



Prospectus: Plant Alaska

Why we exist:

Alaska is a beautiful but dark land. Alaska is remote, harsh and extreme. This is the Last Frontier. It is the biggest and some would say the toughest place to live in North America. Alaska encourages a sense of isolation or escape in its inhabitants. Alaskans are renowned for their prideful autonomy and fierce individualism. Alaska in many ways is a still developing culture in the United States, and her citizens are slow to adhere to national political trends or laws.

Alaska is far removed from the days of mainline denominations dividing what was then the Alaska Territory into individual parcels for church expansion. For every church planted several more are closed each year. Alaska is in many ways becoming a spiritually frozen land.

By the year 2015 the baseline population projection for the State of Alaska is 768,000 people, which represents an approximate increase of 5.1% over the 2010 census. By the year 2020 the population is expected to reach 811,000 (10.9%). By the year 2035 the population of Alaska is estimated to reach 915,000 inhabitants, a percentage increase of 25.2 over the current population. (Huffington Post May 29, 2012)

It is estimated that only 6% to 8% of Alaskans attend a gospel-centered church. Over 80% of Alaskan villages do not have a gospel presence. Our mission as **Plant Alaska** is to reach the 721,920 people with the gospel message of Jesus Christ who currently live in our State. We must also plan and prepare for the anticipated population growth. (Pew Forum on Religion & Public Life's U.S. Religious Landscape Survey)

Our God has called and commissioned His Church to go and make disciples (Matthew 28:18-20.) **Plant Alaska** is a unified network of gospel-centered churches committed to advancing God's Kingdom together by multiplying disciples, leaders and planting churches.

In response to those who would question the validity of effort to plant new churches Tim Keller (Redeemer Church, NYC) has this to say:

A. We want to be true to the BIBLICAL MANDATE

- 1. Jesus' essential call was to make disciples. This was shown by the apostles to be best accomplished by planting churches.*
- 2. Paul's mission strategy was to plant churches*

B. We want to be true to the GREAT COMMISSION

1. New churches best reach a) new generations, b) new residents, and c) new people groups

2. New churches best reach the unchurched

C. We want to continually RENEW THE WHOLE BODY OF CHRIST

1. New churches bring new ideas to the whole Body

2. New churches are one of the best ways to surface creative, strong leaders for the whole Body of Christ

3. New churches challenge other churches to self-examination

4. The new church may be an 'evangelistic feeder' for a whole community

5. An existing church becomes Kingdom-minded when encouraging and supporting a new church in the same community

Our vision is to see a gospel-centered church in every Alaskan community.

Our immediate goal is to plant and support ten new gospel-centered churches in the next five years.

As a network of unified gospel-centered churches **we believe the following:**

INTRODUCTION

We praise God for his great salvation and rejoice in the fellowship he has given us with himself and with each other. We are deeply stirred by what God is doing in our day, moved to penitence by our failures and challenged by the unfinished task of evangelization. We believe the Gospel is God's good news for the whole world, and we are determined by his grace to obey Christ's commission to proclaim it to all mankind and to make disciples in Alaska and of every nation. We desire, therefore, to affirm our faith and our resolve, and to make public our covenant.

1. THE PURPOSE OF GOD

We affirm our belief in the one-eternal God, Creator and Lord of the world, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, who governs all things according to the purpose of his will. He has been calling out from the world a people for himself, and sending his people back into the world to be his servants and his witnesses, for the extension of his kingdom, the building up of Christ's body, and the glory of his name. We confess with shame that we have often denied our calling and failed in our mission, by becoming conformed to

the world or by withdrawing from it. Yet we rejoice that even when borne by earthen vessels the gospel is still a precious treasure. To the task of making that treasure known in the power of the Holy Spirit we desire to dedicate ourselves anew.

(Isa. 40:28; Matt. 28:19; Eph. 1:11; Acts 15:14; John 17:6, 18; Eph 4:12; 1 Cor. 5:10; Rom. 12:2; II Cor. 4:7)

2. THE AUTHORITY AND POWER OF THE BIBLE

We affirm the divine inspiration, truthfulness and authority of both Old and New Testament Scriptures in their entirety as the only written word of God, without error in all that it affirms, and the only infallible rule of faith and practice. We also affirm the power of God's word to accomplish his purpose of salvation. The message of the Bible is addressed to all men and women. For God's revelation in Christ and in Scripture is unchangeable. Through it the Holy Spirit still speaks today. He illumines the minds of God's people in every culture to perceive its truth freshly through their own eyes and thus discloses to the whole Church ever more of the many-colored wisdom of God.

