supply planters for the multi-site campuses, but would also expand to include training and equipping planters for daughter churches as well.

Summary of the History

From the beginning, the CPC came out of both vision and need. The church had established itself from a vision to reach people in the city with the Gospel. Church planting was already in the core DNA of the church from the early stages.

As the people were coming to faith, the church began to experience explosive growth. Consequently, the church planting vision became more urgent. First, the leaders needed to expand by creating multi-sites in locations where they would be more effective in reaching their local communities. Second, these sites became training grounds for future church planters and pastors. Third, they needed to develop a focused strategy on training and equipping pastors. This gave birth to the CPC and the Church Planting Residency Program (CPR), the one-year residency program for church planters. Another name for the Residency Program was the Church Planting Fellows Program. For the rest of the project, Residency and Fellows will be used synonymously.

Overview of the Church Planting Residency Program

The main emphasis of the CPC is the Residency or Fellows Program. The program is designed to prepare church planters to plant churches in Metropolitan City. A short summary of how the program is designed can be seen in appendix 1 of this project.

The one-year residency program is intended to train church planters to plant churches in Metropolitan City with a realistic experience of ministry in the city. The application
is due by April 1 and runs from August 15 to July 31. There is a stipend of $35,000, and the residents are responsible for their own benefits. The primary emphasis of the program is to experience church planting through a combination of seminars and hands-on experience supervised by the director. During their time, church planters learn to contextualize ministry in an urban context. The residency is spread throughout three semesters: fall, winter, and spring.

**Director’s Overview of the Program**

The CPC was started over nine years ago. The current church plant residency director (CPD) has been with the program for the past six years with the task of expanding the CPR. He describes himself as, “the catalyst, the designer, and the fundraiser for all of it.” While he is on the pastoral staff of Community Church, he devotes a significant amount of time, resources and energy into the CPR. He states:

I can devote 25% of my time into the program, and I bring in other human resources from the church planter center to deliver and bring elements to the program. So [in reality, I am] somebody working half to three-quarters time. Plus, I have an assistant giving time to organizing, managing, and putting together the calendar for the programmatic elements to the program.

Regarding the budget, the CPD notes that “our church planting budget is several million dollars. So the church gives the majority of it, but some of that we raise from other sources.” While the overall budget is several million, the budget for the residency program is about $250,000 per year. He further notes that about “10 to 20 percent of our budget comes from the church. And the rest we raise from external sources.”

The financial resources serve to further the goal of expanding the church planting movement in Metropolitan City. When asked about what the yearly goal in terms of churches planted, the CPD responded, “Our yearly goal is that 75% of all fellow alumni will create a
church reflecting our values after two years from the program completion.” It is not only important for the planter to plant just any church, but a church with values found in the mother church. He calls these values, their DNA: “They will basically be our DNA which is understanding and abiding the Gospel, commitment to the city, commitment to be outward focus, and commitment to having a ministry that is balanced on several fronts proclamation, justice and mercy, and a commitment to planting other churches.”

To summarize, these values would include:

1. An understanding and embodiment of the Gospel
2. Commitment to the city
3. Commitment to being outward faced
4. Ministry that would focus both on proclamation and deeds
5. Justice and mercy
6. Commitment to planting other churches

With this in mind, it is important for the program to select the best candidates available to plant churches. This is done through the assessment process. The CPD takes an active role in finding potential candidates.

I do a lot of formal recruiting and I also involve others who are fellow alums and pastors in the [Metropolitan City] to find potential candidates for the program. Some find us out through our website. Others I actively recruit in seminaries. And then church planters contact existing church plants asking how they can prepare them; so some of them come organically. In addition to organically, we visit certain institutions and do recruiting trips and we have a website for potential candidates.

There is great attention in finding the best candidates available. Overall, this process includes multifaceted approaches. It varies from organic, relational connections to
selecting candidates from institutions like seminary and local churches. The focus is to find the best candidates.

Once a candidate has been identified, there is a three-part assessment process. This process is outlined as such:

In my view, assessment is broken into three bits. You have the screening process, application process, assessment process. In the screening process, you want to weed out any who are not potential people because you get a lot of noise. And once you screened them, then I have what I call a normal application process, which is a formal application and they take anywhere between three or four instruments to give back to me so I can get feedback on them, and then several rounds of interviews. We, [then] select the best ones to be part of the fellows program. And before they plant a church, they have to go through a more formal rigorous assessment process.

The first process is known as the screening process to weed out candidates not fitting the structure of the program. After the screening process, the formal application process involves a written application, plus three or four tests to get feedback on the personality, gifts, and skills on the potential church planter. In addition to formal application process, there is an accompanying interview with various leaders in the program. Finally, after these two assessments, before the church is planted, there is another round of formal assessment involving more tests.

In this assessment process, the director looks for specific traits of a church planter, especially a person who is most ready to plant a church. This would include a clear sense of calling for Metropolitan City: “I want to make sure they have a call to be a church planter.” Calling is one of the most important aspects of church planting, and this context can be simply defined as how Merriam-Webster’s defines it: “a strong inner impulse toward a particular course of action especially when accompanied by conviction of divine influence.”
This is what sustains a planter through tough times. In addition to calling, the candidate’s ministry competencies need to match their skills, experience, and education. The key here is to be self-aware of their giftedness and experience.

I want to make sure their awareness of their gifts match the ability of their stage and ministry experience. So if I have a guy who is twenty-five and he is ready to go, and do this and that. I know that he is full of it. I expect to hear back from them things that correspond to their level of development. And I want to look for characteristics of church planters. That is why I give tests to feedback.

Finally, the CFD looks for certain characteristics of a church planter. Various church planting instruments can help in this assessment, instruments such as DiSC, Meyers Briggs Temperament Indicator, Emerging Leadership Initiative from ELI Church Planting Group, and the churches own proprietary instrument the church has developed called “CLI” or Christian Leadership Initiative. Throughout the program, any one or all of these instruments are used to make a good assessment on the potential of the church planter.

One of most important insights regarding interviewing is to know what you are looking for before the assessment. If you know what you are looking for, then you can design the assessment to identify the best candidates. When the assessment is completed, the CPC selects four or five residents for the upcoming year. While the CPD would like to have more candidates, generally only four are selected because the screening process is both rigorous and intense for the highest-potential candidates.

Well on the average, we invited four a year. I would like to have a model where we can have eight a year. Having eight qualified candidates is really hard. Our screening process is pretty tough. And there is only a small pool of people that are qualified and willing and able to be a part of the program so even if I had the funding for six, I don’t bring in six who are not qualified. I only bring those who meet all the requirements of what we are looking for. So if it’s three it’s three. If it’s four it’s four. If it’s five it’s five.
After the assessment process, the four candidates are invited to participate in the program, where skills are also assessed in class, the community, and training in-the-field. Some key skills to develop will be in areas of what the CPD director calls, “missional engagement, learning agility, and redemptive preaching.” All three areas relate to the values of Community Church.

The overall philosophy of training focuses on strength development rather than minimization of weaknesses. He states, “I don’t do anything to minimize the weaknesses. I don’t believe in that philosophy of leadership development.” Rather, he says, “I want to spend most of my time on strengths that they have and actually make sure they spend time on what I call development opportunities, that they own the gap between their current state and their ideal state.”

The process known as “Development Opportunities” assists the church planter to take responsibility between their “current state” and “ideal state”—in other words, where planters are currently at and where they would like to be. The CPD wants each resident to be aware of the gap between these two states, so the planter can start narrowing the gap during their residency training.

To develop the church planting vision, each resident goes through four modules. These four modules and topics are Gospel Urban Ministry Seminar, Leadership Assessment, DNA, and Learning Reflection with the director. These seminars usually meet on Thursdays from two to four hours. There are generally about three hours of preparation before the seminars.

This training only takes 20% of a resident’s time. The other 80% of their time is spent in the context of a new church plant. The key to the learning process is to be on the
field rather than just sitting and observing in an established church. In essence, the programmatic side only supplements the true learning that takes place in a church plant, where the church planter learns hands on in a newer church. The choice of these churches will be with the guidance of the director who works with the church plants to provide the best place for applied learning.

When asked if 80% in a hands-on ministry was effective for training, the CPD replied, “Depending on your theory of adult education. If you want to learn the most, learning is by doing and then supporting them through coaching and learning with good assessment up front.” The hands-on training in an existing church plant is critical to learning about church planting. The other 20% can be supported with a modular curriculum.

The curriculum consists of a syllabus with notes from the SP of Community Church. The potential church planters read several books.

There are a few books that I have them read but not too many because they are already reading fair bit for this. Basically, they read about six books. They read the Forgotten Ways; they read Leadership on the Line, they read a book called Difficult Conversations—these are books for the leadership course; they read a book called the Heart of a Servant Leader, and usually we take them toward one more pastoral formation book like Eugene Peterson or something like and read it.

The key focus of the curriculum is not the content but more on the application of the content in the context of the urban city. Again, the focus is on applied learning more than on content distribution.

Lastly, the third main area of the Fellows Program is the support structures. This would include two major support systems: personal coaching by the director and financial support during and after the program. The support stage is divided into two stages: the church
planter formation stage and church planting formation stage. The former mainly deals with the planter and preparedness for planting, while the latter deals with actual planting of the church. He summarizes these two stages and their support this way:

I make the distinction between the fellows program which is primarily church planter formation stage and the stage they migrate after they finish the program, which is the church planting formation stage, where they are planting and creating a church. So during the first stage, we do provide them a stipend of $40,000 dollars or $35,000 dollars and they go out and raise additional money because usually this is not enough money to have them have a family here in the city. And during the last half of that year they are here, they usually start out by raising money for their church planting project. They have to raise a fair bit of money to make that happen. I don’t think you have to provide them a stipend but we need that as often an incentive to get them here but also to make it feasible.

After the residency, the planter is expected to raise additional support, as well as receive a grant from the mother church for their project. Generally, this additional support is about between $50,000 to a $100,000 for a three-year period.

However, more important than just the finances, the director support role also includes the following two areas: (1) asset resource allocator and (2) consultant for keeping the residents on track. The director’s role is to make sure that the planter is on target for planting the church and provide the necessary coaching for the planter to succeed. Each planter may need something different. It is the role of the CPD to be their coach. As one CPD said, “I look on one side and here’s all things this guy needs to develop. I think about what are the most critical investments I can make that will help them the most? And whom do I look for to help them serve in that? I have to serve some of them but I deploy them to others.”

In terms of long-term financial support, this would vary based on context. Some planters come from other denominations with their own funding structure. Consequently, the
need might be less and the resident would receive a smaller grant. The main goal is to support, but funds vary based on needs. One interesting aspect of their support system is that this is not related to their gathering skills. Since most of these church plants are what CPD calls, “pioneer” plants, they do not necessarily need to raise a core group of forty before support begins. Because of the challenge of planting in Metropolitan City, support begins immediately after the completion of the Fellows Program. However, support is tied to their assessment process. The conclusion from their experience was, “If you get great planters up front, then you will trust that they will be able to gather a core.”

In summary, the three building blocks of CPC are the assessment (before and during), training (hands-on involvement), and support and coaching structure. All three are integral to a successful residency program.

The main benefit of having a program like this is to see churches planted in Metropolitan City every year. However, the main challenge is finding qualified candidates every year. Like major league baseball’s farm system, there are varying degrees of abilities. This program seeks to find planters who are “Triple A” level, planters who are almost ready to plant. To find these planters, assessment is the most critical piece. Second, a training structure is needed to constantly challenge the Fellows to keep on target in planting churches in a metropolitan city.

Participant’s Evaluation of the Program

Following the director’s interview, four former residents were interviewed for a practical evaluation of this program (see appendix 4). All of the former residents interviewed
were interviewed by phone, and their answers were recorded and transcribed. These were the questions asked of each former participant.

1. Why did you decide to participate in this program?
2. In what ways has this program helped you in planting a church?
3. What lessons did you learn from this program?
4. What do you consider the most valuable aspect of this program?
5. What would you change in the program to make it more effective for you?

The first question focused on the reason for participating in a residency program rather than immediately going out and planting a church. As stated in the director’s interview, most of these planters were very qualified to plant. However, each one of them stated that they wanted more focused training, especially at a church that had church planting in their DNA and a unique vision of planting a church in the city with a gospel-centered ministry.

One person said, “The reason I wanted to do the fellows program initially was to learn more about how you can share the gospel and make it sense to the urban professional world.” As a former attorney, he wanted to be trained to reach urban professionals with the Gospel. He knew this program would provide a good basis because this was the DNA of the church.

Two key factors were vision and reputation of the church. Each one of these men already had seminary training and wanted something more than just a theoretical knowledge base. They wanted to see the Gospel lived out in the city. In addition to the vision of reaching the city, the reputation played a key role in the selection of this program. For some, they attended the mother church prior to their residency but for others, they knew CC to be a church planting church. The fact that the church had a developed program was important for these men.
One resident responded, “I didn’t know of any other program like it and I had requisite relationships with leadership at Community Church who encouraged me to do the program. My local church also encouraged me to do that, because they had a church planting vision and by the second year of my seminary, my local church had made the decisions that said if you were to go plant a church, we want to support you through the local church. Local church support was pretty strong.” Because of the organic tie between his local church, Community Church and the church planting residency, he applied to the program.

When each of the residents applied for the program, they were taken through the process of assessment and training. There were several important lessons that helped them plant churches. The first lesson was the focus on contextualizing the gospel for the city. One resident described learning about contextualizing the gospel to your local context and the importance of learning this concept through the practicum:

The key aspect of the program was taking the gospel and contextualizing to the city. Part of the practicum is that I went around and talk to people, and it was good to have SP and CPD establish the framework. But the value of the program is that you test the framework as you talk to people: people who are going to Community Church, the local church where you are doing your practicum, and people who don’t go to church at all. You can test some of these things out in the context.

Over and over again, the word “contextualization” was a dominant concept mentioned. Another resident shared about not knowing exactly what this word was all about until he entered the program. He states, “I really didn’t know it was for real until I went to the program. I learned to be a really good student of the culture, be a good student of the people, to be really deliberative about paying attention to what people’s problems are about and issues are. We have to pay attention to people’s context.” Adapting the Gospel for the
city was a critical part of planting a church, especially applying the message of the gospel to
the people living in the city.

The second aspect of training was to learn on the job. Most of this was through
the curriculum developed by the SP. As one resident noted, “You become engulfed in the
teaching of the SP.” More than just learning about the “how to” of ministry, you also learn
“how not to do.” You learn from the successes, but more from the failures of ministry.

There is a contrast between on the job and classroom training. Church planting
classes are great for theory, but this alone is not enough in planting a church. The church
planting curriculum is designed to be training-focused more than teaching-focused. The
resident is expected to participate “hands-on” in a church plant 80% of the time so they learn
the importance of planting by doing. The analogy one resident gave was of swimming. You
do not learn to swim in a classroom; rather, you learn to swim in the water.

