

THE SGI JOURNAL OF LEADERSHIP



IN THIS ISSUE

TRANSITION

*SGI Leadership
Transition*

*Growing through
Transition*

*Apostolic Ministry
in Transformation*

*Advancing the
Next Generation*

12
100



July - August 2022

TABLE OF CONTENTS

FROM THE GENERAL SUPERINTENDENT

David K. Bernard

ARTICLE 1

Growing Through Transition

Tom Foster

ARTICLE 2

Advancing the Next Generation of Leaders

Nathan Scoggins

ARTICLE 3

Apostolic Ministry in Transformation

Doug Klinedinst

ARTICLE 4

Transition

David Bryan

ARTICLE 5

The Bottleneck of Church Multiplication

Scott Sistrunk

ISSUE 10 TOOLBOX

Succession Readiness Tool



THE SGI JOURNAL OF LEADERSHIP

MISSION STATEMENT

Leading the United Pentecostal Church International to think strategically about future growth.

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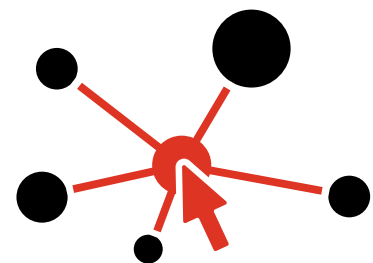
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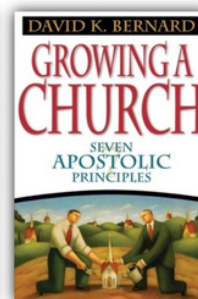
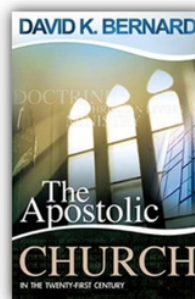
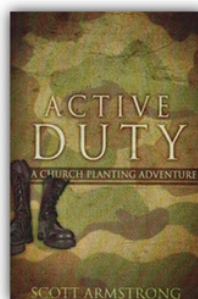
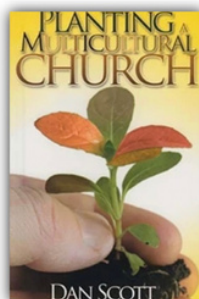
Strategic Growth Initiative (SGI) Resources



The Strategic Growth Initiative (SGI) was born in the heart of General Superintendent David K. Bernard as God gave him a vision for growing the North American church. The General Board of the UPCI approved the forming of SGI for the purpose of highlighting growth in the areas of the number of churches and ministers in North America. The four focus points of SGI are outlined below along with resources available through the Division of Publications.

Multiply the number of churches

SGI will assist districts by providing promotion, planning, and training with the goal of enabling every district to at least double the number of churches (including preaching points, daughter works, autonomous church plants, multicultural church plants, integrate independent Apostolic churches, etc.) in one decade.





From the General Superintendent

SGI Leadership Transition

Over the last few years, we have emphasized the Strategic Growth Initiative of the General Board. The goal is for each district to create a culture of health and to develop plans for both spiritual and numerical growth. SGI emphasizes four key points: new ministers, new works, growth, and strength. In addition to start new works, we want to facilitate the growth of existing churches and to strength ministers and churches that face adverse circumstances.

At the General Board meeting in March, there was new vision, excitement, and commitment as we discussed how to move forward from the disruption of the past two years. In the spring and summer, we have continued to see an influx of new ministers, and many districts are reporting new churches and daughter works.

I appreciate the work of the chair of the Strategic Growth Committee, Jack Cunningham, to lead and inspire us in this endeavor. He and his team have done a great job in helping every district to develop a strategic growth plan. Over the past year, he has spoken to me about his need to restructure his involvements, and he stated that it was time for SGI to have new leadership. We both felt that this summer would be a good time to make a transition.