(II Tim. 3:16; II Pet. 1:21; John 10:35; Isa. 55:11; 1 Cor. 1:21; Rom. 1:16, Matt. 5:17,18; Jude 3; Eph. 1:17,18; 3:10,18)

3. THE UNIQUENESS AND UNIVERSALITY OF CHRIST

We affirm that there is only one Savior and only one gospel, although there is a wide diversity of evangelistic approaches. We recognize that everyone has some knowledge of God through his general revelation in nature. But we deny that this can save, for people suppress the truth by their unrighteousness. We also reject as derogatory to Christ and the gospel every kind of syncretism and dialogue that implies that Christ speaks equally through all religions and ideologies. Jesus Christ, being himself the only God-man, who gave himself as the only ransom for sinners, is the only mediator between God and people. There is no other name by which we must be saved. All men and women are perishing because of sin, but God loves everyone, not wishing that any should perish but that all should repent. Yet those who reject Christ repudiate the joy of salvation and condemn themselves to eternal separation from God. To proclaim Jesus as "the Savior of the world" is not to affirm that all people are either automatically or ultimately saved, still less to affirm that all religions offer salvation in Christ. Rather it is to proclaim God's love for a world of sinners and to invite everyone to respond to him as Savior and Lord in the wholehearted personal commitment of repentance and faith. Jesus Christ has been exalted above every other name; we long for the day when every knee shall bow to him and every tongue shall confess him Lord.

(Gal. 1:6-9; Rom. 1:18-32; I Tim. 2:5,6; Acts 4:12; John 3:16-19; II Pet. 3:9; II Thess. 1:7-9; John 4:42; Matt. 11:28; Eph. 1:20,21; Phil. 2:9-11)

4. THE NATURE OF EVANGELISM

To evangelize is to spread the good news that Jesus Christ died for our sins and was raised from the dead according to the Scriptures, and that as the reigning Lord he now offers the forgiveness of sins and the liberating gifts of the Spirit to all who repent and believe. Our Christian presence in the world is indispensable to evangelism, and so is that kind of dialogue whose purpose is to listen sensitively in order to understand. But evangelism itself is the proclamation of the historical, biblical Christ as Savior and Lord, with a view to persuading people to come to him personally and so be reconciled to God. In issuing the gospel invitation we have no liberty to conceal the cost of discipleship. Jesus still calls all who would follow him to deny themselves, take up their cross, and identify themselves with his new community. The results of evangelism include obedience to Christ, incorporation into his Church and responsible service in the world.

(I Cor. 15:3,4; Acts 2: 32-39; John 20:21; I Cor. 1:23; II Cor. 4:5; 5:11,20; Luke 14:25-33; Mark 8:34; Acts 2:40,47; Mark 10:43-45)

5. CHRISTIAN SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

We affirm that God is both the Creator and the Judge of all people. We therefore should share his concern for justice and reconciliation throughout human society and for the liberation of men and women from every kind of oppression. Because men and women are made in the image of God, every person, regardless of race, religion, color, culture, class, sex or age, has an intrinsic dignity because of which he or she should be respected and served, not exploited. Here too we express penitence both for our neglect and for having sometimes regarded evangelism and social concern as mutually exclusive. Although reconciliation with other people is not reconciliation with God, nor is social action evangelism, nor is political liberation salvation, nevertheless we affirm that evangelism and socio-political involvement are both part of our Christian duty. For both are necessary expressions of our doctrines of God and man, our love for our neighbor and our obedience to Jesus Christ. The message of salvation implies also a message of judgment upon every form of alienation, oppression and discrimination, and we should not be afraid to denounce evil and injustice wherever they exist. When people receive Christ they are born again into his kingdom and must seek not only to exhibit but also to spread its righteousness in the midst of an unrighteous world. The salvation we claim should be transforming us in the totality of our personal and social responsibilities. Faith without works is dead.

(Acts 17:26,31; Gen. 18:25; Isa. 1:17; Psa. 45:7; Gen. 1:26,27; Jas. 3:9; Lev. 19:18; Luke 6:27,35; Jas. 2:14-26; John 3:3,5; Matt. 5:20; 6:33; II Cor. 3:18; Jas. 2:20)

6. THE CHURCH AND EVANGELISM

We affirm that Christ sends his redeemed people into the world as the Father sent him, and that this calls for a similar deep and costly penetration of the world. We need to break out of our ecclesiastical ghettos and permeate non-Christian society. In the Church's mission of sacrificial service evangelism is primary. World evangelization requires the whole Church to take the whole gospel to the whole world. The Church is at the very center of God's cosmic purpose and is his appointed means of spreading the gospel. But, a church that preaches the cross must itself be marked by the cross. It becomes a stumbling block to evangelism when it betrays the gospel or lacks a living faith in God, a genuine love for people, or scrupulous honesty in all things including promotion and finance. The church is the community of God's people rather than an institution, and must not be identified with any particular culture, social or political system, or human ideology.

(John 17:18; 20:21; Matt. 28:19,20; Acts 1:8; 20:27; Eph. 1:9,10; 3:9-11; Gal. 6:14,17; II Cor. 6:3,4; II Tim. 2:19-21; Phil. 1:27)

7. COOPERATION IN EVANGELISM

We affirm that the Church's visible unity in truth is God's purpose. Evangelism also summons us to unity, because our oneness strengthens our witness, just as our disunity undermines our gospel of reconciliation. We recognize, however, that organizational unity may take many forms and does not necessarily forward evangelism. Yet we who share the same biblical faith should be closely united in fellowship, work and witness. We confess that our testimony has sometimes been marred by a sinful individualism and needless duplication. We pledge ourselves to seek a deeper unity in truth, worship, holiness and mission. We urge the development of regional and functional cooperation for the furtherance of the Church's mission, for strategic planning, for mutual encouragement, and for the sharing of resources and experience.

(John 17:21,23; Eph. 4:3,4; John 13:35; Phil. 1:27; John 17:11-23)

8. CHURCHES IN EVANGELISTIC PARTNERSHIP

We rejoice that a new missionary era has dawned. The dominant role of western missions is fast disappearing. God is raising up from the younger churches a great new resource for world evangelization, and is thus demonstrating that the responsibility to evangelize belongs to the whole body of Christ. All churches should therefore be asking God and themselves what they should be doing both to reach their own area and to send missionaries to other parts of the world. A reevaluation of our missionary responsibility and role should be continuous. Thus a growing partnership of churches will develop and the universal character of Christ's Church will be more clearly exhibited. We also thank God for agencies which labor in Bible translation, theological

education, the mass media, Christian literature, evangelism, missions, church renewal and other specialist fields. They too should engage in constant self-examination to evaluate their effectiveness as part of the Church's mission.

(Rom. 1:8; Phil. 1:5; 4:15; Acts 13:1-3, I Thess. 1:6-8)

9. THE URGENCY OF THE EVANGELISTIC TASK

More than 2,700 million people, representing more than two-thirds of all humanity, have yet to be evangelized. We are ashamed that so many have been neglected; it is a standing rebuke to us and to the whole Church. There is now, however, in many parts of the world an unprecedented receptivity to the Lord Jesus Christ. We are convinced that this is the time for churches and para-church agencies to pray earnestly for the salvation of the unreached and to launch new efforts to achieve world evangelization. A reduction of foreign missionaries and money in an evangelized country may sometimes be necessary to facilitate the national church's growth in self-reliance and to release resources for unevangelized areas. Missionaries should flow ever more freely from and to all six continents in a spirit of humble service. The goal should be, by all available means and at the earliest possible time, that every person will have the opportunity to hear, understand, and to receive the good news. We cannot hope to attain this goal without sacrifice. All of us are shocked by the poverty of millions and disturbed by the injustices that cause it. Those of us who live in affluent circumstances accept our duty to develop a simple life-style in order to contribute more generously to both relief and evangelism.

(John 9:4; Matt. 9:35-38; Rom. 9:1-3; I Cor. 9:19-23; Mark 16:15; Isa. 58:6,7; Jas. 1:27; 2:1-9; Matt. 25:31-46; Acts 2:44,45; 4:34,35)

10. EVANGELISM AND CULTURE

The development of strategies for world evangelization calls for imaginative pioneering methods. Under God, the result will be the rise of churches deeply rooted in Christ and closely related to their culture. Culture must always be tested and judged by Scripture. Because men and women are God's creatures, some of their culture is rich in beauty and goodness. Because they are fallen, all of it is tainted with sin and some of it is demonic. The gospel does not presuppose the superiority of any culture to another, but evaluates all cultures according to its own criteria of truth and righteousness, and insists on moral absolutes in every culture. Missions have all too frequently exported with the gospel an alien culture and churches have sometimes been in bondage to culture rather than to Scripture. Christ's evangelists must humbly seek to empty themselves of all but their personal authenticity in order to become the servants of others, and churches must seek to transform and enrich culture, all for the glory of God.

(Mark 7:8,9,13; Gen. 4:21,22; I Cor. 9:19-23; Phil. 2:5-7; II Cor. 4:5)

11. EDUCATION AND LEADERSHIP

We confess that we have sometimes pursued church growth at the expense of church depth, and divorced evangelism from Christian nurture. We also acknowledge that some of our missions have been too slow to equip and encourage national leaders to assume their rightful responsibilities. Yet we are committed to indigenous principles, and long that every church will have national leaders who manifest a Christian style of leadership in terms not of domination but of service. We recognize that there is a great need to improve theological education, especially for church leaders. In every nation and culture there should be an effective training program for pastors and all disciples in doctrine, discipleship, evangelism, nurture and service. Such training programs should not rely on any stereotyped methodology but should be developed by creative local initiatives according to biblical standards.

(Col. 1:27,28; Acts 14:23; Tit. 1:5,9; Mark 10:42-45; Eph. 4:11,12)

12. SPIRITUAL CONFLICT

We believe that we are engaged in constant spiritual warfare with the principalities and powers of evil who are seeking to overthrow the Church and frustrate its task of world evangelization. We know our need to equip ourselves with God's armor and to fight this battle with the spiritual weapons of truth and prayer. For we detect the activity of our enemy, not only in false ideologies outside the Church, but also inside it in false gospels which twist Scripture and put people in the place of God. We need both watchfulness and discernment to safeguard the biblical gospel. We acknowledge that we ourselves are not immune to worldliness of thoughts and action, that is, to a surrender to secularism. For example, although careful studies of church growth, both numerical and spiritual, are right and valuable, we have sometimes neglected them. At other times, desirous to ensure a response to the gospel, we have compromised our message, manipulated our hearers through pressure techniques, and become unduly preoccupied with statistics or even dishonest in our use of them. All this is worldly. The Church must be in the world; the world must not be in the Church.

(Eph. 6:12; II Cor. 4:3,4; Eph. 6:11,13-18; II Cor. 10:3-5; I John 2:18-26; 4:1-3; Gal. 1:6-9; II Cor. 2:17; 4:2; John 17:15)

13. FREEDOM AND PERSECUTION

It is the God-appointed duty of every government to secure conditions of peace, justice and liberty in which the Church may obey God, serve the Lord Jesus Christ, and preach the gospel without interference. We therefore pray for the leaders of nations and call upon them to guarantee freedom of thought and conscience, and freedom to practice and propagate religion in accordance with the will of God and as set forth in The Universal Declaration of Human Rights. We also express our deep concern for all who have been unjustly imprisoned, and especially for those who are

suffering for their testimony to the Lord Jesus. We promise to pray and work for their freedom. At the same time we refuse to be intimidated by their fate. God helping us, we too will seek to stand against injustice and to remain faithful to the gospel, whatever the cost. We do not forget the warnings of Jesus that persecution is inevitable.

(I Tim. 1:1-4, Acts 4:19; 5:29; Col. 3:24; Heb. 13:1-3; Luke 4:18; Gal. 5:11; 6:12; Matt. 5:10-12; John 15:18-21)

14. THE POWER OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

We believe in the power of the Holy Spirit. The Father sent his Spirit to bear witness to his Son; without his witness ours is futile. Conviction of sin, faith in Christ, new birth and Christian growth are all his work. Further, the Holy Spirit is a missionary spirit; thus evangelism should arise spontaneously from a Spirit-filled church. A church that is not a missionary church is contradicting itself and quenching the Spirit. Worldwide evangelization will become a realistic possibility only when the Spirit renews the Church in truth and wisdom, faith, holiness, love and power. We therefore call upon all Christians to pray for such a visitation of the sovereign Spirit of God that all his fruit may appear in all his people and that all his gifts may enrich the body of Christ. Only then will the whole church become a fit instrument in his hands, that the whole earth may hear his voice.

(I Cor. 2:4; John 15:26;27; 16:8-11; I Cor. 12:3; John 3:6-8; II Cor. 3:18; John 7:37-39; I Thess. 5:19; Acts 1:8; Psa. 85:4-7; 67:1-3; Gal. 5:22,23; I Cor. 12:4-31; Rom. 12:3-8)

15. THE RETURN OF CHRIST

We believe that Jesus Christ will return personally and visibly, in power and glory, to consummate his salvation and his judgment. This promise of his coming is a further spur to our evangelism, for we remember his words that the gospel must first be preached to all nations. We believe that the interim period between Christ's ascension and return is to be filled with the mission of the people of God, who have no liberty to stop before the end. We also remember his warning that false Christs and false prophets will arise as precursors of the final Antichrist. We therefore reject as a proud, self-confident dream the notion that people can ever build a utopia on earth. Our Christian confidence is that God will perfect his kingdom, and we look forward with eager anticipation to that day, and to the new heaven and earth in which righteousness will dwell and God will reign forever. Meanwhile, we rededicate ourselves to the service of Christ and of people in joyful submission to his authority over the whole of our lives.

(Mark 14:62; Heb. 9:28; Mark 13:10; Acts 1:8-11; Matt. 28:20; Mark 13:21-23; 1 John 2:18; 4:1-3; Luke 12:32; Rev. 21:1-5; II Pet. 3:13; Matt. 28:18)

As a network of unified gospel-centered churches **we also identify with these distinctives:**

1. We are passionate about Gospel centrality.

We believe the gospel is the good news of what God has graciously accomplished for sinners through the sinless life, sacrificial death, and bodily resurrection of his Son, our Savior, Jesus Christ, namely our forgiveness from sin and complete justification before God; this gospel is also the foundation for our confidence in the ultimate triumph of God's kingdom, and the consummation of his purpose for all creation in the new heavens and new earth.

This gospel is centered in Christ, is the foundation for the life of the Church, and is our only hope for eternal life; this gospel is not proclaimed if Christ's penal substitutionary death and bodily resurrection are not central to our message.

This Gospel is not only the means by which people are saved, but also the truth and power by which people are sanctified; it is the truth of the Gospel that enables us to genuinely and joyfully do what is pleasing to God and to grow in progressive conformity to the image of Christ. The salvation offered in this gospel message is received by grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ alone; no ordinance, ritual, work, or any other activity on the part of man is required in order to be saved. (*Mark 1:1; Luke 24:46-47; John 3:16-18; Romans 1:16-17; Romans 1:18-25; 1 Corinthians 1:18-25; 2:2; 15:1-4; 2 Corinthians 4:1-6; 9:13; Galatians 1:6-9; Ephesians 1: 7-10; Colossians 1: 19-20; 2 Timothy 1:8-14; 2 Peter 3: 11-13 Jude 3-4; Revelation 21-22*)

2. We enthusiastically embrace the sovereignty of God's grace in saving sinners.

We affirm that God chose us in Christ before the foundation of the world, not on the basis of foreseen faith but unconditionally, according to his sovereign good pleasure and will. We believe that through the work of the Holy Spirit, God will draw the elect to faith in his Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, graciously and effectually overcoming their stubborn resistance to the gospel so that they will most assuredly and willingly believe.

