

Church planting in another presbytery



resourcing the church
for spiritual vitality

When planting a new church, it is important to think through a whole range of factors including: who is going to make up the launch team; who you are trying to reach and of course the location of the new church meeting place.

Occasionally the ideal location seems to be in another presbytery. That, however, need not be a problem if the matter is handled properly.

The Church's rules provide that: "where an existing congregation wishes to establish a new congregation within the bounds of another presbytery or to relocate its meeting place inside the bounds of another presbytery, the proposed action must be approved by the presbytery which holds jurisdiction over the initiating congregation as well as the presbytery within whose bounds the proposed action is to take place.

Here are some guidelines to follow if you are hoping to plant a church in another presbytery.

1. Develop a plan for your church plant

[Church planting 2008 and into the future](#) will point you in the right direction. In addition, the [church plant application form](#) asks the kind of questions you should be thinking through.

2. Visit ministers in the proposed target area

Visit (or at least phone) ministers of churches in the area where you are thinking of starting the new congregation. The goals of this visit are (i) to show courtesy; (ii) to explain the proposal and provide opportunities to answer any questions and hear any concerns; and (iii) to seek their support for the new proposal if and when it might come before their presbytery.

3. Present your plan to your own presbytery

A summary in general terms will be helpful, so the two presbyteries may share your joy in planting a new church. Your presentation should explain why you think it is necessary to plant in another presbytery. There may be several good reasons (e.g. you are a NESB church and you have recognized a population density of that particular cultural group in another presbytery and you are the best placed church to reach them, or you may be a church without a meeting place near the edge of a presbytery boundary and you wish to use a public facility or even work from another church property in the next presbytery). Whatever your reasons, explain them.

4. The home presbytery should approve or disapprove the proposal

When the home presbytery approves the proposal it should then in a brotherly fashion communicate with the presbytery in which the new work is being proposed to seek its support and encouragement.

5. The church planting church should write to the other presbytery

Advise them that you are wishing to start a congregation in their presbytery and you would like to have the approval of that presbytery. It would be helpful if you offer to come to their presbytery meeting, to present your proposal, if they wish to hear it. That will give the opportunity to answer any questions they may have.

6. Present your plan to the other presbytery

The proposal that you have already presented to the home presbytery should be submitted. You would do well to do this with humility bearing in mind that they could well disapprove the proposal.

7. The other presbytery should approve or disapprove the proposal

In the spirit of growing God's kingdom one would hope that most proposals are in fact approved. Even though the new congregation is not supervised by the other presbytery it would be helpful for other presbytery's encouragement and prayers for you to send them reports from time to time.

8. Keep the other presbytery "in the loop".

As your thinking develops or your new work progresses, it would be a helpful courtesy to send occasional reports to the other presbytery so they may continue to share the joy found in the new work.

9. Time for independence

Given time and growth the new congregation may become ready to self-govern with its own committee of management and session. It would be right to petition the presbytery where the new church is geographically located to seek to be recognized as a congregation within that presbytery and to ask that the church be given the status of a pastoral charge or home mission station.