

Steps for an Adoption Merger

Pre Steps for an Adoption Merger

1. As a Leadership Team, discuss the possibility of church adoption.
2. Read this book and discuss the Discussion Questions.
3. Pray and discern whether a church adoption is the direction God wants your church to go.
4. Begin casting a vision for adoption.

Steps for an Adoption Merger

1. Establish a prayer team with representatives from each church, supporting the adoption process in prayer and seeking God's direction as you move forward.
2. Adopting church takes Readiness 360 survey to determine readiness and mission awareness and alignment
3. Contact the District Superintendent stating the desire for an Adoption Merger to take place.
4. The District Superintendent establishes a date for an initial meeting with key leadership from all churches. The Conference or District staff person responsible for church planting should be invited to this initial meeting.
5. Each church's Council or Board votes to be involved in the Adoption Merger discussion. If both churches agree, the discussion should continue to the following steps.
6. Hold Town Hall meetings at each church. (There should be several Town Hall meetings to keep both churches aware of the progress and to answer questions.
7. Parent Church:
 - a. Discernment: The Adopting church conducts a feasibility study
 - i. Facility study
 - ii. Financial sustainability study
 - iii. Location study
 - iv. Compatibility study (Doctrinal, demographic, and cultural)
 - b. Church Leadership Team (of Adopting church) determine:
 - i. Who would serve as the campus pastor
 - ii. Financial plan

- iii. Incorporation of leadership from adoptee church
- iv. How many leaders/workers will be deployed to joining campus
- v. How will you transmit healthy DNA to adoptee church
- vi. Whether the adoptee will “go dark” or a period of time, or transition into the new church

8. Joining Church:

- a. Acknowledge that the church will live into the parent church’s mission, vision, and core values.
 - b. Acknowledge that the parent church will receive all income and all liabilities.
 - c. Complete a financial audit.
 - d. Complete an inventory of all the items present in the building.
 - e. Assist those who do not wish to remain a member of the new congregation find a new congregation to join.
 - f. Design the final worship service to highlight the legacy of the congregation and provide an opportunity for grieving.
9. Create numerous opportunities for both congregations to get to know each other. Write a merger document detailing the arrangement. Include:
- a. Date for merger/adoption to take place
 - b. The name of the new campus
 - c. What leadership will be added to the Parent Church Leadership Board
 - d. Identify mission and ministry projects for both campuses to work on jointly
10. Send a completed copy of the Merger Document to the District Superintendent and the Director of Congregational Vibrancy at least three weeks prior to the Charge Conference.
11. Create several listening sessions at both churches to understand and respond to questions and concerns.
12. Set the bar for approval at a simple majority of those voting at the Charge Conference. Both churches should conduct a Charge Conference on the same day, if possible.
13. Contact the District Superintendent to authorize a Charge Conference or Congregational Meeting for the “Adoption Merger Vote.”
14. Hold a Charge Conference at both churches
15. Incorporate new campus into parent campus, and transfer titles, financial documents, and endowments.