Therefore, I am pleased to announce that Darrell Johns, assistant general superintendent of the Eastern Zone, is the new chair of the Strategic Growth Committee. I have also appointed Bryan Parkey, superintendent of the Missouri District, to serve as vice chair. Nathan Scoggins, superintendent of the South Central Texas District, will continue to serve as secretary. I appreciate the faithful work of Brother Cunningham, and I am confident that the Strategic Growth Initiative will continue to move forward under its new leadership.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "David K. Bernard".

GROWING THROUGH TRANSITION



Tom Foster

IDEA IN BRIEF

HOW TO GROW THROUGH TRANSITION

- Help People
- Solve Problems
- Identify Progress
- Develop Leaders

When you work out with weights and have an intentional plan of exercise, your body will transition, and you will get physically stronger. The opposite is also true. Over time, muscles that are not exercised will become weaker and will deteriorate. Change happens no matter which choice you make.

Leadership is the same. When you engage in the practices of growing a ministry or church, you will see transitions in your leadership abilities. The skills you have today will slowly diminish if you do not continually make time to work out and grow yourself.

There are a lot of ways to increase your leadership skills and abilities, such as having a personal coach, reading good books, listening to leadership podcasts, or participating in leadership training and conditioning seminars.

Looking back on my journey as a pastor, these are the transitions I discovered. The first seven years, I learned how to survive. The second seven years, I learned leadership. The next five years, I learned to build relationships. Then, at that point, we experienced REVIVAL! Now, we continue to work on retention and discipleship. Transitions will happen, but it's up to me what it produces in me and through me.

There are principles and practices that will develop sustainable growth in leadership skills and abilities. To grow, you need to target the areas you would like to develop and then have a system to measure your growth and progress as a leader. This takes practice. You must learn the principles of leadership and then apply them to improve your skills. Learning without application will leave you weak and frustrated.

Three foundational principles to build sustainable growth in leadership skills and abilities:

- A simple, consistent walk with God. We must have a devotional life of prayer, Bible reading, and encouraging others to do the same.
 - Personal Integrity that people can count on and trust. It's a life with nothing to prove and nothing to hide.
 - A life that is authentic, steady, and anchored in Jesus Christ.
-

Four practices to be a more efficient leader through all transitions of leadership:

1. **Help people:** Jesus lived his life helping people. He is the perfect example of loving and guiding people with profound and pure motivation.

- Help people by bringing them to Jesus.
- Help people with their practical needs. These needs can include marriage counseling, financial guidance, advice on relationship problems, and many more.

2. **Solve Problems:** A leader's time is spent solving problems. One of the greatest talents is knowing the right problems to give your time to. We can't solve all the problems, so we must learn to focus on the ones that must be solved. Work on the ones only you can solve and delegate the others. Solving problems right will raise your value as a leader. Here is a simple plan I use to keep me focused on the right problems.

- Is this a problem that can stop the growth and vision of the church?
- Can the problem be solved by someone else?
- Have you prayed and asked Jesus for help in this area?
- If it is a problem for me to solve, I ask these questions:
 - What is the timeline involved?
 - Who does it involve?
 - What do I need to know?
 - What results am I looking for?

3. **Identify Progress:** We, as leaders, are responsible for progress. This involves some requirements:

- A clear and identifiable direction
- A strategy that unites people to grow together
- An achievable result
- Discipline to keep going
- The resilience to bounce back from setbacks

4. Develop Leaders: You will never achieve what God has given you all by yourself. You will need to train and develop leaders to help accomplish the vision. Keep the training of leaders simple and consistent. Here is a simple way to develop leaders that I have used since 1989.

- Create a group: Choose five to seven hungry, positive, possibility thinkers. For six to seven months, plan to meet once a month for one to two hours to train and develop. Remember, simple and consistent.
 - Pick a book: There are many good leadership books on the market. I use John Maxwell's books, *Developing the Leader Within You* or *The 5 Levels of Leadership*.
 - Ask two questions:
 - What are you learning?
 - How are you applying what you have learned?
-

A leader on fire and a group of people who want to be there make for a great time of development.

