



TRANSFORMATION MINISTRIES (TM) Strategic Planning Process

Frequently Asked Questions

What's new for TM as a result of this planning process?

On the surface, it might appear the new plan contains little that is new or different, but in truth, the plan calls TM to journey towards a very new horizon. Study the strategic plan and you will see that the Vision is more expansive; the Mission more focused; the Core Values deeper and richer; and the Faith Projections truly God-sized. In turn, these compel us to develop a different kind of culture, deploy high impact ministry strategies, realign our organizational structure, get the right staff in the right places, and exercise a whole new level of faith. In short, this strategic plan is calling TM into a new day. It's scary and exciting!

Why did TM undertake this strategic planning process?

There were two primary reasons. First, TM's *Guiding Principles* mandated such a process: "The Board will draw upon the insights of an outside consultant every three (3) years or less to assess and strengthen the ministry of Transformation Ministries." (Accountability Principle AP1.1.4: Assessment) Second, wisdom called for it. The last envisioning process was undertaken before the Board voted to withdraw from the Covenant of Relationships with the ABC-USA. The old plan served us well, when we were part of a mainline denomination, but a different strategic plan is needed to move us into God's new future as Transformation Ministries.

What has the planning process involved?

It has involved many different people on many different levels. Tom Beck of Synergos Solutions was hired as a consultant to lead us through this planning process. Beck has given outstanding leadership to this project. The process began with Tom's assessment of TM based on information gathered from an online survey (234 responses), personal interviews (36) and focus groups (9), and TM printed materials. Next, a Vision Team consisting of pastors, Board members and TM staff, prayed and worked together over several months to discern God's Vision, Mission and Core Values for this movement of churches. Then, the TM staff developed the appropriate Core Competencies, Strategic Objectives, Faith Projections and Ministry Strategies. The final organizational alignment will continue into the near future.

What did you discover about TM from the assessment?

We discovered the need to change in order to be a viable ministry in the days ahead. The assessment revealed a number of strengths such as biblical-theological integrity, Dale Salico's leadership, the overall integrity of the organization, and our relationships with each other. The assessment also surfaced a number of concerns such as the lack of a compelling Vision and strategic focus, too many unhealthy churches, and a growing distance between TM and younger generations. These last two (2) concerns, especially, represent a slow drift in a dangerous direction. Following the assessment, Tom Beck shared his opinion that TM is at a critical juncture, and that it is imperative that we make significant changes over the next three (3) years or the consequences could be devastating.

How does this new plan impact my church?

There is no "one size fits all" answer to this question, but, if there is a sweeping implication to this plan for all of the TM pastors and churches, it involves how we think about TM.

Perhaps, the word best describing what TM has been is "services." The Church Resource Center has sought to offer services to the churches of TM through the Church Resource Ministers, various events and specialized ministries. On the TM staff level, success was measured by the quantity and quality of services offered. On the church level, success was measured by the amount of helpful ministry received. While these services have met needs, they have not produced the kind of harvest we believe God desires.

The word which best describes what TM must become is "mission." The Church Resource Center must become a mission strategy center, focusing on potentially high-impact strategies. On the TM staff level, success must now be measured by how well our strategies are helping pastors grow, churches operate in health and missional vitality, and the number of communities transformed through the planting of new churches. And, if "mission" is the key word, churches must measure the value of their partnership in TM, by how much their partnership in this movement allows them to become vital mission centers, sharing in the advancement of the gospel.

Why do we call ourselves a "Movement of Churches"?

TM is not a denomination, offering a full range of services to its churches, e.g., seminaries, publishing house, missionaries, etc. But, TM is more than a para-church agency coming alongside churches to accomplish a particular ministry, e.g., Young Life, Campus Crusade for Christ, Focus on the Family, etc. TM is a group of churches, pursuing a kingdom vision, bound together by a covenant of relationships, seeking to live and speak the gospel, transforming communities in the name of Jesus, continually changing and growing into all that God wants it to be. We believe the word "movement" is the best choice to describe this picture.

If values are unchanging, why are the new Core Values different than the old ones?

Two (2) of our previous Core Values, Biblical Authority and Leader Development, remain among our new values. The other two (2) values, Local Church Integrity and Kingdom Multiplication, are now expressed, rightly so, as Core Competencies. The rest of the new

values are simply expressions of who TM is and needs to become. Take God-Dependent as an example. Hopefully, we have always been a people of “prayer, obedience, faith and risk,” yet, stating this reality as a value, reminds us of who and what we need to be to an even greater degree in the days ahead. The Forty Days of Prayer following this year’s Transforming Churches Conference is an expression of this God-Dependent value.

How will the value of “Church as a Mosaic” color our ministry in the future?

It means that we need to be very intentional about celebrating and embracing people from different cultures and ethnicities. The biblical teaching concerning creation and redemption both mandate this conclusion. This value should be reflected in our TM staff, our strategic ministries, and the kind of new churches we plant. It should also be seen in the way we relate to each other, a way of relating marked by listening to, learning from and then serving each other. Although living out this value will have its challenges, it is the gospel way and gives us an opportunity to have a little taste of heaven in the here and now (Revelation 7:9).

How will the value of “Generation to Generation” benefit our ministry in the future?

“Generation to Generation” calls us to work harder to recruit emerging leaders, to invest more deeply in younger pastors currently serving TM churches, and to always challenge ourselves as a movement to do what needs to be done to reach a new generation for Christ. As we reach new generations, we are being faithful to the biblical mandate to entrust to future generations what has been entrusted to us (II Timothy 2:2).

What is a Core Competency?

