

## Policy Objective:

To provide a clear and strategic plan for planting a self-governing and self-sustaining church. Much of the information provided in this policy comes directly from the UPCI Manual and/or the vision of our General Superintendent. Although there are exceptions, the preferred process for starting new works is to follow the path of evangelistic outreach, preaching point, and then daughter work status, before applying for North American Missions status.

## 1. Evangelism and Outreach Extension

- An Evangelism Extension shall be defined as any church that engages in Outreach Evangelism to a nearby unchurched community in one or more of the following ways: door knocking, home Bible studies, bus routes, street services, small groups, etc.
- In most circumstances, a church or individual desiring to start a work should first engage in some form of regular and measurable outreach before seeking approval to proceed to the next step.
- This step does **not** need prior approval from the District Board or NAM, but communication is vital for the future possibility of a preaching point and church plant.
- The local church pastor where this extension begins shall be responsible for ongoing communication with the Sectional Presbyter and the Sectional North American Missions Director. Communication is vital if the ultimate desire is to plant a new work.
- All Evangelism Extension activities shall be under the oversight of the sponsoring church pastor.
- Any conflict resulting from this outreach effort shall be referred to the Sectional Presbyter for resolution with recourse to the District Board.
- When an Evangelism Extension is ready to expand into a regularly scheduled service that features preaching, it is time to apply for Preaching Point status.

## 2. Preaching Point

- A *Preaching Point* is a regularly scheduled service, typically once a week or at least once a month, that features preaching.
- A preaching point is not a firm commitment to start a church, but it's a stated effort to explore the possibility, and therefore it's important to consider the proposed target area and the input of any neighboring pastors.
- A preaching point is distinct from the mother church as to location or language.
- A preaching point is designed to reach people who are currently unchurched.
- The definition of a preaching point does **not** include a church having a service in a prison, nursing home, jail, on a college campus or in any other institutional setting.
- The District NAM Secretary will maintain an updated list of all approved District Preaching Points. Therefore, the NAM Director will make the NAM Secretary aware of all approved Preaching Points.
- It will be the responsibility of each Sectional NAM Director to maintain a minimum of quarterly contact with all Preaching Points in his section to offer support, guidance, and direction.

- The process for receiving approval for a Preaching Point is as follows:

### ***Establishing a Preaching Point***

- Any pastor desiring to start a Preaching Point must notify the Presbyter of the Section and then submit a “Preaching Point Application” to the District North American Mission Director.
- With the approval of the District North American Missions Executive Committee, an existing church can establish a preaching point in any city or town that does not have a United Pentecostal Church.
- The MO District North American Missions Committee consists of the District Superintendent, District NAM Director, Sectional Presbyter, and Sectional NAM Director.
- According to a General Board policy in the UPCI Manual, this committee can approve preaching points in any city or town that doesn’t have a United Pentecostal Church.
- In the event there is a United Pentecostal Church in the town or city where the preaching point is being considered, the approval of the District Board is required.
- The existence of a preaching point in a town/city does not preclude another church from applying to start another preaching point or daughter church. It also does not preclude someone applying to start an autonomous church in that town/city.
- Any conflict resulting from this outreach effort shall be referred to the North American Missions Department for resolution with recourse to the District Board.
- All Preaching Point activities shall be under the direction of the sponsoring church pastor.
- A Pastor may choose if and how to list the Preaching Point in the UPCI Directory.
- When a Preaching Point has the stability and potential to develop into a congregation, it is time to apply for Daughter Work status.

## **3. Daughter Work**

A daughter congregation is:

- A congregation that has met at least three months as a Preaching Point,
- Is the result of the concerted efforts of an established mother church to plant a new congregation,
- Holds at least one service per week apart from the mother church,
- And is under the general oversight of the pastor of the mother church.
- The stated intention of a daughter work is to plant a new church that will eventually become self-governing.
- The mother church oversees this new work and may assign a daughter work pastor.
- When the work can become self-governing, self-supporting, and self-propagating, then the mother church releases it so that it can become a United Pentecostal Church in its own right (see extensive details of this self-governing status listed below), upon application and approval by the district.
- A list of approved daughter congregations shall be provided to Church Administration annually for printing in the Directory. In accordance with the UPCI manual, this is to be done by the District Secretary after the District NAM Director gets him the list of all approved daughter churches.
- The daughter church shall function in compliance with any Mother/Daughter Church policy of the North American Missions Department.

