



Impacting Lostness

THROUGH DISCIPLE-MAKING

Baptist State Convention of North Carolina

Our Vision

"By God's grace, we will become the strongest force in the history of this Convention for reaching people with the message of the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ."

Our Mission

"To assist the churches in their divinely appointed mission."

Our Core Values

The 7 Pillars for Ministry are biblical concepts that serve as core values to help the Convention stay focused on its mission, which is to assist North Carolina Baptist churches in achieving what God has called them to do.

The 7 Pillars are:

1. Practice Fervent Prayer
2. Promote Evangelism and Disciple-Making
3. Strengthen Existing Churches
4. Plant New Multiplication Churches
5. Reach North Carolina's International Community
6. Embrace Unreached and Unengaged People Groups
7. Engage Young Church Leaders

April 11, 2013

IMPACTING LOSTNESS THROUGH DISCIPLE-MAKING

The following strategy must be undergirded and overarched by Kingdom-focused prayer. Pushing back lostness will only be accomplished through spiritual awakening and revival; therefore, utter dependence on the power of God is indispensable. The Convention must build strong spiritual relationships that inspire and motivate through prayer and the Spirit of God and build on those relationships as the process continues.

Strategy Statement

In keeping with its stated mission, the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina will assist the churches in evangelizing all people groups in every ethnic and/or cultural context by developing and applying disciple-making ministry models with an Acts 1:8 focus.¹ North Carolina Baptists commit to accomplish this by strengthening and planting churches through creating a disciple-making culture, utilizing a relationship-driven consulting model incorporating generalists and specialists, starting in the most concentrated areas of lostness located in eight population centers.

¹ The mission of the Baptist State Convention is found in the Convention's Articles of Incorporation Article IV. Purposes A.

Explanation

In keeping with its stated the mission, the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina will assist the churches in evangelizing all people groups in every ethnic and/or cultural context by developing and applying disciple-making ministry models with an Acts 1:8 focus.

There are 5.8 million lost people in North Carolina and that number is growing; North Carolina Baptists are clearly losing ground.² This statistic illustrates our collective lack of faithfulness to obedience of the Great Commission. The Great Commission clarifies that we, all North Carolina Baptists, are to make disciples. Every North Carolina Baptist bears the responsibility and shares in the opportunity to reach the lost and make disciples.

Acts 1:8 focuses our disciple-making efforts on our local communities, North Carolina, North America and the ends of the earth. Moreover, the unreached peoples of the world have come to our own communities. In reaching these people, contextual strategies based on ethnic and/or cultural contexts have proven to be the most effective approaches to impacting lostness.

North Carolina Baptists commit to accomplish this by strengthening and planting churches through creating a disciple-making culture ...

The matters of church health, survival and sustainability weigh heavily on the minds of many church leaders. Many indicators and statistics are used to identify the strength of a church. However, the most concrete indicator of a strong church is the presence of a disciple-making culture. A disciple-making culture is developed as churches assist believers to order their everyday lives around the Great Commandment's call to love God which results in loving others. When the culture of a church encourages all people to be disciples, who in turn make disciples, the church has the greatest potential for effective fulfillment of the Great Commission and Acts 1:8. The Convention will assist the churches as they prayerfully determine how they will pursue a disciple-making culture.

All churches are called upon to support multiplying efforts in order that all people may be reached with the Gospel. Church planting involves the discovery and reaching of unreached people resulting in a disciple-making culture. The Convention will assist churches as they prayerfully determine how they will engage in church planting. Churches should consider partnering with existing church plants, partnering with church planting missionaries who have not yet begun, or possibly sending their own members out as church planting missionaries to establish new congregations.

The Convention will assist Legacy churches as they consider their investment in assisting church plants to target unreached people and in assessing options including church re-starting, church

² Statistic provided by Richard Stanley, Center for Missional Research for the North American Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention. The total population of North Carolina at the end of 2010 was 9.5 million people. The estimated percentage of lostness in North Carolina during that year was 60.8% resulting in the estimate of 5.8 million lost people. Stanley estimates that the percentage of lostness will not increase in the coming decade; however, the number of lost people will grow as the total population grows.

revitalization and church multiplication. Legacy churches are strategic partners in their prayer support, volunteering, worship space and providing financial assistance, all critical components to a church plant effectively impacting lostness.

... by means of a relationship-driven consulting model incorporating generalists and specialists ...

The Convention will design, resource and implement a relationship-driven consulting model in serving churches across North Carolina. This model incorporates the dual roles of generalist and specialist as opposed to a resource and event driven consulting model. A relationship-driven consulting model enables effective engagement with a church in pursuit of a disciple-making culture and ministry vitality rather than simply resourcing them with products, programs and processes. Collaboration among the Convention, associations, networks and other ministry partners in this model of consultation will serve to efficiently leverage the assets of all parties for the benefit of the churches.

