

Appendix D

Determining Non-negotiables in your church plant

Discussion Starters

Important Note before beginning: There is an assumption in place that the group meeting to discuss the formation of the new church is beginning from a unified position of planting a biblical, healthy, reproducing church in accord with the beliefs held by the PCA. IF NOT, you need to start there. Some detailed Bible study may be necessary to bring everyone to a point of understanding positions held by the PCA on doctrinal and governance issues.

Use this list as a checklist to bring to light underlying assumptions, which may not yet have been verbalized. The value of this exercise is **not** in defining every possible position or issue, but in winnowing it down to what **MUST** be understood by the group and by a potential church planter as “givens” or “non-negotiables”. The impulse to define everything prior to the arrival of the church planter is unproductive and even perhaps unhealthy.

In all the issues listed below, you must watch for the tendency to describe or defend personal preferences. It is much more appropriate to filter each through the grid of your community and their spiritual needs. Arriving at a list of non-negotiables in this way will allow you to position your church plant for ministry to the community at large, and not simply for those who are already part of the group.

This list is not meant to be exhaustive. Add others that would seem to be issues in your specific community.

Points for discussion:

Worship style

Youth and Children's Ministries

Pastoral Care

Priority given to Outreach

Particular Target Group

Preaching style

Church Size

Others:

Clarifying Vision:

Where do you want the church "to be" in 5 years? In other words, what would disappoint you if it did not come to pass?

The church didn't have 500 people

The church didn't have a program for _____

The church had not planted another church

The church had not partnered for the good of the community with other churches

The church had not seen a high percentage of growth by conversion

The church was not actively involved in missions

Leaders were not developed effectively

The church had not effectively reached the community

Others: