

**Kentucky-Tennessee Conference
of
Seventh-day Adventists**

STRATEGIC PLAN

POLICIES, GUIDELINES & APPLICATIONS

For

Establishing

◆ MISSION GROUPS

◆ COMPANIES

◆ CHURCHES

Office of Secretariat
Revised: August 11, 2015

Mission Group

The objective of the Mission Group is to expand the ministry of the local church with the intention of advancing the Kingdom of Christ in a specific geographic area or to a specific people group (differentiated by geographic area, ethnic, cultural, or social identity) who are without the ministry and presence of an existing Seventh-day Adventist Church. A Mission Group must be organized for a least one year before it may apply to become a Company. The organizational goal of a Mission Group is to within a reasonable amount of time, become a Company.

Company

When a Mission Group grows, as evidenced by the qualifications listed in the "Organizing of Companies - Guidelines," it may submit an application for approval to be organized as a Company on an interim basis. A Company must be organized for a least two years before it may apply to become a Church. The organizational goal of a Company is to within a reasonable amount of time, become a Church.

Organized Church

When a Company grows, as evidenced by the qualifications listed in the "Organizing of Churches - Guidelines," it may submit an application for approval to be organized as a Church. The fully autonomous Church has its own relationship to the sisterhood of churches and both ministers and functions within the parameters of conference policy and protocol including those stated in this document. The organized Church is subject to the benefits, responsibilities and privileges afforded all churches that are recognized and whose organization is voted by the Kentucky-Tennessee Conference Executive Committee.

INTRODUCTION

The Kentucky-Tennessee Conference recognizes that its primary mission is to evangelize the individuals who reside within its territorial boundaries. A significant means by which to accomplish that Gospel task is to plant new churches. The Savior's commission to carry the gospel to all the world (Matt. 28:19, 20; Mark 16:15) means not only gaining new decisions for Christ, but actively engaging in the ministry of discipling all church members. In order to give adequate support, as well as to ensure the growth and accountability of developing mission groups, companies and churches, the following policies are put in place.

Purpose of group organization

Expanding the membership of God's kingdom is fundamental to being a Christian. The depth of a church's commitment to Christ can be measured by how much of its resources are devoted to evangelism and the gaining of new members. When an organized church reaches an optimum size at which its officers can best perform their task of shepherding, nurturing, and training members, it is well to considering extending the ministry of the church.

The success of new groups are determined by many things, the most important being the guidance and blessings of God. The conference is able to support and contribute to the success of establishing new groups by assisting them in the earliest planning stages of their existence. Criteria for the formation of a new recognized Mission Group includes the following:

- I. **It is required that prior to the establishment of a new group**, and in support of the local Group's sponsoring church, that there be consultation with the Ministerial Director. The ability to provide potential resources and give helpful assistance to the group leadership is vital in the establishment of a healthy and supportive environment. This consultation with the Ministerial Director is significant also in that it assists in coordinating new church initiatives with the conference strategic plan for growth. (Please see "Organizing of Mission Groups – Guidelines" for more information).

- II. **Unlike the application for Company status, there does not exist specific attendance or tithe criteria for the establishment of a Mission Group. However, in order to establish an approved Conference Mission Group, the following should be considered, and will be reviewed by the Conference Ministerial Director, Executive Secretary, and Administrative Committee:**
 - a. Geographic location in relation to other churches, including those in sister conferences

 - b. A sponsoring church willing to guide the new group. A mission group should work closely with the involvement and agreed support of a local established conference church and its leaders. This will likely be the church where a majority of the Group's attending members hold their

church membership. Due to isolated geographical location or other circumstances where a relationship with an established church is not possible, the Kentucky-Tennessee Conference Administrative Committee (ADCOM) may consider approval after carefully reviewing the specific application and circumstances.

- c. An appropriate number of experienced, baptized members in the Seventh-day Adventist Church who are committed to providing adequate lay leadership.
- d. Evangelistic growth potential in the community in which the congregation will be located.
- e. Adherence to the teachings, standards, and policies of the Seventh-day Adventist Church and the Kentucky-Tennessee Conference.
- f. Ability to assume appropriate financial responsibility such as rent, and appropriate return of tithes and designated offerings to the Conference.
- g. A clearly defined Biblical purpose and mission for establishing the group. (New groups should not be formed because of internal church disputes).
- h. The impact of the group on the Conference strategic master plan for churches and schools.

III. An 'Application for Mission Group' must be submitted and approved through the office of the Executive Secretary. (Please refer to the specific guidelines)