



# REGIONAL MINISTER ORIENTATION MANUAL

NORTH AMERICAN BAPTIST CONFERENCE



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# Note from Executive Director Harry Kelm



The NAB was established in the mid-1800s by German-speaking Christians reaching out missionally to other German immigrants around them. In doing this, they raised up leaders, trained pastors, planted churches, and sent international missionaries. This was the identity of the NAB from the beginning. It is the foundation and legacy of who we are today.

One of the blessings of God's working is that people from many different backgrounds continue to come into the churches of the NAB. Churches also call pastors who have been trained in various traditions and viewpoints. God has been growing the diversity of the NAB. In this diversity, it is crucial to focus on our common identity.

In 2013, the NAB moved to a governance structure that had as a key ingredient the establishing of End Goals, priorities the Governing Board believed God was calling us to strive toward together. Four End Goals were chosen by the Governing Board, in consultation with the regional ministers and NAB leaders and churches. These End Goals have subsequently been evaluated and re-affirmed. As the NAB, our unity is based on our love for God, our love for each other, and our commitment to work together toward these End Goals.

In the years since, the need for a common unity and identity have become even more important. We see a need to emphasize these End Goals as we ALL work together, International Office with regions and associations, and churches with regional ministers. These End Goals are important for our current pastors to know and for new pastors to be aware of. Out of these goals flow objectives, ministries, and ministry opportunities for NAB pastors and churches to participate in.

The four End Goals of the NAB are:

**1. NAB churches will be trained for missional ministries.**

The NAB is missional in focus. This begins with knowing who God is and who God is forming us to be in Jesus Christ. It is looking at where God is working and joining him there. This focuses on multiplying the ministry of NAB churches that reach out to those who do not know Jesus. This also focuses on planting churches and revitalizing churches that are missionally reaching out to those who do not know Jesus.

## **2. NAB churches will seek opportunities to engage cross-culturally.**

It is a priority for us to work together with those different than us in North America, culturally and ethnically. We seek to listen and learn from one another, both within our NAB churches and among our neighbors. We seek to live in godly justice and righteousness that confronts sin and injustice in us and in our world while affirming the dignity and worth of all.

## **3. NAB churches will develop spiritual leaders.**

We believe God continues to raise up leaders who are being developed all around us. We will elevate emerging leaders by identifying, encouraging, equipping, and engaging with these leaders. As the NAB, we need to open up ministry opportunities to these men and women.

## **4. NAB churches will send and support international missionaries.**

This is about partnering with national Christians and national churches and national church leaders in global ministries. We are committed to equipping Christians across the world to share with their neighbors the message of redemption in Jesus and also to reach out to those who have never heard the Good News of Jesus.

# The Ethos and Values of the NAB

**There are many ways people describe themselves and the groups they belong to. The values of a group help define its ethos. What follows are some of the significant values of our ethos as the NAB.**

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## Being a People of Faith

Our unity with each other is based on our unity with God in Jesus Christ. Our faith in God through Jesus is what ultimately brings us together. As the NAB, we have a Statement of Beliefs, based on God's Word, that outlines what we believe. This Statement is the most important NAB document we have. It does not address every faith issue or every nuance of how we are to live as a people of God on this earth. It does not address every theological viewpoint. Its intention is to define and describe the primary beliefs of the NAB. There is a recognition that there might be personal beliefs that there will be divergent viewpoints on. As the NAB, we agree on many things, and we also are willing to disagree on some things that are not addressed in the Statement of Beliefs.

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## Being an Irenic People

As a conference, we strive to have an irenic spirit with one another. The word irenic means “moving toward peace.” In Scripture, peace is not just an absence of conflict and disagreement, or even a calmness and serenity; it is knowing the wholeness and fulfillment found in God through Jesus. The Bible describes the peace we can have in Jesus, but it also describes seeking peace with others and endeavoring to bring peace to a broken world. This irenic peace informs our actions to those we might not fully agree with. As an irenic people, we seek to find what we agree on and build from there. To be a people of peace means loving one another, listening to one another, and learning from one another.

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## Being a People of Partnerships

We believe God calls us into community with each other as a community of faith. As Christians, we complement and add to each other; we support and lift each other up. That is how God has designed the body to work. This partnership does not mean we are all the same. In the body of Christ, there is a diversity of abilities, talents, and gifts. There is a diversity of culture, backgrounds, and experiences. God has made us this way. We believe we can celebrate our God-designed diversity and bring it to one another as a strength.

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## Being a People of the NAB End Goals

As a conference of churches, we seek to be unified around our End Goals, which describe our mission. These End Goals have been set by our Governing Board and affirmed by the churches of the NAB. These End Goals are not independent but are interconnected. They flow in and through each other. While there are many good things the NAB does, these End Goals are what we believe God is calling us to do.