- The District NAM Secretary will maintain an updated list of all approved District Daughter Works. Therefore, the NAM Director will make the NAM Secretary aware of all approved Daughter Works.
- It will be the responsibility of each Sectional NAM Director to maintain a minimum of quarterly contact with all Daughter Works in his section to offer support, guidance, and direction.

### ***Establishing a Daughter Work***

- Any pastor desiring to start a Daughter Work must notify the Presbyter of the Section and then submit a “Daughter Work Application” to the District North American Mission Director.-
- The Mother Church must obtain written permission from the District North American Missions Department, with recourse to the District Board, to begin a Daughter Church.
- Any conflict resulting from this outreach effort shall be referred to the Presbyter for resolution with recourse to the District Board.
- All Mother/Daughter Church activities shall be under the direction of the sponsoring church pastor.
- When the pastor of the Mother Church feels like the Daughter Church is ready to become autonomous the pastor shall request a North American Missions application for the Daughter Church to complete.

## **4. North American Missions**

- A North American Missions work shall be defined as a work not over five (5) years in existence. Any funds requested for a work other than the above described may be reviewed by the District North American Missions Board for special consideration, with final approval resting with the District Board.
- The North American Missionary status shall be determined as follows:
  - (a) After a North American Missions application has been approved by the District North American Missions Board and the District Board.
  - (b) After the missionary has been on site.
  - (c) At the time of drawing first funds from North American Missions except in the case of moving expense.
  - (d) If funds are not requested, North American Missions time will be counted six (6) months from when he or she came into the city.
- The District NAM Secretary will maintain an updated list of all approved North American Missionaries on status.
- It will be the responsibility of each Sectional NAM Director to maintain a minimum of quarterly contact with all NAM’s on status in his section to offer support, guidance, and direction.

### ***Establishing a North American Missions Church***

- Any pastor desiring to start a North American Missions Work must notify the Presbyter of the Section and then submit a “North American Missions Application” to the District North American Mission Director.-
- The minister must be licensed, in good standing with the UPCI.
- No one shall be placed in any field without reasonable assurance of a willingness to remain until the work is on a solid foundation.
- Any minister desiring to be approved must read and agree to abide by the District North American Missions Policy.

- Any minister or church desiring to start a new church in the Missouri District shall:
  1. Submit a completed North American Missions application to the North American Missions Director.
  2. Be interviewed by the District North American Missions Board or reviewed by the North American Missions Executive Committee.
    - a. The decision of the North American Missions Board shall be submitted to the District Board for final action.
    - b. The Executive Committee decision may be based upon the results of the Executive Committee survey.
    - c. The decision of the Executive Committee is subject to appeal to the District North American Missions Board.
    - d. An “Area Pastors” and “Executive Committee” survey may be used to assess the viability of any new work.
- No minister shall begin a new work without written permission from the District Board.
- Any minister failing to receive written permission before starting a new work shall:
  1. Forfeit all rights to receive any financial assistance from the District or the National levels.
  2. Forfeit the right to obtain North American Missions status.
  3. Appear before the District Board for appropriate action.
- All approved North American Missionaries shall file a completed Progress Report form with the District North American Missions Director monthly.

### ***Leaving or Closing a North American Missions Church***

- Should circumstances arise which would necessitate leaving such field of labor resulting in the closure of the work, the following guidelines should be adhered to:
  1. Proper notification must be given to:
    - a. District Superintendent
    - b. District North American Missions Director
    - c. Sectional Presbyter
  2. All loans and/or liens involving the UPC must be satisfactorily resolved.
  3. All assets must be liquidated according to the local church bylaws dissolution procedure.
  4. It is *recommended* the assets remaining after all financial liabilities are satisfied be given to the Missouri District North American Missions “Mission Possible” Building Project Fund.
  5. Official dissolution form should be completed and filed with the Missouri Secretary of State (this form can be secured online from the Secretary of State website).

## **5. Self-Governing Work**

- It is recommended that each such assembly affiliate itself with the United Pentecostal Church International for the sake of identification, fellowship, cooperation, and protection. Missouri District North American Missions does not offer their Summary of Benefits to non-affiliated churches.

