

*Be shepherds of God's flock that is under your care, watching over them... - 1 Peter 5:2*



# CHURCH PLANTING & VOLUNTEER LAY PASTOR GUIDELINES

For Lay Pastor Coordinators, Church Planters, and Volunteer Lay Pastors



Seventh-day Adventist® Church  
FLORIDA CONFERENCE





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# INTRODUCTION

The Florida Conference of Seventh-day Adventists recognizes that one of its major responsibilities is to plant churches. The Savior's commission to carry the gospel to all the world (Mathew 28: 19, 20; Mark 16: 15) means not only preaching the message but ensuring the welfare of those who accept that message. This involves shepherding as well as housing the membership. Such a situation calls for organization.

The focus of the Church Planting Strategy will be on new churches with a primary goal of growth through accessions from the communities in which they are planted.

To obey Christ's command to take the gospel to the world, Florida Conference needs more workers. Jesus' words are still true today that "the harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few" (Luke 10: 2 NIV). To fulfill the mission of Christ and reach new communities for God, Florida Conference needs volunteer leaders who can lead current missions, companies, and churches. Training lay pastors, elders, and other leaders is the best solution.

Florida Conference of Seventh-day Adventists has established policies for mission groups, companies, and churches to facilitate church growth and planting. These mission groups, companies, and churches will be led by a Volunteer Lay Leader/Volunteer Lay Pastor or Volunteer Ordained Pastor, under the supervision of the sponsoring church pastor and board, and approved by the Conference.

It is with this responsibility in mind that the following guidelines are put in place to facilitate the volunteer work of lay leaders and lay pastors.



Seventh-day Adventist Church  
FLORIDA CONFERENCE





# LAY PASTOR COORDINATOR

## Mission Statement

Mobilizing and equipping lay people to provide consistent and loving care to congregations. Promoting congregational vitality through lay leadership training and providing a means for those who are called to leadership positions to develop their skills for service in different forms of ministry in the church.

*"I urge the elders among you, as a fellow-elder myself and a witness to the sufferings of Christ, and as one who is to have a share in the glory that is to be revealed: give a shepherd's care to the flock of God that is entrusted to you: watch over it, not simply as a duty but gladly, as God wants; not for sordid money, but because you are eager to do it. Do not lord it over the group which is in your charge, but be an example for the flock. When the chief shepherd appears, you will be given the unfading crown of glory."*

*The New Jerusalem Bible. 1985 (1 Peter 5:1-4). New York: Doubleday.*

## Reporting Relationships

The Lay Pastor Coordinator reports to the Vice President for Pastoral Ministries and the Florida Conference Executive Committee.

## Position Description

The role of the Lay Pastor Coordinator is to:

- Assist in overseeing the life and direction of mission groups, companies, and churches led by volunteer leaders.
- Have a firm grasp on the purpose, values, and strategies of Florida Conference's primary goal of church planting and have the ability to align lay leaders and members to the objectives.
- Offer pastoral leadership to the congregations alongside volunteer clergy and lay ministers.
- Ensure that the systems, practices, and policies of these congregations responsibly and effectively support the Florida Conference's guidelines.



## Key Responsibilities

- 1. Mentoring and Coaching.** The Lay Pastor Coordinator serves as mentor, coach, and guide for Volunteer Lay Pastors as needed. In addition to coaching, the Coordinator will observe the Volunteer Lay Pastors in their ministry environment as scheduling permits.
- 2. Preaching and Teaching.** The Lay Pastor Coordinator will be available to speak and worship in 30 or more congregations a year during Sabbath church service in addition to midweek meetings. Also, seminars and instruction meetings may be arranged that same day as scheduling permits.
- 3. Volunteer Lay Pastors' Continuing Education Program.** The Lay Pastor Coordinator oversees training and development of Lay Pastors. There will be two Continuing Education Retreats (Spring & Fall) in which seminars will be taught in five different areas: spiritual vitality, biblical exposition, people skills, evangelism, and team building. The Coordinator is responsible for organizing these retreats.
- 4. Mission Group Expansion.** The Lay Pastor Coordinator directs and oversees the expansion of new mission groups in new areas and motivates and identifies the development of mission groups into companies and companies into churches by Florida Conference policies. The Lay Pastor Coordinator will be available to provide general and specific vision, direction, and outreach strategies for new mission groups.
- 5. Point Person between Volunteer Lay Pastors and Conference:** The Lay Pastor Coordinator will serve as a point person between the Volunteer Lay Pastor, his or her church, and Florida Conference. The Lay Pastor Coordinator will encourage and supervise the monthly reporting of attendance, baptisms, tithe, visitors, etc.
- 6. Evaluation of Lay Pastor.** The Lay Pastor Coordinator will review and evaluate Lay Pastors every year under the following parameters:
  - a. Evidence of growth in their local church
  - b. Evidence of potential to move on to the next level of organization
  - c. Evidence of growth in the five areas of the Continuing Education Program
  - d. Attendance at meetings, gatherings, and retreats
  - e. Review of monthly reports from Lay Pastors and quarterly reports from the church



# VOLUNTEER LAY PASTOR

## Ministry Description

God asks the church to be a community of people sharing a common purpose and fellowship continually growing in faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God. Paul describes the church as *“His body, the fullness of him who filleth everything in every way”* (Eph. 1:22).

God calls us into His body for the purpose of establishing a saving relationship with Him and the community with one another. The Holy Spirit convicts our minds leads us to repentance and plants us within the church. Thus, the church is a creation of the Spirit.

We experience the presence of Jesus Christ in the world within your church, and the world experiences the living presence of Jesus Christ as it witnesses your church. When a local church serves the world, it is an expression of the love of Christ to the World. It is the body of Christ serving the world’s needs and being used by the Spirit as an agency of salvation.

Thus, the church is a servant body. Created for service, it serves the Lord in praise, serves one another in love, and serves the world in humility. *“For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them”* (Eph. 2:10).

God calls every member of the church into ministry. The church is a kingdom of priests set free to minister effectively for Christ. Our priesthood is to each other within the church and to the world. A volunteer lay pastor is a ministering servant of God, and, like every Christian, is called to ministry, gifted by the Holy Spirit, and in baptism ordained for ministry (Eph. 4:11-12).

God supplies each person in the church with the resources for ministry: scripture, spiritual power, God’s character, and spiritual gifts. A volunteer lay pastor is equipped for his or her ministry by the gifts received from the Holy Spirit.

## Description of Volunteer Responsibilities

A Volunteer Lay Pastor is a lay leader (i) who volunteers to serve, (ii) who has been recommended by the sponsoring church board, (iii) who has completed certification by the Conference through training and demonstrations of fitness for ministry, and (iv) whose appointment has been approved by the Florida Conference Administrative Committee (ADCOM). Annual recertification for Volunteer Lay Pastor status is contingent upon attending annual recertification training, an annual review, and recommendation of the sponsoring church board. Volunteer Lay Pastor status must be a result of a continuing training process for annual recertification. The Volunteer Lay Pastor must demonstrate character, leadership, spirituality, loyalty to church and theology, and a cooperative spirit. To be considered for company status, a mission group should have a Volunteer Lay Pastor serving the group.

