



“Those who are wise will shine like the brightness of the heavens, and those who lead many to righteousness, like the stars forever and ever.” — Daniel 12:3

“... the harvest is plentiful but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field.” — Matthew 9:37-38

“Hardly anything demonstrates the health of a congregation as much as the willingness—and ability—to give birth to new congregations. The opposite is true as well. Hardly anything is a more clear indication of illness than structures which by design hinder church multiplication, or at best permit it as an absolute exception.” — Christian Schwarz, “Natural Church Development”

“Man is so made that whenever anything fires his soul, impossibilities vanish.” — Jean de la Fontaine



northwest conference
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CHURCH PLANTING MYTHS

FREQUENTLY HEARD CONCERNS:



#1 Myth: Planting will hurt the parent church.

FACTS:

- + Seldom true — in fact, most parenting churches find a new season of vitality after parenting.
- + God honors the giving, brings in new leaders, and raises up those who have been waiting for an opportunity to serve.
- + We are blessed when we are a blessing.

#2 Myth: Planting hurts existing churches.

FACTS:

- + New churches set new standards and raise the quality of ministry in a community.
- + Planting helps existing churches recapture their missional heart and edge.
- + New churches seek to reach the unchurched. In most communities this is well over half the population. Many more new churches are needed to reach them.
- + Statistics show that within our conference only 17.8% of the population regularly attends church.
- + New churches often reach different age, ethnic, or socio-economic groups.

#3 Myth: There's no room for another Covenant church in our area.

FACTS:

- + Most new churches are reaching out to a completely different age, ethnic, or demographic group than our existing churches.
- + New church plants are reaching out to unchurched people, not trying to "shuffle the sheep" from one church to another.

- + The ministry style and worship of a new church will be very different from the existing churches and will draw new people.
- + The statistics show that more churches of the same denomination in an area actually strengthen each other's ministries. Both churches often end up growing substantially and can more readily transform a community.

#4 Myth: Planting usually fails.

FACTS:

- + The Bad News: Some estimates say that 4 out of 5 new churches will fail and only 1 in 10 sustain at larger than 100 people in worship.
- + The Good News: The success rate increases dramatically when the new church takes advantage of training and coaching from experienced church planters.
- + The Northwest Conference utilizes the A.C.T.S. system of church planting. We Assess, Coach, Train, and Support each new church plant.
- + The success rate in the Evangelical Covenant Church after 4 years is 86%.
- + We develop "well-conceived plans" with each new planting pastor and leadership group so that they can have the biggest Kingdom impact possible.

#5 Myth: We're too small to plant.

FACTS:

- + Many small churches have successfully helped start new churches.
 1. Several small churches can partner in starting a new church.

2. Ask your Northwest Conference Director of Church Planting how you can become part of the Every Church Network: "Every Church a Planting Church" (www.missiontoplant.org).

- + Statistics show that churches that plant grow 3 times faster than those who don't.
- + It's not uncommon for parenting churches to replace those sent out, plus grow by 10% within a year's time.
- + Large churches sometimes have a more difficult time persuading people to go out to plant a new church than do small-to medium-sized churches.
- + More important than size is the ability to plant is the health and the missional heart of the people of that church.

#6 Myth: Planting causes churches to break apart.

FACTS:

- + This only happens in unhealthy churches that are already heading for a split.
- + With a strong Kingdom vision, the parenting church blesses those who choose to go forth to start a new church.
- + Most parenting churches will grow as they recapture their passion for local mission.

#7 Myth: New churches will replace existing churches.

FACTS:

- + This is not generally the goal, or the truth.
- + New churches often reach people who existing churches struggle to impact.

- + Often the existing churches are strengthened and grow because of the increased Christian "presence" in a community.

#8 Myth: Church planting causes a leadership drain.

FACTS:

- + We should be sending our best and most gifted into the mission field, whether it's next door or abroad.
- + Starting new churches gives younger, gifted leaders a chance to step up into leadership roles.
- + Almost every church has unused capacity with potential leaders sitting idle because there isn't a spot for them to serve.
- + When God calls people out, He always provides for His church.

#9 Myth: America is over-churched

FACTS:

- + The true measure is not the number of church buildings in an area, but rather the number of unchurched people.
- + The fact is we could double the number of churches in America and still not be close to meeting the current need.
- + The population is growing 8 times faster than we're currently starting new churches, and existing churches are closing at a rate of 3,500 per year.
- + Less than 18% of Americans attends church on any given weekend.