# **MINISTRIES**

# Missional Initiatives: Why



**Missional is a renewed theological vision of the church on mission, serving as a sign, servant, and foretaste of the Kingdom of God. Missional is about the very nature of God, who is at work in the world and invites his people to join him on mission (theology - missiology - ecclesiology).**

## **THEOLOGY**

**How we see  
God**

- Missio Dei – We see God as the God of mission. It is his nature.
- Trinity – We believe in the triune God. God is One, Love, Creator, Father.
- Gospel – The reality that in and through Jesus, God is at work redeeming all things.
- Kingdom of God – The reality that in and through Jesus the King, the Kingdom of God is present and yet not fully come. This Kingdom is about the way God intended for all of life to function, with his people living life to the fullest in relationship to him, to one another, and to all creation.

## **MISSIOLOGY**

**How we see  
the world**

- The World – God is at work in the world, redeeming people, places, and all creation. As the Father sent the Son, the Father and Son sent the Spirit, so now God sends his people into neighborhoods and across the globe.
- Culture – All people are made in God's image and have his fingerprint on their lives. Many have chosen their own way and not followed his plan for life. Cultures represent people, places, and ways of living that are often aligned with the ways of the world instead of the Kingdom of God. They are in need of redemption.

## **ECCLESIOLOGY**

### **How we see the church**

- Creation - God has no rivals. He creates order out of chaos, and all he has created is good. All creation is in need of redemption.
- Conversion - Dying to self and the kingdom of this world, and being recreated into the image, character, and cause of Christ.
- Missionaries - The call of everyone who claims to be a disciple of Jesus is to follow him on mission, both locally and internationally.
- Church - Not a place you go but a people you belong to who are also called on mission in a specific location; the Church is a missionary community.
- Framework - We are to be imitators of God, bearing witness to who he is to all the world in all we do. Therefore, we love God with all our hearts, minds, and strength, and we love our neighbors as we love one another.

# Missional Initiatives: What

## Partnering: Creating Movement

We wish to **engage** people in conversation about joining God on mission and **evoke** a response towards the change needed. We want to **equip** leaders and churches to create missionaries in the neighbourhoods and beyond. We believe this will help us **establish** new missional communities and church plants across North America and around the world. To this end, we desire to partner with regions and churches in the following ways:

### **ENGAGE** “to participate or become involved in or with”

We help NAB churches and leaders to join God on mission in the neighbourhoods. We do this through information on the website, telling stories of God at work in updates, book studies, webinars, and a variety of other offerings throughout the year.

**EVOKE** “to cause a particular response to happen”

We are seeking to make our NAB churches respond to God’s initiative as he is at work in the world. We do this through The Discovery Project, Blue Ocean and Light Blue Ocean, Neighbourhood Life, “Asking the Right Questions,” and “The Greatest Story Never Told” (Formation).

**THE  
DISCOVERY  
PROJECT**

Invite the team to come to your church for a weekend to introduce the topic of Joining God on Mission in Your Neighbourhood. The Discovery Project is intended to produce hope for God’s people, develop a dependence on a God who is at work in your neighbourhood, and create an imagination for how you might love your neighbours and neighbourhood.

**BLUE OCEAN &  
LIGHT BLUE  
OCEAN**

Blue Ocean helps NAB leaders engage in what it means to join God on mission, to be formed into the character of Christ, and to learn to share the whole gospel. The cohort meets three times a year in different cities and is a basic introduction to our missional/formational movement. Light Blue Ocean is an online version of Blue Ocean that enables teams to join in together.

## NEIGHBOURHOOD LIFE

In this series of webinars, participants will learn about why the Spirit is inviting God's people to pay attention to their neighbours/neighbourhoods for the sake of God's Kingdom and mission.

## EVANGELISM: ASKING THE RIGHT QUESTIONS

What if we are asking the wrong question? Evangelism has been shaped by pragmatism. Asking "What works?" does not help congregations fulfill their evangelistic mandate. Explore how asking a different question will help your congregation to proclaim the good news.

## FORMATION: THE GREATEST STORY NEVER TOLD

In this workshop, we delve deeply into the issues of Identity (Community), Character (like Christ) and Vocation (Christ Centred). Through stories, practical examples, and exercises, this action-reflection workshop can be hosted in your church or online. Learn how to help those in your church who really want to be like Jesus to enter into a life of formation.

## **EQUIP** "to prepare for a particular activity or challenge"

The Missional Initiatives Team helps create local, theological learning communities to equip leaders and shape churches to participate in God's mission in the world. We do this through Ethos and The Neighbourhood Life Intensive, Evangelism Equipping, and "It Takes a Church to Be Formed."