One resident commented:

by working in a local church context, I feel like I know a lot more about how a
church plant works because expectations of the context works and interacts
with what actually happened on the ground. I worked with some of that. I’m
not that surprised about some of the stuff coming up. Just the awareness and
differences between a generalist who is doing a church in the city versus a
church planter, and I know the differences, the difference of an established
culture and establishing culture in the church plant.

Finally, another valuable lesson most of the residents mentioned was benefiting
from the expanded network of the mother church through other contacts. Since the mother
church had a positive reputation in the city and in the broader Christian community, both
recruitment of potential members and financial support was easier because of the expanded
network of the mother church.
One clear example is from a resident who said:

The most valuable aspect of this program was getting it connected to the Metropolitan Network. That wasn’t what I initially came into the program for, but the reality is that Community Church is targeting a similar population to what I would target. They are like the big kid on the block. It is important to have a good network and good tie with them for the purpose of support, funding, networking.

In addition to these valuable lessons each resident came away with something unique for their church plant context. One mentioned the module on preaching. More than just the homiletics or methods, learning to preach by contextualizing the Gospel was extremely important. Another resident learned about “ethnographies.” In other words, be a student of the culture and people of the city. If a planter is going to be effective in reaching a city, it is essential to know the people. The student mentioned looking for “themes” in people. Asking the question, “What are the things that bring these people together?” In addition to missiological skills of contextualization and ethnographic research, another resident mentioned just the key practical skills of raising financial support. How do you raise funds to support your church plant? Again, being part of the mother church’s network was extremely helpful.

Overall, the residents valued different aspects of the program. The overall training curriculum served as a grid. Each resident studied the various modules and applied them in their unique context.

The final question asked of the former residents focused on what they would like to change to make the program more effective for them. The responses varied again based upon their own individual context. One responded by saying, “I would have more contact with people who have done church planting, people who are three years ahead of people in the fellows program.” Another responded, “I think there would be less content,
extraneous content, because there was 900 pages of content. There was no way to master that in a year.”

In short, one wanted more information on how to train or how to equip volunteers. Since most of the work will be done with lay volunteers, how do we recruit, mobilize, and support volunteers? Another mentioned they would like to have more contact with other church planters who were in the field. Since each resident is assigned to a local church, there is not as much emphasis on meeting other church planters—those who have recently planted or are in the process of planting. Along the same lines, another mentioned more “nut and bolts.” While the residency program provides both a theological and philosophical framework for reaching the city, some “nuts and bolts” or methodology on church planting would be helpful.

**Conclusion**

Community Church’s program has been designed to multiply the values and DNA of the church. The success of the CPR is determined by the assessment and selection process of the candidates. Getting the right candidates, those who are deemed “Triple A” material, will raise the likelihood of planting a successful church in the Metropolitan City area. When the candidates are recruited, it is also important to plug them into an existing church plant where they can learn hands-on what a church plant looks like. The actual training modules are materials developed by the SP and other associates. The primary role of the CPD is to recruit, facilitate, and coach the planters through the residency program. During the year, the residents are supported financially through a yearly stipend as well as through additional support during and beyond their one-year residency. Most of the residents are given grants
beyond the first year. If the planter is not ready to plant, the planter remains on staff of the
church plant they are currently serving for an additional two years or until they are ready to
plant. Overall, the CRP has seen a goal of 75% success rate of planting a “values-like” church
in Metropolitan City within two years of the program’s completion.
CHAPTER 4
CASE STUDY OF BIBLE CHURCH

The second case study will examine Bible Church. This is a non-denominational church in a large city in the Southwestern part of the United States. It is also a congregation of over several thousand (previously defined as a mega-church) with a vision to reach the city primarily through church planting in strategic parts of the city. Part of the church planting vision will be unifying these church plants under an association of Bible Churches. To develop the church planters, Bible Church developed a church planting residency center in 2004. Before looking specifically at the residency model, the methodology needs to be explained.

Methodology

As stated in the first case study, two churches were eventually selected from looking at various sources: the Internet, word of mouth recommendations, books and articles on church-based training and residency programs. After compiling a list, two churches were then selected based on at least a five-year history of planting churches using the residency model. Again, the CPDs for these two churches were contacted based on their willingness to participate in the research, and based on their responses, the two churches were finalized.

As in the case of Community Church, the initial primary communication was by email. However, rather than a phone interview, the interview with the Bible Church CPD was conducted in person on November 9, 2008 at 11:00 a.m. (PST). Prior to the meeting the
Bible Church CPD, a questionnaire (appendix 3) was emailed prior to prepare for the interview. The interview lasted one hour twenty-one minutes and thirty seconds. Then, it was manually transcribed to a Microsoft Word document. After the interview with the CPD, a list of names of former residents were requested. CPD emailed a list of names and four were selected based on their willingness to participate on this study. The four residents were then emailed a set of questions (appendix 4); a phone interview appointment was set. The four interviews were conducted in the month of November 2008 to November 2009 using a computer program called Skpe and recorded on a computer. Each of the interviews was transcribed on a Microsoft Word document.

In addition to the interviews, other applicable information was gathered. First, the church website was consulted for the history and background on the program. Second, CP materials were sent through email by the CPD. Third, additional sources were obtained through the Director of Church planting of the EFCA, George Klippenes.

This chapter is a description of the program from the sources listed above. The primary sources are the transcribed interviews by the CPD and former residents.

*The History of Bible Church*

Unlike Community Church is located which is located in a large metropolitan city, Bible Church is located in Suburban, Texas. Bible Church did not begin with a vision from a church planter or a denomination, but rather as a non-denominational church in the city of Suburban, Texas from the desire of seventeen people who met in October of 1985. Their desire was to see a church with a “balanced ministry” of reaching every part of God’s family. When they first met, the idea of a “balanced ministry” was established.
Attenders of the first meeting were all intent on establishing a church with a “balanced ministry,” one that would effectively minister to every part of the family of God. The consensus of the group was that the church use the best of both traditional and innovative approaches in ministry and outreach. This initial meeting was concluded with a study of Scriptures relating to the New Testament Church, a moving time of prayer, and a bonding in relationships. The group voted unanimously to move forward with the plans for the new church.

In January of the following year, about seventy-five people gathered at a local elementary school. They appointed their first pastor, who eventually led the church for the next two years. During these years, they experienced growth, which was assisted by a new, leased facility. However, when the first pastor left, Bible Church spent the next ten months looking for a new pastor. This gave the church an opportunity to grow their lay leadership.

In 1989, they called their new senior pastor (SP), a recent graduate of a seminary. His leadership was instrumental in growing the church in size, but more importantly, in the vision of reaching their local city. A few years later in 1992, the church was able to purchase about thirty acres of property in the northern section of town for about $300,000. At that time, the property was assessed at more than one million dollars. The church began to see growth in numbers, but also began expanding their facility on their property. For the next seven years, the ministry expansion included a desire to reach the neighboring counties with the Gospel.

One day, the SP was flying back from Mexico City after consulting with a small church on reaching its city. He had encouraged the small church in Mexico to develop leaders and plant churches. This led to a strong conviction about reaching his own city. As he began to look at his own strategy, he realized he was not living up to his own counsel. He states, “If I were a mission board evaluating my performance as a missionary in my city, I
would fire me.” When he arrived back home, he decided to install the vision of having every person hear the Gospel in the city of Suburban, Texas.

The vision was ultimately summarized with this statement: “That every man, woman, and child in Greater Suburban City has the chance to experience the life-changing reality of Jesus Christ because they hear the Gospel from the lips of someone at Bible Church. God has raised up people within our church family to start other Bible Churches.”

The SP knew if this vision was to be fulfilled, several things must happen. They needed to do three things:

1. “They needed to multiply disciples”
2. “They needed to plant churches that were spiritually vibrant and strategically located.”
3. “They need to partner with like-minded ministries.”

The church also surveyed the city and saw that only 17% of the population attended church. Of that, only 8% attended an evangelical church. During the past decade, there was a decrease of 18% in church attendance even though there were eighty-nine more churches in Suburban, Texas. The leaders concluded that they needed over 415 new churches in a ten year period to fulfill their vision of seeing every person hear the Gospel. However this vision took a long time before it became reality. “And it took them significant number of years before they really started planting. It’s probably I think nineteen,” according to the CPD.

Even though the process took nineteen years, the vision statement and the need for more churches resonated with both the pastoral staff and the elder board. In the spring of 1996, the church planted their first church about twenty fives miles from the main campus. This was birthed from a combination of vision and a long commute. The CPD shared, “We
have some people that are twenty-five miles away drive all the way over here to church, ‘Why
don’t we plant,’ and so he took a lot of time and effort to plant the first church. It’s still going.”

Then four years later, this church plant started another church in a nearby city. After that,
four other daughter churches and one granddaughter church were planted in 2007.

As Bible Church began to plant churches, they began to realize they needed to
do a better job of making the vision a reality. In 2004, they made some strategic investments
in two areas: financial and personnel. The goal was to pro-actively see their vision become
reality. In August, they opened their Church Plant Training Center with their first church
plant resident, a pastor of a large church from the Washington D.C. area. They wanted an
intentional process rather than making up a strategy as they went along.

You know, I think it will be good if we started more of a residency where
you had a long course of study where somebody could come in and pick up
from the meaningful pieces of the DNA, develop a missional core and then go
out from there in a very intentional way. And so rather than most church
planters—my experience is most church planters are kind of making it up to
say go—this was far from that, it’s very intentional.

In addition, they hired a full-time Director of Church Planting whose job it
would be to oversee the vision, strategy, and training of the residents.

As of the Fall of 2009, the church has planted or partnered with about twenty
new church plants in the city of Suburban, Texas. They have also established an ambitious
goal of planting 100 churches in seven years. Through the leadership of their current director,
they hope to expand the residency program to develop church planting leaders who will be
able to fulfill this vision of reaching the city through the planting of churches.
Summary of the History

In summarizing the history of Bible Church’s church planting vision, several key points are highlighted. First, the SP or leader was a person who owned the vision of church planting. In this church, through the experience of seeing a need to reach the city, the SP recognized that one of the most effective ways for the church to reach the city was through the planting of new churches. One church was not going to be able to reach the whole city. Bible Church needed to plant and partner with other church plants to reach the city.

Second, the vision for planting was passed down to key leadership. When talking with the leadership at Bible Church, it was evident that the leaders (in this case, the elders) were just as passionate and on the same page with the SP. Part of the transference came through the collective vision of having every man, woman and child hear the Gospel in their city. CPD emphasizes the “SP is the prime vision but the elders really own it. They fully own it, and embrace it, and it’s part of their whole strategy. I mean, I’m sure you’ve spoken to people and hear enough that it is the whole city reaching strategy, but he’s the one ... He’s the one that really drives I think and he’s still very involved in it. He really is.”

Next, the church invested time and resources to turn this dream into reality. In Bible Church’s case, they invested a tremendous amount of financial resources in hiring a full-time Director of Church Planting, as well as fully funding the hiring of four to six full-time residents. Lastly, they established a CPC to carry on the work of planting churches. This Center includes a building, administrative support, and long-term support of their church planters.
Overview of the Church Planting Residency Program

To fulfill the vision of reaching every man, woman and child within the city, the church developed a full-time residency program similar to the Fellow’s program of Community Church.

This is Bible Church’s expectation and clarification summary (a full description can be found on appendix 2): BC’s residency is a one-year learning community similar to a hospital residency where the resident has hands-on experience of being a church planter. To qualify for the program, prior experience and theological alignment are very critical. A resident will write a learning contract to hone skills, knowledge, and character. A resident will learn how to exegete a community and meet goals established by the director. During the residency, the resident will be paid a full salary with benefits. After meeting the expectations, the resident can get a loan and a grant to launch their church plant.

The residency process can be summarized in five phases. The first phase would include recruitment. The goal of recruitment is to spread the word about this program through its website, word of mouth and attending conferences. The second phase would be to assess eight to ten potential couples with the goal of four or five who will be recommended to be a part of this program. Third, there would be an equipping phase. This phase would train the residents to become missionaries in the area of the community where they would be planting a church. The fourth phase would be engagement. In this phase, they would move toward the actual process of recruiting a core team, developing a small group, equipping a launch team and training future elders. Finally, the fifth and last phase is the coaching phase, where there will be ongoing support for the church planter.
The current director was hired in the second full year of their residency program in May of 2006. The first two years were spent clarifying the strategy and developing systems. When the current director joined Bible Church, he began to clarify the focus. When the residency started out, it began with one resident from the East Coast. In 2009, they currently have five residents.

Before his current role as the director, he was a church planter of several large growing churches. From personal experience, he understood the importance of developing young planters. The primary reason for why he left the pastorate to join Bible Church, however, was the clear vision of the Bible Church. He was fascinated and attracted by the vision of the SP to reach the city of Suburban, Texas. As a former church planter and lead pastor, he realized that, “most church planters made things up as they went along.” He wanted to help church planters succeed both in their calling as well as in developing a clear strategy, rather than making things up.

Another part of their residency program was the willingness for Bible Church to invest their time and finances. Since all of their current building has been paid off, half of their mission’s budget goes to church planting. CPD explained, “We’ve paid for all our buildings and we don’t have any debt and so we throw a lot of money in the external mission and half of our mission budget goes to church planting in our city and so we’ve got—I mean last year we spent what my church gave me was $414,000.” From this amount, the director’s salary and residency program are fully funded. With five residents this year, they invest about $80,000 per resident. While the center realizes that this is not realistic for most churches, Bible Church has the resources to make church planting an overall part of their mission.
It is not enough just to have vision and resources; the director’s role is to make sure the goals and outcomes are fulfilled. When asked about what the outcomes were, the CPD’s main goal was evangelism. It is to see every man, woman, and child have a chance to hear the Gospel in the city of Suburban, Texas.

He writes:

I understand it’s a church planting, it’s probably the most—is the most effective means of evangelism ... and the reason is because you’re very motivated to go out, unless you’re just sending out some people to a new preaching point. But you know, if your goal is really to see every man, woman, or child in your city and that’s our vision as the piece of it. The outcome is ... is that every man, woman and child in the greater city has the chance to experience a life transforming reality of Jesus Christ because they heard the gospel from the lips of someone from a Bible Church.

Effectively launching a church planting movement requires the right person. Like Community Church, Bible Church focuses on recruiting the right people. So far, they make sure the front-end assessment is done well. It is a very rigorous process. He admits, “Well, our assessment is pretty demanding. I’m not sure I’d pass the assessment.” This process begins with recruitment. This process is very broad and very organic. “A lot of it is word of mouth.” So through word–of-mouth personal contacts, conferences, referrals from their friends and from their church plants, the CPD obtains a pool of people who might be potential candidates. The goal is to gather the best pool of people, rather than focusing on recent seminary graduates or pastors with very little experience. The focus is to find qualified and experienced leaders.