# Reporting Relationships

Volunteer Lay Pastors are responsible to the Volunteer Lay Pastor Coordinator, Vice President for Pastoral Ministries, and the Florida Conference Executive and Administrative Committees (ADCOM).

## Key Responsibilities

The ministry to which a person is called when he or she becomes a Volunteer Lay Pastor can best be described in the following ways:

- 1. Teamwork.** Volunteer Lay Pastors work under the supervision of a senior pastor/coach or district leader, and they must work closely with the local church board and officers. A “lone ranger” style of leadership will only create problems and not build up the congregation. Volunteer Lay Pastors must arrange to meet on a regular basis (refer to the pastor/coach VLP agreement). Only in this way will Volunteer Lay Pastors ensure that they are supporting one another and working together.
- 2. Preaching and Worship Leadership.** A primary responsibility of the Volunteer Lay Pastor is to fill the pulpit, perhaps three out of four Sabbaths a month. This includes attention to the entire worship service, not just the sermon. The elders are the worship committee in small churches, and it is essential that Volunteer Lay Pastors work with them as co-leaders in worship. Any changes in the order of service need to be voted by the elders.
- 3. Visitation.** Volunteer Lay Pastors cannot do an adequate job of preaching unless they have regular contact with the congregation in their homes and places of work. The Volunteer Lay Pastor is usually expected to systematically visit the church members, give Bible studies to interested persons, and make contact with all Sabbath visitors. Volunteer Lay Pastors need to clarify with the senior pastor/coach and the church board their expectations regarding visits to the sick, funerals, and referrals for pastoral counseling.
- 4. Chairing the Board.** Sometimes the Volunteer Lay Pastor is expected to chair the church board half the time or two out of three meetings while the senior pastor is present and chairs it once a quarter. Other times, the local church elects a board member as chairperson. Volunteer Lay Pastors should clarify this responsibility with their supervisor and the board.
- 5. Midweek Meetings.** Volunteer Lay Pastors should conduct a prayer meeting, a Bible study group, a seminar, or a lay training class one evening a week, with the possible exception of the weeks the church board meets. This is a vital part of a healthy, growing church. In many churches, there is no longer one general midweek meeting but a number of Home Bible Fellowships and seminars offered on different days in various locations. This allows for maximum attendance and the meeting of a wider range of needs.
- 6. Planning.** Every congregation needs to have a yearly plan for church growth to ensure an ongoing, balanced program of outreach, soul-winning, and nurture. The process by which these plans are developed is as important as the actual plan. If the church leaders and members do not participate in planning, they may not support the plans. This happens when the church board or Church Ministries Council has a planning council each year and then presents the plan to a general church business meeting along with the church budget. Volunteer Lay Pastors should determine whether it will be their responsibility to act as facilitator for this process or whether the senior pastor will take this responsibility.

**7. Training Programs.** Volunteer Lay Pastors must cooperate and participate in Conference-scheduled programs and activities, including specified training programs, as directed by Conference officers. The Volunteer Lay Pastor must be involved in a continuous training process for certification as a lay pastor. Recertification for lay pastor status will be contingent upon attending annual recertification training. There will be two Continuing Education Retreats per year (Spring & Fall). All Volunteer Lay Pastors are required to attend both retreats in order to renew and retain credentials.

**8. Ministry Coach.** Having a mentor in pastoral ministry is one of the best prescriptions for healthy growth in competence and protection from vulnerabilities. Becoming a “loner” in pastoral ministry is not only lonely, but it can be perilous. A Volunteer Lay Pastor must meet with a designated pastoral mentor (in most cases, their local pastor) each month, either by phone or in person, to discuss professional effectiveness of active ministry, to strengthen their personal and spiritual health, and to affirm their gifts for ministry (see the pastor/coach VLP agreement).

**9. Reports.** Volunteer Lay Pastors must ensure that membership, baptisms, and financial reports are reported on a monthly basis by the church clerk, treasurer, or assistant treasurer.

**10. Tithe and Offering.** It is the responsibility of the Volunteer Lay Pastor to see that all tithe and conference offering received by the mission group, the company, or the church where the Volunteer Lay Pastor is serving are sent to the sponsoring church or the Conference on a monthly basis as follows:

- a. All tithes and offerings from the mission group are to be sent to and receipted by the sponsoring church. Missions group funds will only be processed through the sponsoring church's bank accounts. The sponsoring church shall assume all administrative responsibilities for the mission group, and its board will exercise over the group the same authority that it has over its congregation.
- b. All tithes and offerings of a company are to be sent to the Conference, with the exception of the local expense offering which is to remain with the company. It is understood that a company has an acting board; however, the Conference Executive Committee serves as the official board.
- c. All tithes and offerings of a church are to be sent to the Conference, with the exception of the local expense offering which is to remain with the church. The congregation should be financially able to assume its pro-rata subsidy to a school in the Conference. This is to be arranged with the Administrative Committee and the Vice President for Education.

## Authorization to Conduct Certain Activities

Florida Conference will authorize a credentialed Volunteer Lay Pastor to conduct all the functions of a local elder with the additional authorization to conduct baptisms within their assigned congregation.

## Duration of Appointment

A Volunteer Lay Pastor is appointed for one year. Annual recertification is contingent upon attending recertification training twice each year, annual review by the Florida Conference Pastoral Ministries Department, the recommendation of the sponsoring church, and approval by the Administrative Committee. Volunteer Lay Pastors may decide to discontinue their service at any time, without penalty.

## No Compensation

The Volunteer Lay Pastor is a volunteer and not an employee of Florida Conference. Volunteer Lay Pastors serve without compensation in any form. Volunteer Lay Pastors who lead a Conference-approved company or church may request reimbursement of designated, documented travel and ministry-related expenses from Florida Conference, up to a maximum annual amount established by the Conference. Volunteer Lay Pastors who lead a Conference-approved mission group serve without compensation nor reimbursement in any form until the mission group reaches company status.





# Training Curriculum

The Volunteer Lay Pastor Training Program is structured for and will be taught for Volunteer Lay Pastors appointed to mission groups and those who are already functioning as Volunteer Lay Pastors in Florida. There will be two Continuing Education Retreats in which seminars will be taught in different areas: spiritual vitality, biblical exposition, people skills, evangelism, and team building.

This training curriculum was developed by consulting with pastors regarding the skills most important to pastoral success. The educational philosophy that guides this training includes three related principles:

1. Each Volunteer Lay Pastor in training already has certain elements of knowledge, experience, and natural skills that can be applied to ministry.
2. Each ministerial competency has basic foundational elements which, if taught and practiced, will guide a natural and personalized development in that competency.
3. These competencies are best developed through practice in a real ministry setting.

## Volunteer Lay Pastor Training Program Objectives

1. Encouragement, care, and growth of churches in need of lay pastoral leadership through the provision of approved laypersons trained and equipped as Volunteer Lay Pastors, thereby strengthening the life of our church and advancing the Kingdom of God.
2. Continuing training and development of Volunteer Lay Pastors already involved in ministry.
3. Development of a clear biblical basis for Adventist doctrines explicitly based on the teachings of Scripture.
4. Development of a firm understanding of Adventist identity and church operations and procedures.