Add the difference maker, Jesus Christ, who needs to be in every meeting. Remember, it's spiritual leadership. Transitions will happen. Let's keep growing through them!

Tom Foster



Article No.2

Advancing the Next Generation of Leaders

In his article, *Developing the Next Generation of Leaders*, Bruce Tulgan, founder and CEO of Rainmaker Thinking, a management, research, and training firm, posed the question, “What will Human Resources (HR) leaders need to know about developing the next generation of leaders?”

He writes that, on a macro level, HR leaders need to understand two critical trends in the global workforce: the great generational shift and the rising global youth tide (the second wave of millennials). On a micro level, HR leaders need to focus on three strategies: first, staffing and succession planning at every level; next, high potential identification and development; and lastly, training and support.

In the parable of the unjust steward, Luke 16:8 says:

And the Lord commended the unjust steward because he had done wisely: for the children of this world are in their generation wiser than the children of light.

Let it never be said that the church is not even more diligent and deliberate in identifying, developing, and training the next generation of apostolic leadership. Developing key leadership is a very vital process to the work of the Lord going forward. We must always be intentional about developing future leaders. Leaders will not automatically become leaders; they will only do so as we continue to identify, encourage, and challenge them to become the leaders that God would have them to be.

It is important to us, as pastors, to recognize the next generation of leadership potential that lies within our grasp. In his book, *Passing the Leadership Baton*, Tom Mullins states:

Transition will be one of the greatest tests of our leadership, but it will also serve as one of the greatest rewards and testimonies of our legacy.

The apostle Paul's work in Philippi shows us this important pattern. In Acts 16, he quickly engaged a woman named Lydia and a man who came to Jesus after he was in jail. Paul took the time and made the effort to identify them, encourage them, and then build them up. That was the beginning of a great work in Philippi, and it became a hub for Paul's missionary efforts far beyond that area. If he had not invested his time and energy into developing those two key leaders, his legacy could have been far less impactful.

The process of development could be summarized by these three words:

Identify

Jesus gave us our greatest example of recruiting workers into the fields of harvest. Notice in Matthew 4:18-19, 21, it says, "And Jesus, walking by the sea of Galilee, saw two brethren, Simon called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea: for they were fishers. And he saith unto them, Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men.... And going on from thence, he saw other two brethren, James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother, in a ship with Zebedee their father, mending their nets; and he called them."

Jesus chose people to accomplish His work. Notice that He didn't wait for them to volunteer but often went to extraordinary measures to recruit them. Likewise, we also need to identify and recruit laborers into our local fields of harvest.

Encourage

One of the most definitive passages of scripture about discipling and encouraging people is found in 1 Thessalonians 2:11-12, As ye know how we exhorted and comforted and charged every one of you, as a father doth his children, That ye would walk worthy of God, who hath called you unto his kingdom and glory.

This passage reminds us that our first priority is to build people, not programs. Notice that it emphasizes the need for a close relationship with those we seek to develop and encourage. And Paul likens himself to a father who encourages, comforts, and even disciplines one, if necessary, in order to become greater. He says encouraging is all about helping people through difficult situations. When life gets hard and ministry gets hard, we must walk alongside them to offer encouragement, comfort, and support.

Challenge

If we want to have healthy leadership teams, we need to learn the skills of a coach. Ministry leaders are usually better quarterbacks than coaches. Quarterbacks like to be out on the field personally leading the charge. They like to call the plays and direct the team. But coaches are all about developing people and getting the very best out of them. While quarterbacks make plays, coaches make players.

Notice that, again, our greatest example is Jesus Christ who spent three and one half years modeling the very examples given here. Jesus identified and called, encouraged, and then challenged the disciples to a greater level of service and accomplishment. As pastors, we must also challenge the next generation to not be merely spectators, but to be active participators in the work of the ministry.