**ETHOS**

Ethos exists to equip leaders and churches for neighbourhood transformation. It is a two-year commitment that shapes the work we are doing in our churches. It consists of six modules, with each module lasting for three months. Through partnership with Kairos University, this training can now be taken for credit towards a Masters level degree or a Doctor of Ministry degree.

**NEIGHBOURHOOD  
LIFE INTENSIVE**

This is a six-month, biweekly intensive for those who have been involved in Neighbourhood Life, aimed at being formed more deeply as God's missional people in their everyday, ordinary lives in their neighbourhoods.

Participants are committed to exploring and engaging postures and practices, experiments, story, and action reflection theological work in order to join the Spirit on God's mission right where they live. In so doing, participants are challenged to step out of their comfort zones and embrace often new (ancient) ways of being God's people as they are faithfully present amongst their neighbours.

**EVANGELISM:  
EVANGELISTIC  
EQUIPPING**

This six-month process includes several stages. An online evangelism questionnaire will be distributed to the congregational and the Leadership Team to fill out prior to the training. The results will be used during the training sessions to both teach and plan for Evangelistic Health. Then there will be three follow-up coaching consultations to encourage the ongoing facilitation of evangelistic health measures. This training will take place both in person and virtually over the desired time frame.

**FORMATION:  
IT TAKES A  
CHURCH TO BE  
FORMED**

Do you want to create a culture of missional formation in your church? In order to be equipped to do this, we need to reflect on the values we present, the practices we keep, and the rhythms we engage in, in order to create a culture of formation. This movement is not just for mystics, contemplatives, and spiritual giants but for all churches who want to be serious about being formed in the likeness of Christ and bear witness to the Father. This six-month cohort equips churches for personal and corporate formation.

**ESTABLISH** “to initiate or bring about”

The ultimate goal of all activity in evoke and equip is to move our churches towards the establishing of new congregations in new neighbourhoods. We foster this movement through Bonfire and a new offering entitled “Launching and Leading Missional Communities.” This is the first year we are also offering Missional Cohorts.

**BONFIRE**

Bonfire is a gathering of NAB leaders who have given themselves to joining God on mission in their various contexts. It is a time to reconnect with ministry friends, make new ones, and deepen the relationships among this community of leaders.

**LAUNCHING  
AND LEADING  
MISSIONAL  
COMMUNITIES**

This six-month cohort is a new offering around what it takes to launch new missional communities and to lead them towards multiplication. All participants must have taken either Blue Ocean or Ethos to be a part of this cohort.

**MISSIONAL  
COHORTS**

We are beginning Missional Communities of Learning this year. Several churches have been chosen to work together in telling their stories of what God has been teaching them when it comes to neighbourhood engagement. We are still seeking churches who would like to be considered for the fall of 2023; contact Sara-May Cardy ([scardy@nabconf.org](mailto:scardy@nabconf.org)) for more details.

# Missional Initiatives: Who

**In addition to the Missional Initiatives International Office staff (see the Staff section), there are a number of other individuals who are a part of the Missional Initiatives Team.**

**MERV BUDD**  
Equipping  
Evangelist

**DEB JUDAS**  
Director of  
Formation

**LUKE MILLER**  
Missional Initiatives  
Teaching Team

**MATT STYLES**  
Missional Initiatives  
Teaching Team

**KAREN WILK**  
Neighbourhood  
Life

# Church Multiplication: Why

**There used to be a time when church planting was viewed as an extraordinary task by a local church or apostolic leader sent out to gather a group who could start a new weekend service that, over time, developed into a full-service church. This is the old math of church multiplication.**



There is now a new math to multiplication. The early focus is on establishing a group to communally discern the leading of God in a community and join his activity in that effort to establish whatever God envisions as his next step of redemptive work. With this new math, the NAB family is engaging in ministry multiplication that includes church planting in ways that demonstrate the Gospel, join God on his missional/formational movement in our midst, and commit to further multiplication.

When a faith community begins with and pivots around communal mission and formation, the weekend gathering remains essential, but it is now a gathering centered on celebrating all God has done and is doing and on equipping followers and skeptics alike in discerning together what he is calling the community to be for the sake of the world.

To that end, church multiplication is the natural overflow of a people formed in Christ's image and joining his mission. We are working hard to create a church planting movement that multiplies the way of Jesus in neighborhoods, rural counties, cities, and suburbs in an ongoing demonstration that the life found in Christ is the best of all possible lives.

Our missional/formational movement seeks to plant churches, establish missional communities, revitalize established churches who have lost their missional impulse, and multiply thriving ministries. We are entering planting agreements, resourcing planters who are committed to:

- the Robust Gospel.
- the NAB missional/formational movement.
- level five multiplication.

