

Conference-Wide Capital Campaign for Congregational Development Feasibility Study

Submitted by: Common Table, Conference Council on Finance and Administration, Equipping Missional Congregations Group (Equipping Link), Extended Cabinet
Contact Person: Greg Kroger, Director of Ministries (605) 996-6552, greg.kroger@dakotasumc.org

Specific Action For Annual Conference Approval: The Dakotas Annual Conference will initiate a conference-wide capital campaign feasibility study to undergird our vision pathway of “Equipping Missional Congregations” through ministries of innovation, renewal and growth. The conference will contract with Tyler Associates of Irving, Texas to conduct the feasibility study. Professional consulting services will be provided for a fee of \$48,000. The Dakotas Annual Conference will be responsible for the cost of printing and distribution of written materials. Tyler Associates will share equally with the Conference costs related to travel and lodging for the Tyler Associates team to implement the feasibility study. The feasibility study will be submitted to the Common Table, the Equipping Missional Congregations Link, the Council on Finance and Administration, and the Extended Cabinet for review and approval. With approval from each of these groups, the capital campaign may commence.

Supporting Information and Background

Relationship to the Scriptural Imperatives and rationale: Congregational development reaches new people by cultivating spiritual vitality and cultivates spiritual vitality by reaching new people. The responses of new and existing faith communities to the Great Commandment and the Great Commission are never for their sole edification, but for making new disciples and focusing outward to heal a broken world. Starting new churches, resourcing existing churches and recruiting, developing and deploying passionate, purposeful leaders for faith communities of diverse models, constituencies and mission fields is a primary role of the Dakotas Annual Conference. The apportioned budget cannot adequately provide for congregational development. While supplemental revenue from invested funds designated for congregational development is waning, our Dakotas Annual Conference strategic plan and goals require investment of even greater resources for growth. Remaining balances of asset accounts available for congregational development are depleted or are nearing minimum levels. Since the year 2000, our investments in planting new churches and in targeted revitalization of existing congregations have resulted in an increase of in average weekly worship attendance of approximately 2,045 people (about 10% of our total attendance). Currently, areas of the Dakotas are experiencing rates of population increase that are among the highest in the nation. By 2023 North Dakota’s population is projected to increase by 111,447 and South Dakota’s by 88,280.

Feasibility Study Implementation:

The objectives of the feasibility study are:

1. Work with congregational development and conference leaders to create a compelling, inspirational case statement to communicate the conference’s vision and plans.

2. Raise awareness among constituents of missional needs inspiring this process and build momentum for a potential conference-wide initiative.
3. Provide a confidential forum for constituent input regarding the vision cast for congregational development and potential support through conversations and online response.
4. Discern interest, concern and special factors in the life of the Dakotas Annual Conference that would influence a conference capital campaign (assets and obstacles).
5. Determine readiness of laity and clergy to support the campaign initiative to achieve stated objectives.
6. Identify leaders among laity and clergy who can assist in telling the story, including potential campaign leadership.
7. Evaluate financial potential to determine challenging and attainable financial goals for the campaign.
8. Identify prospective major donors.
9. Establish specific dates and timelines for a conference-wide campaign.
10. Identify infrastructure of staff support needed for a successful campaign.
11. Establish a budget for a potential capital campaign.

Anticipated Timeline

June, 2014

- The Dakotas Annual Conference contracts with Tyler Associates, Inc. to conduct the feasibility study.

June 15-July 15, 2014

- A Capital Campaign Task Force will be established by the Bishop, in consultation with the Common Table, Equipping Missional Congregations Link, and the Extended Cabinet

June, July, August, September, 2014

- Prepare feasibility study set up guidebook to use in orientation and plan development
- Tyler Associates designs calendar for feasibility study tasks and implementation to discuss with staff
- Three-day visit with Tyler Associates to initiate planning with conference staff and congregational development team – staff orientation and to develop communications plan for the feasibility study
- Establish lines of communication, schedule for counsel, calendar and tasks necessary for coordinating the development of a case statement
- Form congregational development plan concepts to be vetted by conference leaders and ultimately included in the feasibility study
- Schedule conference calls with logistics team to collaborate on calendar and task implementation
- DAVID system calls to key conference leaders to gather feedback and consensus for case statement development
- Tyler Associates meets with Bishop Ough and Extended Cabinet to vet case statement, refine and finalize
- Tyler Associates begins developing questionnaires and correspondence needed to support the feasibility study