The greatest multiplication and influence of our ministries will be through the people we identify, encourage, and challenge to make a great impact in our local churches and far beyond. We must be willing to give the next generation of leadership responsibility, authority, and accountability. We must learn to give them something to do that fits their readiness, the authority and freedom to do it, and the necessary oversight to help them grow through the experience.

May the Lord give us wisdom, knowledge, and understanding as we seek to raise up the next generation of apostolic leadership.

Nathan Scoggins



Article No. 3

Apostolic Ministry in Transformation

Times are changing. Changes in culture, trends, and acceptable norms are leading a dramatic change affecting nearly every area of life. Ministry norms are not excluded in this season of cultural revolution. This, of course, is to be expected. Dramatic shifts in culture certainly require re-assessment in terms of ministry and evangelistic approaches. We are experiencing a significant transition in the apostolic ministry paradigm.

While much of the ministry shift is being driven by the cultural shift, there is a definite spiritual leading as well.

The Spirit of the Lord is leading us to a biblically sound expression of apostolic ministry where a new paradigm will emphasize the five-fold ministry offices.

The church is experiencing increased opposition from the spirit of anti-Christ as our nation becomes less Christian and more secular in ideology. Pastors are facing unprecedented pressure along with new and more complex problems. The family is under pressure socially and financially in a manner we have never seen before. Christianity is being fiercely attacked in the media and politically. These conditions are causing us to realize that ministry is becoming more difficult and certainly more diverse.

Observing conversation and attitudes among pastors, it is easy to identify a few major shifts in attitude and thinking. Pastors are realizing they need help. They are doing everything they know to do and still see that many needs are not being met. Because of this, pastors are more open to reaching out, as well as to receiving help.

The Holy Spirit is responding to the increased need and raising up more prominent examples of the five-fold ministry.

The Lord is anointing apostles and prophets to join the evangelists in partnering with pastors to strengthen the church and reach the harvest.

The greatest transition coming to the apostolic church is a full expression of five-fold ministry becoming commonly accepted and fully functioning. We are moving from a single ministry, i.e., the pastor, to the full five-fold ministry. Apostles and prophets will not usurp the spiritual authority of the pastor in the local church. Instead, they will bring much-needed reinforcement spiritually. The fully functioning five-fold ministry offices will both broaden and deepen the impact of ministry in the local assembly. The church will gain new territory both spiritually and naturally. As a result, the members of the local church will receive more effective ministry through the diversity of operation and administration of spiritual gifts and a broader range of ministry exposure.

The Spirit of the Lord is raising a standard to overcome the incoming flood of worldliness and the spirit of anti-Christ opposing the church. This will be accomplished through releasing the five-fold ministry and increased emphasis of biblical truth. And with this emerging of the five-fold ministry, apostolic preaching is also transforming in sync. The teaching and the ministry of the apostolic teacher is extremely essential.

The Lord is speaking to the church expressly in this critical hour.

Trust the Doctrine

The revelation of the mighty God in Christ is a powerful revelation. Combine this with the revelation of the New Birth—including baptism in Jesus Name and speaking with tongues as the initial sign of Spirit baptism—and it is even more powerful. An emphasis on the doctrine will release an increased flow of the Spirit in signs, wonders, and miracles.

Release the Spiritual Gifts

"Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them: because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world" (1 John 4:4). We have incredible power through the baptism of the Holy Spirit and it is demonstrated through the gifts of the Spirit. We certainly need to avail ourselves of every gift and weapon of warfare in this spiritual battle.

Pursue the Holiness Lifestyle

"No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life; that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier" (2 Timothy 2:4). Separation from the world is absolutely essential to ministering effectively and flowing in the Spirit. The holiness lifestyle provides the hedge of protection for our families and a context for intimate fellowship with the Lord.

Reach for the Lost

The mission of the church must be reaching the lost with the gospel of Jesus Christ. This gospel must be preached in all the world and the Lord will confirm His Word with the signs following. God has elevated the ministry evangelist in the past several years to provide increased leadership and understanding concerning the harvest. Evangelists are partnering with the pastor as never before to assist the local church with reaching the harvest.