... starting in the most concentrated areas of lostness located in eight population centers.

Research conducted by the Intercultural Institute for Contextual Ministry has identified the top 100 areas of lostness in North Carolina. Of these 100, the Convention has found that 97 are located within the top eight population centers of the state. Population centers include the cities and surrounding areas of Charlotte, the Research Triangle (Raleigh, Durham, Chapel Hill), the Triad (Greensboro, Winston-Salem, High Point), Fayetteville, Wilmington, Hickory, Asheville and Greenville. The population in North Carolina increased 18.46% from 2000 to 2010. During this same period, the population in these eight areas increased by 22.33% comprising nearly 75% of the population of the state.³

The Convention must collaborate with local leadership to develop a strategy for a population center and seek to foster and instill local ownership of the initiative. All leaders involved in each population center must be heard and valued. In addition, the roles of all partners must be clearly defined. Success will have been achieved when the existing area churches and new church plants partner in the execution of a well-defined, contextually appropriate strategy to make, nurture and grow reproducing followers of Christ pursuing a movement of God within the population centers to glorify Christ through pushing back lostness. Moreover, a shared commitment of all leadership to this definition of success and adoption of a common language for expressing that definition of success is paramount. Intentionality in communication should be a hallmark of these relationships.

³ U.S. Census, "North Carolina Quick Facts," <http://1.usa.gov/lig9J0>. Internet, Date Accessed: March 7, 2013

While all would agree to the urgency of the task, it is important to also recognize the reality of limited resources that must be efficiently and effectively managed. Accordingly, initiatives in each of the eight population centers cannot begin simultaneously but must be staged in order to appropriately administer the investment of available resources for maximum benefit to all.

Overview of a framework for the eight population centers

Pre-Discover

- Establish the Strategy Team for each population center. The team will include but not be limited to a Convention strategist, Directors of Missions/Associational Missionaries, pastors, staff, and laypersons from within the population center, and ethnic representation based upon demographic makeup of population center group(s).
- Gather the Strategy Team for prayer, orientation process and strategic planning training.
- Mobilize prayer support for the Strategy Team and its work.
- Assemble initial information for each specific population center and prepare supporting documentation for Strategy Team members.
- Identify and explore all local strategies at a church or associational level already planned or underway for impacting the targeted population center.
- Create a communications plan framework and a plan to connect with and network population center area pastors and churches.
- Construct a discovery question list to guide data collection and analysis.

Discover

- Answer discovery questions.
 - Gather, validate and assess data, utilizing tools such as, but not limited to:
 - Intercultural Institute for Contextual Ministry report⁴
 - Annual Church Profile data for existing churches within the focus area
 - "Operation Reach"⁵

⁴The IICM works to encourage congregations and various denominational groups, mission agencies and para-church groups to understand their cultural context and to develop culturally-appropriate messages, methods and missional strategies to reach them with the gospel.

⁵ A missional event utilized by North Carolina Baptist leaders to identify unreached people groups in cities, regions and associations. The one-day event is attended by area pastors and leaders who are equipped to identify the unreached, then journey to assigned areas to determine missional priorities

- Field discovery
 - Community perceptions
 - Identify gaps in understanding (using discovery questions) and determine sources of needed information.
- Identify and test assumptions, and adapt the approach as needed.
 - Assess current strengths and needs of existing churches and associations within the population center area.
 - Engage existing churches in reaching the lost within the population center area through:
 - Prayer for the lost and laborers to reach the lost
 - “Discovery” of the lost
 - Ministry revitalization of evangelism/disciple-making to reach the lost
 - Commitment to intentionally present the Gospel in word and deed
 - Commitment to partnership with others in reaching the lost
 - Institute regional concerts of prayer.
 - Initiate communication plans to all constituencies including:
 - “Discoveries” to date
 - Partners involved
 - Invitation to potential partners
 - Identification of resource needs
 - Request prayer for the population center

Develop

- Create a comprehensive strategic plan.
 - Build the plan to achieve an outcome based upon the definition of success.
 - Incorporate strengthening of existing churches based upon identified needs utilizing the Strategy Team process model.
 - Incorporate planting of new churches based upon identified needs and priorities.
 - Identify milestones and success indicators for each distinct strategy adopted to include feedback loops for real-time data gathering.
 - Document a schedule for strategy and progress assessment and reporting.
- Ascertain required resources for each strategy and identify potential sources.
- Sequence strategies and assign responsibility for execution.
- Continue prayer initiatives and efforts toward networking population center pastors and churches.
- Continue with communication plans to all constituencies:
 - Strategies to be employed
 - Additional “Discovery” updates
 - Updates on partners
 - Continued invitation to potential partners
 - Updated list of needed resources
 - Request prayer for the harvest in the population center