It is something we need to excel at in order to accomplish our God-given Mission and see our Vision become a reality.

Why are there three (3) Core Competencies?

There are only three (3) Core Competencies because these are the priorities that flow out of our Mission. When the Vision Team was asked to prayerfully consider the question: “What does TM need to do really well to fulfill its Mission?” three (3) things came to the surface--Developing Spiritual Leaders, Church Health and Missional Vitality, and New Church Planting.

Why is Church Planting a Core Competency?

The answer above speaks to this question. On a deeper level, there was a strong conviction on the part of the Vision Team that TM is called to be an expanding movement of churches, and the key to expansion is church planting. While we have been involved in church planting efforts in the past with varying degrees of success, it is clear that in the days ahead church planting must become a normal way of life for our churches.

What are some of the more audacious Faith Projections?

Faith Projections describe a measurable result we want to see in five (5) years. Do these three (3) qualify as “audacious?”

- 80% of pastors say that TM contributes to their spiritual growth as leaders.
- 50% of churches will grow by at least 25% in their worship services.
- The number of TM churches launched each year will be 3% of the total number of churches. (This amounts to twenty-five (25) churches in the next five (5) years.)

How will we know if Faith Projections are being reached?

We will measure the results our strategies are producing. Some of the measurement tools we plan to use are as obvious and easy (maybe not easy) as “obtaining attendance results.” Others involve the development of surveys and holding target specific focus groups. In any event, these measurements will only be successful to the degree that churches participate. Measuring effectiveness can be threatening (for all of us), but in the long run it is critical for ministry excellence. We plan to do the first measurements in January. These will give us a baseline for the future.

What key strategies will TM use to reach these Faith Projections?

To date, here are the key strategies we plan to focus on:

- the recruitment of excellent pastoral leaders for our churches
- leveraging the Pastor Mentor Groups for maximum ministry
- networking pastors of growing churches and emerging leaders
- working closely with churches in pastoral transition
- a deeper investment in pastors/churches willing to do what it takes to achieve church health and missional vitality
- cluster-birthed training events
- specialized training events for Hispanic pastors and leaders designed by our Hispanic leadership team
- develop a culture of church-based new church planting partnerships
- the Transforming Churches Conference

We may do other things; but we must do these things. We will keep the strategies that work, and change or discard the ones that don't. In the days ahead, we are all about the Mission, and we believe these strategies are Mission critical.

How will the strategic plan impact the way in which the TM staff relates to our local church?

In the new plan, the staff will have strategic responsibilities. This means that TM staff will interface with pastors/churches in those situations where the pastor/church is involved in a ministry strategy under the oversight of a TM staff person. On the whole, TM staff will no longer have geographical responsibilities for churches. This new orientation will make it possible for a limited number of TM staff to have the greatest impact.

Who will pastor the pastors?

Fellow pastors. Just as effective small groups become the first line of pastoral care in a local church, so we want our Pastor Mentor Groups to be the first line of care for our TM pastors. We are also exploring the possibility of raising-up a cadre of retired “Barnabas like” pastors to visit our pastors serving in the trenches of ministry. Of course, when necessary, the TM staff will be available.

How does camping fit into the strategic plan?

God has used camping to change scores of lives and call many young people as pastors and church leaders. We are exceedingly thankful for the ministry that Thousand Pines, Tonto Rim and San Marcos Christian camps have had in the lives of thousands of campers over the years. We believe God will continue to use these TM owned and operated camps in the years ahead.

While our camps provide our churches with a wonderful resource (as well as many churches not in covenant relationship with TM), the camps are not core to the work God is calling TM to do with the churches. To put it differently, we do not need to own a camp in order to accomplish what God is calling us to do, but the wonderful reality is we do own camps. And they are a resource we could never afford to obtain today. As long as the camps offer effective ministry and are financially viable, they remain a wonderful resource we can offer to churches.

What will happen to the Burundi Mission?

God is doing amazing things in Burundi, and leaders from TM have played a significant role in the training of leaders in that country. Originally, TM entered into a five-year agreement to serve the churches in Burundi. TM will honor that agreement. When the agreement is fulfilled, those who have worked most closely with the churches of Burundi will assess the needs for ongoing service. Should there still be a need, the mission to Burundi will be folded into a network of TM pastors and churches, but not the TM staff.

Are we still “Baptist?”

Transformation Ministries is committed to the historic Baptist principles delineated in the current *Covenant of Transformation Ministries Churches* booklet. These convictions are important not only to churches currently within TM, but also for churches considering becoming part of this movement.

What still needs to happen as part of the strategic planning process?

The last phase of the strategic plan involves organizational alignment. This involves putting the right people in the right places doing the right things to accomplish the Mission. The next step is to develop job descriptions supportive of our Core Competencies. As job descriptions are developed, it will be vitally important to have the right staff in place. While changes will not happen immediately, over the next two (2) years we expect there to be some new faces on the TM staff. For example, one of the current priorities is to hire an emerging leader to oversee the Church Planting Partnership competency.

If God blesses our efforts, what will TM look like in fifteen (15) years?

TM will be a growing movement of about 250 churches comprised of many different ethnicities. More than 75 of these churches will be new. The majority of churches will be growing, reaching new people for Christ. TM pastors will be known for their spiritual depth and ministry excellence. An emerging generation of pastors will be leading our churches, with another generation ready to follow them. Churches will celebrate the Church Planting Partnerships they share with other churches. Communities in Arizona, California, Hawaii, Nevada, Utah, Idaho and beyond will be transformed for Christ. And this is just the beginning!