



## **Directional Plan for Mission & Ministry At Ft. Garry M.B. Church**

**DRAFT - January, 2005**

### **I. Introduction (i.e. What?)**

- Overall, the purpose of this document is to reflect our continued efforts to be faithful to our mission at Fort Garry MB Church. It is a living document that captures the results of the ongoing dialog regarding FGMBs long-term directions.
- This is a discussion paper and a planning document that will evolve over time as our direction unfolds. It is not intended to lock us in on a particular direction, but rather to record what has been discussed and, eventually, decided.
- Church council presented a process and a schedule for completion of this planning exercise at the November 21, 2004 congregational meeting. The milestones in that schedule are as follows:
  - o November 21, 2004: Church council proposed a model for how we will respond to growth, and received initial feedback from the congregation on that model.
  - o December, 2004-February, 2004: Church council to refine the model and continue discussions with congregation.
  - o February 13, 2005: Church council will develop recommendations on growth strategy for congregational decision.
  - o March, 2005-May, 2005: Church council will develop specific plans for the resources required (facilities, staffing, finances) to implement the strategy.
  - o May, 2005: Church council will present these plans to the congregation for decision.

### **II. Background (i.e. Why?)**

*(This section describes the motivation behind the long-term directional questions and what has happened so far in addressing them)*

- Long-term directional questions arose out of discussions on the need for a gym as well as additional pastoral staffing needs.
- Current facility and ministry constraints include:
  - o Midweek ministry space,
  - o Sunday School space (all ages),

- prayer room,
  - foyer,
  - nursery,
  - large banquet & activity space,
  - kitchen
- Ministry survey results demonstrated a significant need for greater balance between Inviting, Being, and Sending. In particular, we saw the need for greater emphasis on Inviting and Sending."
  - There are many ways to develop the ministries of our church. Having considered several alternative models for addressing growth, Council presented a proposed model to the church for discussion. (see attached diagram)

### **III. Vision (i.e. Where?)**

*(This section gives a high-level, narrative overview of a desired state, the proposed model to address the question of growth, and general descriptions of ministry, facility, and staffing requirements.)*

#### **i. Ministry Vision**

Fort Garry Mennonite Brethren Church is a community of people who have committed themselves to following Jesus. We intentionally nurture caring relationships. Children, youth, and adults of all ages and stages are served with commitment and excellence, helping all to grow and develop in their life in Christ. Through words and actions we share Christ with others, inviting them to join us in our journey. New members are welcomed, celebrated, and included in our fellowship.

We are a community of sent ones, with a mission that is both global and local. Members of our congregation, and particularly our leaders, demonstrate a Great Commission Conscience that permeates our thinking and decision-making process. Through prayer, giving and service we impact our personal networks, our city and our world.

#### **Inviting**

Members of Fort Garry freely invite friends, neighbors and associates to explore what it means to follow Jesus, and to experience the worship, community and fellowship of Fort Garry MB Church. Some come through the front door by attending worship services and other public events. Many others come through the side door of friendship and peripheral involvement. These are welcomed and accepted into our small groups, our schedules, our homes, our hearts. Many feel they belong (and get involved) before they come to the point of belief and public commitment to Jesus. In fact, it is that sense of belonging to the community of faith (not formal membership, but being part of and participating in the activities of the group) that draws them to Christ. Our programs (children, youth, adult) are

designed and structured with the expectations that many newcomers will show interest and be welcomed into the community.

### **Being**

Following Jesus means more than giving mental assent to a set of doctrinal statements or a confession of faith (believing). It means allowing Gods Spirit to transform our thinking, our values, and our lifestyle.

We start where people are, welcoming the broken, healing the wounded, nurturing children, youth and adults for maturity in Christ and equipping them for effective ministry and service. Inspiring worship, biblical teaching that is both relevant and engaging, caring community, developing world views that reflect the values of the Kingdom, and a global concern for the world God loves and Jesus died for these are marks of a healthy community of faith. In our relationships, small groups, worship experiences, and ministry opportunities within the church and in our various worlds, we reflect the grace and truth of Christ. We continually stretch our circles to include those whom the Spirit is bringing.

