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## STEPS TO PLANTING A CHURCH IN ALABAMA

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**Our goal in Alabama is to partner with healthy churches to plant healthy churches.**

This is achieved by:

- planting churches who reinvest in the next generation of church plants
- partner with existing churches to help fund new church plants
- encourage healthy churches to mother PACs (Parent Affiliated Churches)

**Before you can plant a church:**

- You must be a credentialed minister in good standing with the Assemblies of God.
- You have to demonstrate a call from God.
- You have to have self-initiative and the ability to build a core of leaders.

*The following steps are the process for you to follow as you launch your new church. As each step is completed, write the date in the blank to the left of the step number. This will help prevent the church planting process from being delayed due to an incomplete step.*

**Every church (whether PAC, multi-site, or otherwise) is required to have CP&D approval before launching in the Alabama Ministry Network.**

### *Where do I begin to plant a church in Alabama*

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\_\_\_\_\_ **Step 1: Receive the Alabama New Church Plant Packet and complete the application**

It is available at <https://www.amnag.org/church-planting> Thoroughly read through all the information. You will find an application, process, timeline, resources, expectations, funding application, and PAC information. If you want to continue to partner with us in planting your church, download, complete, and return the application by email to David Strahan at [dtrahan@amnag.org](mailto:dtrahan@amnag.org). If you are wanting funding, please fill out the funding application and return it with your planter application (Step 5).

\_\_\_\_\_ **Step 2: Complete a Launch Assessment**

This is a tool to help you as you pray about church planting. Go to <https://neworchardsolutions.com> and complete the Launch assessment. In the space for the code, type "AMNAG." Download your assessment in PDF format and email it to David Strahan at [dstrahan@amnag.org](mailto:dstrahan@amnag.org).

\_\_\_\_\_ **Step 3: Sectional CPD Committee Interview**

You will be contacted by the Sectional Presbyter and/or CP&D Director to review the results of the Church Planter Pre-Assessment with the Sectional CP&D Committee. We want you and your spouse to meet with the Sectional Committee where you desire to plant, the Superintendent, the CP&D Director, and Regional CP&D representative. During this

interview, you will need to be prepared to share your vision and burden for church planting, demographics of the location desired, proposed budget, and personal ministry experience.

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#### **Step 4: Attend CMN Launch Regional Event**

Attend CMN Launch at <http://churchmultiplication.net/training/training>. You will need to send a copy of your evaluation, expected timeline, proposed budget, and ministry plan to David Strahan at [dstrahan@amnag.org](mailto:dstrahan@amnag.org) when they are completed.

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#### **Step 5: Complete the Alabama CPD Fund Application**

If you are wanting financial assistance, church planting funds may be available to qualified new churches and Parent Affiliated Churches (PACs). There are expectations and requirements that need to be agreed to.

- To receive funding from us, you can not receive funding from other organizations that require payback without proof approval. We want to make sure that you are not overextended in your financial obligations, especially as a new church.
- You will need to raise \$15,000 to invest in your church plant before any funding is released. It will be yours to use in addition to the funding that you receive from CP&D. This shows your ability to cast vision and compel people to give towards it. It also demonstrates the commitment that you are making towards this endeavor.
- You agree to give faithfully to AG missionaries and projects.
- In the seventh month, you will need to begin to reinvest in the next generation of church planters by giving 5% of your undesignated funds to CP&D.
- After you have reinvested what was given to you, we expect you to continue by giving a minimum of 2% of your undesignated funds to CP&D to help the next generation of church planters.

The funding application is included in your Potential Church Plant Packet. Email it to David Strahan at [dstrahan@amnag.org](mailto:dstrahan@amnag.org).

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#### **Step 6: Final Approval by CP&D Board**

After you send in your full church planter application, assessment, and ministry plan to the CP&D Director, he will contact you to set up a time for you and your spouse to interview with the CP&D Board. They meet once a quarter. You will either be approved to start a church or not. If you desire funding, please send your Fund Application in before the interview. You will be notified within a week if you have been approved for funding.

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#### **Step 7: You will be Assigned a Church Planting Coach**

We have partnered with CMN and other qualified coaching networks to provide you with the best possible opportunities to grow in your vision as you plant. They will walk with you on your journey over the next 12 months.

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## *How to become an Assemblies of God church*

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#### **Step 8: Complete a Ministry Network Affiliated Charter Form or an Application for General Council Recognition as a General Council Church**

If you are receiving funding from CP&D, you should download and complete a MINISTRY NETWORK AFFILIATED CHURCH FORM from our website and send it to our District Secretary and Treasurer. If you are not receiving funding and wish to be General Council

affiliated, you will need to complete a General Council Church Affiliation Form. After the church has completed step 12, the form will be filed with Springfield. You are not considered a new church until steps 9-12 are completed. They will approve you at that time. You can contact the Ministry Network Secretary/Treasurer's office for the appropriate application.

