

A plan for

Congregational Growth **& Ministry Development** for the Eastwood Church of Christ

The focus of this plan is the creation of a sustainable, Spirit-led, goal-oriented set of coordinated ministries (referred to as a Congregational Ministry Plan) designed to “animate” the vision that God is providing for Eastwood. The proposal is organized into three (3) phases and is designed to unfold over the next eighteen months to two years.

Preliminary Planning

The plan was presented as a proposal to the men of the congregation in a special business meeting on May 30. Time was provided for discussion and questions.

The plan was then proposed to the congregation in a special meeting on Sunday, June 2. The congregation was asked to study the proposal in detail for further questions and discussion. Another special meeting was held on Sunday, June 9 for discussion and feedback.

Phase 1

July—September 2013

1.1 Tom will continue individual & congregational equipping by teaching the Sunday morning Bible study and preaching in the Sunday worship assembly beginning July 7.

Tom will continue to lead the congregation in a coordinated series of Bible studies and Sunday morning lessons designed to equip us individually and collectively to “act out” the vision that God has cast for us and to lay a solid scriptural foundation for the establishment of sustainable Ministry Plan.

1.2 The congregation will organize & implement a Congregational Ministry Plan.

Tom will lead the congregation in creating a Ministry Plan and with measurable ministry goals for fulfilling the vision that God has cast for Eastwood.

This portion of the plan will involve a series of at least three (3) planning meetings similar to our *Discovery Meetings* that will help us develop a mission statement, develop measurable ministry goals, choose task responsibilities, and implement the Ministry Plan. The meeting dates for our Ministry Development Meetings are July 20, August 10, and August 24.

1.3 The congregation will search for and identify a “ministering couple” who will assist Tom and the congregation in implementing and building the Congregational Ministry Plan.

As the congregation completes the ministry planning process and moves toward the implementation of the Congregational Ministry Plan, Tom and the congregation will need additional help in assisting the congregation in making the transition from “drawing board” to reality.

Ministering Couple Profile

To provide this help, the congregation will “partner” with a young couple who has received their initial college training in ministry, is planning to go into the field to do mission work, and who is looking for an overseeing congregation for themselves and their mission.

The Partnership

Under Tom’s guidance, Eastwood will offer to provide hands-on training in ministry development, assistance in raising support for their mission, a “home base” for them as their overseeing congregation after they are launched into the field, and a modest salary (including housing) in exchange for **two years of service** at Eastwood.

As part of their job description, the ministering couple will help Tom and the congregation by providing preaching and teaching, helping us develop and improve our Ministry Plan, teach us what they know about making converts, and work with our youth, among other things.

At the end of the ministering couple’s two-year tenure, the congregation will assess the effectiveness of the partnership and determine whether or not to repeat the process with another couple or go in a different direction.

2.1 The congregation will partner with a ministering couple.

The congregation will partner with a ministering couple who fits the developed profile with the goal of developing, sustaining, and assessing the effectiveness of the congregation's ministry strategy (this job description would also include preaching and teaching). In return, the congregation will provide to the ministering couple housing, a modest salary, assistance in developing their mission strategy, raising support, and preliminary training.

A key element of the partnership as it develops is assisting the ministering couple in choosing a mission field or team, developing a mission strategy, and preparing emotionally and spiritually to go into the field.

2.2 The congregation will connect with resources to equip us to become a missionary "oversight" congregation.

The congregation will begin gathering the resources, training, and structure necessary to become an effective oversight congregation for a missionary couple or team in the field.

What is a Mission Oversight Church?

It is common today for missionary couples to seek out congregations of the Lord's people that are willing to serve as their "spiritual family" while they are in the mission field. Their "oversight" congregation may or may not contribute *monetarily* to the mission. Instead, the focus is on providing spiritual, emotional, and relational support as well as being a point of coordination for resources going overseas.

Becoming a Mission Oversight Church

Tom not only has experience in helping congregations establish themselves as oversight congregation, he also has "connections" with resources that would help us develop the structure and acquire the training we would need to become an effective oversight church!

2.3 The congregation will make a six and twelve-month assessment of effectiveness of the congregational ministry plan.

The congregation will make an assessment of ministry goals at about the six-month mark and then again at the twelve-month mark to determine if the chosen ministry strategy is fulfilling the vision cast by God for Eastwood.

3.1 The congregation will launch ministering couple into the mission field.

The ministering couple that has been working with the congregation for 18 months to two years is launched into the field with Eastwood serving as their oversight congregation.

3.2 The congregation will consider the option of identifying & partnering with a new ministering couple.

In anticipation of the departure of our ministering couple into the mission field, a second couple may be sought who meets the minister profile and who can partner with the congregation in a similar fashion to the first. A new couple may be chosen who wishes to prepare join the first couple in the same mission effort or who is entering a new mission field altogether.

Tom's Role in Implementing the Proposed Process

As part of this proposal, Tom will work for the congregation to do the following:

1. Assist the congregation in organizing, implementing, and assessing the effectiveness of the on-going Congregational Ministry Plan.
2. Assist the congregation in identifying and partnering with a ministering couple, including providing training, consulting, and counseling to the couple as well as oversight of the performance of the ministering couple's job description during their service at Eastwood.
3. Preach in the morning assembly and teach the adult bible class on Sunday morning until a partnership is formed with a ministering couple.
4. Assist the congregation in locating resources to become a missions oversight congregation.