

APPENDIX 5

How a Presbytery and the Committee on Home Missions and Church Extension Work Together to Start New Churches

1. *CHMCE's purpose.* The Committee on Home Missions and Church Extension desires to be in partnership with each of the presbyteries of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church in the planting of new OP congregations throughout the United States. CHMCE's goal, given to it by the General Assembly, is to foster the development of mission works throughout the denomination by assisting each of the presbyteries to be as effective as possible in doing its work in the area of new church development. CHMCE sets policies and makes decisions in the light of this overarching purpose.
2. *The selection of an evangelist.* CHMCE has a policy that it "will always be consulted in the selection of the evangelist" when denominational financial aid is in view. CHMCE works hard to find capable and available men to serve as organizing pastors and regional home missionaries. The work of church planting is a specialized ministry requiring special abilities and experience. As plans unfold for the development of a mission work, it is wise to keep the Committee informed, so that, with presbytery and CHMCE working together, a qualified organizing pastor may be found as quickly as possible.

3. *Denominational financial support*

a. CHMCE's policy is to provide financial field support for up to four years on a declining scale, contingent upon the annually renewed recommendation of the presbytery, with the understanding that a full-time evangelist is working in the ministry of the mission work. Denominational financial aid can add the effective giving power of four to six families over the first several years of the life of the mission work. It is anticipated that as the church grows, the families added to the work will make up for the decreasing assistance provided.

b. Presbytery financial assistance to a mission work is always assumed when CHMCE provides field support. In this regard, it would be helpful to calculate how many giving family units would need to be added to the mission work in order to replace presbytery financial support. CHMCE hopes that presbytery and denominational financial support for mission works will complement each other, that they will be reduced proportionally, and that the presbytery anticipates a four-year cycle of support just as CHMCE does.

c. Requests for denominational field support for new mission works are to be made by the presbytery itself with the assistance of its home missions committee. Requests may be submitted at any time during the year, but CHMCE usually likes to consider them during its meetings in March, September, and December. Requests for support require an accompanying letter from the presbytery's home missions committee explaining the status and ministry of the new mission work, telling about the proposed man and his qualifications, and providing a four-year projected budget for the mission work showing the proportion of the work being funded from outside sources and its decrease over

that four-year period. Requests for renewed yearly support are to be in CHMCE's administrative office by November 15 of each year, along with a status report on the work and the presbytery's recommendation regarding further support.

d. A mission work receiving financial assistance from CHMCE through its presbytery is responsible, initially and upon request for renewal, to work toward the goal of financial self-sufficiency as soon as possible. A presbytery requesting financial assistance for a mission work is responsible to assure itself that the requested support is needed by the mission work, and report its findings on the matter to CHMCE along with its request.

4. *Monthly reports.* CHMCE provides a simplified reporting system for organizing pastors receiving denominational financial aid. The reports are in two parts. The first is factual and statistical; the second is financial. Organizing pastors are expected to provide copies to their presbytery home missions committee, to their supervising session, to their regional home missionary, and to CHMCE. These reports are valuable to the organizing pastor and to the supervising session or committee, as well as to the presbytery home missions committee and CHMCE. A careful review of these reports can yield helpful evaluative information for counsel and encouragement.

5. *The importance of prayer support.* The work of church planting in the Orthodox Presbyterian Church goes forward as God's people pray. Monthly reports request prayer information, which is used in the *New Horizons* prayer calendar and CHMCE's twice-monthly prayer service called *Home Missions Today*. Periodically, church planters are asked to provide articles

for the Home Missions pages of *New Horizons*, as a further vehicle to promote prayer for their ministries. Prayer support comes automatically with field support, but it may also be granted at presbytery request to selected mission works which do not receive denominational financial assistance.

6. *Developing a mission work.* A mission work is a young church of Jesus Christ which is developing in maturity and ministry. It needs much attention from many different kinds of advisors in order to develop effectively into an organized congregation. The work of a presbytery's home missions committee must involve the regular review and evaluation of its mission works. CHMCE can provide assistance through the members of its staff, who will visit and provide an evaluation, but, in the partnership approach to home missions, the job starts and ends with the presbytery.

7. *Training for home missions personnel.* CHMCE provides training for organizing pastors and regional home missionaries through its annual Home Missions Training Conference, held in January for those who began their church planting labors the previous year. This conference provides good fellowship with peers and presentations oriented toward the material in *Planting an Orthodox Presbyterian Church*. A yearly Regional Church Extension Conference is also held for regional home missionaries and presbytery home missions committee chairmen in the fall of each year to provide them with special expertise in the work of presbytery home missions and to coordinate the efforts and plans of the presbyteries of the OPC in their mutual work of planting new churches.

8. *Planning.* CHMCE values the planning efforts of the presbyteries as they consider establishing new mission works. The presbyteries which have given careful thought to the development of new churches, and which have laid plans and structured budgets accordingly, are those which have most effectively increased God's kingdom in their area of North America. CHMCE's general secretary and associate general secretary will serve in any way they can to assist presbytery home missions committees in their planning processes. As plans are shared and financial assistance is discussed each year at the Regional Church Extension Conference, an increasing degree of cooperation has developed between presbyteries, and a sense of ownership of the church-planting process has increased. Presbytery home missions committees should spend regular time making and evaluating realistic plans to establish new churches throughout their region. CHMCE will do everything it can to help in that process.