# Church Multiplication: What



## **NAB'S FIT ASSESSMENT**

Fit Assessment is the NAB's partnership with leaders, pastors, planters, and missionaries alike to discern next steps on mission with God. A team of trained NAB leaders and practitioners spend two-and-a half days with candidate couples (if married, singles if not) to walk through the process of assessment in community. We use proven methods and tools to help each individual and couple accurately appraise their fit to be the lead planter in a church plant, be the lead pastor of a church or revitalization effort, or serve as an international missionary. NAB's missional/formational values are trained intentionally during these days.

**PLANTER/  
REVITALIZER  
AGREEMENTS**

Assessments happen in the Sacramento, California, area in February and in the Cleveland, Ohio, area in July each year. This is one of the earliest steps in partnership and resource access.

Following assessment, we work with the planter/revitalizer and alongside the RM and any network partner to draft a planting/revitalizing agreement that establishes the strategic plan for that ministry, as well as milestone-based resource investments. Each plant/revitalization effort additionally agrees to uphold the minister's code of conduct (where applicable), sign the NAB's Statement of Belief, and give back to the NAB's Ministry Resource Fund and their Association's or Region's general fund.

**NETWORK  
PARTNERS**

To assist us, we have relationship with Excel Leadership Network in the US and C2C Collective in Canada.

We also have NAB planters with varied network partnerships, including Hispanics for Christ, SEND, New Thing, 3Strand, Acts 29, and others. Our aim is to find a network partner for planters that serves their needs, if a network partner is of value.



We are always pleased to work arm in arm with Christ-centered, Gospel-focused networks to play our part in supporting a church planter and their call.

## **PATHFINDERS**

As the NAB continues to send out new planters and revitalization pastors to announce the Kingdom in their various communities, we find ourselves at a crossroads of sorts and in urgent need of a short-term learning cohort for these leaders to help them in their early stages of establishing a team and building whatever God has called them to.

We are working to prepare a six- to eight-week cohort that would be designed for new planters/revitalizers, as well as key members of their teams to acclimate their work around NAB's missional/formational ethos and collaborate with others around the NAB doing the same. This step in a planter/revitalizer's journey would ideally come early in the process, done as a team, and designed to inform their multiplication journey.

## **COACHING**

We have carefully vetted a list of approved coaches that span the polarities of attraction, Sunday-centric ministry to

**PLANTER  
SUMMIT**

organic missional communities, all who value and encourage movement with the NAB's missional/formational approach. Planters/revitalizers are typically suggested a coach, but they are free to choose from any of the approved coaches they desire.

NAB's annual gathering for all multipliers designed for connection and soul care of the lead couple. This happens in an overlapping schedule with Bonfire to intentionally connect these two key groups of missional leaders in the NAB Conference.

The challenges associated with the kingdom call of church multiplication are often a heavy burden for a lead couple to carry. Whether revitalizing a legacy church, planting a new church, getting a micro-church off the ground, or leading a movement of missional communities, this is unique work. The sting of rejection, the weariness of long ministry weeks, and the joy of spiritual breakthroughs all weigh heavy on the souls of church multiplication leaders. As NAB leaders, we are convinced the trajectory of any church multiplication effort begins with who we are becoming as leaders.

Planter Summit is not your average conference with a parade of speakers and highly programmed gatherings. For this experience, we seek to gather about 50 people in a beautiful setting to hear from a seasoned church planting leader on the topic of soul care for the lead couple. We hope couples will attend together, though there is no problem attending solo. Our times will be highly conversational and include several hours of non-programmed time to explore the city or simply rest.

# Cross-Cultural Engagement: Why



Cross-cultural engagement is both about who the church is internally and how the church must be missionally. Internally, the people of God are multiethnic. That is not a choice or an intentionally hyperbolic statement or some political sentiment. Through the power of the Holy Spirit, God has called people from all walks of life, all ethnicities, and all cultures to worship him. This vision of the people of God is at least grounded in the change of Abram’s name to Abraham, “father of many nations.” The many nations are not just contained in their respective countries; these nations, ethnicities, and cultures are all around us.

Additionally, Jesus has called us to oneness, as expressed in his prayer in John 17:20–24. This oneness is about our posture toward one another: love from the heart, being united, being patient with one another, showing sympathy and humility, empathizing with one another. Ultimately, our oneness is in the God-man Jesus Christ, and we already possess this oneness because of what God has done. Our job is – by the power of his Spirit – to live like it.

Internally, we see from John 17 that our oneness is Christ’s desire, God’s glory on display, and to achieve it we must destroy our own self-centeredness. As Christ’s desire, we know this is true because he prays for us to have it. As God’s glory on display, Jesus prays that he chooses to be known on the basis of the unity of his own church.