## Curriculum

There are five areas of training for the Volunteer Lay Pastor Training Program with the following designations:

### 1. Spiritual Vitality

***Spiritual Development for Ministry:*** This area explores the role of personal spirituality in effective ministry. It offers insights for developing a stronger personal bond with God and for fostering spiritual growth in others.

Recommended seminars:

- Practicing Spiritual Disciplines
- Growing in the Fruit of the Spirit
- Growing Faith in God
- Authentic Fellowship
- Becoming Vulnerable
- Forgiveness in the Hands of God
- Growth Through Mentoring

***Spiritual Servant Leadership:*** This area outlines both biblical perspectives and recent thinking on leadership theory. It provides principles and tools that help leaders lead in godly ways and godly directions.

Recommended seminars:

- Spiritual Growth Inventory
- Awaking of Your True Self “Exploring Consciousness”
- When Being “Nice” Isn’t Enough
- Leaders are Made, Not Born

## 2. Bible Exposition

***Biblical Foundation of Preaching:*** This area establishes the biblical mandate, scope, and purpose of preaching and develops the Volunteer Lay Pastor's ability to study the Bible for the purpose of preaching.

Recommended seminars:

- Basic Principles of Hermeneutics
- A Clear Biblical Basis for Doctrines
- Good Understanding of Seventh-day Adventist Theology
- A Clear Understanding of Grace
- Bible Preaching

***A Framework for Biblical Preaching and Sermon Delivery:*** This area establishes a framework for sermon development. It takes the mystery out of sermon formation by helping trainees identify building blocks of sermon creation and identifies keys to improve sermon delivery and audience reception.

Recommended seminars:

- Sermon Preparation
- Keys to Effective Preaching
- Homiletics Do's and Don'ts
- The Expository Method

Resource Materials:

1. "Seventh-day Adventists Believe" Nampa, Idaho: Pacific Press Pub. Assn., 2006
2. Braga, James. "How to Prepare Bible Messages" Portland, Oregon: Multnomah Press, 2005.
3. Brown, Jeannine K. "Scripture as Communication: Introducing Biblical Hermeneutics" Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2007.
4. Crane, James D. "El Sermón Eficaz" El Paso, TX: Casa Bautista de Publicaciones, 2004
5. Detamore, Fordyce. "Finding his Lost Sheep" Review and Herald, 1989.
6. Hayden, Keavin. "Lifestyles of the Remnant" Review and Herald Publishing Assn.
7. Knight, George R. "A Search for Identity: The Development of Seventh-day Adventist Beliefs". Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald, 2000.
8. MacArthur, John Jr. "Rediscovering Expository Preaching". Nashville, TN: Word Publishing.
9. Vitrano, Steven P. "How to Preach" Review and Herald, 1991.

## 3. People Skills

***Emotional Intelligence in Ministry:*** This area explores how to develop the people skills necessary to thrive in ministry. It identifies the often sensed but unnamed skills of ministers who win the heart of parishioners.

Recommended seminars:

- Becoming a Resonant Leader
- Coaching Skills (listening, intuition, curiosity, naming, affirming, fulfillment)
- Ability to Use Methods to Reach Postmoderns
- The Motivation to Change

***Pastoral Counseling:*** This area provides tools to meaningfully counsel those in crisis. Also, it helps Volunteer Lay Pastors know when to refer a person to a professional counselor.

Recommended seminars:

- Fundamentals of Pastoral Care
- What Constitutes Successful Pastoral Care?
- Human Relation Skills for Pastoral Care
- When to Refer a Person to Look for Professional Help
- The Goal of Counseling is to Move from One Level of Change to Another

**Managing Conflict:** This area teaches skills for defusing and resolving conflicts in the church. It provides principles and models for managing conflict.

Recommended seminars:

- Biblical Principles for Conflict Resolutions
- Engaging Cultural and Demographic Realities
- Becoming a Calm Leader
- “Holy Habits” and the Process of Transformation

#### 4. Evangelism and Church Growth

**Evangelistic Approaches:** This area explores some of the most time-tested approaches to sharing the truth of Adventism, offering principles and tools for effective evangelism.

Recommended Seminars:

- Biblical Foundation for Evangelism: “The Church in the N. T.”
- The Formation of Small Companies “A plan presented by One that cannot err” (Testimonies, Vol. 7 p. 22)
- Strategic Planning and the Church
- Methods to Reach Postmoderns
- How to Assimilate New Members into the Congregation
- How to Plan and Conduct Evangelistic Events

Resource Materials:

1. Burril, Russel. “Revitalización de la Iglesia en el Siglo XXI” Doral, FL: Asociacion Publicadora Interamericana, 2006. Original Title “The Revolutionized Church of the 21 Century”
2. Burrill, Russell. “The Life & Mission of the Local Church” Fallbrook, CA: Hart Books, 1998.
3. Coleman, Robert E. “The Master Plan of Evangelism” Grand Rapids, MI: Fleming H. Revell Company, 1993. Also in Spanish “El Plan Maestro de la Evangelizacion”
4. Donahue, Bill. “Coaching Life-changing Small Group Leaders: A Practical Guide For Those Who Lead And Shepherd Small Group Leaders” Grand Rapids: Zondervan, c2006.
5. Eldridge, Daryl. “The Teaching Ministry of the Church” Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman, 1995.
6. Hanks, Billie Jr. “Everyday Evangelism” Nashville, TN: Editorial Caribe, 1994. Also in Spanish “Evangelización Todos los Días”
7. Johnson, Kurt W. “Small Groups for the End-time” Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald Pub. Assn., 1997. Also in Spanish “Grupos Pequeños para el Tiempo del Fin”
8. Malphurs, Aubrey. “Advanced Strategic Planning. A New Model for Church and Ministry Leaders” Grand Rapids, MI: Pub. By Baker Books, 2004.
9. Malphurs, Aubrey. “Developing Vision for Ministry in the 21st Century” Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2004.
10. Scazzero, Peter. “The Emotional Healthy Church” Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Corporation, 2003. Also in Spanish “La Iglesia Emocionalmente Sana”



## 5. Team Building and Leadership

***A Theology of Church:*** This area develops a biblical understanding of church function and structure, providing a framework for building the church into a biblical team.

Recommended Seminars:

- Adventist Beginnings and Development of Adventist Organizational Distinctives (historical development and distinctive doctrines)
- Global Mission of the Church vs. a Mentality of Local Consumerism
- Abilities in Financial Management (budgeting, etc.)
- Conducting Effective Meetings (boards, committees, etc.)
- Ability to Plan and Conduct Worship, Communion, Baby Dedications, and Baptismal Services
- Working Knowledge of Church Policy (Church Manual, Florida Conference Policies, etc.)

***Becoming a Ministry Mentor:*** This area presents methods for developing others into ministry. It gives principles of approach and suggests a process to be applied.