Yes, we are in transition. The apostolic ministry is under a dramatic re-alignment directed by the very Spirit of God. We are enlarging to provide a place for bishops overseeing multiple ministries and we are expanding our understanding of the five-fold ministry to allow us to provide more detailed definitions of each ministry and examples of their operation. We have realized the value of women in ministry, and we are enjoying the increased blessing through their contributions. The younger ministers are being given more opportunities and their voices are making a big difference. We have been called for such a time as this. The ministry is expanding, and the anointing is flowing. We will reach the harvest. We are about to experience the greatest revival in the history of the apostolic church.

Doug Finedust



Article No. 4

Transition

When John the Baptist came to the river that momentous afternoon, he, and a crowd of thousands, had a long list of credentials to bask in. But then, Jesus crest the peak of the hill. Suddenly John had to think about what was beyond this moment and what this was really all about. He quickly acquiesced to the Spirit and said, "There's one better than me coming" (see John 1:15). And he made it his mission from that moment forward to make the transition from his way of doing things, to Jesus' way of doing things.

The rest of that story is glorious history, and it provides a template for successful transition. The important thing to recognize here is that John's ministry was necessary to prepare the way for Jesus' ministry. Together they advanced the Kingdom of God. Each one was very important in his purpose, and each worked within his appointed season.

The idea of transition in leadership can be a beautiful time.

Currently, there are many leaders in our organization reaching that wonderful season of retirement and transition. Movement from a lead role into a not-so-lead role can be a bit tricky and scary at moments. Here are some things that have been gleaned from leaders among us in recent years who have willingly aged out and retired their titles and positions in exchange for the greater good of God's church.

As a transitioning leader, remember:

1. The good you've done for the cause of Christ never was for you; it was for God's Kingdom. Sometimes you've just gotta let God "bury your bones," and be excited about Joshua taking the children of God into the Promised Land.
 2. In preparation and planning for your future and the future of the church, make sure that neither you nor the church is left under the pressure of worrying about financial survival. Work diligently on a retirement plan for yourself and a continuing plan for the local church.
 3. As ministries transition into new leadership and organizational identity, please know It does honor your legacy and labor even if it doesn't look like you thought it would or should as it moves into the future. Remember, you were bold and daring and took risks when you entered into this great calling, and God will probably send leaders to fill your shoes who are willing to do the same and more!
-

New leaders...

1. HONOR THOSE WHO HAVE GONE BEFORE YOU! Their labor—even if it wasn't the style of leadership you prefer—is worthy of the honor. Take time during transition to show honor to the leaders and their families; they have sacrificed their lives to bring this opportunity to you!
2. Money is an issue in many cases. Be prepared to make financial sacrifices at the beginning of your time as a newly transitioned leader. It took time and sacrifice to build the organization you will now be leading. And you must make sure that, within reason, the former leaders are cared for and feel cared for.
3. Surprise! Some people will not like you! I know it's surprising, but don't let your ego get in the way of this. Oftentimes, the former leadership of a healthy organization is revered in such a way that it can be a bit difficult to navigate beyond their legacy. It will take time, but it will happen.

Work together to prepare in detail for good transition in your local church and ministry. Have open conversations with your leadership team and with your spouse as to how you will navigate this time. We are maturing as a movement, and we are beyond being reactive about such ideas as leadership transition. We must be wise, prudent, and emotionally intelligent in the matter.

David Bryan



Article No. 5

The Bottleneck of Church Multiplication

Over the last few years, North American Missions has examined the available church planting data to understand the landscape of church planting in North America. We have made much progress. We discovered that, compared to other denominations, we are doing quite well.

