

“Stepping Out in Faith...for the Sake of the Gospel”

We would like to introduce you to a major ministry initiative that is being considered by our Church Council. We are exploring the possibility of developing a new church start at our facilities. We ask for your prayer and for your participation in the coming weeks. The Council feels it is time for bold action that could bring God’s blessing in ways beyond what we can now imagine—if our focus is not on ourselves but on the growing number of people around us who need to know Christ. That need is made more urgent by the frightening pace at which we see our culture turn away from God.

It is widely held by church leaders, backed by research and experience, that the most effective long-term strategy for reaching unchurched people with the good news of Christ is developing and starting new churches. Such churches aim to attract, teach and persuade those without the hope of salvation to embrace the gospel message. Such churches have born much fruit and often go on to birth other new churches. Our Converge Worldwide movement encourages churches to be part of this exciting purpose.

The leadership at Evangel is seeking the Lord’s direction and the support of the congregation regarding our role in developing a new church—a “daughter” church, if you please—on our site, to more effectively reach the community into which God has placed us. We are not left to do this on our own. We have in the MidAmerica district, one of the strongest church planting resources in America.

The Purpose

The driving force behind this proposal is to increase our evangelistic witness and the impact on our neighborhood and community. Bringing renewal and revitalization to our own congregation would be an enjoyable and God-honoring outcome. It is important that we take action now while the opportunity is ripe. If we take this step of faith together we could well see an exciting new chapter in our history. Let us join together to explore the possibilities.

The Process—a “60-day Adventure”

We seek a clear vision from God, starting with a series of targeted prayer sessions on Wednesday evenings, which began on April 10 (14 responded to the e-mail invitation sent last week). Then, under the direction of the Holy Spirit, we can seek unity and flesh out a strategy through as many venues as might prove helpful (small groups, under-shepherd feedback, prayer meetings, “town hall” session on May 5, etc.). A congregational meeting in June will be used to endorse and launch the resulting plan.

The Preparation

To further your own understanding of some of the possibilities, challenges and reasons for considering this ministry step, you are encouraged to read a document we have made available, entitled “Twelve Steps to Parenting a New Church.” It is available online at:

http://www.convergeworldwide.org/files/ww/resource/document/12_steps_to_parenting_a_new_church.pdf

The Spring 2013 issue of *NAE Insight* has a number of related articles that will help lend perspective, encouragement, and more ideas to build on. It is available online at:

http://www.nae.net/images/content/Insight_2013_Spring.pdf

There is also a document prepared by Helen Read that you may find helpful in thinking—and spurring others ideas—about what we as the parent church can do “in the meantime,” since birthing a new church takes time. We’re good at throwing out ideas, but too often fail to pick up the ball, expecting someone else to do it. Are you willing to “Step out in faith...for the sake of the Gospel?”

Join us on this exciting adventure!

Because of the in-house nature of Helen’s document, it is not available online. Copies are available Wednesday evenings at prayer meeting or Sundays on a table in the lobby.

The weekly Prayer Vigil Touch Points (available by e-mail or hard copy on the literature table) is also focusing on evangelism and outreach in the coming months to help inspire and guide your prayer.