Recommended Seminars:

- Becoming a Ministry Mentor
- Paul Charges Timothy to Step Up “The Passing of the Torch”
- The Marks of a Good Ministry Mentor (specific, measurable, attainable, relevant, challenging, memorable)
- How to lead a Spiritual Formation Small Group





# PURPOSE OF GROUP ORGANIZATION

The main reason for any of the three levels of local church organization is to evangelize. Expanding the membership of God's kingdom is fundamental to being Christian. The depth of a church's Christian love can be measured by how much of its time is spent in recruiting new members. When an organized church reaches a size at which its officers can best perform their task of disciplining, nurturing, and training members, it is well to extend the ministry of the church.

## **General issues to consider prior to consideration of a new organization.**

Outreach is encouraged; however, counsel and approval from the Pastoral Ministries Department and Conference administration is required before laying plans or starting a new group so that it can be coordinated with the Conference strategic plan for growth.

1. Geographic location in relation to other churches. Churches should not be located in close proximity to an existing church, which could negatively impact the operations of the existing church.
2. A sponsoring church willing to guide the new group. On occasion, the Conference itself may be the sponsoring organization.
3. An appropriate number of baptized adult members who have been established in the church for a reasonable period of time.
4. Evangelistic growth potential in the community in which the congregation will be located.
5. Adequate lay leadership.
6. Adherence to the teachings, standards, and policies of the Seventh-day Adventist Church and Florida Conference.
7. Ability to assume appropriate financial responsibility such as school subsidies, etc.
8. Reason for wanting to start a new congregation (new groups should not be formed because of internal church disputes).
9. Selection of a Volunteer Lay Leader by the sponsoring church. The Volunteer Lay Leader will be willing to go through a Volunteer Lay Pastor training program and will agree to attend recertification meetings. A Volunteer Lay Pastor must be in place before a group will be recognized as a company.
10. Direct supervision by an employed pastor will not happen during the mission and company status. The sponsoring church pastor will work with the Volunteer Lay Pastor during those formative times. The Volunteer Lay Pastor will serve in a pastoral role working under the direction of the employed pastor.



# ORGANIZATION WORKBOOK

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This workbook has been compiled to assist in the organization of mission groups, companies, and churches as described below:

## **Mission Group**

The objective of the mission group is to expand the ministry of a local church to a different population group (differentiated by geographic area, ethnic, cultural, or social identity).

## **Company**

The purpose of developing a mission group into a company is to take steps toward church status. Company status exists in order to show that the group can work to demonstrate that it is capable of all of the many functions of a fully trusted church in the Conference sisterhood of churches. This is a time when the group proves that it can successfully function in spiritual leadership, ministry structures, finances, membership, strategically planned outreach, and faithfulness to biblical principles as taught by the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

## **Church**

The fully autonomous church has its own relationship to the sisterhood of churches.

## **Using this Organization Workbook**

Florida Conference of Seventh-day Adventists has established policies for mission groups, companies, and churches to facilitate church growth and planting. Before filling out the application forms for your group, it is essential that all members involved in the formation of the group read and understand the policies that apply.

Once the required application and forms are completed with the help of the pastor of the sponsoring church, the pastor will arrange for the request to be presented to the sponsoring church board. After board approval has been obtained, the pastor of the sponsoring church will send the application to the office of the Pastoral Ministries Department.

The Conference Administrative Committee will review the application. Once approval is granted, it will be returned to the Pastoral Ministries Department for further processing.





# CHURCH PLANTING POLICY GUIDELINES

## A DESCRIPTION OF FLORIDA CONFERENCE POLICY

When God calls a person, a group of people, or a congregation to plant a new church, this calling is confirmed by the Seventh-day Adventist Church in the Conference through the following process:

### **I. Initiation by the Local Church**

- A. The idea of planting a new congregation is presented to the pastor.
- B. A core group, which will be the nucleus of the new congregation, is identified within the membership of the sponsoring church.
- C. A shared vision for the new congregation is created.
- D. The pastor presents the vision and plan for establishing the new congregation to the church board of the sponsoring church and to the church in business session.
- E. The sponsoring church commits to support the new congregation it is birthing with prayer, publicity, people, and finances.
- F. The core group goes through the training on mission and policies that is required by Florida Conference for new congregations.
- G. The pastor submits an application on behalf of the church to the Pastoral Ministries Department in the Conference.
- H. The Conference designates a coach for the leader of the new mission group. The district pastor may serve in this capacity.

### **II. Establishment and Growth of a New Congregation: “Mission Group” Status**

- A. Florida Conference votes the new congregation into existence; in this stage, it is called a mission group.
- B. The pastor, the church board of the sponsoring church, and Conference staff support and give leadership to the new mission group.
- C. The new mission group forms strategies for discipleship, outreach, evangelism, and other areas of ministry.
- D. In time, the new congregation is expected to grow and mature in leadership, attendance, member involvement in service and discipleship, and financial solvency.
- E. Remittances of tithe and designated offerings are done through the sponsoring church. The sponsoring church board may allow the mission group to have its own bank account and remit directly to Florida Conference (if this is the case, see process on III. C.) It is required in this case that the treasurer or the head elder of the sponsoring church be a signer on the mission group’s bank account.
- F. The lay leader is required to attend the Volunteer Pastor’s training Florida Conference offers twice a year and other Conference-sponsored training events.
- G. The new congregation is expected to be a faithful member of the Seventh-day Adventist worldwide movement.

### III. The Mission Group Becomes a “Company”

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- A. After a minimum one year of existence as an approved mission group, having established the previous criteria and having at least 40 active Seventh-day Adventist members, the pastor, on behalf of the sponsoring church sends an application for company status to the Pastoral Ministries Department of the Conference.
- B. The Florida Conference Executive Committee considers and votes company status for the mission group.
- C. When the mission group becomes a company, it detaches administratively from the sponsoring church, and it attaches to Florida Conference. The following steps must take place, some of which may have already taken place with sponsoring church’s approval:
  - 1. Membership is transferred from the sponsoring church to the Florida Conference Church through the normal member transfer process.
  - 2. The Florida Conference membership clerk provides materials and training to the new clerk with the support of the sponsoring church clerk.
  - 3. The treasurer of the sponsoring church trains the new treasurer.
  - 4. Church accounting software is obtained from the Florida Conference Treasury Department.
  - 5. The new company will need bank authorization and 501(c)(3) Letters, federal tax ID number (EIN), and a Consumer’s Certificate of Exemption. These are applied for and obtained through the Florida Conference Development & Planned Giving Department.
  - 6. Please, do not file for a fictitious name. If you have questions about fictitious name filing or questions about Sunbiz, call Maria A. Pino in the Development & Planned Giving Department.
  - 7. The new company opens a bank account using their own EIN supplied by the Development & Planned Giving Department and other pertinent documents.
  - 8. The new company starts direct remittances of tithe and designated offerings to the Florida Conference Treasury Department.
  - 9. A Ceremony of Organization is conducted by Florida Conference.
- D. Through time, the new company will show growth and maturity in the areas of leadership, membership growth, and member involvement in service and discipleship. It will become financially solvent, and it will show faithfulness to the organization and the doctrines of the Seventh-day Adventist worldwide movement.

