

CHURCH PLANT REPORT

RENEWAL CHURCH OTTAWA



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New Church Plant Committee

Chair: Pastor Joshua Wang

Members: Alfred Tsang, Tim Lau, Vincent Wong and Manson Yan

Our Mission

The proposed mission is “A church for growing disciples of Christ”.

It is our desire to not be seen as a “church building” that houses people, but to be seen as a gathering of disciples that live as the church.

Target

Our initial target group comprises of churched & unchurched people of pan-Asian descent, providing a spiritual home for English-speaking, Asians for generations to come. As well as reaching individuals in our spheres of influence (friends, family, colleagues). While this is a natural initial phase, all are welcome and we intend to reach the emerging global village with its growing diversity. We will continue to discern the ideal location.

Community

We are created to exist in community. God has created us in His image so we desire to reflect the triune nature of God who exists in perfect unity as Father, Spirit, and Son. We desire to be a family of worshippers that reflect the image of God. This community will be living proof of a loving God to each other (Gal 6: 10) and the people around us (Mt. 22:37-39). We desire to cultivate an environment where you can belong and be greeted by our loving community.

Missional

Just as the Father sent the Son into the world, the Son has sent the church into the world. It is our desire to teach and engage others to be learners of Christ (Mt 28:18-20). We hope to adopt the position of Christ and learn, listen, and love the people in our context and the ends of the earth. We endeavor to truly embody the gospel in word and in deed.

Word

In reading the charge against the Pharisees in Matthew 23:15, we recognize that we cannot properly serve and proclaim a God that we do not know. We strive to create a culture where the Word of God is carefully studied in order to help us grow in our love for Christ and people. We must be shaped by God in the context of Scripture and community in order to be faithful disciples in today's culture.

“ We are passionate about building a **joyful community of faith** that inspires individuals to enter a **deepening relationship** with God, **life-changing relationships** with other believers, and **engaging relationships** with those yet to believe.

Our Values

We believe that there is **more joy in Jesus** than anything else.

We want to be people who **are rooted in Scripture**.

We believe we are **transformed** (through the renewing of mind through Scripture) **within the context of community**.

We believe that we are **culturally embedded**. God did not create us to isolate ourselves, but rather to live in the world (not of it), so they might see the hope we have in Christ!

Leadership Training and Development

Our desire is to focus on building up and nurturing future elders and leaders. We would like to develop a sustainable process by which the initial leadership is trained and future leadership is groomed.

Practical next steps may include:

- Initial leadership receiving focused mentoring from experienced church leaders and pastors.
- Partnering with the greater church body to provide training, courses and workshops on church leadership.

Active and Engaged Membership

Placing a higher emphasis on the meaning of membership, its expectations (committed, serving lay members) and the deep/transformational discipleship involved.

Practical next steps may include:

- Utilizing membership classes to teach core principles and to build an understanding of Biblical essentials. We hope to automate this process so that membership classes are always available to members on a scheduled basis.

Life-long discipleship

Flows from the initial leadership training to ongoing emphasis on discipleship, service and membership.

Intentional Participation in Meaningful Worship

Re-imagining what worship is and what a 'worship service' can look like through incorporating elements of liturgy, more voices and participation of members (prayer, scripture reading, etc).

While we recognize the value in the various models of the church (Teaching, Devotion, Community, Seeker, Social Justice etc.²), we are unable to perform to the strengths of every model, we seek to focus on the strengths of the Teaching Church and the Seeker Church.

We are a church rooted in God's Word which seeks to provide sound doctrine and cultivate a deep knowledge of the Scriptures. We are willing to innovate and respond to an ever changing culture with excellence yet without compromise on the Word that stands forever.

We know that the good news of the gospel and the power of the Holy Spirit will transform our lives in a manner which will dynamically shape the people & community around us.

“ So then, as we have opportunity, let us do good to everyone, and especially to those who are of the household of faith.

