

Checklists

for 

Starting New Churches



USA/Canada Mission/Evangelism Department
Church of the Nazarene

Introduction

Healthy churches are interested in the values that lead to advancing Christ's kingdom. These missional congregations and leaders recognize that starting a new church is one of the greatest ways to win new people to Christ and enfold them into a local fellowship. There are many excellent reasons for existing churches to be involved with starting new churches. Recent studies reveal the following trends related to sponsoring new churches:

1. New churches are the most effective way to reach new people.

George Gallop discovered that 54% of the unchurched population is open to joining a church. In a culture where the average family is moving nearly every three years, people are looking for a sense of community, love, and acceptance. New churches provide a non-threatening opportunity for people who are looking for a place to connect to get in on the ground floor and be a part of a church in the making.

2. New churches are a more effective way to reach young people.

Studies are showing that individuals born after 1940 are showing up in larger numbers in newer churches. They seem to want to be in on the action of the work of building the Kingdom, and newer churches are reaching them.

3. New churches are a more effective way to reach disenfranchised people.

Newer congregations are more able to attract those who have dropped out of the established, mainline churches. The newer church allows them a fresh challenge and the opportunity to be needed.

4. New churches develop new leaders.

Many existing churches are loaded with talent and available leadership who are on the sidelines and not really involved. These potential leaders are ripe for a new challenge and eager for meaningful involvement. New churches can effectively unleash new leadership.

5. New churches bring new life.

Just as the arrival of a new child can activate the life of a family in new ways, so a new church can bring spiritual renewal to a sponsoring congregation. In most cases, the sponsoring church experiences dynamic benefits from the birth of a daughter congregation.

Action Items for a Sponsoring Church

Checklist #1:

- We have an increasing awareness that God is leading us in this work.
- A growing number of believers are regularly praying about this opportunity.
- Confirmation is growing from our church's lay leadership and pastor.
- Our primary motivation is reaching new people for Christ.
- In building Christ's kingdom, we believe the resources needed will be provided.

Checklist #2:

- A free demographic study of the target area has been ordered from the Research Center at headquarters or from the Website www.nazareneresearch.org.
- A profile has been designed of the people we hope the new church will reach.
- A study of existing churches of the area shows the potential of a new church (existing church population compared to community population).
- We have contacts in the target area to begin a core group.
- Our congregation has interested workers to assist this new church in getting started.
- Our congregation has completed the attached survey to determine where our members and leaders are on this opportunity.

Checklist #3:

- We recognize this new church may be different from our church in its style, philosophy, and ministry methods, while still holding to the doctrines and teachings of the Church of the Nazarene.
- We will be willing to release control of this new church and allow its leaders to follow God's calling for their ministry.
- We will regularly conduct a "faith check" to determine our willingness to move ahead without having all the details of our questions answered.
- We will celebrate the significant milestones for this new church and rejoice in their victories, to encourage and enable their future development.
- A budget is prepared that outlines our financial support for this new church.

Checklist #4:

- We are in full agreement for the choice of pastor for this new church and have the approval of our district superintendent for the pastor and targeted area.
- Our church leaders are willing to establish an interim taskforce for starting this church until the new church can recruit its own leadership.
- Preliminary work is being done to locate potential meeting places for the new church to begin worship services.
- Possible methods and tools for announcing the opening of this new church are being discussed and evaluated.
- The pastor of this new church is able to clearly describe his vision for starting this congregation.

Checklist #5:

- An overall timeline is completed that places these checklist items on a one to three-year calendar for planning and budgeting purposes.
- The timeline allows for the new church's funding to follow at least two years behind the growth in attendance.
- The timeline permits nine to twelve months of preparation time before actually launching the new church into public worship services.
- The timeline reflects the high attendance times of spring and fall, by planning for the launch and regular outreach efforts in those seasons.
- Regular meetings of the taskforce with the starting pastor are scheduled for encouragement and accountability.

