

BOARD OF CHURCH EXTENSION REPORT 2005

"And the Good News about the Kingdom will be preached throughout the whole world so that all nations will hear it and then the end will come." Mathew 24:14

Our mission is to facilitate the planting and strengthening of multiplying congregations across Saskatchewan. Historically we have thought of church planting primarily as the function of the Canadian Conference Board of Evangelism and the provincial Board of Church Extension. Many good things have happened in these endeavors, but we were hampered by big budgets and the difficulty to adequately supervise and coach the new works. In last year's report, Greg wrote "Our strong preference is for churches planting churches—or even a couple of churches working together." In this we see the Canadian and Provincial Boards as coming alongside with information, resources, coaching, financial, etc., but we want to see churches planting churches.

Throughout this year, the term 'multiplying church' was used quite a lot, and you can only have a multiplying church if you have multiplying disciples. An excellent resource is Neil Cole's Book, "Cultivating a Heart for God", where he talks about the organic church and life transformation groups. As a Board of Church Extension we have purchased a copy of this book for every M.B. church in Saskatchewan. If many people in our churches were multiplying disciples, we would very naturally have multiplying churches.

Models of Church Planting

a) Mother-daughter church plants (About 10% of our churches could do this)

An existing church intentionally develops ministry teams and gathers a group of people from the mother church to hive off and start a new church. Larger population areas should actively consider the development, birthing, and parenting of a daughter church. West Portal Church is modeling this.

b) Networking Church Plants (all churches could participate in this)

Several churches work together for the development of a new church in a community where they each share a burden. The churches affirm a point person or co-coordinator who will relate and would function as a coach for the new work. Rod Dick is working with the Watrous, Lanigan, and Foam Lake churches to model this.

c) Conference initiated church planting projects

This type of church planting may be necessary to establish a church in an area where no church exists. Funding and coaching are primarily the responsibility of the Conference although having partner churches would be pursued.

d) House Fellowship

New communities can be ministered to by bi-vocational church planters who establish a fellowship in their home. As the fellowship grows, a fellowship of house churches could be established with networking together to share ministry projects. The conference would help leadership development with some coaching and resourcing.

In Saskatchewan, our cities tend to be growing and our rural areas are in decline. Our desire is not to put a guilt trip on churches that are working very hard, but are in decline because of shrinking populations. Our intent is to help create a climate for multiplication.

Dialogue on the Key Cities Initiative

These discussions began last year (2004) but have struggled in knowing how to focus them. We don't have the big cities that other provinces have, plus we have this growing conviction that churches should plant churches with conferences coming alongside to empower them. Board of Church Extension is working together with the Ministry Leadership Development Team (M.L.D.T.) to flesh out a church multiplication proposal. An initial proposal will be presented to this convention by M.L.D.T. and time will be put into developing it during the course of this next year. We would anticipate its implementation in early 2007.

Summary of work being done

1) Project Reach Your World

This involves funding for new Saskatchewan based outreach events and programs. We received and approved 3 applications from the following churches: Living Hope (Saskatoon), Arelee, and Parliament (Regina).

2) Prairie Winds Church in Moose Jaw

The church has moved a long way towards being fully self-supporting and was going to be off subsidy at the end of this year. The church had some families move early in the year, and new families started coming in fall. Overall, they have strengthened, and now this fall, with Joe's wife sick with a rapid rise cancer, the financial needs changed a little. P.W.C. came to B.O.C.E. and asked for an 8 month extension on their subsidy at \$800.00/month. The B.O.C.E. recommended the approval of this request. Please keep Prairie Winds Church and the Almeida's in your prayers.

3) Faith River, Saskatoon

This church has had a healthy start and has purchased an existing church building (Rock of Ages Lutheran) to worship in. They began using their facility on Sunday evenings in September, and received possession of the building on January 1, 2006. B.O.C.E. has committed funds to support Faith River through 2006. We are excited to see the development of Faith River, and the ongoing coaching it receives from West Portal.

4) Church Networking for Working in Wynyard

Wynyard, like many communities around Saskatchewan, has minimal Gospel presence and outreach. Rod Dick, with B.O.C.E.'s blessing talked to the Watrous, Lanigan and Foam Lake M.B. churches about working together to do outreach ministry in Wynyard. A number of trips were made to Wynyard researching the town and the churches there. There is a small struggling E.M.M.C. church in Wynyard with most of its people coming from the rural areas. As we explored ministry options it became obvious that starting a new church would result in some people coming from that struggling church, and the decision was made to explore ways of helping the Wynyard Gospel Church to strengthen and to reach out into the community. The Watrous, Lanigan, and Foam Lake churches are developing a plan for this.

In summary, the Board of Church Extension is endeavoring to help disciples of Jesus become multiplying disciples and churches to become multiplying churches. In that we ask the Conference to affirm:

- 1) Project Reach YOUR World, empowering churches to dream of and fulfill outreach endeavors.
- 2) Continued support of and prayer for Prairie Winds Church in Moose Jaw.
- 3) Support for Faith River as they are established and grow toward independence.
- 4) Support, encouragement, and prayer for the Watrous, Lanigan, and Foam Lake congregations as they, led by Rod Dick seek to strengthen the Gospel witness in Wynyard by helping strengthen the Gospel Church.
- 5) Working with the Ministry Leadership Development Team on a task force initiated by Conference Executive to develop a plan suitable for Saskatchewan to partner with the Canadian Conference in a Key Communities/Multiplying Churches Initiative.

Thank you to all the B.O.C.E. members who have served this year: Scott Loewen, Bob Cappelle (secretary), Calvin Penner (vice chair), Marion Oatway (P.R.Y.W.), and Gary Sawatzky (chair); Director of Church Ministries Ralph Gliege, and Rod Dick (not an official member but the co-coordinator for working in Wynyard).

Submitted by Gary Sawatzky on behalf of B.O.C.E.