We also believe that these, the elect of God whom he gave to the Son, will persevere in belief and godly behavior and be kept secure in their salvation by grace through faith.

We believe that God's sovereignty in this salvation neither diminishes the responsibility of people to believe in Christ nor marginalizes the necessity and power of prayer and evangelism, but rather reinforces and establishes them as the ordained means by which God accomplishes his ordained ends. (*John 1:12-13; 6:37-44; 10:25-30; Acts 13:48; 16:30-31; Romans 3-4; 8:1-17,31-39; 9:1-23; 10:8-10; Ephesians 1:4-5; 2:8-10; Philippians 2:12-13; Titus 3:3-7; 1 John 1:7,9*)

3. We recognize and rest upon the necessity of the empowering presence of the Holy Spirit for all of life and ministry.

The Holy Spirit is fully God, equal with the Father and Son, whose primary ministry is to glorify the Lord Jesus Christ; he also convicts unbelievers of their need for Christ and imparts spiritual life through regeneration (the new birth).

The Spirit permanently indwells, graciously sanctifies, lovingly leads, and empowers all who are brought to faith in Christ so that they might live in obedience to the inerrant Scriptures.

The model for our reliance upon the Spirit and our experience of his indwelling and empowering presence is the Lord Jesus Christ himself who was filled with the Spirit and entirely dependent upon his power for the performance of miracles, the preaching of the kingdom of God, and all other dimensions of his earthly ministry.

The Holy Spirit who indwelt and empowered Christ in like manner indwells and empowers us through spiritual gifts he has bestowed for the work of ministry and the building up of the body of Christ. Although there are different understandings in our network of the nature and function of these gifts, we all recognize that they are divine provisions central to spiritual growth and effective ministry and are to be eagerly desired, faithfully developed, and lovingly exercised according to biblical guidelines. (Matthew 3:11; 12:28; Luke 4:1, 14; 5:17; 10:21; John 1:12-13; 3:1-15, 34; 14:12; 15:26-27; 16:7-15; Acts 2:14-21; 4:29-30; 10:38; Romans 8:9; 12:3-8; 1 Corinthians 12:7-13; 12:28-31; 14:1-33; 2 Corinthians 1:21-22; Galatians 3:1-5; Ephesians 1:13-14; 5:18)

4. We are deeply committed both to the fundamental spiritual and moral equality of male and female as well as the principle of male headship in the church and home.

Both men and women are together created in the divine image and are therefore equal before God as persons, possessing the same moral dignity and value, and have equal access to God through faith in Christ.

Men and women are together the recipients of spiritual gifts designed to empower them for ministry in the local church and beyond. Therefore, women are to be encouraged, equipped, and empowered to utilize their gifting in ministry, in service to the body of Christ, and through teaching in ways that are consistent with the Word of God.

Both husbands and wives are responsible to God for spiritual nurture and vitality in the home, but God has given to the man primary responsibility to lead his wife and family in accordance with the servant leadership and sacrificial love modeled by Jesus Christ.

The Elders of each local church have been granted authority under the headship of Jesus Christ to provide oversight and to teach/preach the Word of God in corporate assembly for the building up of the body. The biblical office of Elder/Pastor is male. (*Genesis 1:26-27; 2:18; Acts 18:24-26; 1 Corinthians 11:2-16; Galatians 3:28; Ephesians 5:22-33; Colossians 3:18-19; 1 Timothy 2:11-15; 3:1-7; Titus 2:3-5; 1 Peter 3:1-7*)

5. We embrace a missionary understanding of the local church and its role as the primary means by which God chooses to establish his kingdom on earth.

The church has a clear biblical mandate to look beyond its own community to the neighborhood, the nation, and the world as a whole; thus mission is not an optional program in the church but an essential element in the identity of the church.

We are called to make Christ known through the gospel and, by the power of the Holy Spirit, to bring his lordship to bear on every dimension of life.

The primary way we fulfill this mission is through the planting of churches that plant churches and the training of their leaders. Our aim is that Jesus Christ would be more fully formed in each person through the ministry of those churches God enables us to plant around the world.

We also believe we are responsible neither to retreat from our culture nor to conform to it, but with humility, through the Spirit and the truth of the gospel, to engage it boldly as we seek its transformation and submission to the lordship of Christ. (*Isaiah 52:7; Matthew 10:5-25; 28:18-20; Luke 4:18-19; 24:46-47; Acts 28:31; Romans 10:14-15; 2 Corinthians 10:4-5; Galatians 2:10; Ephesians 3:10; 4:11-16; 2 Timothy 4:1-5; Hebrews 10:23-25; 1 Peter 2:4-5, 9-10*)

In addition, Plant Alaska is committed to these **four values:**

1. We want to plant churches that plant churches. Plant Alaska is a church-planting network of Alaskan churches for the purpose of planting churches that will in turn plant churches.