Once the leaders are gathered, they are given an extensive application form to fill out. The CPD gives an overview of the application process:
[They are given] a very extensive application ... we don’t give them a very stringent theological screening but they have to look and review our document and then once they have read through all that. We also show them ... a five-page document called Expectations where we just lay out everything that we’re expecting of them and what they can expect from us and then they sign that thing.

The number from this pool of people is around fifty people. From the fifty recruits, the director begins to funnel the candidates through a process of application, interviews and broad assessment. When the group narrows to around eight to ten planters, the CPD gathers these planters to a three-day intensive developed by an organization called New Churches Initiative (NCI) from Sugar Land, Texas. More than just assessing individual behavior, the interview’s focus is on assessment through observation in teams. Some of the assessment is deliberately designed assignments where the potential planter is building teams, sharing the gospel and responding to stressful situations. The focus is to observe Charles Ridley’s thirteen characteristics of church planters. During the three-day intensive weekend, the planters go through a one-hour interview where the assessors can talk with the spouse to measure spousal support.

Another part of assessment uses other measurements like DiSC, personality and leadership situation tests called SDI (Strength Development Inventory). “We use DiSC and SDI. SDI is a leadership indicator that shows ... how to adjust their leadership based on the environment. Well you know from the situational management that if you’re going to work with people, you’re going to have to adapt.”

Through observations and interviews using more than personality measurement tools, the director narrows down the group of eight to ten planters to four or five. These four or five are then invited to be a part of the formal residency program. They are given a full
salary with benefits, as well as money for moving expense. In September, the residents begin their one-year residency. The whole vetting process takes several months from the recruitment phase to the assessment phase to the actual residency phase.

Bible Church believes getting the right planter is central to fulfilling their mission of planting churches in the greater Suburban area. Even though four or five are selected, not all of them actually plant churches. Assessment process continues all the way through their residency. The director notes that not one of the church plants has failed because they make sure that those who are not ready to plant are stopped along the way.

The CPD notes:

We have nobody that has tried and failed but we have stopped people before they fail because ... we got a big series of gates that people need to get through and it is very important we say something like, “You’re coming into our residency in medicine, we already assume that you know certain things in medicine and that you’re going to come in and you’re going to hang around with experts and hone your skills in such a way that you could be more effective and you’re practice of medicine. Well, that’s what we’re doing with the residency.

There are several gates the residents have to go through. During any part of their residency, the planter can be stopped along the way. For example, if they do not meet the goal of ten missional families or 200 prospects by a certain time period, the planter cannot proceed to the next level.

Once the four or five residents begin their program, they all sign a learning covenant contract. The learning covenant comes from all the assessment done through the previous months. The contract is an honest assessment of their strengths and weaknesses. As the director emphasized in the interview, his role is to make sure they are held accountable to the covenant they established at the beginning of the residency.
Each planter sits down with the director to make plans to develop their areas of weakness. For example, if they are weak in communication, they may be required to read books, attend conference, and speak at other churches. The learning covenant is written down at the beginning of the residency. Lastly, the members of the four or five resident team also help one another in a group environment. This part of the accountability helps the resident reach the milestones they all establish.

On the front end of the residency, assessment plays a critical role. From the assessment, the planter goes through the training process. Unlike Community Church, where the planters divide 20% of their time at the mother church and 80% at a daughter church plant, Bible church focuses a majority of their time at the mother church.

Before they begin their formal training process, the residents spend three days in a “boot camp” intensive. During their boot camp phase, they drive around the city. The director explains further: “At the end of that where they’ve gotten the big picture about the city, and we expose them to city leaders and spiritual leaders in the city, and then go over those expectations one more time then say, ‘Are you in or not,’ and get them to sign that covenant, saying, ‘Yeah, I’m ready to do this.’”

Furthermore, they receive an orientation of the church by meeting with the pastors and leaders of Bible Church. They also meet the family of Bible Church planters. More than just falling in love with a model of ministry, the goal is to help them fall in love with the people of the city of Suburban, Texas. From the boot camp orientation, the planters move to a formal training process.
There are two major aspects to their training. One is an established curriculum developed by the director. He states, “And what we do for training is we do have cognitive stuff that they need to work through, they need to read a weekly. I think we require them to read ten or twelve books and most of them about how to think missionally.” The goal in the curriculum is for the planters to interact with material like a book called *Primal Leadership* by Richard E. Boyatzis (Goldman, Boyatzis, and Annie McKee 2002). Throughout the course, they would read ten to twelve books focused on leadership and church planting. Every Monday morning from 8:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m., the planters gather with the director to discuss books and articles pertaining to missional leadership. The goal of the cognitive learning is to develop a missional mindset for the planters.

The second part of the training is more hands on experience. That week, each one of the planters is given an assignment pertaining to their leading. For example, “CPD gives them assignments to go out and do like for instance if you’re talking about exegeting culture, you talk about it through that chunk of time and you go do so that we could go out and explore an area of the city.” They will go around the city during the week and begin having conversations with people about their beliefs and values. More than just looking at demographic data, they would look to see the ethnographies of the community. Finally, on Friday morning, each planter would meet with the director for one to three hours to discuss his progress on his assignments.

As the time nears for the planters to plant, there is less focus on the mother church and more focus on recruiting a core launch team for their own church. During this time, the planter may spend time with other church planters. By the sixth month, before the elders can officially approve them and move to the location, three goals have to be met. They
call this 10/200/50 Critical Path Targets. The numbers describe three important groups of people: ten core families, 200 prospects who may be potential members, and fifty gatherable people. Before they move to the support phase, these milestones must be met.

If the residents meet these milestones, they enter the support phase. When asked about the support, the director gave at various levels. Through the residency, there was personal support. Once a week, the SP also invested his time in discipleship. “SP goes through a discipleship, a twenty-week discipleship, two-hour discipleship, sort of a spiritual formation, big picture leadership discipleship curriculum with these guys.” On Wednesday mornings, the residents would meet to discuss lessons on Biblical manhood. In addition to supporting the residents, their spouses would also be supported. On Wednesday mornings, the spouses would meet to discuss Biblical womanhood. And on Friday mornings, the spouses would meet with the SP’s wife or the director’s wife to encourage their role as a spouse in the new church plant.

Beyond the emotional and spiritual support, the residents would be financially supported during their year of residency as regular staff.

It’s a 1-year program and we move them here. We pay for their move. We’re probably going to pay less on that because we just need to try to bring the cost down a little bit on that but we pay them ... I think our salary this year is $53,000 for the year and then they get benefits. They had a phone and a computer. And they’re treated like staff people.

To further emphasize the value of the planters to Bible Church as staff, “they come in to the pastors and directors staff meeting at will when they want to when it works for them. So they’re really honored. In our culture, church planting is an honored thing. It’s not like you’re a scrub intern.”
In addition to being paid and treated as staff, they are also encouraged to raise additional support prior to and beyond their residency when they launch their church. When the planters are ready to launch, CPD begins to ask the question, “How much do you need? ... And we do grant them up to—we loan them a $100,000 in their first year and then we will grant them up to $50,000 in their first year.” When they are approved to launch their church, the church plants are given a $50,000 grant for cash flow purposes. In addition, they are given a $100,000 loan for equipment, salary, facilities, and any other needs they may have. The $100,000 loan is expected to be paid back between their first two weeks and their first nine months. Some even pay back at the first service when they collect their “first fruits offering.”

On rare occasions, such as reaching college students with very little income, some church plants are supported financially beyond the first year. However, the goal for most is to be supported for one year, and give back to their church plant revolving fund called the Church Planting Acceleration Fund.

Even though there is a good resource base to start a new church, the emphasis is not about the money. It’s about leadership. The CPD emphasized this point with this statement: “And I find that it’s never really about the money. I mean money is an important factor but does the guy have vision; does the guy have leadership?” Funding will follow someone with a strong vision and leadership.

Also, beyond the first year, the planters meet with the director once a week during the first year and once a month after that in their Association. The Association’s role is to foster collegiality for the purpose of launching and supporting a movement. The Bible Church Association emphasizes the principle that church planting movements happen best in collegial relationships rather than in competitive environments.
So far, the system of assessment, training, and support has produced about twenty churches (including churches planted by residents and partnerships with other denominations). Some of the challenges for Bible Church to reach their vision of every man, woman and child hearing the Gospel is the challenge of diversity. The city is about 27% Hispanic while all the church plants have been Caucasian. Their dream is to begin broadening out and become more multi-ethnic in their focus if the dream of reaching this city is to become a reality. The CPD candidly wondered if this method will work on reaching Hispanics.

Well I think the number one challenge we have is we’re a bunch of white people in the suburb and in our city it’s not that—that is a deep concern for us that we would figure out how to really go after people that they don’t look like us, they don’t think like us. It’s our hard stuff right now that we’re trying to figure out how can we reach 27% of our city is Hispanic and we have so few of them. We don’t know how to reach them and we’re really right now we’re trying to develop a strategy for—we would mess things up but that we would know how to get into that part of our population. ‘Cause it’s very significant and it’s not going to do anything but mushroom by 2050 we’re going to be the minority here.

The future goal will be to expand this program by bringing on a diverse resident so they could be more proactive in reaching the growing diversity of people.

**Participant’s Evaluation of the Program**

In the last few years, Bible Church has seen its residency take shape. The program has constantly morphed throughout the years. The first year in 2004, the program started with one intern. In the participants’ survey, the first resident had a very unique and different experience than the rest.

The first resident was part of a large mega-church in the East Coast where he led a large young adult service. Back in 2004, church planting was not on the radar until he
got a personal phone call from the SP of Bible Church. He asked him to pray and consider planting a church with Bible Church. At that time, there was no formal assessment, training, or support. He prayed and felt compelled by the vision laid out by the SP to plant a church for the city. The main attraction was the vision, SP and a college town with small Christian community. He states:

One was the vision for the city to see what it would look like; they have a city perspective ... in planting churches in greater [metropolitan area] and that really resonated with me. So the second major component was SP and the third was the opportunity itself to plant a church at the University where there’s ten percent of the student body who are Christ’s followers.

When he arrived with his family, there was no formal assessment, no formal residency cluster group, and no set training. While the training was not formal, lessons were learned through a personal relationship with the SP. The SP got very involved in the process as frustration began to mount. Early on in the residency, the resident recounts:

I think I would realize that this is not planned out the way we wanted it to ... so at that point SP got very involved in the process with me. I think he recognized that I was pretty frustrated. I could have just gone mad; I am not doing anything, I am just sitting in the office and doing nothing. And that first three months I was there they didn’t really want me talk to anybody or even starting up formation of a core team. So I would just kind of sit around doing nothing and got pretty frustrated, end up sharing those feelings with ... the director at the time and with SP and then at that point senior pastor kind of stepped in and really took it more one-on-one, “we’re going to make this thing happen; let’s just get it up and going,” you know, “don’t worry about the training, but let’s plant this church.”

The frustration became an opportunity to develop into a one-to-one mentorship in church planting. The training and support came from his relationship with the SP.

With informal training, the support was very strong from the mother church.

Since he was the only one planting, he started the church with eighty-eight adults and financial
support of $150,000. Most of the church gathered in support in reaching the university through this church. To this day, this is one of the few churches that is receiving support as part of their overall mission budget.

When asked what he wished the program offered, the first resident responded that he wished there was a better assessment process. In addition, a well-developed program needs to impart a clear vision for the city and develop a missional mindset in building their core. When he launched, most of the people came from the mother church. Sadly, there were only two converts and most of the original core team left. They had to revise the church and begin focusing on becoming a missional community. As a result, they began to grow in both conversions and number of attenders. Finally, the support structure was incredibly helpful for this church. Because of the student and university focus, the church plant continues to receive some support.

In the following year, the program became much more systems-based. The three-step process of assessment, training, and support developed with the hiring of a full-time CPD was established. When asked about the reason why the residents participated in this particular program, there was unanimous support for the vision for the city. One resident made the point that the vision was “tangible.” He said, “We just fell in love with the vision of the church ... the vision of reaching every man, woman, and child, there was kind of a tangible vision there that we could kind of grab a hold of.” It was something they could see being fulfilled through the planting of the churches. “Give them a repeated opportunity to hear it, and ... to plant multiple churches at strategic places all throughout the city; different types of churches.” Another stated, “He could give his life to a vision of seeing every man, woman and child hear the Gospel in the city.”
For most of the residents, the vision to reach the city by planting churches was key draw for them. However, it took more than agreeing to the vision. They had to fit the right profile of a church planter. This is where they focused on the assessment piece of the residency.

The assessment process was more than just a filter for the program; it gave residents an opportunity to identify their strengths, weaknesses, and especially their blind spots. One resident quotes from the SP, saying, “It’s not your weakness that will kill you, but your blind spots.” The reasoning, then, is that these “blind spots” may potentially become pitfalls later on in the residents’ ministry.

Once each of these residents was hired, they began their formal training under the leadership of the director. Their first aspect of the training was the accountability of the group to the director. Each resident must submit a learning contract covenant. This covenant is designed to give structure to the areas that the resident must work on. However, the residents understand that the group also played a role in helping one another to grow. Another important part of the accountability was the director’s ability to walk alongside the residents. He became their primary cheerleader, facilitator, mentor, and coach. This is an integral part of the process. One resident mentioned how the director truly wanted the residents to succeed.

From the accountability phase, the residents began a crash course on church planting. Some of the topics discussed included the essentials of church planting. Church planting research was more like field research. Each resident had to work on specific projects. This served as a practicum for missional living in the city. Each student mentioned the importance of learning how to exegete culture. One resident responded by saying, “the first phase is to exegete the culture. Different areas of the city are so completely different and to really learn
how to interpret and to understand what’s going on and find this baseline cultural narrative of people ... and how do they view the world.” With a combination of field research and classroom learning, the residents spent the first half of residency developing a new vocabulary and learning a methodology for missional church planting. For some of the residents, this was a foreign concept, and they had to learn to adapt and develop. One mentioned he had to have a clear vision while at the same time keeping the process fluid. Thus, the residents found themselves constantly learning as they went through the program.

One of the residents interviewed mentioned that the training time actually became time for intense self-discovery. He stated, “As it was self-discovery for me that I learned a lot more about myself ... clarity.” While his strength of evangelism was obvious, he also recognized his weakness was casting vision. As the training became more focused on developing a core group and launch team, he could not meet the matrix established by the director. Consequently, the training process helped him to identify that he was not the best fit as a lead church planter and ultimately decided not to plant a church.

Apart from a few notable exceptions, the majority of the residents do plant. Each one of the residents was given a grant to begin the church, including a $50,000 grant and a loan. However, none of the residents mentioned the financial aspect as being a deal-breaker. Because Bible Church had resources to fund these plants, the financial support structure was not a critical aspect to whether these residents would plant or not plant. However, each one mentioned the importance of the ongoing coaching relationship with the director.