Just looking at 2020, our worst year for starting new churches for at least five years, the UPCI started 129 new works for a 2.62% gain. By comparison, the Assemblies of God started 214 new works for an increase of 1.65%, and the Southern Baptist Convention started 588 for a 1.24% gain. Over the last five years, we averaged planting 173 new works every year, and the AG averaged 311, which is a gross growth rate of 3.7% and 2.4%, respectively. We are thankful for this progress and celebrate the hard work of our church planters, but we must do more. The goal of North American Missions is 5% gross growth, which means we need to start 243 churches this year.

“Leaders are the most important aspect of church planting because these individuals will not only manage church affairs, they will model the faith for good or ill” (D. J. Hesselgrave).

So far, in North America, we operate on the plant-and-pastor model. This model necessitates those leaders be nearly fully developed before the church plant begins. However, most local churches are not equipped to train pastors; they are best equipped to train lay leaders. This lack of trained leaders ready to plant can create a bottleneck in our church planting efforts. The most oft-cited reason I hear for pastors not starting daughter works is, “I don’t have anyone to pastor it.”

In a previous article, I pointed out that church planting networks are highly effective at training leaders. A group of experienced church planters with strong ministerial relationships in the same geographic region can effectively pass on hard-gained knowledge and best practices to new church planters. These relationships are built over several years, and the trust factor is very high. The best way I know to produce trained leaders who are ready to plant churches is for them to be exposed, for an extended period, to the front lines of church planting.

Leaders who arise in church planting networks are exposed to several different church plants, church planters, and methodologies.

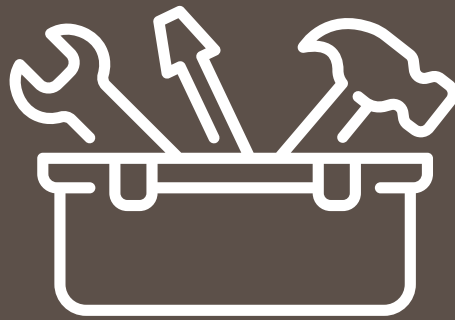
When no local church plants are available to send prospective leaders to receive training, consider sending them to assist a church planter you trust. This method is used very effectively by Global Missions. The Associates in Missions (AIM) program is responsible for training thousands of leaders over the years and is now a requirement for all prospective global missionaries.

I hope that thousands of young men and women will be sent to work in new church plants for a period to prepare them to be church planters. The purpose of sending this army is not as much to lift the load for church planters, but to inspire, train, and equip them to become an army of church planters. A stint in a real emergency room, treating real wounds and sickness, is necessary to complete every doctor's training. Likewise, there can be no substitute for exposure to the real-life experience of being in a church planting situation.

Bro. Bernard has consistently advocated establishing regular leadership training in every local church. As a result, our Bible schools are experiencing record enrollment and many districts have implemented programs such as Purpose Institute to train leaders. This year, North American Missions is offering a concentration (minor) in church planting at Urshan College and North Texas Christian College. Soon, we hope it will be offered in all of our UPCI-endorsed Bible colleges.

As the North American Missions Director, I am grateful for every effort made to train more leaders for the harvest. If we work together, we can ensure that our goal of 5% growth becomes a reality and will not be slowed because of a lack of trained leaders.

Scott Fistrunk



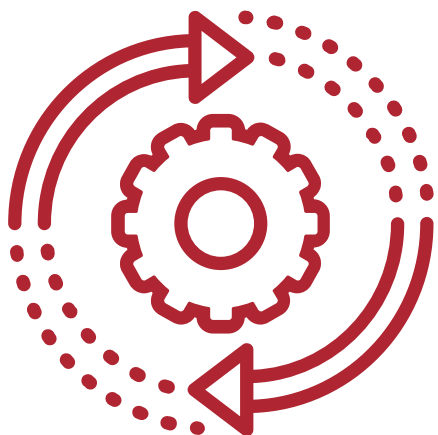
ISSUE 10 TOOLBOX

PRACTICAL TOOLS YOU CAN USE



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STRATEGIC GROWTH INITIATIVE



SUCCESSION READINESS TOOL

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