### IV. The Company becomes a member “Church” of Florida Conference

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- A. Once the previous criteria is established and the company has at least 60 members and 80 thousand dollars in annual tithe, the pastor, on behalf of the company, sends an application for church status to the Florida Conference Pastoral Ministries Department.
- B. Florida Conference considers and votes the status of “church” for the company.
- C. Once the company becomes a church, it becomes a Florida Conference member church. The following steps must take place:
  - 1. Membership transfer from the Florida Conference Church to the new church through the normal membership transfer process.
  - 2. A Ceremony of Organization is conducted by Florida Conference.
- D. The new church may continue to be led by a Volunteer Lay Pastor.



# PREREQUISITE FOR LOAN QUALIFICATION POLICIES

The prerequisite for loan qualification form should be returned to the Property Development Department upon completion.

## Building and Appropriation Policies

The title to church and school properties should not be held by individuals or by trustees. Title to all church properties should be vested in the name of the Florida Conference Association of Seventh-day Adventists.

No church property may be offered for sale without the approval of the Conference Executive Committee/Conference Administration. No arrangements or negotiations for the purchase of lands or buildings should be entered into without prior Conference approval. All real estate transactions require an appraisal from a certified appraiser.

Churches contemplating either the purchase or the erection of buildings shall not undertake financial obligations that would embarrass the membership. In all building undertakings, careful counsel should be sought, in each case taking into consideration the size of the congregation, its financial strength, and the location of the building.

In the purchase of building and church properties, the following additional guidelines/information shall apply:

1. The land must be clear of debt before entering into a construction project.
2. The church may borrow the equivalent of 250% of its annual tithe or 65% of the project cost, whichever is less. The church must have the difference of the construction cost (35%) available in cash or readily convertible assets before construction can begin.
3. The Conference subsidy of 5% is calculated on the building cost (including land) less the amount from the sale of any previously owned property. The maximum subsidy for any one project is \$50,000. Availability of cash flow may necessitate the subsidy for construction to be spread over a period of one year.
4. Tithe and financial strength of the church must be taken into account and repayment ability confirmed to the Conference.
5. If a Revolving Fund loan or Conference appropriation is requested by a church, the church's financial plan must be approved by the Conference Administrative Committee.
6. To qualify for a construction subsidy, a bid price from a qualified General Contractor or Construction Estimator must be submitted to the Florida Conference Property Development Department along with the application for building assistance together with a complete set of plans and specifications (two sets if project is \$500,000 or more). This is to be submitted even though the church chooses to hire a project manager and use some volunteer labor because it will give all concerned a better assurance of the actual cost of the project.



7. Since the title to all church property is held in the name of the Florida Conference Association, all contracts for sale and purchase of property must be approved and signed by the proper officers of Florida Conference. Extreme care must be taken to see that proper contingencies are included regarding zoning, utilities, soil conditions, and the like. Also, a minimum Phase I environmental study is required. Although the local congregation can begin negotiations and must give final approval for any contract, the Conference Property Development Director should be kept advised of such negotiations.
8. Subsidies will be granted to churches or schools for construction or purchase of its first facility. Once a church/school is established in its own facility, additional subsidies will only be granted for future expansions within the subsequent five years, cumulative up to \$50,000.
9. Builder's Risk and Liability Insurance coverage should be requested from the Conference Risk Management Department before construction begins. Evidence that the builder/contractor carries Worker's Compensation Insurance on all their employees must be obtained and a copy furnished to the Conference Church Property Development Department prior to start of construction.
10. Churches shall use only contractors that are licensed and bonded.
11. Other church debts and obligations must be current.





# ORGANIZING A MISSION GROUP POLICIES

The following applies for the official approval of a mission group (church plant) by the Florida Conference Administrative Committee (ADCOM):

## 1. The Process

1. Sponsor church pastor & church planter utilize ACTS Support System tools.
2. Sponsor church pastor submits this mission group's Application to the Pastoral Ministries Department along with the following attachments:
  - a. Church Planting Coaching Agreement
  - b. Mission Plan Template
  - c. Partnership Covenant
  - d. Copy of Sponsoring Church Board (or Business Session) Minutes including four voted actions:
    - i. Recommendation for the new mission group church plant
    - ii. List of Committed Members whose membership is already in the sponsoring church (eAdventist list)
    - iii. Name of recommended Volunteer Lay Leader for new mission group
    - iv. Completed Partnership Covenant
3. The Pastoral Ministries Department reviews and submits application to ADCOM for approval.
4. A Ceremony recognizing the new Mission Group is held by the Pastoral Ministries Department.

## 2. Mission

The primary goal for which a mission group is organized is for community outreach and growth through accessions from the community in which it is planted. A mission group should not be organized as the result of any internal church disputes.

## 3. Leadership

The Volunteer Lay Leader of a mission group shall be appointed by the sponsoring church. The mission group will be led by a Volunteer Lay Leader or Volunteer Lay Pastor under the supervision of the sponsoring church pastor and board.

The church board of the sponsoring church should select a lay leader for consideration to enter the Volunteer Lay Pastor training by the Pastoral Ministries Department.

A Volunteer Lay Pastor (VLP) is one who has been recommended by the sponsoring church board and is voted by the Administrative Committee. A VLP is an ordained elder willing to complete twice-a-year training by Florida Conference through which they are equipped for ministry in their local church. Recertification is contingent upon attending annual training and under the supervision of the director of Volunteer Lay Pastors character, leadership, spirituality, loyalty to church, theology, and cooperative spirit need to be demonstrated.

#### **4. Long-term Rental Agreements**

Mission groups should not enter into long-term rental agreements of any kind without consulting the sponsoring church.

#### **5. Membership**

Membership of those attending the mission group is held in the sponsoring church.

#### **6. Objective.**

The mission group should be organized for specifically evangelistic reasons. Mission groups will not be started for the purpose of creating employment opportunities for pastors.

#### **7. Tithes and Offerings**

The mission group must designate from within an Assistant Treasurer to the Treasurer of the sponsor church. All tithes and offerings from the Mission Group are to be sent to and receipted by the sponsoring church. Mission group funds will only be processed through the sponsoring church bank account. The Treasurer of the sponsoring church keeps separate accounting for both tithe and offerings from the mission group to enable financial progress reports. The offering funds of the mission group should always be available for its ministry needs.

#### **8. Financial Responsibilities**

The sponsoring church, along with the mission group, shall collaborate and agree in its engagement in regards to all the management of finances regarding the mission group. While financial support will vary in each case, the specific commitments should be articulated in the Partnership Covenant.

#### **9. Administrative Responsibilities**

The mission group should form its own ministry team and bring major decisions to the sponsor church board for recommendations. The authority for the mission group resides in the sponsor church board. If there is any purchase of property, this will be handled through the sponsoring church in consultation with Florida Conference. Mission groups do not qualify on their own to obtain a loan for church property.