Finally, each one of the students was asked what they would like to see changed or adapted in the program. The director mentioned the program is constantly morphing as
they learn from the previous class. There was some agreement from residents who were moving from other parts of the country to the city, that they wished they had more time. Since they were coming as outsiders, the residency did not afford them enough time to build enough significant relationships to build a core. One resident mentioned that the further removed one was from the mother church, the more difficult it was to recruit a core from within the mother church. Relationships take time, and sometimes a structured residency can be a difficult challenge in building relationships in a short period of time.

Another helpful suggestion included working alongside church plants and even partnering with existing churches to help recruit a core as a part of their residency. Without a broader church plant network, it can be difficult to recruit a core or even a launch team. Also, having another church to partner might give additional people support in terms of allowing some of the weaknesses to be worked through. Again, the duration of the residency is one year. In one year, it might be a challenge for some without the relational base to effectively raise a team.

Conclusion

Like most vision statements, to make the vision a reality, structures and systems have to be put in place to see this vision become reality. Bible Church has developed both the structures and systems to fulfill the vision of seeing every man, woman, and child hear the Gospel in their city. This church is very unique in the clarity of vision.

The residency program is designed and funded to bring the very best church planters to the city. Its assessment process is rigorous by design. It focuses both on whether there is a clear sense of call to the city as well as competencies to fulfill the task of becoming
a church planter. From the time a person applies to becoming a resident, only one out of ten actually becomes a resident.

However, once the director and elders of Bible Church approve the resident, there is a very clear support structure. Financially, they are given both a grant and a loan. Some even may raise additional support along the way. Money is not a factor since the church makes a large financial investment in the resident. However, the key to the support structure is the relationship with the director. He serves to make sure that planters have a built-in accountability matrix to make sure these residents are tracking with the goals established by the director. The relationships keep the movement on track, and the director plays an important role for the residents beyond the residency.
CHAPTER 5
BEST PRACTICES OF CHURCH PLANTING
RESIDENCY PROGRAMS

One of the most exciting developments in recent years is to see church planting move from denominational headquarters and seminaries to local churches. We examined two churches in two different parts of North America, launching their own church planting training without denomination or seminary assistances. These churches have taken on the role of becoming Church Planting Centers (CPC).

In this section, we will explore the best practices from the two churches. One of the challenges of applying any specific model is the context of these two churches. Both churches have a few characteristics in common. First, both churches would be classified as mega-churches. Their congregations number well over 2,000 on any given Sunday. Having a larger church provides a larger resource base to launch a Church Planting Center. In addition, a larger church has greater resources to fund and resource church plants. Second, because of their larger resource base, these churches can be much more focused on planting churches. Third, both churches can bring on more than one church planting resident at a time. Both currently have four or five residents in a given year with full salary package, benefits and moving expenses. Fourth, both these churches target their local cities with a city-reaching strategy (to saturate a city with similar churches for the spreading of the Gospel). Community Church targets a large urban metropolitan area and Bible Church targets medium-sized city in a suburban context and saturates their city with church plants.
While individual contexts may be different, there are best practice principles that any church that wants to be a church planting church can apply. The goal is to make these practices scalable so a church of any size can become a CPC to train the next generation of church planters. Also, weaknesses will also be explored as well, especially as it pertains to the best practices.

**Best Practices of Launching a Church Planting Residency**

How does a church begin the process of developing a program where future church planters will be equipped for launching a church regardless of size and resources? There are several essential practices that any church can learn from these two churches.

**Vision for Church Planting Must Be Clearly Shared from Leadership Down**

In this principle, we see three major components. The first component we see in both case studies is that the vision for church planting and developing church planters began with the SP. In the first case study, the SP was first a church planter. He was able to experience the effectiveness of planting a church in a large metropolitan city as a church planter. In addition, early on, the church plant actually began as an urban center to multiply other church plants. This was part of the early church’s DNA. The second church, Bible Church in Suburban, Texas had a different beginning. The SP was actually the second pastor. Rather than starting the church with this DNA, he brought the DNA with him. Through his own personal study, reflection and experience in ministry, the SP at Suburban, Texas, simply came to the conclusion that church planting was the most effective way of reaching his city and fulfilling his vision.
If a church planting residency center is to be developed in any sized church, the first step has to be the passion and vision of the SP or leader. Again, as the CPD of Bible Church reiterated, “the senior pastor is the prime visionary ... he’s the one that really drives this thing and he’s still very involved in it.” If the SP is to be the prime visionary, it must come as a God given vision to see church planting and multiplications as a means to making disciples. For some, this may mean the shifting of priorities. “Don’t get me wrong,” says Bob Roberts, whose church started their own residency program that launched fifty churches. In an interview with Leadership Network, he writes, “We have sixty acres here and we want to fill it up to transform our community. But our church died a long time ago to being the biggest church in the area ... We are starting churches around the world” (Williams 2005, 4).

Wayne Cordeiro formerly of New Hope Church in Hawaii echoed the sentiments in this statement: “It was a defining moment for me when I had to do a self-examination and humble myself ... You have to decide, ‘Am I going to build a big church or build big people?’” (Williams 2005, 4).

Because of the personal cost and financial investment, unless the SP has a vision and passion for church planting, it will become a major challenge. Does the primary leader believe that church planting is an essential strategy in reaching his community, city, and culture? When the leader owns this vision, he will resource, support, and cast vision. This is extremely critical when the church faces economic challenges, member opposition, or competition of other ministry values.

The second component is the vision also must go beyond the SP. In both churches, there was a very clear strategy for passing down the vision for church planting beyond just the SP. The SP’s brought on staff and elders and made sure their key leaders own the vision.
This has to be a leader’s primary objective early on, to make sure this becomes a part of the DNA of the church and DNA of the leadership. The CPD of Community Church said the vision for their residency program came from “leadership from our Church Plant Center (CPC)” which includes both staff and lay. Also, Bible Church CPD says that while the SP is the primary visionary, “The elders really own it. They fully own it, and embrace it, and it’s part of their whole strategy.” Without the “buy-in” from leaders, resourcing and funding becomes extremely difficult. Also, when there is buy-in from the leaders, it also gets filtered down to other members of the church. When regular members hold to the vision, they can be possible core team or part of the financial support team. In Bible Church, the elders approve each church planter and their proposal. Elders help bring discernment and wisdom, but also bring partnership to the whole church.

To begin a residency program, the second step is to have as much support from a larger group of leaders, especially for long-term sustainability. In many churches, the lay leaders outlast the pastor. So if this is something that will be a part of the DNA, the key leaders must own the vision. This may take time, energy, and long discussions. Ultimately, the hard work done with leadership will pay off in the residency having a greater chance of sustained success.

The third component of vision is the clarity of the leadership’s vision must be transferred to the laity, and subsequently owned by the church. In the case of Bible Church, their vision statement is almost a mantra. “They want every man, woman and child to hear the Gospel through one of their church plants.” So to accomplish their vision, they are excited to be a part of this strategy. It is also important to note that in both churches, the
clarity of the vision became the main source of recruitment. Resident after resident from both churches mentioned how the vision for church planting was instrumental in becoming a part of these two programs. One resident said, “We love their vision; the fact that here was an established church entrenched in the city that was ... saying hey, we want to reach greater city, and not just, grow fatter and bigger.” Having a clear vision was critical in all phases of developing a church planting residency: recruitment, training, and raising financial support.

If a church wants to develop a residency, it has to be clearly owned by the leadership and passed down to the church. This may be a challenge because of so many competing needs in a local church; however if the church is committed to this vision, it needs to structure itself this way. In a briefing produced by Leadership Network after a gathering of 250 participants of Church Multiplication Centers (CMC) in Las Vegas in 2005, they summarized their findings in this statement:

To move from an occasional church planting church to become serial multipliers, all the CMCs have integrated, organized and systemic processes and procedures ... also have constructed a variety of training platforms, on-going coaching and movement-expanding networking and strategic partnerships. Some of the CMCs launched with those processes in place. (Williams 2005, 6)

In other words, procedure and process were all critical to recruitment, training and casting the vision from leadership to the average church member. Structure needs to be in place as well as the organic relationships. Mark Driscoll, SP from Mars Hill Church in Seattle, said it best:

It has to move from subjective, relationship-to-relationship to objective assessment and systems, verbal to written. At first, it’s almost all intuition, and you go with your gut. That works for one or two church plants a year. But if you want get beyond that, it takes more than chatting over chicken wings and hanging out to see a movement of church planting. (Williams 2005, 6)
Often this can take time to trickle down from the SP to his leadership team or board, and ultimately to the congregation, but with structures and processes in place, the vision can be implemented more effectively.

**Church Planting Is an Integral Part of Their Budget**

In each case, a substantial amount of the budget was dedicated to church planting. One church had about $200,000 dedicated to church plant while the other church set aside about $400,000. In both cases, budgets were established to pay for a program director, recruit and train residents, and provide financial support in the form of a grant or loan. There are other ways to support church planting than just money, but it is an important statement when the vision is reflected in the budget. The CPD of Community Church makes the point that their emphasis of church planting is reflected in their budget, “Our church planting budget is several million dollars. So the church gives the majority of it, but some of that we raise from other sources.” CPD of Bible Church says that half of their missions budget goes to church planting, partly because there is no building debt, but mostly because of vision. “We’ve paid for all our buildings and we don’t have any debt and so we throw a lot of money in the external mission and half of our mission budget goes to church planting.”

Another church with a history of developing leaders through a residency is Fellow Bible Church in Little Rock, Arkansas. Their CPD shares his insight: “It’s an investment of resources, talent and time, but it won’t happen any other way. You have to decide whether you believe planting new churches is a significant and valued priority. There are a lot of other ways our church could spend money. But we believe it is the best way to share the Gospel and raise up new leaders” (Williams 2005, 5).
Church planting takes money and based on values and priorities, if church planting is truly important, it will be reflected in resource allocation. In other words, this is something church planting churches answer with their annual budget. In most churches, money and value goes together. Churches fund what is important. When it comes to church planting, this is something that may not need a lot of funds; however, to start any new ministry, budget has to be set aside for a program that invests in future leaders. The budget can be set aside for a small stipend, grant, loan, start-up costs, or even a part-time director.

A Church Planting Point Person Is Key in Developing a Program

In Community Church, the original architect was the executive pastor who launched the multi-site campus strategy. But as the ministry began to grow, they hired a full-time director. While he served in the mother church with some pastoral responsibility, the main role of the director was to recruit, assess, and train church planting residents. At Bible Church, various pastors on staff shared the leadership. However, it was not until the second year that they hired a full-time director. It was under his leadership that the residency program developed both structure and systems.

The first resident who came to Bible Church shared his early frustration with not having a clear person in charge: “When I got there nothing was developed. The residency was led by one of the church pastors ... he was kind of the small groups pastor, that it was like he wanted to do a residency program so okay.” Later, residents expressed how important this person became. When asked what they appreciated the most, the latter residents of Bible Church emphasized, “You know if I had to narrow it down, it was the coaching I got.” The
CPD provided coaching and more than that provided a support system that lasted beyond their one year residency. The CPD from Community Church emphasized, “Part of my job, in the support role, is to give them access to resources they need to flourish. So basically, I’m an asset resource allocator and I’m a consultant to keep them on a critical path.” This makes this position a critical piece to the success of the residency.

Leadership Network’s study on Church Plant Residency confirms this as well. “Linda Stanley’s research also found that all the CMCs within Leadership Network’s pilot project have a minimum of one full-time director of church multiplication and at least a part-time administrative assistant” (Williams 2005, 5). In Fellowship Bible Church’s residency program, when their CPD was hired, it led to greater effectiveness for the whole program. “Hiring Steve was a key. He has been totally devoted to cultivating the relationships and the networks, and in finding key leaders” states Bill Wellons of Fellows Associates of Fellowship Bible Church (Williams 2005, 5).

While most churches will not have the resources to hire a full-time church-plant resident director, it is still important to have a point person or designated pastor who will give oversight to the vision. Having a leader who focuses on this role allows the resident to have direction and accountability. Without a director, the integrated system of assessment, training and support might not be as effective in a long-term strategy. Bible Church had the first resident begin without a director. He eventually became frustrated and was on the verge of leaving until the SP stepped in to give guidance. The other residents at Bible Church, who had a focus director, mentioned this was one of the best parts of the residency. Regardless of whether this person is a full-time paid staff or a volunteer, the critical piece of the residency puzzle is having a leader who can give attention to both the vision and the resident.
Assessment Is Critical for Success

Another factor in these churches is the value, resources and energy they place on recruiting the right people to plant churches. As stated in Leadership Networks paper, “Each CMC leader affirms that drawing a bead on the right person is perhaps the most crucial piece of the process” (Williams 2005, 6). Both CPDs in this study concur with this statement. As one CPD said, “it allows you to assess where are the key investments you want to make in people that has the best return. So this has really caused us to do a lot of due diligence on what are the key things that we want to see happen depending on the outcomes. The challenges are it is hard to find enough qualified candidates.”

Each church began with a wider net strategy and filtered down their candidates. One church had more than fifty people at the beginning of the process and narrowed it down to four or five. Only one out of ten are selected into the program. In addition, the filter progress really looks for people with a clear calling and competencies to plant a church right away.

Each church had a specific grid in mind often using variety of measure tools, such as Charles Ridley’s Thirteen Characteristic of a Church Planter, MBTI, DiSC, ELI, or other measurement tools. But these tools are used selectively based on their context and some were even updated. The CPD from Community Church stated:

So the profile we use is called CLI which is slightly different from Ridley’s, which is fairly bit dated, and hasn’t been updated with the latest research in my view. That’s why we had to create our own in an urban dynamic. Some of the competencies are the same but we also had to add more due to the current realities that we face. So those will be things like missional engagement, learning agility, redemptive preaching. So about 75-80% is the competencies of what you would find in a Ridley model.
But more than just giving a battery of tests before they enter the program, assessment in both churches was ongoing. The CPD from Community Church said, “My model for any development which I have in the Church planting fellows program is you have to assess and screen your candidates before they come in the program and while they are in the program.” At Bible Church, this has saved from planting churches that might fail. “We really have nobody that has tried and failed but we have stopped people before they fail because—and so we’ve got a big series of gates that people need to get through.” The gates are the ongoing assessment throughout the program.

Any church desiring to plant, needs to find individuals with the right mixture of calling and competencies. Most of these CRP spend time and money to make sure they have the best candidates to plant churches. In addition, resources like Ridley, online assessment programs, and denominational resources serve to help programs assess their candidates. Because of the time and financial investment, a good assessment will save the church in both areas. One church plant leader sums it up by stating, “Assessment is the backbone of successful plants” (Williams 2005, 7).