We value our location on Pembina Highway, a major traffic and bus route close to the university, as Gods unique opportunity for ministry. We will therefore develop and expand our ministry potential in this location.

### **Sending**

Fort Garry MB Church is not a holding tank for Christians waiting to go to heaven; we are a community of sent ones engaged in our various worlds as reconcilers, healers, and agents of Gods agenda in the world. This happens at three levels. In addition to programs and ministries offered on-site, much of the ministry of Fort Garry MB Church happens outside the church walls. As followers of Jesus, we are sent into our various worlds to share life, extend love, ask questions, offer personal experiences and perspectives, and seek to help others take the next step in their spiritual journey, wherever they happen to be. Some of us become pastors to our street, community at the lake, or workplace. Some reduce the number of hours spent at church in order to develop and nurture these spiritual friendships.

Secondly, Fort Garry MB Church actively calls, equips, and sends short- and long-term workers to serve in various ministry settings. Families with children, youth, and adults (including seniors), are sent to specific ministries in our city, our province, and around the world.

Thirdly, Fort Garry MB Church will prayerfully, deliberately, and joyfully send out groups of members (including leaders) to plant daughter churches. This is an on-going strategic plan to extend and multiply the ministry of our church, enabling us to be increasingly faithful and effective in living out our God-given mission.

## ii. Conceptual Model

**Summary of Proposed Growth Model:** At a high level, the model under consideration has two main phases:

**Phase 1 Inviting:** Accommodating moderate growth at our current location with expanded/improved facilities, to be followed by

**Phase 2 Sending:** Church daughtering to accommodate further growth.

*Note: This approach is most similar to model F in the attached diagram showing alternative growth models.*

### Phase I Inviting

- **Ministries:** We should move toward more deliberate thinking and new/expanded ministries that invite and welcome newcomers. People new to FGMB should have ample opportunities to make friends and become part of a small group.
- **People:** To support a ministry of invitation, our church should give attention to staffing (not necessarily full-time or paid) in at least three areas of ministry:
  - Outreach and assimilation. In particular, our small groups will become a significant side door to faith.
  - Ministry to seniors. This is the largest demographic in our immediate church community, and remains untouched by current initiatives.
  - Ministry to children and their parents. Nothing attracts young families like welcoming facilities and safe, enjoyable, and intentional programs for young children.
- **Facilities:** We have been blessed with a strategic location (near U of M, major bus route, apartments) and we believe we should continue to work at our mission out of this location. Saying this, however, places practical limits on the size of congregation we can become. Thus, we should think and plan in terms of being a church of roughly 500 Sunday morning attendees, using this approximate number to guide our staffing and facilities planning. The 500 number allows for some growth while acknowledging the physical limitations of our lot size to accommodate additional facilities; as well, this number is not so large as to lose our current sense of community, or the feel of FGMB.

In response to the constraints and opportunities regarding ministry space, we should plan to add to or improve our current facility to address the following specific needs: Sunday School/prayer/meeting rooms, office space, midweek activities, increased foyer and nursery, and a large gathering/activity space

(gym) with appropriate kitchen facilities. Again, our space planning should take into account an approximate congregational size of 500.

### **Phase II Sending**

- **Church Daughtering:** As God grants growth approaching the 500 number, our response should be to work towards resourcing, equipping and sending a group from FGMB to daughter a new congregation. While the process of daughtering a new congregation can be challenging, we believe it can be a life-giving process, and one that is faithful to the church's universal mission. As we begin the church-daughtering process, we should employ the best practices of other congregations who have experience in this process. For instance, we should set aside financial resources to aid the new congregation in their transition to independence, and hire new pastoral staff that would eventually lead the new congregation, allowing for pastoral continuity in the home church.

### **IV. Resources (i.e. How?)**

*(This section describes, in detail, what it will take to make the vision attainable)*

1. Facilities
2. People/Ministries
3. Finances

### **V. Implementation (i.e. When?)**

*(This section describes the specific actions needed to move toward the vision)*

1. Schedule
2. Costs
3. Projects/Initiatives

# Various Strategies to Congregational Growth