- Identify target list of constituents to participate in personal conversations
- Enlist host churches in geographical areas for Tyler Associates visits
- Implement protocol to enlist constituent participation in the feasibility study

October, 2014

- Meet with Extended Cabinet to vet case statement to refine and finalize
- Distribution of case statement project information to constituents in late October or early November
- Implement protocol to enlist participation in personal conversations
- Open period for invitees to sign up for visit appointment slot
- Telephone calls are made to those who do not respond to online sign up
- Confirmation cards mailed or emailed
- Weekly conference calls with logistics team to collaborate on calendar and task implementation

November, 2014 – Feedback

- Promotion continues to encourage constituent feedback through the online questionnaire
- Tyler Associates onsite for 7-10 days or more to conduct personal conversations with constituent groups and conference leaders
- An additional week set aside for phone conversations to wrap up feedback and information gathering

December, 2014 – Compile and Evaluate Data

- Conference call with Bishop Ough and congregational leaders for early glimpse of feasibility study findings
- Tyler Associates compiles input and prepares report

January, 2015 – Report

- Tyler Associates onsite to meet with Extended Cabinet and various groups to present and interpret feedback and report observations and recommendations
- Other opportunities for conference-wide presentation of feasibility study findings will be determined in collaboration with conference leaders

If the feasibility study indicates a capital campaign could be successfully undertaken, the following is a possible sequence of steps to implement the campaign:

January, 2015

- Common Table, the Equipping Missional Congregations Link, the Council on Finance and Administration, and the Extended Cabinet vote on moving forward with a capital campaign. With majority approval from each of these groups, the capital campaign may commence.
- These groups, on behalf of the Dakotas Annual Conference, select and contract with a firm to conduct the capital campaign. This would likely be Tyler Associates, but this is not an obligation created by virtue of the agreement to conduct the feasibility study

January-February, 2015

- Internal organizational tasks

February-June, 2015

- Leadership enlistment and preparation

Annual Conference 2015

- Formal launch of campaign
- Organizational plan activated

June, 2015–April, 2016

- Conference-wide sharing of story and commitments sought

Annual Conference 2016

- Celebration of commitments
- Follow up for closure continues and a follow up plan is established to help assure the highest level of collection of commitments

Outcome: Resources will be used to implement targeted strategies for addressing the following vision pathway goals:

- *Strategically identify the congregations best positioned to engage their communities, multiply ministries, and make new disciples:* By October 2014 a demographic and cultural analysis of the Dakotas is created. Key communities/churches for future growth and development are identified.
- *Invest and partner with those congregations most ready for the next steps to increase congregational vitality, especially those ready to form second campuses or new faith communities:* New faith community planters are deployed to reach new people for Jesus Christ. Abundant resources are available to support new faith community development. Policies to guide the stewardship and allocation of these resources are clear, sound and effective in supporting new faith community development.
- *Develop and implement for the Dakotas Annual Conference a Missional Church Initiative (MCI) for targeted congregations:* The Dakotas Annual Conference will develop the capacity to provide the majority of support and delivery for all the training, consultation, and prescription coaching elements of MCI through conference financial resources, and conference clergy and laity.

Resources required:

- Allocation of existing staff hours for personnel of the Extended Cabinet.
- Allocation of additional volunteer hours for people affiliated with the Capital Campaign Task Force and potential, future capital campaign leadership teams.
- \$25,000 added to the 2015 Equipping Missional Congregations apportioned budget.
- The remaining funds needed for conducting the feasibility study, up to \$41,000, drawn from assets designated for congregational development.
- Negotiated fees for capital campaign (if implemented) for fundraising consultant services.

Necessary portion of capital campaign receipts (if implemented) for administrative, staffing, marketing, promotional and program expenses