

CHURCH PLANTING, Board of Spring Conference Call - February 27, 2013

Welcome & Prayer

Roll Call—Present: *Brian Hopkins, Jeff Maness, Brad Griffin, Keith Twigg, Adam Huschka, Steve Strutz, Ben Baker, Crull Chambless*

Why we're here:

- To vision-cast and invite and resource Church Planting & Multiplication

Updates:

- **Harvest-Butte:** *Core group with average attendance 20 adults, 12 kids and 2 salvations. Launch on Sept. 8, preview services 2 weeks before. Meeting at Butte High school (the Commons)—moving out of senior center. No pushback from Butte school district. Celebration: Howard accepting a house offer; Salvations already. Prayer: Growth of core team.*
- **Harvest-Cody:** *Partnership with Grace Baptist is changing—previously a legalistic church, got a new pastor last 4 years, trying to turn the corner with legalism and battled through uprisings. Lead Pastor believes only way to win is to start over. Membership unanimously voted to dissolve interest and become a part of Harvest. 30-50 adults to move, youth pastor, and acres of land to sell. Implications: Lead Pastor of Baptist church will start a process of transitioning to become Cody Campus pastor, and Keith + family will relocate back to Billings so Keith can run multi-site campuses.*

“Better together” book speaks to idea of mergers. Now, how do we communicate in a benign way to churches that are struggling that Harvest is open to possible merger?

How to manage staff hours away? Heavy duty video conferencing research (flights, buildings, seamless technology, \$20k to \$30k range) internet isn't as stable in Plentywood as it is in Billings or Cody, WY.

- **Element-Wheatland:** *Officially launched on Jan 20; 117 in attendance, six weeks old with 6 salvations total in Sunday worship experience. Steady decline in attendance every week; 47 attendees is lowest (two weeks ago). Core team is growing, and understanding of mission is growing. Small group engagement and other class (financial coaching) engagement. Biggest hurdle is location. Hard to find an adequate space in Wheatland. Currently meeting in Fire Training center—use 20' x 40' room to meet in. Won't be able to have full worship experience in the room. Prayer—Continue to search for room to meet in. Only meet on Sunday night, driving video up on a hard drive. Re-approaching school district to inquire about a meeting space. High School would be a great place to meet. Also working on getting Wheatland to a Sunday morning worship opportunity. Other issues include internet capabilities; live from Harvest is not an option; satellite may work as an option, but large upfront cost. Discussion of other satellite options.*
- **Journey-Missional Mobilization:** *Slow growth. Working with a group in Livingston right now that's been meeting and we like the conversation over there. Bryan Baker in Big Timber is tying in with us and teaming up with Tyler and valley churches. We have another group about to fire in Manhattan, 5 or 6 couples that are somewhat connected to Journey, starting a pilot group there.*

Both groups are a few weeks old (outside Bozeman network). Folks in Dillon make the drive every week to Bozeman, which could turn into something, but not anything at the moment. Keep you posted on that development.

- **Any other Church plants/multiplication on the horizon?** *Core group in Powell, WY, 30 adults and kids that are meeting in a small group and want a Harvest Campus there. There is a college in Powell, and haven't moved in because there is an E-Free church, Cornerstone, that have met on the college campus. With leadership issues, attendance has fallen from 150 to approx. 15 people over a few years. Want to give that church a chance to revitalize before Harvest moves in. Harvest and Element are discussing who will move in when the Lord allows. Waiting to see what God will do in that community.*

Process:

- How do we/should we think about planting Evangelical Churches in communities where there is already an Evangelical Church?
 - *Previous conversations around the edges of this before. Still a question mark.*
 - *Ask: Is the current evangelical church, "life giving?" What's the overlap? By nature of style, are we exempting ourselves from reaching other groups?*
 - *Free Market Capitalistic VS. Community and Relationship based. Can we serve that market? If a church doesn't have 100% penetration than we can change and reach other people? Our conference values partnership and approaches community and one another, and wants to be "better together." Collaboration is important. Self-preservation drives desire to not accept other churches in communities. Practical side of staff livelihood is important to consider on the business side of churches. What level of approaching it from a business standpoint? Consider harm of merging into a community where a church already exists.*
 - *Example: Sheridan, WY. A church was there, broke down and patched together. Now Element and Harvest are debating who should move in?*
 - **How do we define "life giving?"** *Preaches gospel? Gives people opportunity to accept Christ? How do we gauge and measure a church that successfully reaches that community? In what authority can we move in to place? Versus help someone with resources excel? How can you tell where there is a "pulse" and where there is not?*
 - **Smaller breakout of board to assemble "metrics" that would signal viable life giving kingdom expanding ministry.** *Discipline may have broad strokes of this, but more refined scenario would be helpful. Give conference greater authority over ability to allow or stop the functioning of a church? How much autonomy does local church have? Superintendents are driving this topic and its evolution.*
 - *What about bigger cities? Bozeman, Billings? How do we divide up territories and expand reach? Make sure we have a life giving church in geographical divisions within cities and compare to Satellites.*
 - *What about Churches that target different types and communities of people? Is there a baseline of population where similar ministries could co-exist and not be redundant?*
 - *Church planting VS multi-campus? Viability of two models...a multi-site model is a hub and spoke model. The further away you are it's harder to maintain long-term viability. A good example is a 20-minute drive creates community, additional capacity for home building. Harvest chooses not to go into certain areas out of respect relationally for other churches. Seems healthier to respect and lend resources to other churches. Harvest moves to regional churches because does not want to overrun local existing conference churches.*
 - *What determines a baseline conference church?*

- *When does Holy Spirit release us into a city? How long do we wait on a “struggling work” and then move in? Growth through subtraction—can be benefit in market competition.*
 - *Not a reality to be predatory in small towns. We don’t want to be like a “big box store” moving into town. Posture has always been, “we are not proactively poaching” but looking at it from a business plan franchising point.*
 - *How do we articulate and define a desire to aide and resource other churches?*
 - *Write down a “where, why, when and IF” to move in.*
 - *Harvest Qualities to move into an area: 1.) Does community want to be a harvest community? Must have an INVITE to community and QUANTIFIABLE NEED in community. 2.) Is community designed like Harvest can reach? I.e. College 3.) Logistical-how easy is it to support?*
- *How do we/should we proceed when multiple Evangelical Churches want to plant in the same community?*

Network:

- *Who is doing a great job of vision-casting/training small & medium-sized churches to plant churches/multiply their ministries into other neighboring communities?*
 - *Brand New Church, Shannon O’Dell in AK. “Transforming Church in rural America”. Ad-hoc training, round table stuff with church planters.*
 - *Catalytic leaders want to grow to other communities. Finding a venue to ship good pastors off to this place to dream would be neat to see what would happen.*
 - *“Sticks” Conference. Been around that some.*
 - *Try and get into more “networks.” Encourage staff into “coaching networks.” Mack Lake, Granger Church (Tim Stevens) in Indiana. Value comes from relationships afterwards. Granger puts everyone in a Google group where questions can be asked and discussed within network. Similar churches share resources, etc. Has proved valuable.*
- *What if we got our Church Planters together a couple of times a year for relationship, prayer, equipping, and fun?*
 - *Useful? Helpful?*
 - *Being able to connect relationally and feel supported will be nice.*
 - *Help brainstorm how to spread resources would be great, but help to resource a “get-away” for pastors would be needed.*
 - *Would be useful for relationship building part.*
 - *Existing models had been very helpful for men, keep them in the game, feed their soul. Would it help to have that?*

Brian will commit energy to putting ONE event together in 2013; make some invites, lean on some members to help create that.