2. We want to be known for holiness and humility. While our member churches are theologically aligned we are also philosophically diverse. Our diversity is seen primarily in how we proclaim and live out the gospel in our own, unique context and culture. In doing so, we endeavor to be holy in our motives and actions while humble in our interactions toward those within and outside of our immediate network.

3. We want to become a radically diverse network of churches. Alaska natives comprise over 17% of our population, and Alaska is growing as an immigration destination. Necessity demands and thus we are compelled to plant churches in our State's many distinct cultures.

4. We want to be serious about evangelism. Our pastors and leaders share the gospel message as boldly in their neighborhoods as they do from the pulpit. We yearn

for conversions and walk in a godly frustration when we don't see them. We believe in the sufficiency of the Scriptures and the power of the Holy Spirit to open the eyes of the most hardened people in our communities. We are committed to train the men and women in our churches to see their neighbors, co-workers and friends as an opportunity to love supremely by praying for and sharing the best news in the universe with them.

To accomplish our goals and see our vision become reality, we want and need to equip men to be prepared and ready to plant gospel-centered churches that will **make disciples of Jesus Christ**. To do so **our strategy** is to develop men in these **eleven essential competencies, benchmarks to evaluate the church-planting candidate's Call, Character, Competency and Compatibility**

1. Gospel centrality and Gospel fluency

- a. Knows and clearly articulates the gospel (Acts 18:24-28; 1 Corinthians 15:3-11)
 - b. Experiencing ongoing repentance and growing faith in the gospel (Philippians 1:3-11)
 - c. Able to see the gospel thread of redemption through all of Scripture (Luke 24:25-27; John 5:39, 46; 2 Timothy 3:14-17)
 - d. Relates personal and other people's stories to the story of God (Acts 17:22-31)
 - e. Holds to a gospel world view and addresses everyday issues with the gospel (Acts 17:22-31)
 - f. Ability to identify own strengths & weaknesses (Proverbs 16:18; Romans 12:3)
 - g. Tough, resilient & not prone to discouragement (Joshua 1:9; Psalm 31:24; John 16:33; Romans 8:26; 1 Corinthians 15:58; 2 Corinthians 12:9; 2 Timothy 1:7)
 - h. Exhibits God's grace to in flexibility & adaptability to changes & needs (1 Corinthians 9:19)
1. Recognizes the appropriate value of bodily exercise and rest (Romans 12:1; 1 Corinthians 6:19-20; 9:27; 1 Timothy 4:8)

2. Deepening personal relationship with God

- a. Serious about holiness and humility (Leviticus 11:44-45; John 14:15; Ephesians 1:3-4; 1 Peter 1:13-16; 1 John 5:3; Phil 2:1-11; 1 Peter 5:5)
- b. Gives evidence of a personal relationship with Jesus (Matthew 7:16-20; 22:35-40; Romans 8:15-16; 2 Corinthians 13:5; 1 John 2:3-6; 4:13)
- c. Displays a deep commitment to the authority of the Bible in both personal life and public ministry (Psalm 119; John 17:17; 2 Timothy 3:16; 2 Peter 1:21)
- d. Knows the importance of prayer as not only a means to the end of gospel ministry but also as an expression of an intimate & dependent relationship (Colossians 1:3-5; Philippians 1:3-8)

- e. Displays the fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22-24; Colossians 3:12-17) and a clear sense of dependency upon the Holy Spirit for all godliness and every aspect of ministry (Matthew 3:13-17; Acts 1:8; 1Corinthians 12-14)
- f. Reflects the requirements of an elder (1 Timothy 3:1-7; Titus 1:5-9; 2 Timothy 2:2)
- g. Humbly invests in continued personal and pastoral growth (Ephesians 5:16)

3. Healthy marriage and family

- a. Exhibits a healthy marriage (loving service, kindness, communicative, mutual honoring, cherishing) (Genesis 2:24; 1 Corinthians 13:4-7; Ephesians 5:22-33; Colossians 3:18-21; Hebrews 13:4)
- b. Demonstrates integrity in managing finances (1 Timothy 3:3-5; 6:7-9; Hebrews 13:5)
- c. Family does not undermine his leadership, nor behave so as to discredit his witness (Ephesians 5:22-28; Colossians 3:18-19; 1 Timothy 3:4-5)
- d. Leads his family in a lifestyle that commends Christ (Matthew 7:12; 20:25-28; 1 Timothy 3:2-7; 4:12; Titus 1:5-9; 1 Peter 5:2-3)
- e. Committed to providing for the family in an exemplary way (1 Timothy 5:8)
- f. Does not neglect his family in the pursuit of ministry (1 Timothy 3:4-5; Titus 1:7-9)
- g. Acknowledges a healthy sexual relationship & purity in his marriage (Exodus 20:14; Proverbs 6:32; Matthew 5:27-28; Ephesians 5:25-27; Hebrews 13:4)