- It shall transact all other business pertaining to its life as a local unit. It shall have the right to administer discipline to its members according to the Scriptures.
- It shall have the right to acquire and hold title to its property, either through the trustees or in its corporate as a self-governing unit.
- The fact that a local assembly is affiliated with the United Pentecostal Church International shall in no wise destroy its rights as above stated.

### ***Establishing Affiliation with the UPCI***

- The affiliation of the local church is to be understood as not compulsory for fellowship, but rather it shall be entirely optional. This does not affect Article XII, Section 16, Paragraphs 2 and 3.
- Any assembly to be affiliated with and under the protection of the general body must publicly announce a specially called meeting for the purpose of considering whether or not they desire to be affiliated with the organization.
- Should a majority of the recognized members of the assembly who are present at the meeting vote their approval for accepting our Articles of Faith and affiliating with us, an application must be filled in.
- The application must be endorsed by at least three (3) officers of the local church.
- The Articles of Faith and government adopted by the assembly must be presented to the District Board for their consideration.
- If acceptable to the Board, the application shall be endorsed by a majority of the Board including the District Superintendent.
- The procedure to be used in affiliation of new churches shall be as follows: The pastor, or Director of North American Missions if there is not a pastor, shall notify the District Superintendent or District Presbyterian of the section in which the church is located, who shall set a date to have the church set in order and in harmony with the Local Church Government as set forth in the Manual, after which a certificate of affiliation shall be granted.
- A certificate of membership will be issued to every affiliated assembly, the cost of same being \$5.
- Any church affiliated with the United Pentecostal Church International must be pastored by a UPCI minister.

### ***Withdrawing from the UPCI***

- Any church desiring to withdraw its membership from the United Pentecostal Church International must abide by the following procedures:
  - (a) Arrange for and announce a business meeting for said purpose at least ten (10) days in advance of said meeting. The same shall be announced at three (3) regular public services.
  - (b) Advise and invite the District Superintendent or his designee and District Presbyterian to speak as representatives of the district at said meeting. No Superintendent or Presbyterian shall be the representative for the District at the disaffiliation of the church he pastors.
  - (c) In the event a church decides to take steps to withdraw its membership in the United Pentecostal Church International, no words derogatory to the United Pentecostal Church International shall be spoken by the pastor, and no words derogatory to the church and pastor shall be spoken by an official of the United Pentecostal Church International.

(d) After a fair representation of both the church and district is heard, then a majority vote of legal members of the church present voting shall be the deciding factor.

(e) The fellowship of a minister who withdraws from the United Pentecostal Church International is determined on the basis of the grounds or reason for which he or she withdrew. The same rule shall apply to a church, and the fellowship status of a church which has disaffiliated shall be determined by the District Board on said basis. In the event there are no grounds or reason for which the church should be dropped from fellowship before the church instituted said action to disaffiliate, said disaffiliation shall not cause the church or pastor to lose or forfeit fellowship with the United Pentecostal Church International.

(f) Any church voting to disaffiliate shall complete a disaffiliation form giving the reasons for the action and send the form to the District Board. The District Board shall forward the form to the United Pentecostal Church International, Weldon Spring, Missouri.

(g) Any pastor having been duly notified of a written complaint against him or her which places him or her under judicial action shall not be permitted to allow disaffiliation of the church he or she pastors until the complaint is resolved.

### ***Local Church Government***

- The assembly may use the UPCI adopted form of local church government, or any form which a majority of the members voting shall endorse, so long as its provisions do not conflict with the constitution of the General Body.
- The assembly shall have the right to adopt such additional bylaws as it deems needful or necessary to enforce or handle any matter which may arise, so long as all new bylaws shall be in harmony with the Constitution of the General Body.
- The Internal Revenue Code 501(c) (3) mandates some form of provision of disposition of assets in the event of a dissolution of nonprofit organizations, each local assembly shall provide in its local constitution a provision for dissolution of property assets in the event it ceases to function as a church. Such clause should provide that all such assets be assigned to another religious, nonprofit organization and the disposition of these assets be reviewed and approved by the District Board.
- It is recommended that each local church pay its pastor's expenses, as far as possible, to attend the annual General Conference of the United Pentecostal Church International.