Seventh-day Adventist Church  
FLORIDA CONFERENCE

## Application for Mission Group

Application Date: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

Sponsoring church: \_\_\_\_\_

Sponsoring pastor: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of mission group: \_\_\_\_\_

Street address of mission group: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP code: \_\_\_\_\_

How many miles is the group from the sponsoring church? \_\_\_\_\_

How many miles is the group from the nearest Adventist church? \_\_\_\_\_

Name of the nearest Adventist church? \_\_\_\_\_

How many current members of the sponsoring church are going to be part of the mission group?

(attach a list from eAdventist highlighting/markings such members)

\_\_\_\_\_

Name of Volunteer Lay Leader recommended by sponsor church pastor and church board:

\_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP code: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of birth: \_\_\_\_\_ Name of spouse: \_\_\_\_\_

Date when the Volunteer Lay Leader was ordained as an elder and place:

\_\_\_\_\_



# CHURCH PLANTING COACHING AGREEMENT

*"When we get together I want to encourage you in your faith, but I also want to be encouraged by yours."  
- Romans 1:12*

## What is Coaching?

Every church planter, whether a paid or volunteer pastor, must have a coach. The coach is neither a specialist telling the planter what to do (that's mentoring) or a Holy Spirit replacement. Instead, effective coaching provides accountability to the self-identified goals of the planter and availability for emotional and spiritual support during the journey. Good coaching involves asking the right questions, not having the right answers. The Florida Conference coach training program helps equip the coach with a set of baseline skills.

## Where Does the Planter find a Coach?

Ideally, the coach has been through the Florida Conference coach training program. If the sponsor church pastor has received coaching training, they become the coach. If this arrangement will not work or the sponsor church pastor has not received coaching training, then the Pastoral Ministries Department will assign a different coach. If the pastor/coach is someone besides the sponsor church pastor, the relationship between sponsoring pastor and church planter must continue.

## What are the Specific Commitments?

### 1. **Monthly Conversation** between the pastor/coach\* and church planter.

**Purpose:** Support the church planter, their goals (Mission Plan Template), challenges, etc.

**Time:** No more than 90 minutes per month. Communication through emails or telephone between monthly meetings is also assumed as needed.

**Location:** A restaurant is recommended in most cases. Up to \$30 per meal is provided.

Receipts must be submitted by the sponsoring pastor to the Pastoral Ministries Department for reimbursement.

**Initiate:** The pastor/coach initiates communication and makes arrangements for the meeting.

### 2. **Monthly Visit** by the pastor/coach\* to the mission group/company/church.

**Purpose:** Observation, training, advice, and support.

**Time:** Once a month.

**Location:** Some suggestions: leadership meeting, elders, small group, ministry event, worship services, etc.

**Initiate:** The pastor/coach will determine when the visits will take place depending on his calendar of activities. The church planter will indicate the dates that need support from pastor/coach.

### 3. **Ongoing Training** Opportunities for pastor/coach and the church planter.

**Purpose:** Specific training for church planters and coaches.

**Time:** Once a year. It might be a weekend, weekday, Sabbath afternoon, etc (per schedules).

**Location:** To be determined by the Florida Conference church planting ministry.

**Initiate:** The Pastoral Ministries Department in conjunction with the church planting ministry.

**Note:** The relationship between the the pastor/coach and church planter may change after the mission group is approved as a company.

\* If the sponsoring pastor is different than the pastor/coach, the three commitments still apply to the sponsoring pastor. In that case, a conference-trained coach will be provided whose sole responsibility is twelve phone coaching sessions (50 minutes max).

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Name of sponsoring pastor

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Name of church planter

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Name of pastor/coach (if not sponsoring pastor)







# PARTNERSHIP COVENANT BETWEEN SPONSOR CHURCH AND CHURCH PLANT

## Overview

Sustainable church planting includes a healthy and intentional relationship between sponsor church and church plant, particularly the first three years. This involves more than the sponsor church simply giving its “blessing” and the church plant becoming a silo. Based upon the four principles of effective church planting partnerships, this template has been developed between the leadership of the new plant and sponsor church for approval at church business meeting.

Name of sponsor church: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of church plant: \_\_\_\_\_

### 1. **Prayer:** How will both groups find ways to communicate prayer needs and pray together?

Sponsor Church:	Church Plant:

### 2. **Publicity:** How will both groups establish good communication?

Sponsor Church:	Church Plant:
(How will you give updates, and how is it obvious to members and guests that you are a church-planting church?)	(How will you communicate milestones, challenges, reports, etc?)

**3. People:** How can members and nonmembers get involved with the new plant?

Sponsor Church:	Church Plant:
(Both for those who want to fully become new members in the new plant and those who want to stay but can get involved temporarily during startup phase.)	(What are the specific needs and ways people can serve... organize informational meals for interested families to learn more, etc.)

**4. Pennies:** What type of financial support will the sponsor church offer?

Sponsor Church:	Church Plant:
(Some options include: onetime special offering, monthly contribution for first year or two, church budget line item, purchase of larger items such as sound system, storage trailer, etc.)	(Itemize your first-year budget, communicate specific financial needs, etc.)

# MISSION PLAN TEMPLATE OVERVIEW

Florida Conference's desire is to equip, support, and resource you as effectively as possible so your church plant will be successful. With that in mind, there are three key areas that need to be addressed comprehensively for you to have the greatest opportunity to thrive as a church plant. Those areas are vision, discipleship, and evaluating progress.

## 1. Vision

Vision is a compelling and inspiring picture of a preferred future. Having vision may be a gift of the leader; yet, if only the leader sees the vision, not much will happen. There is an old proverb that says, "If you want to go fast, go alone, but if you want to go far, go with someone". Creating a "shared vision" with your core team is an essential component for catalyzing action which will be lasting and not just temporary enthusiasm. The following resources are recommended for helping you and your core team discover, develop, and create a "shared vision" that will guide your church plant in the years to come:

"Deep and Wide: Creating Churches Unchurched People Love to Attend." *Andy Stanley (Zondervan 2010).*

"Vioneering: God's Blueprint for Developing and Maintaining Vision." *Andy Stanley (Multnomah 1999).*

"Revolution in the Church." *Russell Burrill (Hart Research Center, 1994).*

"Spiritual Body Building Model." *Kim Johnson (1997).*

"Church Unique: How Missional Leaders Cast Vision, Capture Culture, and Create Movement." *Will Mancini (JosseyBass 2008).*

## 2. Discipleship

"Biblical discipleship portrays the Christian as one who has a dynamic and growing experience of following and obeying Christ as well as inviting others to also follow and obey Him." [1] Within the principle of discipleship three key areas are present as well: evangelism, leadership, and spiritual disciplines. In order to create a comprehensive strategy for these essential components, the following resources are recommended:

"RealLife Discipleship Training Manual: Equipping Disciples Who Make Disciples." *Jim Putman, Bill Krause, Avery Willis and Brandon Guindon (NavPress 2010).*

"The Complete Book of Discipleship: On Being and Making Followers of Christ." *Bill Hull (NavPress 2006).*

"Breaking the Missional Code: Your Church Can Become a Missionary in Your Community." *Ed Stetzer & David Putman (Broadman & Holman 2006).*

"Protege: Developing Your Next Generation of Church Leaders." *Steve Saccone (InterVarsity 2012).*

[1] Eims, L. (1978). *The lost art of disciple-making*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan.