Galatians 6:10 (ESV)

¹We also hope to become a meaningful presence in the area the Lord calls us to. We recognize that this takes time so as we multiply, we pray that we would sink into the fabric of the community, building relationships through loving service to others. Planting and establishing trust will take time. (Jer 29:4-7)

²From Richard Lovelace, Dynamics of the Spiritual Life & Darrin Patrick, the Church Planter

Our Structure

We affirm the New Testament Church and the instructions passed down by our Christian heritage with regards to church governance, shepherding, service and ministry. The structure of this new church will include and resemble the apostolic offices of Elders and deacons as defined in the New Testament churches.

New Testament Church: Church Leaders' Role/Function and Ministry

Church Governance (1 Timothy 3)¹

Using Biblical principles to rule and run the church

Serve Tables (Acts 6)²

Practical Needs or Daily Needs

Shepherding (Acts 6 and 1 Peter 5)¹

- Teaching
- Prayer
- Counseling
- Caring

Outreach and Ministry (Acts 2)

- Preaching
- Witnessing
- Baptism
- Church Life (teaching, fellowship, communion, sharing, and prayer)

Terms for Leaders used in scriptures: 1 - Elders 2 - Deacons

The exact structure will be determined at a later time when the initial leadership is formed and may require a single board structure that will evolve with anticipated growth.

Leadership For This New Church

The leadership will comprise of those who:

- Meet the Biblical qualifications as defined in the New Testament churches;
- Reflect the definition of our initial target group make-up and demographics of the expected congregation; and
- Bear the characteristics identified in the 'leadership' category noted below.

The Potential Type and Number of Brothers and Sisters From Our Existing Congregations Attending This New Church

Our approach is to cast this vision and trust that brothers and sisters who are aligned and passionate about working towards this goal will be willing to invest themselves in building this new church together.

The initial target group characteristics include: English-speaking, pan-Asian in heritage. We acknowledge that this new church will present a new environment, which may attract some existing members. However, we believe our focus should be casting the vision and values to spur a spiritual desire that will naturally attract either CCCO members or non-members alike.

We cannot accurately identify the specific individuals from our existing congregations due to a variety of reasons and factors. For example, not everyone will be passionate regarding the same focus points; there are also changes over time (i.e. marriage, changes of employment, moving etc.) and economic situations.

The Potential Type and Number of Brothers and Sisters From Our Existing Congregations Committed to Build This New Church

We are looking for Brothers and Sisters who will serve in these ministry areas:

LEADERSHIP

- Faith Team (spiritual gift of faith): existing members who can empower other members to pray
- Dreamers, builders, risk-takers, discerners (part of core team)
- Teacher/shepherd (caring role)

