

REPORT OF THE GROWTH STUDY COMMITTEE

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The Free Methodist Church in Canada
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WHEREAS the Free Methodist Church of Canada exists to present the Gospel of Jesus Christ to all who will listen, and to disciple all those who respond to that Gospel; and

WHEREAS that mission is best fulfilled by the multiplication of healthy, vibrant, disciple-making churches; and

WHEREAS due to statements made by Christ such as the Kingdom of God is like "the smallest of all your seeds" yet "becomes a tree" (Matthew 13:31-32) and "the harvest is plentiful" (Luke 10:2), combined with the vision of John in which he saw gathered around the throne of God multitudes of the redeemed from every tribe and language group (Revelation 7:9), we believe that as we obey the Great Commission of Christ, significant Kingdom growth will be accomplished through our local churches.

THEREFORE we recommend the following actions:

1. The Bishop of the Canadian General Conference is directed to develop a vision statement so as to facilitate the direction that will propel the church into the 21st century.

GROWTH BALLOT 1.

I vote to approve this recommendation.

☐ YES ☐ NO

2. The Board of Administration is directed to develop a denominational mission statement that will facilitate the vision of our denomination in Canada, and present that statement to the next regular sitting of General Conference for approval.

GROWTH BALLOT 2.

I vote to approve this recommendation

☐ YES ☐ NO

3. The Outreach Commission is directed to implement this denominational mission by identifying and beginning to implement a denomination-wide church-renewal and church-planting system that will empower and equip churches to become

healthy, reporting to the next regular sitting of General Conference the timeline for full implementation of such a system. Strategies to accomplish this could include the following:

- 3.1. Encourage all to develop a ministry philosophy with the Great Commission at heart.
- 3.2. Voluntary Network Clusters of pastors who are experiencing limited growth in their Churches who meet together on a regular basis for accountability and coaching using renewal materials that would assist them in their growth and development could be formed. A facilitator would be provided for the group and a coach for each individual pastor.
- 3.3. Voluntary Network Clusters of pastors in existing healthy Churches with an identifiable core group of people willing to either start an alternative worship service for different target groups or plant a Church from their Church for seekers could be formed. A facilitator would be provided for the group and a coach for each individual pastor.
- 3.4. The development of at least two Church planting areas a year across Canada where an assessed Church planter would work alongside a healthy Church that wants to plant or pioneer a Church could be initiated. The Church planters would join a network cluster. A facilitator would be provided for the group and a coach for each individual pastor.
- 3.5. The development of a Cluster of pastors with the goal being to break the 200 barrier could be initiated. A facilitator would be provided for the group and a coach for each individual pastor.
- 3.6. The development of an assessment system for the Toronto area to provide training for people interested in assessing and interviewing potential Church Planters could be initiated. This will help create a pool of pastors who would better know their strengths and weaknesses in ministry performance and whether they are Church planting types.
- 3.7. The development of facilitators and coaches for the above networks who are identified as mature pastors with a track record of growth could be initiated. These pastors could in turn develop networks of willing teachable pastors who would welcome accountability for the particular network they choose to join.
- 3.8. These clusters could be formed by task rather than by geography, as money and national focus allow.

- 3.9. These networks could be familiar to the Ministerial Education Guidance and Placement Committee to ensure that candidates for ministry be aware of these resources.
- 3.10. Training events could be developed and funded on a national basis with training available first to the facilitators and coaches and then to the interested network participants in east and west training events.
- 3.11. A strategy could be developed to identify those pastors and Churches who would be willing to be involved in any one of these areas.
- 3.12. A strategy could be developed to identify qualified pastors who could serve as facilitators and coaches of networks and pastors respectively.
- 3.13. Training events could start in January of 1997 and subsequently offer training modules every quarter until all networks are fully operational and facilitators and coaches are selected and trained.
- 3.14. A strategy could be developed that would define the best possible scenario of Church, pastor, congregation, location, and evangelical need so as to prioritize which situation receives funding for a Church renewal/plant initiative on a yearly basis.

GROWTH BALLOT 3.

I vote to approve this recommendation.

☐ YES

☐ NO

- 4. The Outreach Commission is further directed to implement this denominational mission by identifying and making available one or more church-renewal models to plateaued or declining churches, empowering them to become growing churches, reporting to the next sitting of General Conference the progress made toward making these available; strategies to accomplish this could include the following:
 - 4.1. Voluntary Network Clusters of pastors who are experiencing limited growth in their Churches who meet together on a regular basis for accountability and coaching using renewal materials that would assist them in their growth and development could be formed. A facilitator would be provided for the group and a coach for each individual pastor.

- 4.2. The development of a Cluster of pastors with the goal being to break the 200 barrier could be initiated. A facilitator would be provided for the group and a coach for each individual pastor.
- 4.3. These clusters could be formed by task (such as large churches dealing with large church issues, small churches dealing with small church issues, or rural churches dealing with rural issues) rather than by geography, as money and national focus allow.

GROWTH BALLOT 4.

I vote to approve this recommendation.

☐ YES

☐ NO

5. The Board of Administration is directed to annually set both short- and long-term growth goals, and strategies to achieve those goals, that would lead toward the accomplishment of our denominational mission, and regularly report to the denomination progress toward accomplishing those goals.

GROWTH BALLOT 5.

I vote to approve this recommendation.

☐ YES

☐ NO