### 3. Strategic Plan & Evaluation Process

Continuing to do the same thing over and over again and expecting a different result, as some have said, is the definition of insanity. That's why assessing where you are in comparison to where you want to be is critical for every church plant. The following resources are recommended for your church plant to get a better picture of the current reality on the journey towards your goal as a church plant.

The Planter Plan - [www.planterplan.com](http://www.planterplan.com)

Launch - Nelson Searcy (Regal 2007).

Activate - Nelson Searcy (Regal 2008).

Leading Missional Communities - Mike Breen (Zondervan 2013).

Steps To Church Planting: From Inception to Launch - Tom Evans

Reveal Study by Willow Creek - [www.revealnow.com](http://www.revealnow.com)

"Natural Church Development: A Guide to Eight Essential Qualities of Healthy Churches." *Christian Schwartz (1996).*



**1. VISION:** What is the vision for the new church?

**2. DISCIPLESHIP:** Describe your discipleship process. What are the steps you will use to move someone who is far from God to being a fully devoted disciple of Jesus who makes disciples?

**3. STRATEGIC PLAN & EVALUATION:** Based on the composition of your community, describe how you will implement your vision and evaluate progress over the next twelve months? This strategic plan should be given to your coach as a springboard for ongoing conversation and support.





# ORGANIZING A COMPANY

## POLICIES

The purpose of developing a mission group into a company is to take steps toward church status. Company status exists while the group works to demonstrate that it is capable of all of the many unctions of a fully trusted church in the Conference sisterhood of churches. This is a time when the mission group proves that it can successfully function in spiritual leadership, ministry structures, finances, membership, strategically planned outreach, and faithfulness to biblical principles as taught by the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

### **1. The Process.**

- a. Sponsoring church submits application for company status of mission group to the Pastoral Ministries Department.
- b. Pastoral Ministries Department reviews and submits application to the Administrative Committee for approval.
- c. Administrative Committee reviews and submits application to Executive Committee.
- d. Executive Committee grants authorization to organize a company. It is understood that a company has an acting board; however, the Executive Committee serves as the official board.

### **2. Conference Directory.**

Authorized companies will be listed in the Conference directory.

### **3. Financial Responsibility.**

Before authorization to organize into a company is granted, the congregation shall demonstrate ability to function on a sound financial basis as proven by its tithe record and the existence of a strong stewardship program. These shall testify to the ability of the congregation to meet all its financial obligations.

### **4. Membership.**

The congregation seeking authorization to organize into a company shall have at least 40 baptized attending members. Once approval has been voted by the Conference Executive Committee for organizing the company, the members who join the organized company will hold membership in the Conference church. Eighty percent (80%) of family units are returning tithe and offerings and are involved in ministry.

### **5. Leadership.**

The company will be led by a Volunteer Lay Pastor under the supervision of the sponsoring church pastor.

### **6. School Subsidy.**

The congregation shall be financially able to assume its pro-rata subsidy to the school of the sponsoring church. This financial responsibility will begin at the time the congregation is organized into a company. It will continue in effect until such time as the sponsoring church and company mutually agree to the dissolution of the arrangement.

### **7. Time Frame.**

A mission group shall be organized for at least one year before it may apply to become a company. Company status will be granted for a minimum of one year with a quarterly review of growth.

### **8. Tithes and Offerings.**

All company's tithes and offerings should be sent to the Conference with the exception of the local expense offerings, which remain in the company.



## Application for Company Organization

Application Date \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

1. Sponsoring church's name: \_\_\_\_\_

Senior Pastor's name: \_\_\_\_\_

Volunteer Lay Pastor's name: \_\_\_\_\_

2. Company's name: \_\_\_\_\_

a. Mailing address: \_\_\_\_\_

b. Street address \_\_\_\_\_

3. How long have you been an established mission group? \_\_\_\_\_

4. a. How many miles is the company from the sponsoring church? \_\_\_\_\_

b. How many miles is the company from the nearest Adventist church? \_\_\_\_\_

c. Name of the nearest Adventist church? \_\_\_\_\_

5. Reasons for establishing a company in this specific area: (e.g. reaching a specific people group differentiated by geographic area, ethic, cultural, or social identity.) \_\_\_\_\_

a. Are you achieving the goal of reaching your target people group?

b. What changes have you made to your strategic plan to accomplish this?

6. How many current Seventh-day Adventist members are going to be part of the core company? \_\_\_\_\_

*(Provide names and addresses of core company members as requested on the attached form. Once organization is approved, this information will be submitted to the Conference Executive Secretary for membership transfer from the sponsoring church to the company/Conference church)*

7. What is the average attendance each week? \_\_\_\_\_

8. List your company leaders on the attached company officer list form.

9. What is your financial situation? *(Attach mission group financial report [tithe & offerings] and budget for the last three years or since inception-whichever is less.)*

10. What school constituency, if any, have you arranged to join? \_\_\_\_\_

11. We have read, understand, and accept the Policies to Organize a Company in the Florida Conference.

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

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Dates of approval (Enclose copy of voted action): \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

The sponsoring church board recommends the formation of this company: \_\_\_\_\_

*Please return this application to the Pastoral Ministries Department upon completion.*

*(Florida Conference of Seventh-day Adventists: 351 S. State Road 434, Altamonte Springs, FL 32714)*

## Company Officer List

Attach a company officer list to the application. We understand that not every congregation fills every church office. With that in mind, please give the names, addresses and phone numbers for your company officers filling any of the positions listed below:

Head Elder \_\_\_\_\_

Clerk \_\_\_\_\_

Treasurer \_\_\_\_\_

Pastoral Ministries Leader \_\_\_\_\_

Pastoral Ministries \_\_\_\_\_

Pastoral Ministries Secretary \_\_\_\_\_

Stewardship \_\_\_\_\_

Communication Secretary \_\_\_\_\_

Health Secretary \_\_\_\_\_

Family Life Coordinator \_\_\_\_\_

Community Services Leader \_\_\_\_\_

Youth Leader \_\_\_\_\_

Pathfinder Director \_\_\_\_\_

Child Evangelistic Coordinator \_\_\_\_\_

Sabbath School Director \_\_\_\_\_

Sabbath School Secretary \_\_\_\_\_

Safety Officer \_\_\_\_\_

Youth Sabbath School \_\_\_\_\_

Early Teens Leader \_\_\_\_\_

Junior Leader \_\_\_\_\_

Primary Leader \_\_\_\_\_

Kindergarten Leader \_\_\_\_\_

Cradle Roll – A \_\_\_\_\_

Cradle Roll – B \_\_\_\_\_

Investment Leader \_\_\_\_\_

Lay Advisory Representative \_\_\_\_\_

Women's Ministries \_\_\_\_\_

Disabilities Ministries \_\_\_\_\_

Men's Ministries \_\_\_\_\_

Prison Ministries \_\_\_\_\_

Head Deacon \_\_\_\_\_

# ORGANIZING A CHURCH POLICY

The fully autonomous church has its own relationship to the sisterhood of churches. The overlying principle governing all organized churches in the Florida Conference is that all policies of the Conference apply to all churches. As part of the worldwide Seventh-day Adventist denomination, all churches in the Conference will adhere to its teachings, standards, and practices. The following specific policies and criteria must be kept in mind when a company wishes to become an organized church:

## **1. The Process:**

- a. Company submits application to Pastoral Ministries Department.
- b. Pastoral Ministries Department reviews and submits application to the Administrative Committee for approval.
- c. Administrative Committee reviews and submits application to Executive Committee.
- d. The Executive Committee grants authorization to organize a church.