Formationally, achieving the oneness Christ desires calls for the destruction of our self-centeredness because unity happens as we deny ourselves and love others the way our Lord has loved us. Mark DeYmaz writes, “In seeking to develop cross-cultural relationships with fellow members of a local church, it is important to keep in mind that your way is just a way of seeing things and not necessarily *the* way of seeing things” (*Multiethnic Conversations: An Eight-Week Journey toward Unity in Your Church*).

Externally, cross-cultural engagement is about listening to one another out of love of neighbor. To reach the nations, both internationally and across the street, we must grow in cross-cultural competence, the ability to engage people different than us in relationship. There is no other way to be

faithful to the Great Commandment than to engage our neighbors, different in ethnicity and culture, with the love God has for them. But doing that calls for our own growth, both in cross-cultural competence and in the ability to listen well to our neighbors, respecting their historical and cultural backgrounds. To take the Great Commandment to love the Lord and our neighbor seriously, and to take the Great Commission seriously, calls for relational humility and sacrificial love. We must learn what things we need to lay down in order to love our neighbors in the way Christ has loved us.

# Cross-Cultural Engagement: What

**Here are a few ways you can communicate the value of cross-cultural engagement, equip the conference, and elevate and connect multi-cultural ministry leaders:**

- Partner with Wayne Stapleton to develop the kinds of connections and lines of communication through which we hear and understand each other; let's be friends.
- Participate in Zoom studies with multiethnic members of the NAB.
- Promote these Zoom studies in your regions and associations.
- Present connections between Wayne and BIPOC pastors and other pastors doing work in cross-cultural engagement.
- Propose connection between Wayne and Anglo pastors seeking growth in cross-cultural engagement.
- Process possibilities with Wayne for how we can engage the least-connected churches in the NAB due to cultural barriers.

- Pass on to Wayne examples of NAB churches working cross-culturally and the activities in which they are undertaking.
- Personally participate in periodic webinars.
- Plan with Wayne how to extend these conversations and work among our regions and churches; invite him to association and region meetings.
- Place Wayne in connection with specific NAB folks who are multiethnic that he can meet and get to know so their voices are heard, especially First Nations people in the NAB.
- Pursue personal opportunities to grow in your own cross-cultural competence and present them to Wayne.

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## Webinars

As the opportunity arises, we will occasionally host webinars to allow those across the conference to glean different perspectives on cross-cultural engagement. Past webinars have included:

- Impact of Culture on Biblical Interpretation and Spiritual Formation with Dr. Larry Caldwell and Lyndell Campbell-Réquia
- A Safe Place to Ask Tough Questions
- An Invitation to Listen with Pastor Aaron Brockmeier of Faith Baptist Church in North Minneapolis, Minnesota
- February 2021 Year of Bonfire Gathering with authors Soong-Chan Rah and Allen Yeh



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## Dialogues on Race and Culture

Mutual understanding about race and culture is not arrived at through mandate or pressure but in the context of Christ-centered unity and dialogue where brothers and sisters of different perspectives can share openly and in an environment of grace. A foundational way we seek to grow in our understanding is through holding conversations between people of different ethnicities and views. We set the stage for one another to hear hearts and to seek understanding and even love in the context of being the church.

If you're interested in hosting or taking part in a dialogue with other believers, or you want to take part in a book study to dive deeper into issues related to cross-cultural engagement, contact Wayne Stapleton.

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## Book Studies

Every few months, Wayne Stapleton gathers a small group of individuals across the NAB to read through a book together and discuss it on a weekly basis. One example of a book that was used in a recent study is *How to Heal Our Racial Divide* by Derwin L. Grey.

# Emerging Leader Engagement: Why

We often hear younger leaders referred to as the leaders of tomorrow, but in truth they are the leaders of today, a significant part of NAB ministries in North America. Emerging leaders, those of age 20-40, are currently on staff or volunteering in churches, using their gifts for the Kingdom. In the past, we have had passionate adult leaders leading ministry to younger leaders. Currently, our desire is to put emerging leaders in positions to lead the conference. This is for the health of the NAB today, as well as for the future of our conference.



God has entrusted to us shepherding the conference, and one significant aspect of shepherding is inviting and helping to fan into flame the giftings of those in our midst. We see in Scripture many instances of seasoned leaders encouraging and making a way for younger leaders. Moses put Joshua in a position to learn and develop. Elijah came alongside Elisha. Even the relationship between Paul and Timothy is an example of a seasoned leader encouraging the leadership giftings of a younger leader. Paul mentored Timothy and put him in place in Ephesus to provide leadership and teaching to that congregation.

