

# SEND WELL

## 9 THINGS A SENDING CHURCH MUST DO BEFORE SENDING A CHURCH PLANTER

By Dr. Ed Love

### **1. Implement a prayer strategy.**

John Wesley once said, “I continue to dream and PRAY about a revival of holiness in our day that moves forth in mission and creates authentic community in which each person can be unleashed through the empowerment of the Spirit to fulfill God’s creational intentions.” Sending churches must lead their congregation in prayer strategies around the new church plant. Don’t assume prayer is just going to happen. Be intentional and develop a strategy. This strategy could include regular public prayer times for the church planter, a prayer walk through the city that the church will be planted in, or a countdown to launch daily prayer card for your congregation.

### **2. Empower a lay leader to lead the partnership.**

It’s easy for a lead pastor to feel connected to the birth of a new church, but sometimes the congregation can feel distant and the church plant ends up being known as “the pastor’s project.” By empowering another person to serve as an advocate spreads the multiplication vision faster throughout the body and builds a stronger multiplication DNA in the long run.

### **3. Take the Church Planters Assessment Center seriously.**

Most leaders want to believe in people and support their calling; however, church planting is a serious undertaking. Some individuals may like the idea of planting a new church, but they may not be wired to start new churches. Even more, some planters may need to go through a self-discovery process to find out what areas he or she needs to grow in. When CPAC’s are done right, they provide wonderful opportunities to speak into a future leaders life through encouragement and correction. Don’t assume your potential

planter is good to go until they have been thoroughly assessed. Use the CPAC as an opportunity for testing and affirmation.

#### **4. Help your planter get the right training and coaching.**

Very few church planters come to you pre-trained. Even the most skilled and experienced staff leaders are still ill equipped for church planting. The right church planting training track will inform the church planter's intuition, help them avoid some costly mistakes, and increase their survivability level. In kickball, a person can call for a do-over, but in church planting there are no do-overs. Send your church planter out well trained and make sure they are connected to a trained coach for the first 2-3 years!

#### **5. Develop a broader network of supporting churches.**

Even though your church might be taking the lead on a church plant, don't let other churches miss out on the blessing of supporting the new church. Church planting is a hard journey and the new work may require multiple support systems, which includes prayer, people, and financial resources. Share your church planter and invite other churches in your denomination or network to surround them however they can.

#### **6. Bring clarity to the financial realities.**

Many church planters have not even seen, much less managed a church budget. Don't think talking about the planter's budget and personal salary is a birds-and-the-bees conversation. Talk about the finances and recommend being involved in setting the planter's salary and benefits so they don't have to feel awkward setting it themselves.

#### **7. Clarify who can go with your church planter.**

One of the largest sources of tensions within a mother/daughter relationship is caused because key people may choose to leave the sending church and go with the planter. When people leave sending church leaders enter into a grieving. It's not easy losing key relationships and especially if they were significant givers. Be sure to prepare you church planter with

appropriate expectations and let them know how much you want to be involved in the process with people. Some sending church leaders inform their church planter that anyone is open for recruitment; however, other church leaders prefer to set the terms and be involved in those discussions. However you approach this subject matter, just be clear.

#### **8. Commission your planter and planting team.**

The sending church has the awe-inspiring opportunity to enter into a holy moment and publicly commission the planter and planting team. This is the moment when you announce to your church, “We are having a baby! Now, let’s show our support!” Don’t let this day go unannounced. Make it a party!

#### **9. Implement an ongoing communication and care strategy for the planter.**

Once you commission your church planter, don’t consider your job done. Your church planter is going to need your ongoing relationship, prayers, and financial support. The relational dynamics will change and the planter will quickly begin to develop their autonomy. Be sure to come to an agreement on what level of connection is desired. Sending churches should not feel overbearing or distant. Regularly converse with your planter about what they desire and be there when you need to be there. Along the planting journey, find ways your church can continue to bless the planting couple (consider raising some funds to send them to the Bahamas.)

Seriously, the Bahamas! Be a blessing!