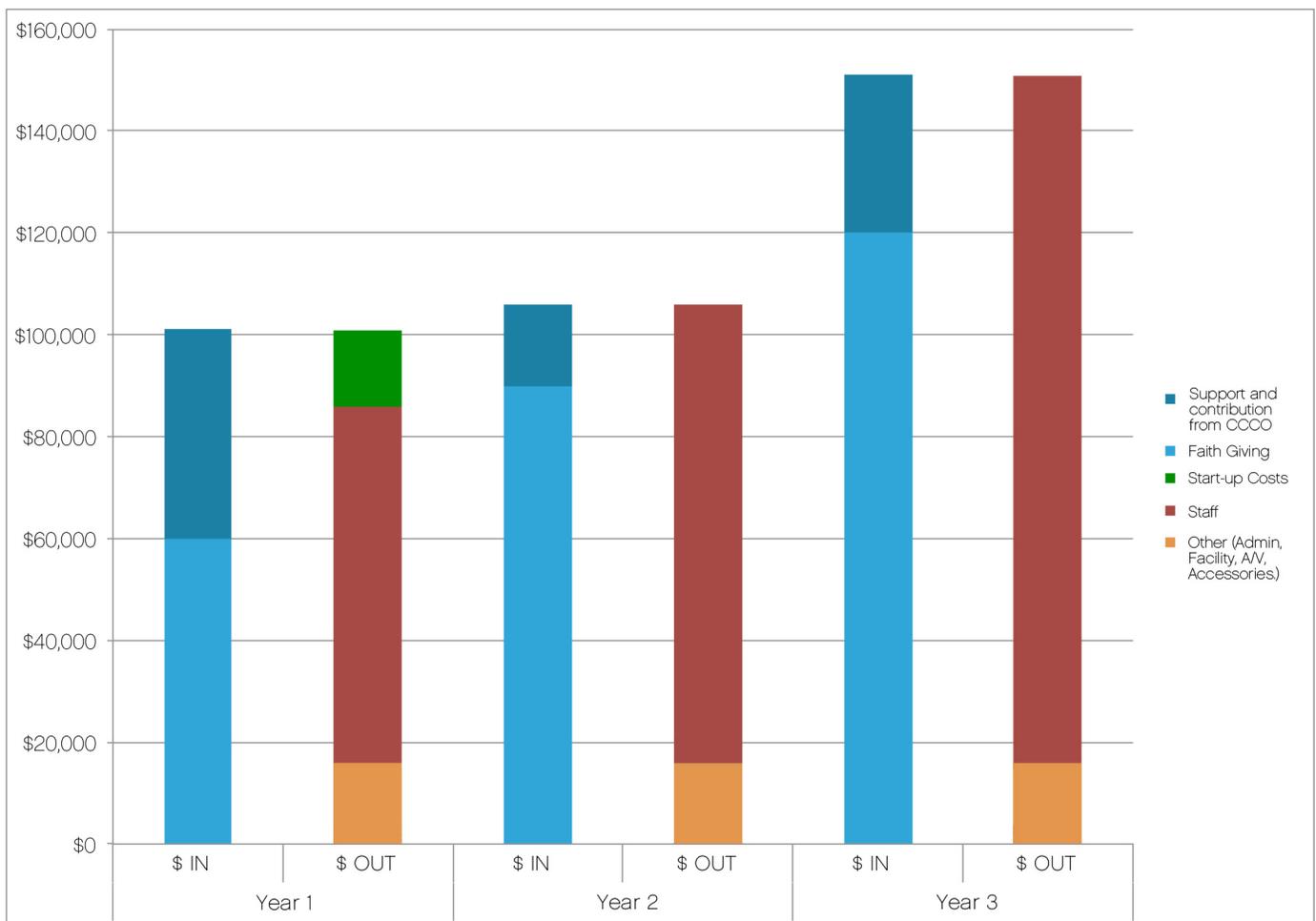
SERVANT TEAM (supports leadership)

- Ministry leaders
- Those with gifts of administration and serving
- Prayer Warriors (internally and externally)
- Financial Partners

Finance

Should we proceed with this church plant, the reasonable anticipated amount for an annual budget would be in the area of \$150,000.

Our projected initial costs for the first year includes a full-time pastor, a part-time administrator, costs for facilities/rent/utilities, initial legal and incorporation fees, equipment, and ongoing accounting. Projected additional costs for subsequent years include evolving from a part-time to a full-time administrator in year 2 or 3 and eventually other ministry staff.



Meeting Place for This New Church

We plan to rent a facility on Sundays to facilitate worship service and classes. The exact geographical location needs more time to be considered.

Some of our considerations include:

- Convenient location for bus routes and highway
- City-focused, targeting initial group characteristics (English speaking, local born, etc.)
- Westboro as a potential location due to ease of access and lack of gospel presence

Potential Time Frame and Steps for Forming This New Church

The exact time frame and order is difficult to articulate as many of these steps can be done in parallel:

- Fundraising
- Gathering and building up the initial leadership (Pastors and mentors within the greater church body have indicated an interest and willingness to assist in this initiative)
- Initiating weekly planning / prayer
- Conducting teaching and spiritual formation opportunities (topics may include: what is an elder, leadership roles)
- Launching regular membership classes (sustainable, repeatable, automated process)
- Preview services / promotion to work towards a launch service
- Assessing legal and administrative matters

What We Believe

This Church Plant Affirms:

The Three Ecumenical Creeds

The Apostle's Creed, the Nicene Creed and the Athanasian Creed (references to "catholic" mean "universal")

The modern language confessional statement written by the council of the Gospel Coalition, D.A. Carson and Rev. Tim Keller