There has likely never been the kind of generational change akin to what we are experiencing in our midst right now. And yet, to be faithful to our charge from Jesus to make disciples of the nations, we are called to engage our culture where it is, inviting them to lay down their lives to follow the Lord. In such a time of great change and cultural transformation, our emerging leaders are conversant in the questions and challenges of this generation. We must engage these questions and challenges if we are to be faithful to the Great Commandment and the Great Commission.

It is possible that ministry strategies of yesterday, executed today, might be faithful to the Lord but miss the heartbeat of the culture. There are times the church has passionate answers to questions the people around them are not currently asking.

As we invite the voices and involvement of emerging leaders, we invite their perspectives on reaching emerging generations,

providing the answers to questions we as older believers have not thought to ask and preparing the world for a faithful representation of a church ready to meet them where they are and invite them to follow the Lordship of Jesus Christ.

# Emerging Leader Engagement: What

**The Elevating Younger Leaders Team (EYELET) exists to engage, equip, and elevate young leaders to lead the NAB into the future, as well as today. What this looks like will continue to grow in the coming days to include things like Regional EYELETs, where youth workers are connected via local clusters. For the time being, the following are a few ways you can help your churches engage with what is happening:**

- Communicate to your churches the work EYELET is doing, including the Gathering, EYELET Zoom calls, Youth Pastor Connection, and more.
- Counsel the emerging leaders and pastors in your region about the work EYELET is doing.
- Connect Wayne with emerging leaders in your region.

- Consider the ways churches are elevating emerging leaders in their contexts and share them with Wayne.
  - Capture names for the growing, ongoing list of emerging leaders and send them on to Wayne.
  - Chat with Wayne about what kinds of leaders we are looking for and how we might develop Regional EYELETs to encourage emerging leader engagement at the regional level.
  - Coach: think about what your influence might look like in the life of an emerging leader in your region.
  - Create: work with Wayne to see how we can create momentum for emerging leader engagement in your region.
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## The Landing

The Landing is a space for youth workers to receive resources for ministering to the teenagers in their culture and context. The NAB covers a large demographic, and The Landing will seek to have representation of each culture and context, welcoming all voices to the table. These resources will include current cultural trends, latest research from Barna and other organizations, opportunities to learn from each other and outside sources, and insight to help youth workers partner with parents and families, along with other resources that will engage, empower, and equip youth workers to disciple this generation of teenagers.

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## The Gathering

Every three years, middle school and high school students from across the NAB come together in Orange County for an experience unlike any other. For five jam-packed days, students hear from gifted speakers, sing praises to God, dive into the Word, engage in service projects, and interact with others from across Canada and the US.

This is The Gathering, a youth conference and missions experience that provides students with a variety of thoughtful encounters to dive deeper in faith, community, and service as an opportunity to become ambassadors for Jesus in Orange County, with the ultimate goal of inspiring them to serve God and others when they return home. The Gathering is the only venue that assembles students from across the NAB in one place for a time of worship, service, transformation, and fun.

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## Explore NAB Podcast

Two members of the EYELET team are joining together to produce another version of the Explore NAB podcast. In this discussion format, NAB leaders from around North America will be interviewed, showcasing how they are moving forward in each area of our Four Ends.

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## Webinars

EYELET also plans to conduct webinar interviews with people on topics relevant to emerging leaders. The purpose will be to develop a sense of connection among emerging leaders, as well as to equip emerging leaders for ministry in an ever-changing cultural environment.

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## The Summit

EYELET is anticipating putting together this event targeted at emerging leaders within the conference. The purpose will be to provide a space to unplug and relax, look deeper into God's Word, connect with other emerging leaders from across the NAB, and have fun. The Summit will occur once every three years, featuring times of worship, a guest speaker, free time, and intentional times to connect with emerging leaders and to share and pray for one another.



# International Missions: Why

**So that our joy may be complete. (1 John 1:1-4 ESV)**



The mission of the Church is God's mission. God created humanity to be in community with himself, one another, and creation. After Creation, God entered into a day of rest – a day of shalom – that was to have no end, and we were to have fellowship with him. However, humanity sinned and broke this shalom, leaving all of humanity separated from God and in need of forgiveness, redemption, and restoration.

However, throughout history, God has been bringing humanity back into fellowship with himself and one another. This redemptive history reached its fullness in the Gospels of the New Testament. Through the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ, God brought about the forgiveness of sin, the reconciliation of all creation to himself, and the ushering in of the Kingdom of God, thereby making it possible for each person to once again enter into rest and fellowship with God, one another, and creation. While we still wait for the fullness of this Kingdom upon Christ's return, this present reconciliation is the in-breaking of the Kingdom of God; it is the reconciliation into which God invites his people, and it is the ministry of reconciliation to which God invites us to be coworkers.