4. Theological clarity

- a. Committed to the centrality of the gospel in doctrine, life and ministry (1 Corinthians 15:1-8; Galatians 1:6-10; Philippians 3:7-14)
- b. Possesses a clear understanding of sound doctrine (Acts 20:28-31; 1 Timothy 6:3-5; Titus 1:5-9; 2:1, 15; Jude 3)
- c. Embraces the sovereignty of God's grace in saving sinners (John 1:12-13; 6:44; Acts 16:14; Romans 9:14-18; Ephesians 2:4-10; Philippians 1:6; 2:12-13; Titus 3:3-7)
- d. Celebrates a missionary understanding of the local church & her role as God's primary mission strategy in the world and for the world (Matthew 16:18; 28:18-20; Romans 1:8; Ephesians 3:10; 1 Peter 2:9-12)
- e. Knows the power of the gospel to reconcile and works this out to the best of the opportunities available and presenting needs, resulting in ethnically, socially and economically diverse churches which display the power of the gospel to unite people under Christ (Ephesians 2:11-22; Galatians 3:28-29; Revelation 7:9-12)
- f. Displays grace toward those who differ from him in both doctrine and practice (Matthew 7:1-5; Romans 14:1,10-13; 2 Timothy 1:13-14; 1 Peter 3:15;

James 1:19)

- g. Deeply committed to the spiritual and moral equality of male & female, alongside male headship in the church and home (Genesis 1:26-27; 2:18; Acts 18:24-26; 1 Corinthians 11:2-16; Galatians 3:28; Ephesians 5:22-33; Colossians 3:18-19; 1 Timothy 2:11-15; 3:1-7; Titus 2:3-5; 1 Peter 3:1-7)
- h. Calls believers to active participation in and humble submission to the local church (Matthew 18:15-20; Hebrews 13:17; 1 Timothy 3:15; Titus 2:15)
- i. Demonstrates an ability to understand & communicate theological truths in a manner consistent with the gospel (Acts 20:20, 27; 1 Timothy 4:13; 5:17; 2 Timothy 1:13-14; 4:2; 1 Peter 3:15)
- j. Shows grace & flexibility in teaching and discipling others (Acts 20:28; 2 Timothy 2:2)

5. Effective disciple-making leader

- a. Excels in crafting & communicating vision (Romans 12:8)
- b. Has a clear & reproducible system for leadership development (2 Timothy 2:1-2)
- c. Able to accomplish tasks with limited resources (Deuteronomy 8:18)
- d. Ability to raise up others to become leaders in church, home, business, community (2 Timothy 2:1-2)
- e. Portrays resilience under opposition & setbacks (Acts 20:28; 1 Corinthians 16:13)
- f. Adaptable to meet needs, identify barriers & articulate vision (Acts 20:20-21)
- g. Releases & resources others to accomplish goals (Acts 13:1-3)
- h. Courageously leads others who do not follow easily (1 Corinthians 16:13; Galatians 6:9)
- i. Proven track record of developing and implementing strategy (Proverbs 15:22; 16:3; 19:20; 20:18; 21:5; James 1:5; 4:13-15)
- j. Effective plan for discipleship, emphasizing both maturity & multiplication (Acts 16:1-5)
- k. Skilled in establishing and multiplying gospel communities (Acts 14:21-23)
- l. Track record of making disciples that make disciples (1 Thessalonians 3:2; Phil 2:22)
- m. Evidence of multiplying leaders that multiply leaders (1 Corinthians 4:16-17; 2 Timothy 1:6)
- n. Inspires & encourages others toward spiritual maturity (1 Thessalonians 1)

6. Relational maturity

- a. Establishes and maintains, as far as is possible, healthy relationships with Christians and non-Christians (Romans 12:18; Colossians 4:5-6; 1 Timothy 3:7; 2 Timothy 2:24-25; 1 Peter 2:12)
- b. Takes initiative to meet new people (Romans 15:2; 1 Corinthians 9:19-23;

1 Timothy 3:2; Titus 1:8)

- c. Willing to initiate conversation with and listen to others (Proverbs 18:13; 19:20; James 1:19)
- d. Shows empathy & compassion (Psalm 86:15; Matthew 9:35-36; 14:14; 22:39; Mark 1:40-41; John 11:33-35; Romans 12:15; 1 Peter 3:8; 4:8; 1 John 3:17)
- e. Displays patience & sincerity (Psalms 37:7; Romans 2:7; Galatians 5:22; Colossians 1:11; 1 Thessalonians 5:14; James 1:3-4; 5:7-8)
- f. Ability to accept constructive criticism and input from others (Proverbs 11:14; 12:15, 22; 24:6; Luke 17:3; Hebrews 12:11)
- g. Willingness to be accountable to others in community (Proverbs 27:17; Luke 17:3; Galatians 6:1-5; 1 Thessalonians 5:11; Jas 5:16)