<http://thegospelcoalition.org/about/foundation-documents/confessional/>

The statement of faith of our mother church, the Chinese Christian Church of Ottawa

Final Thoughts

We acknowledge that this vision is possible within CCCO. However, we feel that an opportunity has arisen in which we can prepare and position ourselves to minister to the urgent needs of the emerging global village by, Lord willing, establishing a church from the foundation upwards. CCCO has been and continues to be a unique bridge between the immigrant and first generations of local-born Canadians. There is no doubt that a crucial need remains, allowing for CCCO to continue her focus and ministry to the ethnic Chinese and 'Canadian born Chinese' communities. Nonetheless, we also recognize that the current structure and multi-language nature of CCCO can present challenges in reaching out to successive generations and their peers in what has become an exceedingly post-modern culture and worldview.

As the church of Jesus Christ, we need to be continually reminded that we exist to show God's love to others and reach out to new people groups and cultures. We don't necessarily know fully how to get there, but we are taking first steps and exercising our faith to grow while seeking wise counsel and relying on the support of the church body.

A practical approach in moving forward with this church plant initiative is to take time with the initial leadership (up to a whole year if need be) to grow under spiritual guidance. There must exist a commitment by the initial leadership to desire to continually learn and be transformed as opposed to just being taught.

Some Observations to Consider

The following points are some observations that came out of the preparations for this report on vision and specifics for a new English-speaking church plant:

- CCCO has evolved into serving divergent cultural (new immigrant, '1.5 generation', local-born first/second generation) and language (Cantonese, Mandarin, and English) contexts
- CCCO has an established church governance culture: non-denominational, congregational/Presbyterian vs. Episcopal (hierarchical/leader-authority)
- Some have observed that CCCO has been focused on sustainability/preservation mentality; a reactive body vs. a pre-emptive mindset.
- Because of the current structure and multi-language nature of CCCO, it can be difficult to make decisions that accommodate all interests.
- As a church ages, internal pressures build to focus on the internal flock whereas new churches focus on the outside (ref: Tim Keller, "Why we plant churches")
- Immigrant churches draw strength in culture and act as a bridge for immigrants to the second/next generation; however, the immigrant church does not appear to be reaching out to the global context
- This church planting process allows for an opportunity to dream/vision for the future, a benefit to the body.
- Potential resources have expressed a desire to be involved in this initiative: wide body of Christ and network within Ottawa.
- Some outside Christian leaders have observed that: "younger generations in immigrant churches aren't taking a foothold in their 'home' church." Pastors in other local churches have also expressed that they are noticing the trend and challenge in local-born Christians filling in or taking ownership of their 'home' church.
- In Asian culture, there tends to be a strong emphasis on nurturing that continues well into adulthood and as a result, can impact the maturity of children, learning from mistakes; allowing true ownership and succession

Appendix 2

Why Plant a New Church in the City?

adapted from Tim Keller "Why Plant Churches?"

Often times, the normal response to discussions about church planting is something like this:

- We already have plenty of churches and lots of room for all the other people. Let's get them filled before we build other churches
- A new church will just take people away from existing churches
- Help should be given to the struggling churches first. We need better churches, not more churches.

Although these statements appear to be 'common sense' to many people, they rest on several assumptions. The error of this thinking will become clear if we ask, "Why is church planting crucially important?"

Church Planting is a Biblical Mandate

Jesus' essential call was to plant churches. Virtually all the great evangelistic challenges of the New Testament are basically calls to plant churches, not simply to share the faith. The 'Great Commission' (Matt.28: 18-20) is not just a call to 'make disciples' but to 'baptize'. In Acts and elsewhere, it is clear that baptism means incorporation into a worshipping community with accountability and boundaries (cf. Acts 2:41-47). The only way to be truly sure you are increasing the number of Christians in a town is to increase the number of churches.

Paul's whole strategy was to plant urban churches.