God's mission of reconciling and forming his people is driven by his great love for us, a love that compels us to be coworkers on his mission. As coworkers in this ministry of reconciliation, God calls his Church to spread his peace/rest/shalom to all people, from our next door neighbors to the nations. It is the work of his people through the Holy Spirit to restore the relationship of humanity with God, one another, and creation. This is the mission of God, and ours as well, compelled by his great love. It is in the living out of this mission that the believer's joy is made complete.

Therefore, the following core beliefs guide the NAB's international mission efforts as we participate in God's mission:

- **The mission is God's mission.**

We are invited by God to participate in his mission as his people. While God calls his people to reach the whole world, we believe his Spirit guides in the discernment of where and how we join him on his mission as we steward the resources with which he has blessed us.

- **The invitation to participate in God's mission is for all believers.**

God calls and equips each of his followers for his mission of reconciliation. There is a diversity of giftings God gives to individuals, and because of this, there is a rich diversity in the living out the mission of God. Some are called to minister in the local community while others may go to distant lands, but each of us are called to participate through the power of the Spirit in this mission, both individually and corporately as his Church.

- **God's mission is holistic, and therefore the work of missions is as well.**

The proclamation of the Gospel includes, but is not limited to, the verbal preaching of the Gospel for the reconciliation of sinners. The proclamation of the Gospel is also to be seen in the care of the physical and emotional needs of a world God loves. This includes giving voice to the voiceless; participating in racial reconciliation; providing medical care and education to those in need; assisting in disaster relief; properly stewarding God's creation; caring for the

orphan and the widow; giving drink to the thirsty, food to the hungry, and clothes to the naked; caring for the prisoner; and so much more. God calls and equips his people to do all this through the power of his Spirit and compelled by his love to demonstrate and proclaim the in-breaking of his Kingdom into a broken and fallen world.

- **The Gospel is transcendent of and yet essential for every culture.**

The Gospel is not to be equated with one culture, but every culture is to be transformed by the Gospel; therefore, we must be careful in how we approach other cultures and avoid presenting the Gospel with our cultural norms. Rather, we should attempt to present the Gospel within the culture we are endeavoring to reach while not compromising the Gospel's truth.

- **The global Church is composed of interdependent groups of brothers and sisters in Christ from every tribe and nation spread throughout the world.**

The interconnectedness of all believers through the Holy Spirit transcends place and culture. Because of this, we minister from within a relational paradigm of fellowship and interdependence rather than dependence or independence. This requires of us a posture of listening and learning from our national brothers and sisters in Christ as we seek how best to contribute to this specific relationship and to the broader Kingdom.

- **The full joy of the Gospel is found in being a disciple-maker.**

The true joy of reconciliation cannot be experienced by only participating in our own reconciliation with God, others, and creation, but it is experienced in sharing this Truth with others. In other words, this joy is not complete in simply being formed back into the image of God but is made complete in participating with him in his mission.

As a conference, it is our hope that each individual member, church, and association and region will find the joy of being on mission with God to our neighbors and the nations.

# International Missions: What

**FIELDS:** **Brazil** (theological education, orphan care with partner Chain of Love), **Cameroon** (medical, theological education, least-reached people outreach, ministry support, primary and secondary education with Rain Forest International School), **Central and South America** (church planting with Hispanics for Christ), **East Asia** (evangelism and counseling), **Hungary & Serbia** (wholistic ministry among Roma and Goorani), **Lebanon** (sister-church partnerships with Horizons), **Japan** (church planting, women's ministries, youth ministries, English school for evangelism), **Philippines** (theological education), **Romania** (camp, church engagement, theological education, leadership development), **Russia** (theological education), and **Ukraine** (theological education).



## Strategy and Areas of Engagement:

### WHAT WE CAN PROVIDE

- Training for sister-church/ministry partnerships and short-term mission opportunities.
- Through on-site seminars, help mission teams think strategically about best practices for budgets, engagement with missionaries, etc.
- Consider inviting a member of the International Missions team (missionaries, office staff, Gateway staff, etc.) to speak at association or regional pastors' events - this doesn't always need to be about missions (there is expertise in theology, New and Old Testament, ecclesiology, cross-cultural preaching, medical ethics, reaching the next generation, leadership development, etc.).

### RECRUITMENT

- Sister-church/ministry partnerships: we want to lean more heavily into resourcing churches to develop relationships with our NAB fields. The hope is these closer connections will lead to recruitment opportunities from within NAB churches.