Deliver

- Execute the strategic plan.
- Monitor progress relative to established milestones and assess results relative to success indicators.
- Adjust strategies as necessary based upon ongoing assessment of results, capturing learnings for future use.
- Continue prayer initiative and facilitation of networking for population center pastors and churches.
- Complete communication plans to all constituencies:
 - Results realized to date
 - Additional Discovery updates
 - Updates on partners
 - Continued invitation to potential partners to participate
 - Updated list of needed resources
 - Request for prayer and the sharing of “celebrations”

We acknowledge that many of the efforts noted in this model already take place, but the effectiveness of these efforts can be increased through a unified approach. We believe that cooperatively approaching these efforts, as outlined above, will maximize the results.

Conclusion

The mission of the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina is to “assist the churches in their divinely appointed mission.” Utilizing this strategy, it is the prayerful expectation that, “By God’s grace, we will become the strongest force in the history of this Convention for reaching people with message of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ.”

Glossary

This glossary pertains only to this report and does not necessarily reflect common understanding of the terms throughout the Convention

Consultant: A Convention staff person assigned the primary responsibility of working directly with churches to provide assistance as needed and appropriate in pursuit of the church's mission.

Consultation: An assignment in which a Convention consultant works directly with a church for a defined period of time to provide assistance as needed and appropriate in the pursuit of the church's mission.

Context: The environment, conditions or circumstances that define or surround a church and its ministry such as: average age or educational level of church members, local economy, financial condition of the church, demographics of the community, age and condition of the facilities, etc.

Contextual: Relating to or dependent upon a particular context as defined above.

Contextualize: To adapt a process, model or framework in order to fit or accommodate a particular context as defined above.

Decline: A church that has passed the plateaued life cycle stage and exhibits a clearly discernible regression in baptisms or other additions, attendance, giving and ministry involvement, and general appearance of ministry health has entered a stage of decline.

Disciple-making culture: The values and ministry focus of a church result in a lifestyle of disciple-making behaviors on the part of church members.

Generalist: A consultant serving as a diagnostician who works with church leadership to effectively engage and apply contextually appropriate resources. A generalist serves in much the same way as a family practitioner in the medical profession whereby the generalist is responsible for the ongoing relationship and engages specialists as appropriate and necessary for the benefit of the church. However, this does not mean that a generalist does not have an area or areas of specific expertise, but only refers to the role with regard to a particular church.

Learning environment: "...the continuous testing of experience, and the transformation of that experience into knowledge – accessible to the whole organization, and relevant to its core purpose." Peter M. Senge, Art Kleiner, Charlotte Roberts, Rick Ross and Bryan Smith, *The Fifth Discipline Field Book*, (New York, NY: Doubleday, 1994), 49.

Legacy church: A long established church still exhibiting signs of health and vitality but nearing the plateaued life cycle stage as its sense of calling and purpose begins to diminish, as does its congregants' age, and it also fails to reach and assimilate younger members.

Model: A framework, outline or process to be followed or utilized in conducting a consultation.

Multiplication church: A multiplication church is a reproducing church that engages in church planting through one or more ways. The church may play the role of "mentor" in the church planting process, intentionally cultivating disciples who are selected, developed and supported in order to

be sent as church planting missionaries to start new faith communities. This may include “praying” for the unreached people group and church planting missionaries who are sent, “participating” by involving members personally assisting the church planter, and/or “providing” for the financial needs of the church planter and new church plant. Church multiplication may also include visionary churches that value multiplication, establishing a Church Planting Center equipping those from inside their congregation and from other congregations, and providing intern, student missionary and apprentice opportunities, sending them out to reach unreached people groups resulting in new faith communities.

Network: A collection of churches or individuals with similar interests or concerns and like values who intentionally connect and maintain formal, as well as informal, communication for mutual assistance or support in pursuit of a common goal or objective.

Organizational culture: The shared set of values and assumptions that guide how the members of an organization think, feel, behave, and work. George Babbes and Michael Zigarelli, *The Minister’s MBA – Essential Ministry Tools for Maximum Ministry Success*. (Nashville: B&H Publishing Group, 2006), 30.

People group: The largest group through which the gospel can flow without encountering a significant barrier of understanding or acceptance. “People Groups” <http://peoplegroups.org/> Internet. Date Accessed: March 7, 2013. This understanding guides the work of the International Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention, please read, Orville Jenkins, “What is a People Group - Gospel Strategy” <http://public.imb.org/globalresearch/Pages/PeopleGroup.aspx> Internet. Date Accessed: March 8, 2013.

Population center: An area within which a significant concentration of people live and work.

Relationship-driven consultation: A model of consulting whereby primary emphasis is placed upon building rapport and understanding, enabling the consultant to more accurately discern and meet the needs and requirements of the church served.

