

In any healthy church multiplication system, certain foundational behaviors influence every turn, as we find leaders, equip for effectiveness, plant and multiply. We offer **three foundations** here.

Prayer

The Acts of the Apostles could also have been named the *Acts of the Holy Spirit*. For us to imitate Acts as we take the Good News of Christ beyond the boundaries of United Methodist and Christian communities, we **move forth in conversation with God**, in faithfulness to God, and in love with God (and neighbors). All vibrant movements of new church development have included a **corresponding movement of prayer** and an outpouring of **God's presence and power**. We recognize church planting as an act of God, through human beings. Effective planters, launch teams, conference lead teams and cabinets undergird their church planting decisions and efforts in prayer.

Theological Focus on Evangelism

The mission of The United Methodist Church is “to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world” (p. v, *The Book of Discipline of The United Methodist Church* 2008). We plant new churches to **reach persons who do not have a relationship with Jesus Christ** or those who presently are outside the Church. New church development is a faithful response to God's redemptive act in Christ Jesus and **not primarily a strategy for denominational growth or survival**. Our biblical mandate is clear and our Wesleyan heritage grows from that calling. As you cast vision for new church development in any context, we urge you to focus on reaching new people with the Good News of Christ.

Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age. – Matthew 28:19-20 (NRSV)

Connection-Based Collaboration and Teamwork

Church planting is never solo work. It is “team” from start to finish. A **connectional church works together at every level** in missional partnership. Annual conferences with the best results in new church development operate in a culture of teamwork. Fruitful collaboration for church planting in an Annual Conference includes:

- Healthy churches working with cabinets (Healthy churches plant churches. Cabinets appoint planters.)
- Cabinets working with conference staff persons overseeing new church development
- Conference leaders working with leaders on the ground in new planting projects
- Partner churches working with planters and new launch teams