The greatest missionary in history, St. Paul, had a rather simple, two-fold strategy. First, he went into the largest city of the region (cf. Acts 16:9,12), and second, he planted churches in each city (cf. Titus 1:5). Once Paul had done that, he could say that he had 'fully preached' the gospel in a region and that he had 'no more work' to do there (cf. Romans 15:19,23). This means Paul had two controlling assumptions: a) that the way to most permanently influence a country was through its chief cities, and b) the way to most permanently influence a city was to plant churches in it. Once he had accomplished this in a city, he moved on. He knew that the rest that needed to happen would follow.

Planting New Churches is Healthy for the Entire Body of Christ

It is a great mistake to think that we have to choose between church planting and church renewal. Strange as it may seem, the planting of new churches in a city is one of the very best ways to revitalize many older churches in the vicinity and renew the whole Body of Christ.

Often times, in efforts to reach out to unchurched people, a new church will take risks and bring new ideas into the whole Body. It is the new churches that will have freedom to be innovative and they become the 'Research and Development' department for the whole Body in the city. Often the older congregations were too timid to try a particular approach or were absolutely sure it would 'not work here'. But when the new church in town succeeds wildly with some new method, the other churches eventually take notice and get the courage to try it themselves.

Likewise, in older congregations, leaders can emphasize tradition, tenure, routine, and kinship ties. New congregations, on the other hand, attract a higher percentage of venturesome people who value creativity, risk, innovation and future orientation. Often older churches 'box out' many people with strong leadership skills who cannot work in more traditional settings. New churches thus attract and harness many people in the city whose gifts would otherwise not be utilized in the work of the Body. These new leaders benefit the whole city-Body eventually.

A Kingdom Mentality

New church planting is the only way that we can be sure we are going to increase the number of believers in a city and one of the best ways to renew the whole Body of Christ. The evidence for this statement is strong--Biblically, sociologically, and historically. In the end, a focus on the Kingdom of God rather than our own personal kingdoms will keep us fixated upon Jesus' call to go and make disciples of all nations.

Appendix 3

What is a Gospel-Centered Church?

adapted from "Christ, City, Church - Vision packet" by Jonathan McIntosh

Is there really such a thing as a Christian church that is not also gospel-centered? Is it possible for elders and pastors to lead churches into areas that are not gospel-centered?

Yes.

However, it is not that these churches have fallen into some sort of blatant heresy. Most likely, it is that over time, they have let the message of the gospel slip in favor of another way to try and draw people or even change people.

Replacements for Gospel Motivation

A few of the most prevalent replacements that can crowd out the gospel:

Moralism - using fear, rules and commands as the basis for discouraging sin and encouraging holy living, which sadly, results in increases self-righteousness among the rule-keepers and despair among those who feel they can't live up.

Pragmatism - when in an effort to reach new people, church leaders spend more time focused on techniques of useful principals than actually pointing people to the only thing that has real power to change both hearts and lives.

Activism - out of a desire to get involved in the public square and influence policy, Christians of every political stripe often begin to equate the spread of the gospel with the growth of a particular political party.

What is tricky is that usually these -isms start with good intentions and noble aspirations: a deep desire to help people change and grow, a desire to reach out to people who are far from God, or a desire to use influence to change the way things are done. Unfortunately, when something other than Jesus is our primary goal, (no matter how good that goal is), we will eventually start taking shortcuts to get what we want accomplished.

Marks of a Gospel-Centered Church

A gospel-centered church understands that change or transformation of any kind, especially authentic heart transformation, cannot happen apart from the gospel of grace.

A gospel-centered church roots itself and keeps the focus of all activity - teaching, worship, outreach, social activism and discipleship - honed in on the gospel: the riches of the grace of God available because of the sacrificial death of Jesus for sinners.

Because of this, a gospel-centered church is committed to:

- Reading and teaching the entire Bible in light of the gospel message
- Preaching the gospel to believers, not just unbelievers
- Leaders applying the gospel to themselves first; church leaders are a model of repentance
- Developing a leadership culture marked by ever increasing "gospel-astonishment"
- Being known for an atmosphere of grace (gospel centered churches are a safe place for seekers, skeptics and those outside the faith)
- Producing people who not only know the doctrine of the gospel but who also love the person of Jesus Christ