On-the-Job Training Is Essential

Both churches had a structured program. Both programs gave a mixture of theological, missiological and practical curriculum. More than just a seminary lecture, the residents interacted with the material through reading and reflection. While the classroom curriculum was an important part of the learning, it was only a small fraction of the learning. In the case of Community, the bulk of the learning took place in another church plant. They would observe, support, and learn about church planting by participating in a church plant.
The Community Church CPD states:

You have to remember that 80% of their time they are invested in working in a church plant. The whole key in my view is that if there is one thing I highly recommend while it’s helpful to them to be a part of an existing church, you increase the learning if you put them in that environment. They learn best in the context of a newer church ... They need the challenge of doing something. They need to be out on the field. They need to practice their preaching. They need to do evangelism, to do small groups, get the smell of a new church plant, not just read about it, theorize about it. And they need to be properly coached, supported and affirmed when they get challenged.

Bible Church had a different method of on-the-job training. They would incorporate a lecture-lab model. On Mondays, they would come and discuss, and then on Fridays, they debrief. In between, during the week, they would go in the field and immediately apply what they learned onto their field assignments.

This is how they describe it:

But we try to put book-ends in on the week where on Monday, they have to come to the training in the morning and on Friday we debrief and say, “What happened this week?” And then during the week, they all have a one-on-one with me for about depending anywhere from between one and three hours. In the three hours, chances are when I go out with them into the city, into the area where it looks like God’s leading them and help them exegete and just walk around and say, “What do you see?” “What do you see here?” “What kind of people do you see?” “What do you see they’re doing?”

On the job training can vary depending on the context. The Vineyard Church has developed their Vineyard Leadership Institution. “It has developed a hands-on, five quarter training/mentoring process” and Fellowship Bible Church has a program which “includes hands-on skills training and one-on-one mentoring from the church pastoral staff” (Williams 2005, 11).

In short, this principle can be summarized as learning by doing. For any church planter, skills will be learned more on the field than in a classroom or a book. If a church is to
establish a residency program, the program should include some type of on-site participation in another church and assignments like mapping of a community as a means to build skills necessary for church planting.

Training Is Personalized

Each resident is coming into the program with a different set of skills and experience. Both of these churches recognize the uniqueness of the individual planter and specialize the training based upon their strengths and weaknesses. Bible Church had each resident sign a learning contract. This contract is based upon areas of growth the resident needs to develop.

The learning contract was described this way:

And so we have them write a learning contract to address particularly growth areas ... we just sit down with them and say, “Okay, these are the things that I’m saying here. Do you see something different?” And during the course of the whole residency, what we’re working on is helping them understand ... So that learning contract is a place to do that. So for guys whose communication skills aren’t that great ... we say, “You come to us and you tell us what you think you want us to do to help you develop your speaking. This is what we would suggest that you take an online course on speaking, that you get X number of speaking opportunities within your country association, and that you video yourself and that you sit down with the mentor and let them, you know, run the DVD and give your feedback.” So there is a development plan for your areas of weakness.

Likewise, Community Church also works with each resident on areas of skill development. Their focus is on the individual’s core strength. Community Church CPD says, “So I want to spend most of my time on strengths that they have and actually make sure they spend time on what I call development opportunities, that they own the gap between their current state and their ideal state. And things that we offer them are modules delivered over a course of a year.” These skills are developed as they serve alongside another church plant.
While these churches can afford to have planters who are ready to plant almost immediately, most churches who want to develop a residency program may have to work longer to develop the necessary skills to plant a church. In structuring a program, the curriculum is secondary to the individual. In some sense, the curriculum is established by individuals coming into the program. There is both a core curriculum (or necessary skills) all church planters must learn and specialized lessons based on factors such as gifting, experience and maturity.

Support Is More Than Financial

It is obvious in these two case studies that because of their size and resource base, these churches have a large financial resource pool to draw from. In both cases, churches were given about $50,000 grants. Some had been given a grant up to $100,000 for a three-year period. There were loan options as well. The loan option had to be paid back within a short period of time. More important than financial support, though, is the broader network support of the directors and relationships within the peer networks.

One caution the CPDs give is that if their main question is about money, this is a warning sign that the candidate might not be a good fit for this program. Bible Church CPD says,

We do a big vetting process. Of course there are enough people that have heard about us. If they want you to know find out more and I think they get wind of the fact that we have a salary position to learn how to do this. And so those are the first ones that you probably eliminate because that’s the danger in the residency. If you pay people then you attract people who want you to take care of them.
John Reeves, founder of Xpansion Ministries, says something similar: “If a potential church planter is overly-concerned about what kind of benefits package awaits his arrival as a spiritual entrepreneur, RUN!” (Williams 2005, 9). While the residency does provide financial support, all of the residents interviewed stated this was not a factor. Rather it was broader support systems like “networking,” “coaching,” “training,” “relationships.”

If a church is to begin a church planting residency program, it would be important to build in an ongoing support system. Coaching is an important part of the emotional and spiritual health of the planter, especially in the early stages of planting a new church. While the grant or loan is fairly large, not all planters used the money. They were actually encouraged to raise additional support and pay off their loans quickly. But, the support of their coach and peer network was invaluable.

Develop Partnerships with Other Churches and Denominations

One surprising practice coming out of both churches was their willingness to partner with other churches both in and out of their own associations and denominations. As long as the values were the same, both churches would plant daughter churches from different denominations. The two churches were more kingdom-focused than just local-church focused. Their reasoning was that church planting was not about spreading their church brand. Rather, it was about reaching as many people as they could. As long as the values were similar, they would plant Presbyterian churches, Non-denominational churches, Baptist churches, or any other denomination that had similar values.
Bible Church CPD gives his perspective on partnering:

We cooperate with a lot of people. If you look at those different bars you’ll see we’ve got what we call like-minded partners. We have a pretty good relationship with the Southern Baptist ... and we go to them and say, “You know is there anybody that you want to plant?” ‘Cause we don’t have to have our name on this thing and if it would help them, they could come through our training environment and then we try to unbundle it through ... money, mentors, members, ministers, model whatever would help and so those kind of cooperative efforts.

These partner churches would also serve as a training ground for some of the residents. For example, at Community Church, residents were required to serve at one of the daughter churches for 80 % of their residency. Another benefit of partnership is a larger pool of recruits. One last benefit of partnering with other churches and denominations is the wider support base in terms of larger network of churches and possible financial support. Other churches and denominations might have a larger financial base to help the church planter. But more than just money, other groups may also have another layer of coaching to support the church planter.

This last practice is an important practice for most churches. Churches without a large resource base can utilize the support of other churches in the area to partner in the residency program. They can look for church plants where residents can volunteer and learn at the same time. Or, a group of like-minded churches can support one another in launching a residency program together. Finally, denominations and other church planting organizations might utilize other support systems to help with local church residency programs. This may actually help denominations lower the church planting casualty rate by investing in a residency program where church planters can be assessed, trained, and supported through a local church. The investment would be minimal compared to giving a church planter a three-year support
package without a proven track record. Local churches can be laboratories where planters can be nurtured and equipped.

Challenges to the Best Practices of a Church Planting Residency Program

In this section, several important challenges and weaknesses in developing a residency program was explored based upon the two case studies. These challenges sometime stem from the unique successes of these programs. In other words, churches that try to replicate the model rather than deriving their practices from overarching principles can lead to failed church plants. Challenges were expressed by both the directors as well as the participants.

Time and Financial Investment Can Be Extensive

As examined in the case studies, both churches are large mega-churches with a sizeable portion of their budget dedicated to church planting. By trying to develop a CPR, a church may be tempted to either wait until it has the resources or not begin a CPR all together. In interview with both directors, the financial aspect can be a big weakness. Rather than having the money first, the emphasis should be on training the church planter. As stated before, the church plant can find funds elsewhere: denominational support, missionary support, or even bi-vocational support. What church planters need is a coach and mentor who will guide them through the basics of planting a church in the context of a healthy church community. One of the directors mentioned that sometimes the wrong people get attracted to their residency because of the full-time support. Often, these candidates have to be vetted out. Consequently, money is rarely a factor for successful church planting.
In addition to the financial challenge, very few churches can hire a full-time director to mentor and guide the planter. Again, this is something that is scalable based on the context. The key is not full-time, but more a director who will oversee the vision and planter. The reason for a full-time director in both these churches has to do with the amount of money they have and how many residents that are being trained. In reality, the amount a director spends with candidates is only about ten hours a week. These are mostly once or twice a week. The other time is spent on the field working at a church plant or doing research.

Smaller churches with a smaller budget can either hire someone part-time or partner with an organization that specializes in church planting. Alternatively, one of the current staff can take on this role as well. Smaller churches may even elect to have the SP be the champion in leading the church planting residency. What better way for the residency to have value than for the SP to take the lead in this area. At Bible Church, the first resident spent most of his residency with the SP. For him, this was the best part of the residency. He developed a mentoring relationship that became invaluable for him as he went to plant.

Models Can Be a Limiting Factor

The director at Bible Church remarked that most of the churches are very similar to the mother church. In other words, they are a replication or clone of the mother church. While the model for Bible Church works well in the suburbs of the city, as they branch out to other parts, they need to be more adaptable with their model. Part of the issue is the growing ethnic diversity. As the area around Bible Church is 27% Hispanic, the same model and method may not work in planting a Hispanic church. Or, as other ethnic groups move into the area (Asian, African American, or International Students), the church plant residents must contextualize
the ministry model to the culture of the community so they can reach the increasingly diverse population. For instance, mostly because of its urban setting, Community Church focuses more on contextualization in their training. Rather than trying to duplicate the mother church, they have made a very concerted effort to change the methods and models based upon the people they are reaching.

If a church planting residency program only franchises the mother church like a fast food restaurant, they may not be effective in reaching the people despite gifting and resourcefulness of the church planter. Knowing the context and adapting to the context is more important than cloning the programs of the mother church. There are other forms that might be explored: house churches, missional communities, third-place churches like churches in coffee shops. Models must be flexible based upon the context.

Not Having the Right Candidates for the Program Can Hinder the Church Plant

Because of the highly intensive nature of a residency, the recruited residents must be prepared and ready to plant. Some of the directors used different analogies to describe potential candidates. Likes sports, there are first round draft picks versus late round draft picks. The residents need to be selected from a pool of recruits are most ready to plant. Both churches have programs designed for “interns.” The difference between an intern and a resident has to do with readiness and investment. An intern is usually inexperienced and needs more time and training. There is minimal financial investment. However, a resident is generally experienced and ready to plant almost immediately. There is more focus on training, and larger financial resource investment.
Churches need to make a distinction between a “residency” versus an “internship.” The kind of program will determine what type of person a church will be recruiting. As a resident, the selection process is highly selective. A battery of tests, a behavioral interview, and a review of Charles Ridley’s Thirteen Church planting characteristics are all vital in vetting the right candidate. This would include such areas as spousal cooperation, visioning capacity, responsiveness to the community and resilience. So churches need to have a very carefully laid out process of the right candidate they are recruiting.

Lacking Flexibility Can Undermine Effectiveness

Another challenge is to establish a well-structured program and at the same time be flexible with the time to accomplish the goal. Several of the residents mentioned the challenge of moving into a new area without a lot of established relationships, and within a twelve-month residency, they were expected to recruit a core and plant a church. One resident who was not able to plant, had the biggest challenge. He moved from out of state, but also was planting furthest from the mother church. He was only able to recruit a core of twenty rather than fifty. He lamented that he wished there was a little bit more time based on his circumstances.

When churches are looking to develop a residency, this challenge is an important one to keep in mind. Having a few or even just one resident can actually be more beneficial for the planter, as the program develops around the planters’ unique gifts and timing. Smaller churches can hire a resident for one year, but can afford to have more flexibility in raising support, forming a core launch team and building contacts with non-churched people.
Summary

These best practices can be adapted to many church contexts. Each of the directors mentioned how they did not want their residency model to hinder other churches trying to develop their own residency programs. It can be intimidating when a church lacks the resources and personnel, unlike the two churches in this project. The purpose of this research is to examine and demonstrate that any church can learn to apply the principles regardless of size, money, or resources.

A church needs to make sure that the SP or leader holds as a central value. This vision gets passed down to other key leaders with a clear missional end and focus. Second, there needs to be some financial investment in the program. More than the amount, it is to demonstrate the importance in fulfilling the vision. Third, someone has to take ownership and guide the residents along. Without a clear director, everyone can get lost in the process: the resident, church leaders, and lay members.

Fourth, some assessment process needs to be established to bring the right candidate or candidates. This can be done in partnership with church planting organizations or even denominations. Fifth, when the resident is trained, it is important to have a combination of classroom and on-the-job training. On-the-job training is critical for skill development through observation and hands-on experience. Sixth, because each resident is different, there needs to be some flexibility with the residents to build on strengths and work on weaknesses. Some type of learning contract can be very valuable. Seventh, while some financial support is necessary to plant a new church, the ongoing emotional and spiritual support is even more important. There should be some long-term commitment to the church planters. The eighth
and final lesson is simply a willingness to partner with other groups, churches, or even denominations. Rather than doing this alone, there are a host of other valuable resources smaller churches can utilize. This simply may mean to partner with other church plants to give the resident practical hands-on training. It may mean to send them to a denomination church planting seminar. There are many other ways to explore partnerships.

In the final chapter, the best practices will be applied at Ambassador Church. This will demonstrate how a smaller church can become a church plant residency center. The best practices listed will be applied specifically to the church at Ambassador Church in Brea, California.
CHAPTER 6
APPLICATION OF CHURCH PLANTING RESIDENCY
AT AMBASSADOR CHURCH

In looking at the best practices of developing a residency model for planting, the question of scalability becomes a major question. Generally, the residency programs are developed by large mega-churches with large budgets, full-time staff or director, and full-time salaries for the residents. If these are necessary prerequisites for developing a church planter residency program, this would be a limiting factor for churches. However, as seen from the case studies and best practices, the question is not necessarily the amount of resources necessary to develop a residency model, but rather, what are the values and practices to make a residency model work in any sized church. The best practices of these two churches provide the foundation of developing a residency program in different size churches.

In this section, the primary goal is to provide the best practices and applying the lessons in the unique context of Ambassador Church, including its culture, structure, and values to demonstrate how this would look in a smaller size church with limited resources. In addition to assisting Ambassador Church, a secondary goal is to provide a framework that other churches can use to develop their own residency program.
To understand the background of Ambassador Church, one has to trace back its origins as a residency experience at First Evangelical Free Church of Fullerton. During the late 1970’s, when Chuck Swindoll was the Senior Pastor at First Evangelical Free Church of Fullerton, he was gaining recognition through his books, radio ministry and growing church, seminary graduates and other young leaders inquired about an opportunity to work as interns. During the 1980’s, under the guidance of their Senior Associate, Paul Sailhamer, a residency model was developed to help develop future leaders with an emphasis on giving young residents an opportunity to experience a healthy church from the inside out. The program lasted for nine months, from September to May of the following year. The structure was similar to the two churches studied. The resident would be immersed in every aspect of the church from staff meetings and board meetings to different ministries of the church. They would be considered full staff. While the compensation was very low (around $800 a month with full benefits), the accessibility to every facet of ministry was on level with most senior staff pastors. The focal point of this program was to expose every part of the church to the resident and help impart the values of a healthy church to future pastors and leaders.