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### **Step 9: Apply for Non-Profit Articles of Incorporation**

Incorporating is a means of protecting church members from any liability beyond the liability insurance coverage of the church. An incorporated church becomes a legal entity and is separated from the members who formed and make up the membership of the church. When the church is incorporated, lawsuits filed against the church are filed against the church itself which has become a legal entity. Incorporation is another financial protection that is both desired and appreciated by many church members.

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### **Step 10: Receive and Adopt an approved Alabama Ministry Network Affiliated Church Constitution and By-Laws**

When the Ministry Network Affiliated Charter Form is completed, you will need to decide between the three suggested models of the DISTRICT AFFILIATED CHURCH CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS. They can be modified if approved.

You can find them at [http://adcag.org/files/ministries/CBL\\_merged\\_documents.pdf](http://adcag.org/files/ministries/CBL_merged_documents.pdf).

If you are not asking for funding, you can choose another model that would still need to be approved by the Ministry Network and General Council. (Parent Affiliated Churches will not receive this because they operate under the parenting church's constitution and by-laws).

Contact our Ministry Network Secretary/Treasurer if you have further questions concerning the CB&L.

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### **Step 11: Receive a 501(c)(3) letter from the General Council**

As part of the Assemblies of God, your church operates under the General Council's 501(c)(3) exemption. When your MINISTRY NETWORK AFFILIATED CHARTER FORM is completed and you are approved, you will be under their status. If you desire a letter for your records, please contact the Ministry Network Secretary/Treasurer's office or the General Council Secretary's office. (Parent Affiliated Churches can request this from their parent church or contact the General Council Secretary's office).

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### **Step 12: Apply for an EIN Number**

You will need to complete an application for your Employer Identification Number (EIN)– Form SS-4. You can complete the SS-4 form online at <http://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/fss4.pdf>. When you receive your EIN number, you should contact the Ministry Network immediately and give it to the Secretary/Treasurer's office. Once we receive your EIN, we will forward the MINISTRY NETWORK AFFILIATED CHARTER Form to General Council. Upon approval by the General Council, you will be considered a new church. (Parent Affiliated Churches can operate under the parenting church's EIN as long as their payroll is handled with the parenting church).

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## *What else do I need to know*

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### **Step 13: Open a Church Checking Account**

Take your 501(c)(3) and your EIN number to the bank to open your church checking account. The signature card for the checking account should include the signature of either the Network

Secretary/Treasurer or the treasurer of the mother church. To open an account, you'll typically be asked to provide:

- Proof of your EIN
- Photo ID, and social security numbers of the principal signers
- Master list of the church's board of directors and corporate officers

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### **Step 14: Set Up Your Church Financial System**

When you have opened the church checking account, you are then eligible to receive contributions. Make an appointment with David Strahan or our Network Secretary/Treasurer to set up your church financial system and review your salary structure. Many financial issues need to be addressed including housing allowance and Social Security payments. More information can be found at <http://www.churchlawandtax.com/lessons/new-minister>.

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### **Step 15: Apply for the STL Grant**

Speed the Light (STL) will help you with funds for a sound system or video projection system. If you are either licensed or ordained through the AG and your church is less than two years old you may apply for this grant. STL will only release funds after the church has launched. To receive an application or for questions on the STL grant, please contact our Network Youth Director.

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### **Step 16: Apply for the BGMC Grant**

Boys and Girls Missionary Crusade (BGMC) will help with a grant for ministry supplies relating to discipleship or evangelism. If you are either licensed or ordained through the AG and your church is less than two years old you may apply for this grant. To receive an application or for questions on the BGMC grant, contact our Network Christian Education Director.

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### **Step 17: Obtain Church Insurance**

Prior to holding any public meetings, the church planter needs to obtain church insurance. To set up your coverage, contact Brotherhood Mutual Insurance at 1-800-333-3735 or another reputable insurance company. In the event of a mother church plant you may do better getting a rider added from the parenting church policy.

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### **Step 18: Adopt a Children's and Youth Risk Management Policy**

Your church needs to adopt, implement and abide by a Children's and Youth Risk Management Policy. Contact our Network Secretary/Treasurer for any questions and a consultation.

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### **Step 19: Send Monthly Reports to our CPD Director**

Until you become a General Council Affiliated Church, you will need to email monthly reports to our CPD Director at [dstrahan@amnag.org](mailto:dstrahan@amnag.org). You can contact his office for the form. It is a financial report, attendance report, and ministry report that gives a snapshot of where you are and where you are going. A copy is in the New Church Planter Packet. Save it on your computer and use it as a template.

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### **Step 20: Enjoy the Journey!**

It is exciting that you have followed these steps to plant. Enjoy the ride! God has called you and will provide for you. Take time to pray, dream, believe, and enjoy what God is going to do!