**NEW FIELDS****BE AN  
ADVOCATE**

- Pre-recruitment: by engaging youth at camps, Urbana, and Fuse teams (Gateway teams made up of youth 17-23 years of age), we hope to become a more integral part of the conversation with young people thinking about missions.
- Strategic partnerships: Horizons in Lebanon is one example. A second that is relatively new and working with Dr. Dennis Palmer is the possibility of a strategic partnership with a medical mission sending organization.
- Our philosophy about when it is time to consider a new field is to explore where NAB churches are already being led by the Spirit.
- Discernment of capacity and long-term implications.
- Stay informed on open positions on our NAB missionary fields.
- Consider using missionary stories as sermon illustrations as you are speaking to churches. This requires that you stay informed.





# EVENTS & RESOURCES

## Triennial

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Since 1865, all the churches across the NAB gather every three years for a time of worship, fellowship, and inspiration, as well as to conduct the necessary business of the conference. Triennials generally are planned and developed around a ministry-related theme.

## Regional Minister / Executive Team / Field Director Retreat

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Once a year, the Regional Ministers, Executive Team, Field Directors for our international missions, and their spouses gather to connect relationally, to be encouraged, to be challenged missionally, and to consider strategically where God is leading the NAB.

## Advancement Resources

For more information, contact Stu Streeter directly at [sstreeter@nabconf.org](mailto:ssreeter@nabconf.org).

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### Feasibility Studies

From time to time, every person, every marriage, every family can greatly benefit from careful and grace-filled insight. Churches are no different - but with the complexities of leadership dynamics, busy ministry schedules, and hard-earned wounds, most churches never have the courage to invite in an outsider to lovingly weigh in on the health, effectiveness, and future possibilities. Add to that the high financial cost of bringing in a consultant and most churches are dealt out of the availability.

NAB's Advancement Team has a long history of consulting churches, with excellent outcomes. Whether you are examining a philosophical shift, potential capital campaign, staff-team restructure, moving locations, or even a rebrand and fresh launch - we are honored to spend a few days on site with you working through our system and then providing you a report and strategic plan to accomplish the vision to which your church leadership senses God's call.

Most churches are asked to contribute \$2,000 to \$3,000 to the NAB Ministry Resource Fund to help offset the cost of the consultant's time and travel.

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## Design and Branding Services

When it comes to some simple design work, we can help you at no charge. For larger projects, we work with a number of contract designers from all over the country who we can introduce to your region or churches if you need design services. Most designers charge \$60 to \$100 per hour for design services, but we have relationship with designers at a significant discount for NAB churches. Just give us a call and let us know what you need, and we can introduce you to the designer we think might be able to help you!



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**FUNDS**

**While there are a number of different funds that support the ministry of the NAB International Office, the following are the most prominent.**

## Ministry Resource Fund

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The Ministry Resource Fund is the broadest and most flexible way to support NAB ministries. It is like the electrical supply line for your house; it is vital and can flow in many different directions and power many different and important things. It supports the training that pastors, missionaries, and leaders receive in missional and formational principles. This fund provides for pastoral enrichment and care. It allows for resources such as *Onward* to exist. It also funds teleconferences and webinars, which foster discussions on God's working in and through us as his people. It opens the doors for the planting of new churches in Canada and the United States and in identifying church planters. The Ministry Resource Fund resources the identifying, elevating, and equipping of emerging leaders. It is used to encourage biblical justice and righteousness. Many of the NAB ministries around the globe and in our own communities would not be able to stand on their own without the Ministry Resource Fund.

## Global Missions Fund

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The ongoing conviction behind the theology of missions for the NAB is the firm biblical belief that God's mission to humanity in Jesus Christ was not to come, save, and leave but rather to come, save, and remain through the power of his Spirit! What this means is that when we engage in a mission field or an international missional movement with a global partner, we do so with the firm conviction that God is calling us there for the long haul – not to come, proclaim, and leave but to come, proclaim, and partner. The Global Missions Fund is central to sustaining this type of ongoing, collaborative ministry on an international scale. While all of the NAB international missionaries have their own network of support through individuals, groups, and churches, the Global Missions Fund serves as the foundation that provides our missionaries and partners with the necessary resources, administrative support, and other help that allows them to focus on the ministry on the field.

## Connie Salios Church Planting Fund

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The efforts of church multiplication in the NAB are largely funded through the Connie Salios Church Planting Fund, in memory of one of the church planting giants within the NAB. This fund was established at the 2018 Edmonton Triennial, and since that time it has resourced nearly forty church planting and revitalization efforts across Canada and the United States.

## Special Projects

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There are a number of special funds that have been established to directly support specific Kingdom endeavors. Some of these are ongoing while others are intended to be active for only a defined period, and as such, the list changes on an irregular basis as different special projects are added or removed. You can find the complete and current list by using this QR code.





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