In the spring of 1992, after applying for the residency, I was one of two selected for the program. As a Korean-American whose ministry context and experience was limited to mostly a Korean-American community, it was a life-changing experience to be a part of a large Caucasian mega-church with a large pastoral staff and nationwide ministry. This church provided a venue to practice the concepts taught in seminary. Working at a large, influential mega-church opened up a host of other opportunities like networking with other large churches and ministries.
Through this experience I learned the value of a residency program in developing future leaders. It allowed me to grow in my experience, exposure, and opportunities. One practical benefit of working with First Evangelical Free Church of Fullerton was getting licensing and ordination through the local church. This allowed me to continue with my affiliation when I moved to Washington, D.C.

At Washington, D.C., I planted Ambassador Bible Church with the Evangelical Free Church of America in the fall of 1996. Early on with our church plant, we hired additional staff and interns, but had no formal residency program in place. It was not until the spring of 2000 when I was hired back on staff as the Outreach Pastor at FEFC where I resurrected a modified internship model. With five interns from Talbot, we were able to establish a fellowship group, which eventually became the core to launch Ambassador Church in the fall of 2003.

*Context of Ambassador Church*

Ambassador Church in Brea is an Evangelical Free Church located in the suburbs of the greater Los Angeles Metropolitan area. It is located in the county of Orange, about ten miles north of Disneyland and Angels Stadium. The congregation is currently predominately Asian-American with the majority from a Korean-American background. Most would be considered second generation, primarily English speaking. Ethnically, the focus has always been to be multi-ethnic. Our current staff is composed mostly of non-Asians, with six Caucasians and two Koreans.

The average age in the church would be in the thirties to forties and most congregation members would be classified in the category of young families. The church size is about 200 attendees (combined with adults and children). The budget is currently above
$400,000 with about 10% directed toward Outreach (local, global missions and church planting).

We have articulated our DNA as consisting of three words: missional, multi-ethnic, and multiplying. From our very conception, the church was designed to be a place where we equip everyone to be missionaries and live missional lives. The church also was designed to be diverse, reaching all nationalities, and to multiply churches from individual church planters.

In short, we would be summarized as a young, evangelical church with a strong vision to be diverse with a healthy-size budget for the size of our church. In addition, there is strong emphasis on developing future leaders and planting churches. This has been a large part of my vision for the church. This vision began in the first year of the church plant.

**Current Residency Program at Ambassador Church**

During the first year, as the church began to grow, because training young leaders and young leaders was a high value, we put into our budget a church planting resident position. Unlike the two case studies, our budget devoted only a small percentage to church planting. But by instituting church planting as part of the budget, it communicated the value of church planting to our leadership board and members. The following year in the spring of 2005, the church hired its first resident.

Our first resident graduated from Dallas Theological Seminary and served on staff of a large growing church in the Dallas Metropolitan area. He came to our church with five years of experience and a high motivation to plant. During the year of residency, the training was minimal and there was no formal assessment done. Most of the residency was designed to experience a healthy church and to build relationships with our church members.
to eventually build a launch team. In the winter of 2006, our first resident left with a three-year support base as our missionary and about ten families from our church. In the fall of 2006, this planter launched his church plant in a suburb of Los Angeles.

While our first resident learned lessons through observing our church, the residency program lacked the structures and systems to assist him. After three years, we still have a coaching relationship and continue our support. After our first resident, we had three other residents. All three came to Ambassador Church with seminary degrees and varying levels of experience. Again like our first resident, there was very little assessment, training or support structure in place. It was mostly based on personal coaching relationships. Our second resident eventually planted a house church. Our third resident failed in his first attempt at planting a church, and our last resident has decided not to plant. I still maintain a coaching relationship with most of our former residents.

If I were to summarize our current residency model, the residents are recruited informally through relationships. Most come to Ambassador Church through word of mouth or some other relational network like friends, churches or through conferences. After agreeing to join Ambassador Church, we bring each resident in as a member of our pastoral staff. However, because of our financial limitations as a small church, we would provide a stipend to each resident of about $1,000 a month. Our most recent resident did not receive a stipend but worked bi-vocationally in a sales position while being a church resident.

For training, each resident was invited to conferences like the Exponential Conference in Orlando, Florida, an annual church planting conference. They were also required to attend EFCA Church Planter’s Boot Camp as part of their training. On a staff level, each
resident was required to attend our weekly staff meetings and our monthly board meetings. In addition to meetings with the other staff, I would meet with the residents and recommend books or conferences to help them continue learning. One practical lesson for all our residents was to require them to start or build a ministry, recruit a team, and cast a vision. Similar to other training models, I wanted to observe if they were able to display basic church planting skills like vision casting, gathering, and leadership. Related to the training, I would continue to coach each resident beyond the residency as needed.

Once the residency is completed, the church planter was given some support based upon whether I would assess them to be an effective church planter. Our first resident was given any core members that wanted to join his launch team, as well as equipment and monthly support for three years. Our second church planter decided to not receiving any support since he wanted to become a bi-vocational church planter. Our third resident was recommended he not plant because he could not find a ministry partner or gather a core. However, we still maintain a coaching relationship. Our most recent resident did not pass assessment as a lead church planter and was recommended to get some more training and more experience in ministry.

So far, only two out of the four have planted. The third resident became one of our campus pastors since he was not able to successfully launch his church. The fourth will not plant due to gifting and experience. While the passion to help others plant churches is part of my personal DNA, I recognize the limitations of having an informal residency process. With this in mind, the purpose of this project was to help our church learn from other churches that successfully developed a church plant residency center. In the next section, I will apply best practices gathered from the two churches to our church context.
Lessons to Be Applied from the Best Practices

As a result of the lessons learned, I will reshape our residency program to apply the best practices. The goal is to develop a contextualized program for our church that will produce the desire result of missional, multi-ethnic, and multiplying church plants to reach more people with the Gospel.

Vision for Church planting Must Be Clearly Shared from Leadership Down

Out of the eight best practices, this is the easiest to apply. Since I currently work with our denomination in the area of church planting, assist the current regional church planting director in the EFCA West, teach at a local seminary in Church planting and Church Growth, owning the vision and need for planting more churches is most obvious. As the senior pastor of Ambassador Church, this is something that is strategically stated as one of our eight core values. I preach on it on Sundays whenever I can. In our board meetings, I make sure this is something that we are constantly placing as a high priority. Owning the vision naturally flows out of my leadership at Ambassador Church.

Early on in the ministry, it was difficult to pass down the vision for church planting. Of course, starting the church, everyone knew the importance of why we were starting this new church. They invited their friends to be part of this new church. However, as the church began to grow, it became increasingly difficult to convince people of the importance of church planting. Like most churches, the members want to focus on the present active ministries rather than expanding and planting other churches. When the need becomes great in the current church, members begin to question why we need to plant other churches. However,
as we began to grow as a church, I began to see the need to communicate our vision to our staff and to our board on expanding God’s mission, not just our ministry. The most effective way of reaching people was through the planting of a new church. I shared with our leadership that every person that is won to Christ from one of our church plants, we can joyfully participate in their salvation as part of our ministry.

Since this vision is something the congregational does not naturally hold, I placed this in one of our eight core values. We continually talk about it whenever the opportunity allows. Finally, we made a part of our budget focused on church planting. This happens both through portioning a part of our budget for a resident’s stipend and salary, as well as missionary support for our church plants. One way to pass this down on a personal level is to get our leaders and members more involved in one of our church plants. Rather than just financially support a church, we can go and offer support of time and energy. Finally, I can strategically take some of our leaders to church planting events and conferences so they can be further challenged beyond my own promptings.

When communicating the vision for church planting, this has to tie into the mission of God. We need to communicate both the whys (apologetics) and hows (practical implications) of church planting. The vision for church planting is in our DNA statement of becoming missional, multi-ethnic, and multiplying church. However, the vision is not as clear as it could be. Applying the lesson from Bible Church, it might be important to lay out a clear statement on why we plant churches—so every man, woman and child in our city can have a chance to hear the Gospel. This is something that needs some work at our church. Not only can this be a great tool to recruit future church planters, it can also be a great way to motivate members in our church to become more involved in church planting.
Another helpful process is for the church planting leader to go to conferences, seminars or classes and begin dialoguing with other pastors who are doing similar work. As part of this process, I had the opportunity to have multiple conversations with leaders who are more experienced. A conference like Exponential can be a starting point for inspiration. With this inspiration, the senior pastor can move toward developing a strategy to pass down the vision to his leadership team and eventually to the church body.

**Church Planting Is an Integral Part of Their Budget**

Church budgets can be an important place to install vision. What we budget can demonstrate the importance of a ministry. However, church budgets can also be a source of contention in a local church. There is always a need for more resources, whether it be staffing, facility, ministry, or programs. This is something that needs to be strategically put in our budget to remind people of the vision. Every year, we will set a percentage of our money to support church planting and provide resident financial assistance. As the budget grows, the resident support can grow as well, hiring a staff person to be our church planting director. Currently, this is built into my job description as the senior pastor and CPD. Smaller churches have the opportunity to be more personally involved with residents.

This is the area where scalability has to intersect with creativity. In all the models presented, both churches are large churches with an equally large resource base. They invest hundreds of thousands of dollars into their respective programs every year. Money does play an important role in recruitment, assessment, training and supporting. In my conversations with the two directors, they emphasized that financial investment does not have to be extensive. Financial commitment can be scaleable based on the size of the church.
In our church, while we put a small percentage away for church planting in our earlier budgets, we found that this amount plus other creative sources allowed even a smaller church developed a church plant residency.

First, we limited our residency to one resident. In our two case studies, both churches had four or five residents ever year. This included a full time salary and financial support for the church plant. In our model, we can only bring one resident at a time, and the funding might be limited in partial support.

Second, we learned through the interviews that one important skill set is for a church planter to be able to adequately raise support. This process can start as part of the residency. Even in one of our case study churches, the program required their residents to raise some of their support because of the cost of living in a large metropolitan city.

Third, additional funding can be secured through partnering with another organization or denomination. While neither of our case study churches had direct funding from denominations, one director played a role in raising fund from outside sources. In our case, we have partnered with our denomination to secure some funding from our denomination. A sample proposal is enclosed in appendix 5.

Fourth, another way to provide additional funding for the church planter is to encourage the church planter to be bi-vocational. Many church planters have to take on additional jobs to support their family. This can be important part of the church planting process to provide additional financial support, but also to build relationships in the target community.
A Church Planting Point Person Is Key in Developing a Program

In our particular context, I have the opportunity to serve both as a senior pastor as well as the CPD. However, as the church grows in resources and the program expands, it would be important to hire somebody for this role. Another option is to have one of the other staff members serve as a resident director or even have one of our former residents work with our current residents in an informal mentoring relationships. Another aspect of the point person’s role is to begin developing systems and structure to maximize the resident’s time and churches resource. And for smaller churches like ours, it might be better to have a few people working directly with our residents; however, the senior pastor does play a primary role in functioning as a mentor.

Even though, it was natural for me to serve in this capacity, my relationship with our church planters was much more casual. However, as a result of this research, I’ve learned the relationship has to be more than intentional. Each director plays the assessor, mentor, teacher, coach, counselor, facilitator and at times even a critic. The role changes as the resident progresses in the program. First, the director must provide an accurate assessment of the candidate’s gifts, strengths, passions and capacity for church planting. This takes a tremendous amount of wisdom and discernment. Also, there are instruments readily available to help in the assessment process. Second, the director has to give training. Training has to be adapted to the uniqueness of the planter. Again, materials, seminars and books can be supplemented in the training process. Finally, when the resident moves from the training phase to the support phase, the director changes the role to provide much more guidance and encouragement in the coaching phase.
Therefore, the relationship between the director and planter is a critical piece to provide better training and guidance. In one particular case, a planter from one of our case study churches had several directors in the year he was a resident. Rather than providing a good learning experience, it provided stress and frustration. But in each the other cases, one of the most important benefits was having a director to guide them. Each resident in our case study churches was appreciative of their directors. One important lesson is this: regardless of the size of the church, having a good mentor for the resident is an important part of the residency program.

Assessment Is Critical for Success

One of the biggest changes we need to make in our residency program is to rearrange our assessment at the beginning of the program rather than at the middle or at the end. Since we are a smaller church, we do not have all the tools for a comprehensive process so we used some of our denomination’s system. Therefore, assessors in our denomination assessed most of our residents through a behavioral interview. After speaking with both directors and former residents of the two churches studied, we need to expand our assessment process beyond just one behavior interview. There are other tools like various spiritual gift, psychological and leadership tests which can help in the assessment process.

Some of changes we will be implementing will be to have our future residents go through several levels of assessment before they come into our residency program. First, they will have to go through a simple assessment process with measurement tools like DiSC, MBTI, spiritual gifts inventory and strength finder. Second, they will have to go through our denominational behavioral interview. This usually takes three hours with the planter and spouse.
present. Finally, they will be interviewed and assessed by our staff and board for their potential. Getting more people involved in the process will bring better discernment.

Once all the assessment is done, then we can invite the candidate to be our resident. There is one area of difference with the larger churches; we can be more patient and bring planters who may need more time and experience. Rather than a rigid one-year process, based on the assessment, smaller churches can take more risks and allow younger residents to develop more gradually.

Another aspect of assessment is the on-going nature of the assessment. Because accurate assessment is a critical piece of entering a residency program in both churches, the churches spent resources and time early in the process to get the best candidates. However, both churches spent additional time and resources to continually assess the potential success while the residents were in their residency

On-the-Job Training Is Essential

Since we have planted a few churches and now have a multi-site location in another part of the city, we can utilize these churches as a place for our residents to learn more practical skills. Originally, when our church was a new church, much of the on the job training happened at Ambassador. As we approach our sixth year of our ministry, we are faced with more challenges of an established church. Applying Community Church’s model of 20% at the mother campus for concentrated learning and 80% on the job training, we can adopt a ratio of 50-50. Time can be split on two campuses. The first half would be to be involved in the life of the mother church to learn the values of the ministry. But the second half would be involved in the life of a church plant to gain firsthand experience on church planting.
On the job training could include some assignments like cultural mapping of an area, serving in different areas of ministry to gain exposure, be involved in training of various ministries of the church. Based upon the competencies identified in the assessment, we can tailor the training around the church planter. Adopting a learning covenant would be a valuable tool to develop the best training for the individual.