Relationship-driven: An approach whereby primary emphasis is placed upon building rapport and understanding.

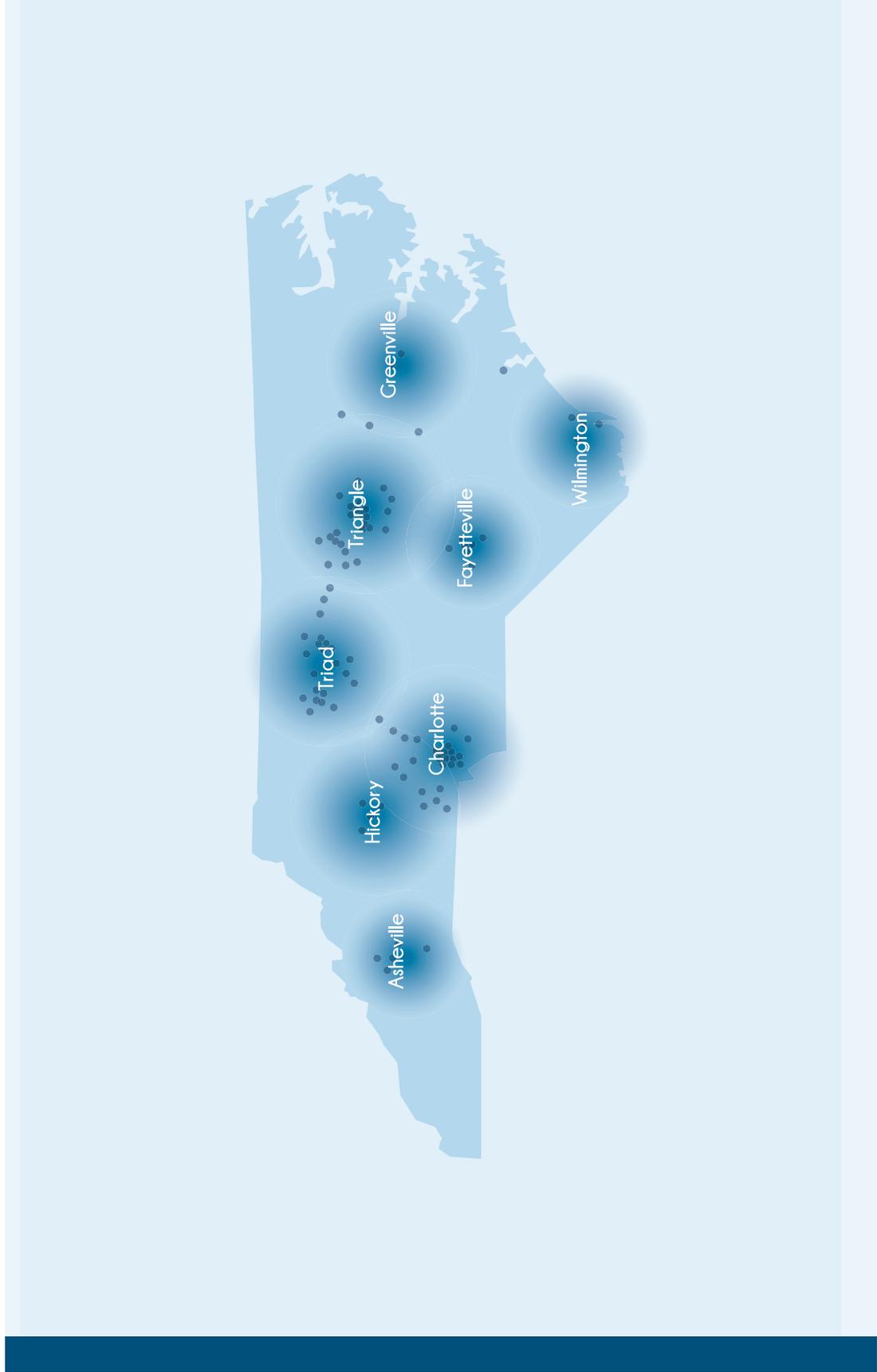
Resource driven: A model of consulting whereby primary emphasis is placed upon the application of products, programs or services offered, rather than looking for creative solutions to the issues at hand, based upon discernment through relationship.

Revitalization: The process whereby a church that was once plateaued, or declining, has rediscovered its calling and is living out that calling in a culture of disciple-making.

Specialist: A consultant serving as a subject category expert in a specific ministry area.

POPULATION CENTERS

Concentrated Areas of Lostness in North Carolina





Baptist State Convention of North Carolina • Milton A. Hollifield, Jr., *Executive Director-Treasurer*
205 Convention Drive • Cary, NC 27511 • (919) 467-5100 • (800) 395-5102 • www.ncbaptist.org

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