

The Metro Northwest Church Planting Network By-Laws

Operating Consensus

The Metro Northwest Church Planting Network (Network) will operate according to the following Consensus Documents: *The Vision and Purpose Statement*, *The Philosophy of Ministry Summary* and *The Charter*. These documents may be amended by a majority of member churches. However, amendment of these documents allows for early negotiated withdrawal from the Network as described.

The Vision and Purpose Statement

The Metro Northwest Church Planting Network seeks to magnify God's glory in the gathering and discipling of his elect by helping to fund new churches primarily in the metro-regions and university communities of Washington and Oregon. Our vision is to raise up churches that engage, challenge and serve their neighborhoods and, ultimately, the Pacific Northwest through the power and application of the gospel. It will function, consistent with the constitution of the PCA, to help plant theologically sound, evangelistically faithful and culturally relevant churches by two means: 1) identifying prospective church planters for consideration by Presbytery and 2) participating in the funding of new church plants.

The Philosophy of Ministry Summary

There is general agreement that more important than any particular set of definitions is the sincere intention on the part of everyone involved in the process of selecting and/or supporting a given church planter to ensure that he will meet the profile that the Network has agreed upon in order to qualify for the Network's support.

Discussion of particular issues will always be possible at the initial point in the selection and/or support process, and a man's teachable spirit will be the key point in cases where a man's views are undeveloped or where he may have indicated in some way that he holds views that might appear to be inconsistent with the Network profile.

In this context of mutual trust, the Network has recognized some philosophy of ministry targets that illustrate member churches' shared affinities and aversions. While this list is more representative than definitive, these "ministry targets" help focus our goals and resources and communicate our general ministry philosophy to prospective planters.

It is important to understand that there is a good degree of diversity in the ministry styles of the Network churches themselves. We also acknowledge that church planters must use resources selectively and may need to pursue important ministry goals in phases. Still, it is helpful to sketch some characteristic philosophy of ministry targets.

Characteristic Philosophy of Ministries Targets:

- Central emphasis on gifted, expository preaching
- Commitment to biblically and theologically driven worship that engages the local culture
- Commitment to "gathering" of the elect by biblical evangelism and mercy

- Commitment to the “perfecting” of the saints through educational discipleship ministries
- Commitment to cultural engagement through dialog, service and practical apologetics
- The practice of central corporate ministries:
 - The practice of the Lord’s Supper at least once a month
 - The regular exercise of corporate prayer
 - The long-term commitment to a full Lord’s Day ministry
 - The vision to plant more churches
- Particular characteristics in the Church Planter (not intended as a complete list):
 - Theologically articulate with a love for the Reformed faith
 - A history of personal and ministry outreach and evangelism
 - A desire to pastor as well as plant a church
 - Assessment qualification of “PQ” or higher
 - Ordained minister in the PCA
 - The ability to raise funds

Characteristic Philosophy of Ministry Aversions:

- Celebration of the Lord’s Supper infrequently or irregularly
- A broadly evangelical or culturally driven worship including the use of drama
- A broadly evangelical and shallow doctrinal and creedal emphasis
- A Restrictive “reformed church identity” and isolationist ministry emphasis
- A restrictive misapplication of the regulative principle to the worship of the Church exhibited, for example, in the exclusive use of the psalms or non-instrumental worship
- The use of women in adult education to men, ecclesiastical office or preaching
- Tendencies toward Theonomy or Reformed fundamentalism
- “Single school” philosophy of ministry focus that define the work, for example, “Home School”, “Sonship” or “Mission”, *etc.*

The Charter

The Network:

The Metro Northwest Church Planting Network (Network) shall be composed of the contributing churches, which are the members of the Network. The Network members will meet through their representatives, one per member, annually on a date and at a place determined by the Board of Directors. Amendments to the Vision and Purpose Statement, The Philosophy of Ministry Summary and The Charter may be proposed by either the Board of Directors or a member church, must be published in the call to the annual meeting and require for enactment a two-thirds majority of members present and voting.

Board of Directors:

The Board of Directors is composed of one representative, either a Teaching or Ruling Elder, from each member church. For the sake of continuity, representatives serve a minimum term of three years; however, they may serve indefinitely at the discretion of their member church's Session or organizing pastor.

Authority of the Board of Directors:

The Board of Directors has no authority to change its powers, alter the Vision and Purpose Statement, modify the Philosophy of Ministry Summary or alter the Charter. The Board of Directors has final authority to make all project and support decisions. It approves and releases support funds, oversees and disburses checks and financial reports, and receives and directs all formal Network communications.

Once a quorum is established, a two-thirds majority of members present and voting is required to approve actions or commit any support. Normally no single project will receive more than 45% of its funding from the Network during a twelve-month period. If compelling reasons convince the Board of Directors that a project should receive a greater percentage of the Network's funds, special funding can be approved by a two-thirds majority vote of Board members present and voting of the Board. .

Officers of the Board of Directors:

Chairman: Proposes the meeting agenda, moderates the meetings and is a voting member.

Secretary: Keeps the minutes and other records, writes communiqués, *etc.*

Treasurer: Oversees the financial operations of the Network including payments, and recording income and compliance with IRS and other regulations.

Officer Elections:

Board of Directors officers are chosen by the Board of Directors by simple majority. Office terms are three years with no limit on the number of terms a member may serve.

Stated and Called Meetings, Minutes and Quorum:

The Board of Directors will meet at least bi-annually, on the dates set by the Board President. The annual meeting of the Board will take place on the day of the annual meeting of the Network. . One-third of the Board of Directors members may request a called meeting as needed. Prior notice of all meetings is to be sent via email to each Board member including a brief

description of the agenda. Minutes including notice of all decisions will be sent to member churches via email within two weeks following the meeting. The quorum for the Board of Directors shall consist of a simple majority of the Board of Directors or 50% in the case of an even number of Board members. In the event a Board member is providentially hindered from attending in person, he may attend by telephone and fully participate, including casting his vote, or, in the alternative, the member church he represents may designate an alternate, who must be an officer of the church, to attend the meeting in person. Every effort shall be made to ensure that all members can be present.

Financial Support Levels:

Churches with budgets of \$100,000 to \$250,000, by arrangement

Churches with budgets of \$250,001 to \$300,000, \$15,000

Churches with budgets of \$300,001 to \$400,000, \$20,000

Churches with budgets of \$400,001 and above, \$25,000.

Charter members of the Network and new member churches and missions have three years to meet the stipulated annual minimum financial commitment for membership in the Network. Member churches are required to pay the stipulated financial commitment in either monthly or quarterly payments. Failure to meet the stipulated financial commitment for a period of twelve months shall terminate the membership of a congregation unless the Board of Directors determines that special circumstances warrant the continuation of the church's membership.

Member Church's Obligations to the Network:

Membership in the Network entails the following commitment: that upon notice of intention to leave the Network, the member church remains obliged to fund its commitment through the end of that calendar year and the year following. (Example: If a church gives notice of intention to withdraw from the Network in December, it remains committed to fund its stipulated obligation for the following thirteen months.)

Supported Churches and Apprenticeships:

Projects must be developed within the parameters of the Network's Operating Consensus Documents. Church planters will provide regular reports to the Board. To receive funds, church planters and mission churches must be in good standing with the Presbytery. Network supported mission churches will be required to begin their benevolent giving with support of the Network. Mission churches must agree to full participation in the Network according to the support schedule upon (or before) particularization. Church planting apprentices may be supported at an appropriate rate.

Upon motion the document Northwest Network Operating Consensus was adopted as amended, May 16th, 2001, and amended _____, 2007.