## **2. Mission:** Before authorization is voted, the Conference Executive Committee shall receive, as part of the approval process, satisfactory knowledge that the following events, activities, and/or orientation of the company have been successfully achieved:

- a. Stewardship education including an appropriate level of understanding of church financing and local church financial relationship to the Conference.
- b. Seventh-day Adventist Church organization including resources available to the local church.
- c. Church clerk and church treasurer orientation.
- d. Redefine current strategic plan into a three-year plan of action utilizing the broader opportunities and resources available to the church.

## **3. Conference Directory:** All organized churches will be listed in the Conference directory.

## **4. Stewardship:** Before authorization to organize into a church is granted, the company shall demonstrate ability to function on a sound financial basis as proven by its tithe record and history of submitting its remittances to the Conference on a timely basis and attain and maintain an annual tithe income of \$80,000. Also, at least 70% of family units are trained, equipped, and involved in one area of ministry in the church.

## **5. Membership:** The company seeking authorization to organize into a church shall have at least 60 baptized members and average weekly attendance of 60 people.

## **6. Pastoral Assistance:** The Conference reserves the right to make pastoral assignments only as conference budget allows. It may take a few years before a pastor can be worked into the Conference budget. In the meantime, the Volunteer Lay Pastor will continue to lead the congregation.

## **7. Ratification:** All properly organized churches will be voted into the sisterhood of churches at the next Florida Conference constituency meeting.

## **8. School Subsidy:** The congregation shall be financially able to assume its pro-rata subsidy to a school in the Florida Conference. This is to be arranged with the Administrative Committee and the Vice President for Education.

## **9. Tithes and Offerings:** All tithes and offerings of a church must be sent to the Conference with the exception of the local expense offerings, which are to remain with the church.





## Application for Church Organization

Application Date \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

1. Company's name: \_\_\_\_\_

New church's name: \_\_\_\_\_

2. Sponsoring church's name: \_\_\_\_\_

Senior Pastor's name: \_\_\_\_\_

Volunteer Lay Pastor's name: \_\_\_\_\_

a. Mailing address: \_\_\_\_\_

b. Street address: \_\_\_\_\_

3. How long have you been an organized company? \_\_\_\_\_

4. a. How many miles is the company from the sponsoring church? \_\_\_\_\_

b. How many miles is the company from the nearest Adventist church? \_\_\_\_\_

c. Name of the nearest Adventist church? \_\_\_\_\_

5. Redefine your current strategic plan into a three-year plan of action using the broader opportunities and resources available to a church. Please attach plan and names of those involved in creating the plan.

6. a. What is your Company's current baptized membership? \_\_\_\_\_

(Provide names and addresses of Company members as requested on the attached form. Once organization is approved, this information will be submitted to the Conference Executive Secretary for membership transfer from the company/Conference church to the new church)

b. What has been your growth in baptism and transfers during the last three years?

Year	Beginning Memb.	Baptism	Transfers	Ending Memb.
------	-----------------	---------	-----------	--------------

_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
-------	-------	-------	-------	-------

_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
-------	-------	-------	-------	-------

_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
-------	-------	-------	-------	-------

_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
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7. What is your company's weekly attendance? \_\_\_\_\_ (Average during four weeks attendance)

8. List the names and addresses of the new church officers on the attached church officer form

9. a. What is your financial situation? \_\_\_\_\_

(Attach Mission financial report [tithe and offerings] and budget for the last three years or since inception-whichever is less)

b. What has been your growth in the title and local church offering during this time frame?



10. Provide your company's facility plan for a church.

Does the company own land for building a church?

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

11. Are you member of any school constituency? \_\_\_\_\_

a. What is your monthly school subsidy? \_\_\_\_\_

b. Is your school subsidy current? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

12. We have read, understand, and accept the Policies for Organizing Churches in the Florida Conference.

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

In accordance to Church Organizing Policy Items 2B the following has been completed:

	Department	Completion Date
Stewardship orientation		
Seventh-day Adventist Church orientation	Stewardship	_____
Visioning process		
Church clerk orientation	Church Growth	_____
Church treasurer orientation	Church Growth	_____
Lay leadership training	Secretariat	_____
	Treasury	_____
	Church Growth	_____
Ministry included		_____
		_____
		_____

*(Contact the Conference Church Growth Facilitator for further information)*

-----  
*Dates of approval (Enclose copy of voted action):* \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

*Company Board requests organizing into a church:* \_\_\_\_\_

*Please return this application to the Pastoral Ministries Department upon completion.*

*(Florida Conference of Seventh-day Adventists: 351 S. State Road 434, Altamonte Springs, FL 32714)*

## Church Officer List

Attach to the application a church officer list. We understand that not every congregation fills every church office. With that in mind please give the names, addresses, and phone numbers for your church officers filling any of the positions listed below.

Church Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Fax: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_ Website address: \_\_\_\_\_

Proposed church name: \_\_\_\_\_

Company location address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Company mailing address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Worship times:

Sabbath School \_\_\_\_\_ Church \_\_\_\_\_

Prayer Meeting (day) \_\_\_\_\_ Time \_\_\_\_\_

Head Elder \_\_\_\_\_

Clerk \_\_\_\_\_

Treasurer \_\_\_\_\_

Pastoral Ministries Leader \_\_\_\_\_

Pastoral Ministries \_\_\_\_\_

Pastoral Ministries Secretary \_\_\_\_\_

Stewardship \_\_\_\_\_

Communication Secretary \_\_\_\_\_

Health Secretary \_\_\_\_\_

Family Life Coordinator \_\_\_\_\_

Community Services Leader \_\_\_\_\_

Youth Leader \_\_\_\_\_

Pathfinder Director \_\_\_\_\_



Child Evangelistic Coordinator \_\_\_\_\_

Sabbath School Director \_\_\_\_\_

Sabbath School Secretary \_\_\_\_\_

Safety Officer \_\_\_\_\_

Youth Sabbath School \_\_\_\_\_

Early Teens Leader \_\_\_\_\_

Junior Leader \_\_\_\_\_

Primary Leader \_\_\_\_\_

Kindergarden Leader \_\_\_\_\_

Cradle Roll – A \_\_\_\_\_

Cradle Roll – B \_\_\_\_\_

Investment Leader \_\_\_\_\_

Lay Advisory Representative \_\_\_\_\_

Women's Ministries \_\_\_\_\_

Disabilities Ministries \_\_\_\_\_

Men's Ministries \_\_\_\_\_

Prison Ministries \_\_\_\_\_

Head Deacon \_\_\_\_\_





Seventh-day Adventist® Church  
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