

# Great Lakes Baptist Conference/Converge Great Lakes Core Mission/Values/Strategy/Expectation Document

## **Core Mission**

- The GLBC exists to glorify God by strengthening churches so that they may reach those who do not know Jesus Christ locally, nearby, and around the world.

## **Core Values**

- Spiritually Dynamic: We are a movement that will always be focused on biblical convictions and values. We are more than a social agency or nonprofit entity. We are the people of God who have been called to represent Him to a lost and dying world that desperately needs the truth of God's Word.
- Relationally Devoted: We care for one another and for those who do not know Jesus.
- Missionally Driven: Our mission of reaching lost people for Christ and planting missional churches is paramount in our thinking and practice.
- Culturally Diverse: We are a racially and culturally diverse group of individuals who desire to overcome our differences so as to rally around a common mission for the sake of Jesus Christ.
- Generously Desirable: We desire to be a generous people who seek to grow and develop generous hearts and lifestyles in order to advance the work of the church so that we may reach those who do not know Jesus Christ locally, nearby, and around the world.

## **Core Strategies**

### Strengthening Congregations- Jerusalem/Judea

We strengthen congregations in four specific ways:

1. *Retool Kit (Mobilization Process)*: This 12-18 month strategic planning and re-visioning process is being used throughout the district. Its purpose is to lead the local church through a structured reevaluation of the vision that God is calling them to and then show them how to exercise that vision for their next season of ministry to reach their communities for Christ.
2. *Natural Church Development (NCD)*: The newly redesigned (NCD) process, with skilled and trained NCD coaches who come alongside our churches, is a shorter alternative than the Retool Kit process. Church health diagnosis is done to help the local church identify areas that have minimal effectiveness which may be hindering health and growth. An "annual checkup" is implemented so that a church might continue to grow in a healthy manner and thus as a result reach more people for Christ.
3. *Pastor/ Board Leadership Training*: This training for leaders in our local congregations is being used to transform and create leadership communities that can help our churches become more evangelistic in focus. Conducted on a Saturday for three hours, this training has been extremely effective because of the follow-up assignments that the pastor and board complete together following the actual training. Each year this training

is covering one of these four areas on a rotating basis: Spiritual Vitality, Team Building, Conflict Management or Strategic Re-visioning, and Congregational Renewal.

4. *Individual Church Consultations:* These are tailored gatherings that the Great Lakes Baptist Conference/Converge Great Lakes staff members conduct that focus on individual church issues whether related to staffing, renewal, or conflict issues. Other areas of consultation are pastoral transition, leadership development, and financial consultations, which include our growing payroll service and “Do It Right” financial seminar.

#### Starting Congregations- Samaria

1. *LEAD Teams:* The Great Lakes Baptist Conference/Converge Great Lakes primarily starts new congregations through the vehicle of regional LEAD teams. There are many ways to begin new congregations. However, we have found that within our context, LEAD teams are the best for us. In the past these LEAD teams have been comprised primarily of pastors who get together three to five times a year to learn together, encourage one another, achieve kingdom outreach purposes, and dream together on how together more congregations could be planted within a particular region. We are now shifting the focus to LEAD Teams. This new focus brings together not just like minded pastors but also congregations who will give of themselves through prayer, participation, and finances to see new congregations get started.

#### Stretching Congregations – Uttermost Parts of the World

1. *Short Term and Compassion Based Mission Initiatives:* The use of short term and compassion based mission initiatives as the vehicles by which and through which our churches will be stretched to preach the gospel to the uttermost parts of the world through church planting and missions efforts is a core strategy. The Great Lakes Baptist Conference/Converge Great Lakes has chosen a regional approach of purposeful short term and compassion based missions done well as a means to pursue global impact.