Another important place for training might be starting a new ministry in the local church. For example, every church planter has to learn how to start something from nothing. One way a smaller church can immediately benefit from a church plant resident is to develop a new ministry. By developing a new ministry, residents can learn new skills like vision casting, gathering a core, evangelism, strategic thinking, and other skills needed for planting a church. This helps the mother church with a new ministry but also allows the resident to develop skills on the job.

Training Is Personalized

Another aspect of a residency program has to take into consideration the unique personality of each resident. Going back to the model of Jesus, while he had twelve disciples who learned together, there were times Jesus would uniquely work with a few for different assignments. At times, different disciples were called to join on trips to the mountain, others were asked to step out in faith and walk on water, and others were asked to get bread to feed the multitudes. Specialized training is an important part of the training process.

At Ambassador, rather than developing cohort system with four or five residents, we will probably have one resident a year. This resident would have to learn basic skills in church planting. For example, go through our denominational boot camp. There will be discussions
and reading pertaining to understanding missional leadership, cultural engagement, and spiritual character. But another part of the curriculum will be personalized based upon assessments, their target group, church planting model, personality and other unique factors.

When I was a resident at FEFC, one of the opportunities I had was designing part of the residency around my interests. If I wanted to teach more, they gave teaching opportunities. If I wanted to observe more, I could observe an area of ministry unfamiliar to me. I can combine the assessment results with the needs of the church and the needs of the resident to develop a specialized training for the resident.

In many ways, the unique characteristics of a smaller church can be advantageously utilized for the residency program. Because the church is small, there can be more personalized attention to the church plant resident. Training and scheduling can be adjusted around the person’s learning capacity. Much like home-schooling, a church-based training can maximize an individual’s strengths. In addition, at a smaller church, there is more personal investment from the church body. There is greater involvement not only from the leadership, but also from congregational members who can give input as well.

Support Involves More Than Finances

Based on the budget, when the resident is brought on in a staff position, the support can vary. In our previous section, we explored several creative outlets for financial support. Regardless of the method of support, it is important that the church makes a financial investment and commitment to the resident. In addition to this support, we will put the resident on a three-year missionary support. Once our church budget gets larger, the idea of having a revolving fund is something we can develop. This could work as a start-up loan like Bible Church where the residents have to pay back within a year.
Financial support is definitely an important part of planting a church. However, more than just the financial resources, another aspect of the support structure has to be ongoing mentoring and coaching. As stated by many of the former residents of both case studies, one of the important long lasting benefits of being a part of these programs was the built in support from their director and their association beyond the first year of their new church.

There are several things we can do to help our church plant residents for long-term emotional and spiritual support. First, I try to meet with and mentor the church planting residents personally. Because this is one of my major passions, I enjoy gathering together with each one of our residents to encourage, support and counsel with any area of need in their life and ministry. Second, I can network with our current residents with our former residents to build an association where we can gather once a year for support. Third, I can utilize our denominational gatherings like our annual Leadership Conference as a gathering place. Finally, one of the new ways to gather is online. Social networks provided on the Internet can be a great way to expand, recruit, and build on what we are doing. It can also be a forum for networking and providing resources. All these ways can be part of the support system for the church plant resident.

In summary, while a larger church may have more financial support, a smaller church can provide support in other ways. Combined with the creative approaches to funding, a smaller church can provide spiritual, emotional and personal support just as well. In addition, there is potential for long-term relationships with the mother church from both the leadership and the lay members of the church.
Develop Partnerships with Other Churches and Denominations

The final application in the best practices is to expand our residency through developing partnerships with other organizations and churches. There are many ways our residency can partner with other groups. Our residency can be a great resource for other church plants that may need help. Based upon the person and the model of ministry, we can partner with churches that would best help our resident. For example, if they want to learn more about a house church model or an attractional model of church planting, then we can partner with one of these churches where our resident can serve for three months. They will be supported by us so these church plants can provide the learning environment without any financial concerns.

Another way to develop partnership with our denomination is to develop a residency model where our denomination can send residents to our church for training. In many case, denominations may invest large amounts of money on a church plant without adequately training the train planter. Many finish seminary and go to a boot camp but do not have the experience to plant a church. In a case like this, Ambassador can be a place where we provide the structure and join the resources to better assess church planters. For example, the denomination can give a grant to a church and the church can match that grant to recruit a candidate. With this type of investment, there is shared risk but also shared reward. Both groups can share in the assessment, training and financial support. Rather than doing this alone, partnerships can be more effective way to develop the next generation of church planters.

Other partnerships can also be explored such as partnering with other like-minded churches, denominations or para-church organizations can join resources to reach a city or
possibly another state. Currently, there are organizations like Acts 29 and New Church Network that are more cross-denominational. Expanding partnerships can be a great way to plant churches and expand our networks.

Because smaller churches are limited in resources, partnerships are much more important in developing a residency program. From every aspect of the assessment, training and support structure, smaller churches should look for ways to work with either other churches or denominations. This can actually be a very healthy way to work together for mutual benefit. Both groups get to participate in giving birth to a new work.

**Future Program Development for a Residency Program**

One of the goals in our residency program is to bring more structure and systems based upon the best practices. We will be changing our current model to adopt these models beginning of next year. Some of the areas of change will include the three major areas studied in this project: assessment, training, and support systems. Here is an overview of how the church planting residency will be designed. A more detailed description can be found in the appendix.

Our recruitment phases will begin a year before the residency program is to start. We will use our relational network—our denomination, church plants, and pastor friends. In addition, we will advertise in our nearby seminary. We will also post on seminary job posts as well as other ministry job post sites. We will also put this on our website for anyone who is interested. There will be an application process to get the initial pool of residents. We will collect applications until March 31. Then from beginning in April, the assessment process will begin.
For our assessment, a resident will go through several levels of assessments. First, they will be personally interviewed by me either in person or on the phone to get an idea of the potential candidate. If they pass the initial screening, then they will go through a behavioral interview conducted either through our denomination or other sources. Next, they will have to take several online measurements, such as DiSC, MBTI, spiritual gifts inventory, marriage tests, and leadership style. This will enable the reviewer to get the best picture of the resident. Finally, if there are a few candidates, we will invite them on-site to our church, where we will put them through an assessment through personal observation. Based upon the assessment, we will invite one candidate to join us on staff. However, as we begin this process, we recognize that the pool of candidates might not be large. The main point is to get the best church planting candidates. This process will be completed by July 31. This will be followed with an orientation retreat in August.

The official training phase will begin the first week of September. The training will be composed of a weekly meeting with me for several hours to go over the reading, discussion, and assignments from the previous week. This will be established on Monday mornings. On Tuesday, the resident will be part of our regular staff meetings as part of our regular staff. On Wednesdays and Thursday, they will be doing a field practicum. On the weekends, they will be asked to serve and help the mother church for the first six months and serve another church as part of their training.

The training phase will be adjusted based upon the learning covenant established at the beginning of residency. There will be other factors such as whether the resident will be working part-time, experience base or family situation. The key will be to mix the required
materials with flexibility. Rather than a one-year residency, this could be protracted beyond that to two-years depending on these factors. Generally, the goal will be to finish the residency in August, and begin launching a new church in the fall.

During the latter half of the training, the focus will be on building a team and preparing for the launch. This is to transition the resident to the support phase. As soon as they leave Ambassador to plant a church, we will give them a grant and monthly support for a period of two to three years. In addition, they will have the opportunity to gather people from the mother church. In addition to the financial support, I will meet monthly with the residents to provide emotional and spiritual coaching. This will continue to a quarterly gathering and eventually to a yearly meeting with all the church planting residents. In addition to personal support from myself, the church will also provide prayer support, people support with programs or ministry development. Support will be an important process for the long-term success of the residents.

A sample of a possible future residency program is included in appendix 5.

**Conclusion**

In closing, the goal of this project was simply to examine two churches with working church planting residency programs and to extract the best practices out of these churches to apply at Ambassador Church. By exploring these churches, the main emphasis of church planting and developing church planters is not to see these as an end, but rather as a means of something bigger, namely expanding God’s kingdom on earth. Furthering the Gospel so that every person can have a chance to hear is a worthwhile vision to pursue. Church stresses the importance and value of His body. We see this throughout the New Testament, but also throughout
church history. However, to build growing, multiplying churches, we need good leaders. Leadership is key to developing healthy churches. But more than just human leadership, the leader needs to be led by Jesus, and church-planters needs to understand how they are made and created so they can maximize their giftedness for the Kingdom.

The best place for leadership development is in the context of the local church. The church has a major role to play in assessing, training, and supporting the developing leader. The ultimate goal is to get every church to multiply itself by investing in future leaders. One of the ways to fulfill this dream is by local churches like Ambassador to become training grounds for future leaders.
APPENDIX 1

COMMUNITY CHURCH PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

THE FELLOWS PROGRAM

The Fellows Program is a church planting training program and leadership development program designed for individuals preparing for church planting in New York City. The Fellowship is designed to give participants a realistic experience of life and ministry within the city context. The program is a full time one-year residential program in New York City for those who have completed or nearly completed their formal theological education.

Church planting

We are committed to planting churches throughout the New York metropolitan area and in other global cities. The program is designed to prepare leaders for this experience through pastoral and leadership formation, and when needed urban enculturation. The program could fulfill credentialing internship requirements for ordination.

Application


Cost

Some Fellows can qualify for a $35,000 stipend. Participants in the program are encouraged to raise additional funds (up to $50,000) that can be applied to the cost of their living expenses. Fellows are responsible for their own health insurance.

Structure of the Program

The Program consists of supervised ministry, seminars, and ministry in a church planting project in greater New York City. Each Fellow will be assigned to a church planting project for ministry. During orientation Fellows will be evaluated regarding their ministry and educational experiences, interests, gifts and needs in order to determine the appropriate program of study and ministry assignments.

Ministry Experience and Supervision

Fellows will spend most of their time in ministry at their assigned church. Fellows will meet as a group with the director once a month to present case studies of experiences and issues they are facing in ministry for instruction, leadership formation and theological reflection. The program is designed to expose participants to a range of ministry
experiences and needs in urban ministry, for example: Small Group Ministry, Leadership Training, diaconate and mercy ministries, church plants, worship leading, teaching, evangelism, Redeemer’s Center for Faith and Work, Christianity and Arts ministry, and in some cases inner-city ministry.

Seminars and Modules
Fellows participate in a Theology and Practice of Urban Church Ministry seminar. Other learning experiences include Leadership seminars, DNA modules and orientations on Redeemer and the city. These seminars are taught by staff and Church planting Center staff. Fellows who have completed a M.Div will take the seminars but are not expected to take them for credit.

Seminars and Modules include the following:
1. Orientation: Orientation to Redeemer and to the city, Leadership Assessment.
2. Fall Semester: Urban Church Ministry Seminar: Ministry and Leadership in the City; Leadership Modules 1-3; DNA modules
3. Winter Semester: Urban Church Ministry Seminar: Pastoring and Evangelism in the City; Leadership Modules 4-5; DNA modules
4. Spring Semester: Urban Church Ministry Seminar: Worship and Preaching in the City; Leadership Modules 6-8; DNA modules
5. Specific Topics in Theology and Practice of Urban Church Ministry: Gospel Renewal Ministry, Contextualization, Culture Cities, City-Ministry Church Models, Ministry Church Leadership Evangelism, and Justice, Pastoring, Worship and Preaching (1), Preaching (2)
6. Leadership Module
All fellows will take a leadership assessment instrument (at least four references included) at the beginning of the program and then provided individual feedback, analysis and learning contracts based on the leadership profile.

Eight monthly seminars will address various leadership competencies important for church planters. These seminars will be facilitated by numerous lay leadership subject matter experts within the Redeemer community and Redeemer staff. These seminars will include reading assignments, learning exercises, and occasional writing assignments. Topics covered: managing vision and purpose, developing teams, difficult conversations, developing others, managing change, and self-management.

(Fellows Application Form)
APPENDIX 2

BIBLE CHURCH PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

I. What is a residency?

A residency in medicine is a period of specialized training in clinical medicine or surgery in a hospital that hones the skills of the physician through practice, instruction and “master classes.” BC’s residency is a one year learning community of the same type, assisting a church planter with a learning contract that hones the skills, character and knowledge of the planter, coaching him to a successful church plant that eventually matures into a part of the Association whose mission is to take the life transforming reality of Jesus to all of Greater Suburban Texas.

II. What are the criteria for qualifying as a candidate for the Residency Program?

1. Proven ministry experience
2. Approved by a certified assessment that evaluates your aptitude for church planting
3. Theological alignment (not creedal conformity, but general agreement—see website for “This We Believe”)
4. Commitment to male, elder led church governance
5. Willingness to raise funds if needed to supplement the first year’s costs of plant

III. What are the main learning objectives of the training to be?

1. Understanding the biblical foundations.
   The planter will have clarity on the biblical imperative of planting churches, the biblical description of a local church, and the biblical values and convictions that shape church ministry. Without biblical certainty in these areas the planter will lack courage to face the task.
2. Exegeting the community.
   Under the direction of the elders of BC, the planter will be assigned a specific neighborhood or people group in greater Suburban, Texas that fits his passion and profile. Does he understand why Suburban is important to the Christian church? Has he grappled with the biblical view of cities? Is he ready to unpack what it means to be a Suburbanite? Is he captivated by a love for the city? What kind of church will it take to reach his “parish”? That is, what kind of values and what kind of strategy will he employ?
3. Understanding leadership.
   Gift based, elder-led church polity is a non-negotiable. Can he cast a compelling vision that enlists followers as well as emerging elders? The lead pastor must first be tested as a leader. Does the planter demonstrate the ability to plan, organize, lead and evaluate ministry?

4. Developing Concrete Skills.
   1. How to exegete a culture
   2. How to cultivate and cast vision
   3. How to prospect and gather people to a cause
   4. How to identify, enlist, develop, and deploy a missional core
   5. How to communicate effectively in a variety of contexts, for example, 1-1, small group, large group.
   6. How to develop and implement a contextual model of church
   7. How to evangelize a community
   8. How to develop and implement an assimilation strategy
   9. How to raise funds

IV. What are the performance expectations for the Residency?
   1. Create and fulfill the learning contract established between you and the church planting center director.
   2. Exegete the targeted culture with a compelling analysis of demographics/psychographics.
   3. Establish a prayer base.
   4. Enlist, envision, and engage a missional core of at least ten families/households (which you have freedom to enlist from BC if appropriate to your targeted field.)
   5. Develop the key ministry systems for launch.
   6. Develop a clear Ministry Action Plan with a granular execution detail, to include a 120-day assimilation plan post launch.
   7. Develop a First 120-Day Budget and First Year Outlook Budget.
   8. Raise funds to underwrite your first year’s budget. (Funds may come from core group, BC, and outside fundraising.)
   9. Identify 200 qualified prospects.
   10. Qualify fifty gatherable people.
   11. Identify, develop and select a minimum of two elders. (If this is not possible, consideration will be given to a post launch development strategy.)
   12. Network in the community.