7. Persuasive preaching and teaching

- a. Demonstrates exegetical & expositional competency (2 Tim 2:15; 4:2-4; Titus 1:9; 2:1)
- b. Able to teach the Bible into specific contexts & audiences (Acts 20:20-21; Romans 1:14-15; 1 Corinthians 9:19-23)
- c. Displays a commitment to Christ-centered preaching/teaching (1 Corinthians 1:17-18, 23; Galatians 1:6-10; 1 John 1:1-10)
- d. Teaches & applies the Bible in a manner, style & tone consistent with the gospel (1 Corinthians 11:1; Phil 4:8-9)
- e. Acknowledges the role of the Holy Spirit in the task of preaching & teaching (1 Corinthians 3:6-7)
- f. Preaches with effectiveness as evidenced by changed lives (Nehemiah 8:8; Luke 24:27, 44; Acts 2; Col 1:3-6; 1 Thessalonians 1)

8. Missional lifestyle

- a. Demonstrates a passion to reach others through relationships & evangelism (Matthew 9:37-38; 28:18-20; Romans 1:16; 10:10-17; 2 Timothy 4:5)
- b. Consistently & effectively shares faith in a manner understood by non-Christians (Acts 17:16-34)
- c. Meaningful relationships & rapport with non-Christians (1 Timothy 3:7)
- d. Sees lives impacted & changed through relational engagement (2 Corinthians 5:11-21; 1 Thessalonians 2:8)
- e. Leads others in a missional lifestyle and hospitality (1 Corinthians 4:16; 11:1)
- f. Cultural fit (naturally or adaptively) with the planting context (Acts 10:9-23; 16:1-5; 18:1-4; 1 Corinthians 9:19-23)

9. Entrepreneurial aptitude

- a. Demonstrated some successes in starting new ventures (Matthew 25:14-30; 1 Corinthians 3:10)
- b. Innovative and strategic visionary (Proverbs 22:29; Romans 12:2; 1 Corinthians 9:19-23)
- c. Energetic and enthusiastic about starting a new work (Romans 12:11; 2 Timothy 1:7)
- d. Ability to recruit others into a new venture (1 Corinthians 3:10)
- e. Evidences of being a self-starter (Ecclesiastes 11:4; 1 Corinthians 3:10)
- f. Willingness to work intensely for an extended period of time (1 Corinthians 9:24)
- g. Problem-solver even if that means knowing where to go to solve problems (Philippians 4:6, 13)

10. Indigenous (Alaska) commitment

- a. Understands cultural context of proposed Alaskan church plant (Acts 17:16-32)
- b. Responds with gospel truth to the sins of the culture (John 15:18-21; Romans 1:18-25; 1 Corinthians 15:1-8; 2 Corinthians 5:17-21)
- c. Commits himself and family to long-term residency and engagement with his Alaskan city and region (Jeremiah 29:4-7)

11. Conviction and calling

- a. Communicates a compelling personal conviction to plant churches (Acts 16:6-10)
- b. If married, his wife commends him for the task and shares his conviction to plant (1 Timothy 3:1-7; Titus 1:6)
- c. Willingness to sacrifice in order to discharge the conviction to plant a church (John 10:11; 15:13)
- d. Compelling vision for the church plant that motivates others (Romans 12:8)
- e. Clear strategy for planting a church-planting church (Matthew 28:18-20; Acts 2:41-47; 16:9, 12; Titus 1:5)
- f. Commended for ministry by other churches & church leaders (1 Timothy 3:7)

To develop these eleven essential competencies **our process** will include but not be limited to:

1. Active recruitment of potential church-planters

- In-house (within our churches or within Alaska)
- In-bound (from outside Alaska)

2. Assessment of growth in spiritual maturity and a recognized and affirmed calling by God to plant and lead a church

3. **Immersion training** over the course of one to two years that will include some formal instruction, hands-on experiences and coaching in both individual and online cohort settings to encourage maturity and readiness in the eleven essential competencies

4. **Placement and ongoing coaching** to encourage gospel saturation and contextually-appropriate fit in specific and unreached Alaskan communities

5. **Statewide training events** (multi-site or roadshow) in key Alaskan locations, with emphasis on one or several of the eleven competencies.

Our **organizational structure** consists of the following:

- 501(c)3 not-for-profit status
- Advisory/Advocacy Team consisting of community and movement leaders
- Executive Leadership Team consisting of gospel-centered Alaskan pastors

Plant Alaska will be comprised of the following member entities:

1. Participant churches

- Alaska-based
- Sharing the vision as an extended Family on Mission together
- Committed to identifying potential church-planters
- Resource commitment and leadership equity

2. Resource churches

- Prayer support
- Emphasize Alaska as vital mission focus
- Committed to identifying potential church-planters
- Resource commitment

Plant Alaska is in **Relational and Strategic Partnership** with church-multiplication movements and para-church ministries that agree with our distinctives and desire to partner with churches planting churches in Alaska.



Why participate with Plant Alaska?

- Plant Alaska offers equipping resources for future gospel-centered Alaskan church plants
- Plant Alaska provides a brotherhood of and for Alaskan church-planters
- Plant Alaska represents a unified team approach to making disciples, equipping leaders and planting churches in Alaska and the circumpolar North

Why Does Plant Alaska need you and your church?

Like you, we are committed to advancing God's Kingdom by multiplying disciples, developing leaders and planting churches that will plant churches.

Multiply Together!

Plant Alaska

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