#### ***Core Expectations***

##### Self Evaluation

- Each of the current affiliated churches of the Great Lakes Baptist Conference/Converge Great Lakes shall enter into a self-evaluation process **every five years**. This evaluation will help them gauge whether they consider themselves fully-engaged, missionally-engaged, relationally-engaged, or disengaged in relation to the mission of the Great Lakes Baptist Conference/Converge Great Lakes, which is that the ***GLBC exists to glorify God by strengthening churches so that they may reach those who do not know Jesus Christ locally, nearby, and around the world.*** If the church expresses a desire for greater engagement, the Great Lakes Baptist Conference/Converge Great Lakes Executive Minister or his designee will assist them in that process.
- Our hope is that this process will assist each church to evaluate its relationship with the Great Lakes Baptist Conference/Converge Great Lakes in reference to the core expectation already in the Great Lakes Baptist Conference/Converge Great Lakes constitution under Article 5-2e which states; “All member churches shall participate through prayer, financial and personal involvement in the mission and ministries of the national and district Conference”.

- If a church evaluates themselves as “disengaged” and that level of involvement continues for one year after their evaluation, a one year re-engagement process (such as conference calls, personal visits, personal invitations, etc.) will be initiated by the Great Lakes Baptist Conference/Converge Great Lakes Executive Minister. If the church chooses not to engage in at least a relational level, then the church will be encouraged to disaffiliate. If another year passes and the church neither increases their engagement to at least a relational level nor disaffiliates, the Great Lakes Baptist Conference/Converge Great Lakes will initiate a process of disaffiliation of that church. This process represents a minimum of four years of potential re-engagement.
  - Phase/Year One: Disengagement assessed by the local church and engagement level remains as is for one year
  - Phase/Year Two: Re-engagement process initiated by District Executive Minister
  - Phase/Year Three: Engagement decision made by church, if choice is to disaffiliate then required paperwork to do so must be submitted
  - Phase/Year Four: No response from church, the Great Lakes Baptist Conference/Converge Great Lakes disaffiliation process initiated

### Evaluation Criteria

#### *Fully- Engaged Church*

- Church LEAD team involvement, through participation and financial support
- Attends District Annual Meeting yearly
- Engages, as a church, in short term missions or compassion somewhere around the world on a yearly basis
- 10% as a minimum of their budget is given to missions
- Partnership financially with the funding of the Great Lakes Baptist Conference/Converge Great Lakes Core Ministries at 2% of the church's total income
- Engages annually in the NCD (Natural Church Development) process or a like tool
- Involvement in a regular major assessment and planning cycle every three to five years using either the Retool Process or another assessment vehicle
- Gives a minimum of 1% to the Broader Converge Ministries such as individual Converge missionary support
- Adheres theologically with the tenets of the BGC/Converge Worldwide Affirmation of Faith
- Affirms the BGC/Converge Worldwide position on baptism as it relates to church membership

#### *Missionally- Engaged Church*

- Partnership financially at some level with the district (i.e. supporting area church plant, consistent giving to the Great Lakes Baptist Conference/Converge Great Lakes Core Ministries, etc.)
- Relationally involved at some level (i.e. Annual Meeting, LEAD team, retreats...)
- Willingness to consider increased financial support to the Great Lakes Baptist Conference/Converge Great Lakes Core Ministry functions
- Engages in NCD or a like tool every three to five years
- Willingness to discuss a major assessment such as ReTool and implements the assessment every five to seven years
- Engage, as a church, in short-term missions or compassion somewhere around the world at least every other year
- Gives a minimum of 10% of the church's budget to outside mission endeavors both locally, nearby and around the world
- Adheres theologically with the tenets of the BGC/Converge Worldwide Affirmation of Faith

- Affirms the BGC/Converge Worldwide position on baptism as it relates to church membership

*Relationally- Engaged Church*

- Not involved financially at any level
- Willingness to consider relational connection such as joining a regional LEAD Team
- Participate in at least one regional event
- Willing to discuss financial involvement
- Interest in engaging the Great Lakes Baptist Conference/Converge Great Lakes Short-Term Missions Coordinator on how to effectively launch a short-term ministry
- Open to discussing the use of NCD and/or a major assessment tool such as ReTool
- Adheres theologically with the tenets of the BGC/Converge Worldwide Affirmation of Faith
- Affirms the BGC/Converge Worldwide position on baptism as it relates to church membership

*Disengaged Church*

- No financial partnership
- No relational involvement
- No missional involvement
- Not willing to consider involvement
- May have some major disagreement with BGC/Converge Worldwide Affirmation of Faith