Checklist #6:

- What haven't we discussed that needs some attention?



Congregational Survey

Do you believe our church could sponsor a new church?

YES, please check all that apply . . .

- How can I help?
- Here's a monthly pledge of \$_____ to help start a new church.
- I have some contacts in the _____ community.
- Call me, I have an idea . . .

NO, here are my concerns . . .

- The _____ community is not ready for a new church.
- These people could come to our church.
- How can we afford this?
- Other: _____

Name: _____

Phone: _____

Leadership Discussions

As pastor and church leaders, several considerations exist on the Lord's leading to sponsor a new church after going through this checklist together. As you and your congregation have a growing sense of God's will in this adventure in faith, additional training materials are available to you through the USA/Canada Mission/Evangelism Department.

For the sponsoring church, please order the how-to book "*Churches Starting Churches*," which describes the options in sponsoring a new church. This book describes the practical steps for pastors and church leaders involved in sponsorship, with discussion guides.

For the starting church, please order the how-to manual entitled "*Starter Kit: For Pastors and Leaders Starting Churches*." This easy-to-read manual outlines the phases needed to start an effective and growing congregation for the starting pastor and new church leaders. "Assessment Centers" and training materials for NewStart pastors are also available.

Starting new churches continues to be one of the greatest ways for building the Kingdom and reaching new people with the gospel. And the most effective model for starting new churches continues to be missional churches sponsoring new churches.

The following is a checklist for a sponsoring church to consider in starting a new church. Starting a new church can be as demanding as it is rewarding for a sponsoring congregation. Much prayer, planning, and discussion needs to go into this important step of faith. The following list will assist your church in working through the initial preparation steps in starting a new church.

Prayerfully work through the following questions and discuss them among your church leaders. For additional resources, please check the NewStart Website at www.NewStartUSA.org.

Discussion Questions

Level One:

Why do we want to sponsor a new church?

1. Is there a sense that God is leading us to sponsor a new church?
2. Are there people our church is not presently reaching that a new church could impact?
3. Do we have agreement from the church's spiritual leaders to consider sponsorship?
4. Are there resources in workers, property, or support we could invest into sponsorship?
5. Has our congregation prayed about this evangelistic opportunity?

Level Two:

Who would be touched by sponsoring this new church?

1. What community or group of people do we want to reach with this new church?
2. Is our pastor willing to be a sponsoring pastor to this new pastor and church?
3. Are there individuals in our church who may be interested in helping this new church?
4. Are there other available and capable lay leaders for the sponsoring church?
5. Do we have contacts for a core group from the target group for the new church?

Level Three:

How would we begin in sponsoring this new church?

1. Will we allow this new church to grow into its own ministry role?
2. Will we be teachable in equipping ourselves and these new church leaders?
3. Can we trust God to provide for the needs of both our churches?
4. Are we willing to release the new leaders and the new congregation into ministry?
5. Can we start in this adventure in faith without having all the answers?

Level Four:

What are the essentials for starting this new church?

1. Will we be willing to pray in and work for the right pastor for starting this new church?
2. Are we able to pray for and release local lay leaders for starting this new church?
3. What are we able to do to assist in locating a place for Sunday worship services?
4. How can we enable the starting church to begin their children's ministries?
5. Are we able to recruit new attenders for this new church? How will we do that best?

Level Five:

When will this new church be started?

1. Will we develop a masterplan for starting this new church from the training materials?
2. Are we willing to select and follow the strategies needed for starting this new church?
3. Can we celebrate the victories of this new church with as much joy as our own victories?
4. Do we see this ministry opportunity as sowing seed for a greater spiritual harvest?
5. Will we be able to pray for this new church's success as fervently as for our own church?

The logo for NewStart features a large, stylized letter 'N' composed of two overlapping brushstrokes, one in red and one in blue. Below the 'N', the word 'NewStart' is written in a blue, cursive script font.

1-800-306-8294

www.NewStartUSA.org