

Article #2: Church Planting Possibilities

Last week we talked about why we should plant churches. Today let's talk about church planting possibilities, and let's focus on two possibilities.

One possibility is to start "from scratch." That's when "Church A" raises up a team of people and sends them to a new location to start a church where there is no church. That's how Foothills got her start! Many churches are started this way. Like Foothills, across the Valley, many of these "scratch churches" begin in the home of a team member, then relocate to some rented space like a school, or a strip mall. Sometimes an already existing church will allow a church plant to begin in their facility with the intention of the plant moving to their own location elsewhere. One big challenge in the Valley, for a number of reasons, is finding a location for a new church.

The second possibility is to "replant" a church. This might also be referred to as a Legacy Church plant. Unfortunately, church may have declined to the point of near death. Maybe they simply have so few people, new people are too uncomfortable to return. They may be financially strapped, and unable to pay their bills. They may be an aging congregation with little hope of reaching families. Perhaps the condition of their facility hinders their ability to reach people.

Reasons vary for why a church may find itself in this situation. But if that congregation agrees that what they need is more than "a new pastor," they may make the selfless, kingdom-minded choice to become a "replant" or "legacy church plant" with the help of a sending church.

There are details here, but essentially, the declining church agrees to "close," and give themselves, the property, facilities, and financials to a sending church as a "legacy gift." The sending church will send a lead planter and team to plant a new church. This can work where the remaining congregation is prayerful, visionary, and open-handed, where the facilities and property are useful, and the location truly needs a church.

Of course, there are variations on both of these possibilities. The main ones being language or ethnic church plants. The church we served in Columbus, OH planted Ghanaian, Vietnamese, Hispanic, and Nepali congregations within our own facilities, and then the

language congregations eventually relocated to their own locations. Today, the combined attendance of three of the four that made it is over 1,500 people!

One final word. As a Southern Baptist Church, and a member of the Pillar Network, we subscribe to a set of 13 Pillars that guide our thinking about planting new churches. Follow the link to check them out! And by the way, the author, Matt Rogers will be our guest preacher for our Live Sent Conference this fall!

<https://www.9marks.org/article/13-pillars-for-planting-healthy-churches/>