V. What can the resident expect from BC?
   1. Financial support for the duration of the residency provided the candidate is able to fulfill residency expectations.
   2. Start up, interest-free “loan” from the Church Plant Acceleration Fund (CPAF) of up to $100,000, to be repaid into the CPAF by first fruits gifts from the missional core and a minimum of 10% monthly mission giving from the general budget.
3. Additional grant for the first year of the plant up to $50,000.
4. Coaching and a personalized learning contract, with follow up coaching for up to two years after launch.
5. Freedom to enlist up to ten Missional Core families out of BC when appropriate.
6. Guidance in developing a successful strategy for planting a spiritually vibrant community.
7. This is a one-year residency, and not a guarantee of success or long-term employment.

VI. What can BC expect from the resident?
1. A teachable, servant’s heart.
2. Initiative to own the church planting effort.
3. Willingness to follow BC leadership within scriptural limits.
4. Willingness to be a part of the residency community.
5. Faithfulness to fulfill all assignments.
6. Willingness to gladly participate in worship and service as a part of the BC Northwest community.
7. Willingness to develop a spiritually vibrant, reproductive church that sustains an ongoing relationship with the Association.

VII. What is the typical compensation?
   The residency is normally a one-year program, depending upon the readiness and development of the candidate, with a monthly salary, plus health and dental insurance and cell phone expense for up to one year. Insurance coverage under the AHCC policy is available for any daughter church in good standing under the BC association health plan. A full confirmation of actual compensation will be described in the formal offer letter.

VIII. What happens at the end of the residency?
1. The aim is for the resident to launch a spiritually vibrant AHCC “daughter church” that will eventually mature into a sister partner, sitting at the table with partners in a movement.
2. Churches plant churches, so the residents would be planted by one of the churches of the association.
APPENDIX 3

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR CHURCH PLANTING DIRECTORS

The research in which you are about to participate is designed to evaluate churches with a working model of church plant residents. It is being conducted by Raymond Y. Chang, D. Min student at Trinity International University. As part of this research, you will be asked to respond to question about the recruitment, training and support structure for church planters. In this research, you will be asked to respond to the questions and survey as accurately and objectively as possible. At no time will your name be asked or reported with your response. The purpose of this interview is to give Raymond Y. Chang research data evaluate a working model of a church plant residency model. Please note that the information you provide will be held in the strictest confidence and is completely voluntary. You are also free to withdraw at any point of this study. In addition, your name will not be reported with the results. By completing the interview and survey, you are giving informed consent on the use of your response for this research paper.

Overview

1. What is the history of your church planting residency program?
2. What resources from your church go into this program (e.g., time, personnel and budget)?
3. What is your goal, hope or intended outcome of your residency program?
Recruitment

4. What is your process of recruitment for residents?
5. Through what formal assessment, if any, do you take your resident candidates?
6. How do you evaluate both strengths and weaknesses of resident candidates?

Training

7. What do you do to develop strengths and minimize weakness in the resident?
8. What type of training do you take them through (e.g., on the job, curriculum, mentoring)?
9. Do you use any formal curriculum for your resident (e.g., books, classes, seminars)?

Support

10. What kind of support do you give the resident while in your program?
11. What kind of follow-up support do you give your residents after they finish your program?
12. How long does this support run?

Conclusion

14. What have been some of the benefits and challenges of your program?
15. Have you perform any type of self-evaluation for your programs and what are your findings?
17. If there was one thing you could advise churches that want to start a program like yours in their church, what would you advise?
APPENDIX 4

SURVEY OF CHURCH PLANT RESIDENTS

The research in which you are about to participate is designed to evaluate churches with a working model of church plant residents. It is being conducted by Raymond Y. Chang, D. Min student at Trinity International University. As part of this research, you will be asked to respond to question about the recruitment, training and support structure for church planters. In this research, you will be asked to respond to the questions and survey as accurately and objectively as possible. At no time will your name be asked or reported with your response. The purpose of this interview is to give Raymond Y. Chang research data evaluate a working model of a church plant residency model. Please note that the information you provide will be held in the strictest confidence and is completely voluntary. You are also free to withdraw at any point of this study. In addition, your name will not be reported with the results. By completing the interview and survey, you are giving informed consent on the use of your response for this research paper.

1. Overview: Why did you decide to participate in this program?
2. In what ways has this program helped you in planting a church?
3. What lessons did you learn from this program?
4. What do consider the most valuable aspect of this program?
5. What would you change in the program to make it more effective for you?
APPENDIX 5

AMBASSADOR CHURCH PLANTING

RESIDENCY HANDBOOK

This appendix gives a copy of the Ambassador Church Planting Residency Handbook in a slightly different format than the original. All textual material is the same.
INTRODUCTION

One of our dreams as a church is to be an equipping center for future leaders, especially leaders who will be planting church across the streets, across the states and across the seas.

In some ways, we have already done this through our internship program. Our church began with five interns who are now fully serving the Lord in ministry in the role of church planting.

Part of our mission is to equip disciples to be Christ’s ambassadors to all the nations. This year, we are going to make an intentional, strategic investment by expanding our church planting residency program by recruiting church planting residents in partnership with our denomination.

One of the goals of this program is to give church planters a practical and theological framework to church planting. The model for this program is from my own experience at First Evangelical Free Church of Fullerton where I was given a one-year residency to prepare myself for ministry.

In addition to my own positive experiences, we will learn from other churches in their residency program. For example, one church in Arkansas has this goal.

1. Jesus loved to talk about the church, especially about the power it could unleash in the world. He called His people, the church, to connect with a disbelieving, disinterested world—to build influence to the community. This requires strong leadership: Leadership with vision; Leadership with purpose; Leadership in pursuit of results.

2. Good leadership is at the heart of the success of any organization. The church isn’t any different. Our desire is to take the top seminary graduates in the country—men who have been trained theologically—and equip them to lead the church to a place of influence in our world, outside its own four walls, and become the Gospel incarnate that Jesus envisioned.

3. The main goal of our Residency program is to plant churches. It is not an internship. The Residents are not here to make copies or do research or be “gophers” for a year. Much like medical students after they graduate from medical school, Residents are here to explore the practical “how-to’s” of church leadership before launching out to plant a new church of their own.

In addition, we will also partner with our denomination to for support, coaching and accountability.
Purposes:

1. Pastoral: to equip the church planter with pastoral skills in building relationships, shepherding and counseling essential in discipling and building a mature core group.
2. Personal: to nurture the church planter in developing his personal walk with God, self-identity as a pastor, passion and character in the light of their assessment.
3. Leadership: to develop the church planter’s leadership qualities in building a vision, communication, recruitment, mobilization and reproducing servants.
4. Administrative: to educate the church planter in understanding the inner-workings of building a healthy church infrastructure.
5. Philosophical: to educate the church planter in understanding the various philosophies of church planting and for the planter to develop a vision and strategy.
6. Theological: to develop a solid theological basis for church planting and how this incorporates into everyday ministry.
7. Missional: to understand how to contextualize the Gospel for the culture with a particular emphasis on evangelistic strategies.

Plan:

A. Assessment
   1. The church planter will go through a detailed assessment process developed by local church and/or in conjunction with the EFCA.
   2. The church planter will develop a profile of strengths and weaknesses based upon the assessment to develop a learning contract.
   3. The church planter will develop a strategy for building on strengths and minimalizing on their weaknesses.

B. Training
   1. The church planter will learn the missiological and theological principle and practice of contextualization of the Gospel to the target community.
   2. The church planter will study and read books on leadership structure and development.
   3. The church planter will participate in staff and board meetings.
   4. The church planter will take classes, seminars and conferences to assist in the church planting vision.
   5. The church planter will determine specific ministries to serve in to purposefully develop his/her gift or areas of weakness, e.g. small group, event planning, etc.

C. Support Systems
   1. The church planter will be coached by the senior pastor or other appropriate staff on a regular basis for accountability and emotional, spiritual support.
   2. The church and/or the denomination will provide a stipend or salary for the church plant during residency.
   3. The church may receive additional funding based upon fulfilling their residency requirements and assessment.
4. The church planter will strategize fund raising for start up costs and pull together resources.

D. Implementation
1. The church planter will develop a vision and strategy proposal, including a timeline.
2. The church planter will recruit, mobilize and equip a core group.
3. The church planter will train leaders and servants within the core group.
4. The church planter will do area, demographic and community need research of the targeted area.
5. The church planter will build outside network relationships vital to the success of the church plant.

PROPOSED PROGRAM:

1. Prior to the Church planting Residency program—Prerequisites to participating in the Church planting Residency
   a. Having completed the EFCA written and oral assessments for a church planter
   b. In the third year of seminary if pursuing an M.Div. and in the fourth year of seminary if pursuing a Th.M.
   c. Fill out a full assessment from EFCA Start Churches

2. 0-3 months—Theological Reflection
   a. Attend boot-camp
   b. Read church planting books: Murray and Stetzer
   c. Build rapport with congregants
   d. Research possible planting areas

3. 4-6 months—Missional Reflection
   a. Do a cultural map of community
   b. Attend Church Planting conference
   c. Assess potential core group members and build relationships with them
   d. Complete Doctrinal Thesis for credentialing
   e. Develop a mission, core values and vision statement
   f. Determine planting area and do in-depth research on a target group
   g. Small group/Assimilation Rotation

4. 7-9 months—Leadership Development
   a. Read leadership books: Effective Pastoring by Bill Lawrence and Team Leadership by Kenneth O. Gangel
   b. Complete application and necessary attachments for credentialing
   c. Complete church plant proposal
   d. Determine a timeline and launch date
   e. Vision cast and recruit core group
   f. Build an evangelism team
5. 10-12 months
   a. Read spiritual formation books
   b. Finalize an approved church plant proposal
   c. Complete the board interview for credentialing
   d. Train and equip core group
   e. Build networking relationships in target area
   f. Develop evangelistic outreach plans, follow up events and blueprint for preview services
   g. Outreach Rotation

PROCEDURE FOR ADMISSION

1. Taking all the Required Assessment Tests (www.efcastartchurches.com).
2. Fill out Church Planting Residency Application Form.
3. Submit a Ministry Resume and Preaching Tape.
4. Interview with the Pastor. You will be asked about your testimony, ministry experience, Christian life and future goals in ministry.
5. After a thorough evaluation of the applications, individuals will be selected.
6. Complete the Learning Contract.
I. OVERVIEW: For the past three years, I have been working on my doctoral thesis on church planting residency and have incorporated an informal church planting residency at Ambassador. In the past few years, we have seen fruitfulness with three churches planted through our interns and our staff. However, our desire is to partner with EFCA ReachNational to model how a smaller church (less than 200) can play an active role in planting churches. I believe that a residency model can be a “win-win” for the both EFCA and the local church.

1. The local church will benefit by getting resources to begin planting
2. The local church will benefit by allocating resources to kingdom projects
3. The local church will benefit by receiving coaching from EFCA
4. EFCA will benefit by focusing their investment in the best candidates in the context of learning at a local church. If a planter doesn’t plant, then the investment is minimal compared to investing for three years.
5. EFCA will benefit in a shared accountability and long-term investment with the local church.
6. EFCA can examine various models of church planting: pioneer, incarnational, attractional, multi-site in the residency.

While there are other benefits, the purpose of this proposal is to BETA test this process and project so we can having a working model for other local churches. The candidate for this project is ________________.

II. POSITION: CHURCH PLANT RESIDENT
Goal: Our goal is to prepare ________________ to plant or pastor a new campus in the Evangelical Free Church of America and EFCA West through a one-year intensive full time residency as the campus pastor of Ambassador Church. The candidate will go through all the prescribed requirements by the EFCA ReachNational such as assessment and training. They must be provisionally accepted by both the National Director of Church Planting and the EFCA West Church Planting Director.

III. TIME TABLE: APRIL 2010 TO MARCH 2011
The resident will work full time for Ambassador Church as the campus pastor for their multi-site location in Los Angeles. During the first year, he will work through the learning contracts and will meet with mentors for training and coaching. While the tasks assigned will be designed to prepare the church planter to be either a campus pastor or a church planter, it will also mutually benefit the mother church. Furthermore, the church planter will work on these agreed upon areas:
1. Creating a learning contract based upon assessment
2. Meeting with mentors for training and coaching
3. Developing a evangelistic strategy for multi-site and turn around churches
4. Attending Boot camp and Expotential Conference
5. Fulfilling licensing requirements of the EFCA
6. Fulfilling expectation checklist

The goal for the first year will be to equip our planter to either lead a multi-site campus or church plant for the second year.

IV. MAJOR AREAS OF RESPONSIBILITY AT AMBASSADOR (LEARNING CONTRACT)
1. Leadership
   a. The church planter will recruit a lay leadership team in the area of evangelism, gathering and assimilation. The purpose of this will be to develop skills in gathering and mobilization
   b. The church planter will lead a group for leadership training.
   c. The church planter will coordinate quarterly leadership meetings, entitled “Leadership Community.”
   d. The church planter will read six books on leadership focused on developing his core strengths based on Strength Finder and CPI.
   e. The church planter will participate on the Leadership Board of Ambassador Church.

2. Evangelism
   a. The church planter will develop an “evangelism” strategy for the church plant.
   b. The church planter will begin developing a list of contacts and seek out relationships with non-Christians in the planting area.
   c. The church planter will attend the Outreach Conference in November
   d. The church planter will teach people in the church how to share their faith.
   e. The church planter will actively meet with non-Christians and pray for non-Christians on a weekly basis.

3. Communication (Preaching)
   a. The church planter will read books on preaching assigned by the mentor
   b. The church planter will be assigned a series of sermons to evaluate preaching
   c. The church planter will be required to take additional classes on preaching
   d. The church planter will be assessed once a month or more depending on his improvement as a communicator
   e. The church planter will be given other opportunities to preach, i.e. special services like Good Friday, special events or weekday services, etc.

4. Additional Requirements
   a. The church planter will meet with a spiritual mentor focused on the health of their marriage once a month.
   b. The church planter will begin raising “support” for prayer and financial for the investment into their ministry.
# CHURCH PLANT RESIDENCY APPLICATION

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Have you ever committed or been convicted of a crime?  

- [ ] YES  
- [ ] NO  

If so, please explain below:

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## PERSONAL FINANCES

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## REFERENCES

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**PREVIOUS MINISTRY EXPERIENCE**

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REFERENCE LIST


Smith, Glenn. 2007. *Models for raising up church planters: How churches become more effective through intentional leadership development.* Dallas, TX: Leadership Network.


