

2019 Ministry Inquiries

Cooperative Program

- 1. With an understanding that SBC entities which receive Cooperative Program funding share an equal responsibility to promote and advance the Cooperative Program, please give an explanation and description of NAMB'S commitment to promote the Cooperative Program and provide examples.**

The North American Mission Board (NAMB) is grateful for every dollar Southern Baptists send through the Cooperative Program, which provides 35 percent of NAMB's annual budget.

NAMB's president and others who represent NAMB regularly make note of the Cooperative Program and thank Southern Baptists for giving when they speak, write or create videos that will be viewed by Southern Baptists. NAMB provides a speakers' guide for missionaries and staff, as well as for NAMB ambassadors and other advocates, which requests the speaker always thank their audience for their support through the Cooperative Program.

NAMB seeks to educate church planters on the importance of the Cooperative Program and the [Annie Armstrong Easter Offering](#)[®] (AAEO) in a number of ways.

- NAMB requires church plants that receive funding from NAMB to give a minimum of 6 percent of their undesignated offerings through the Cooperative Program and 4 percent to Great Commission Giving for a total of 10 percent.
- Every NAMB-endorsed church planter who comes to Send Network Orientation attends a session with Kevin Ezell, during which he outlines the importance and expectation of Cooperative Program giving.
- Included in every gift that the Send Network distributes to planters is a reminder that the gift is provided through the generous giving of Southern Baptists through the Cooperative Program and to AAEO.

NAMB's president and Public Relations director participated in a Cooperative Program Task Force with the SBC Executive Committee which concluded in 2018. The task force focused on how national and state SBC entities can better communicate with and cultivate a closer relationship with churches.

In addition to printed materials produced by NAMB which cite "NAMB is a Southern Baptist Convention entity supported by the Cooperative Program and the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering[®]," NAMB's digital presence of information and articles frequently reference the Cooperative Program, with links to the Cooperative Program website to learn more.

- 2. Please describe in detail the terminology you and your team at NAMB use to help church planters, send city coordinators and church planter catalysts navigate the SBC Business and Financial Plan, VI, Section D, "In no case shall any Convention entity approach a church for inclusion in its church budget or appeal for financial contributions." Please provide anecdotal examples.**

The Southern Baptist Business and Financial Plan applies to the SBC entities only. The North American Mission Board is in compliance with the Business and Financial Plan, and our policies are noted below:

- 6.4 Gift Acceptance Policy – “Notwithstanding [any NAMB gift acceptance policy or procedure], the solicitation and acceptance of any gift(s) by NAMB shall at all times be in accordance with the SBC Business and Financial Plan.”
- 6.5 Fundraising – “Because NAMB is an agency of the SBC, NAMB intends to support the Business and Financial Plan of the SBC. As an agency of the SBC, NAMB receives donations from two primary sources: The Cooperative Program (CP) and the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering (AAEO).”
- 6.5.2.3 Unauthorized fundraising activities – “Fundraising activities that are not compliant with this policy are not allowed. NAMB team members that conduct themselves in a manner inconsistent with this policy or produce material that is inconsistent with this policy will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination.”

Southern Baptist churches are autonomous. NAMB’s role, through its mobilization team, is to connect those Southern Baptist churches who initiate contact with NAMB—and have indicated interest in becoming a supporting or sponsoring church—with planters, missionaries in NAMB focus areas (this includes missionaries formerly known as Send City missionaries) and church planting catalysts.

3. Which of NAMB’s initiatives in 2018 have demonstrated a “value add” for Southern Baptist churches as these churches consider their level of commitment to SBC missions and ministries supported through the Cooperative Program? Which NAMB efforts or initiatives in the coming year(s) might produce similar sentiments toward cooperative missions, cooperative funding – the Cooperative Program?

The development of the [Multiplication Pipeline](#) (formerly called Church Planting Pipeline) has become further refined this year and creates a win/win for both the local church and for SBC missions involvement. The Pipeline helps churches develop leaders who may one day become church planters and church planting team members, as well as developing people to live missionally no matter what their profession. There are 186 churches that have implemented the Multiplication Pipeline, and promotion of the value and benefits of doing so will be increased in 2019. NAMB’s missions personnel are making this a priority as it is the best way for Southern Baptists to raise up future mission leaders and those who will be life-long mission advocates.

Evangelism has always been the thread woven into everything NAMB does through church planting and compassion ministries; however, a brighter spotlight will shine on evangelism efforts with the launch of NAMB’s new Evangelism and Leadership group, led by Johnny Hunt beginning in 2019. The key focus will be on championing the cause of evangelism among Southern Baptist churches and pastors and equipping pastors with tools and leadership skills that will allow them to lead their churches to become more evangelistically active.

As noted in Ministry Inquiry #1, by requiring NAMB-funded church plants to give 6 percent through the Cooperative Program, and by encouraging Cooperative Program participation at church planter orientation events, NAMB is nurturing loyalty among new SBC churches to give through the Cooperative Program.

As always, NAMB regularly produces stories—both written and video—that tell the story of how NAMB-supported missionaries are reaching people for Christ through church planting and other means. The new NAMB website, which launched this past summer, was intentionally developed to allow pastors and other visitors to quickly find stories and information they are interested in and need, as well as making it easy for people to contact NAMB for further information.

GenSend is a critical component in Send Relief efforts. GenSend participants are college students who serve short-term in urban cities and rural environments, connecting with church planters as well as refugees and others in need in the community. GenSend summer and spring/fall/winter break mission experiences touch on most of the Send Relief focus areas and nurture a generation of collegiate Christians to live their lives on mission. Through GenSend, these students are learning the value of the cooperative nature of serving and giving to support SBC causes.

4. What value does NAMB place upon its partnership with Southern Baptist churches through the Cooperative Program?

As mentioned in Ministry Inquiry #1, NAMB is grateful for every dollar Southern Baptists send through the Cooperative Program, which provides 35 percent of NAMB's annual budget.

The Cooperative Program is essential to the support of missionaries. Every NAMB-supported missionary directly benefits from the resources and infrastructure that the Cooperative Program allows NAMB to provide.

NAMB is grateful to pastors for how they lead their churches to give through the Cooperative Program. NAMB's president regularly expresses that gratitude directly to pastors when he speaks in churches, records video messages and in daily correspondence.

NAMB's number one customer is pastors and the churches they lead. While the resources ultimately belong to God, NAMB views every dollar that comes through the Cooperative Program as money coming from churches and individuals to be used with the highest standards of stewardship.

Ethnic Participation

5. Over the past 12 months, (2017 – 2018) has NAMB increased or decreased the number of ethnic leaders across NAMB ministry platforms? In this endeavor has NAMB introduced new and specific opportunities for greater ethnic involvement? Please give examples.

NAMB considers multiethnic representation and engagement a high priority, and we have multiethnic leaders at the most senior levels on NAMB's Alpharetta staff and in all levels of field-based management. The 2017 Equal Employment Opportunity report showed that 20% of NAMB employees are non-white. While this is lower than the 22.2% noted in last year's report, NAMB is committed to multiethnic representation and, of the four vice president roles (one to be filled January 1, 2019), three are non-white. In addition, we added this year a second-generation national church planting mobilizer to help us expand NAMB's connections to multiethnic churches and planters.

Among Send Network field leaders, there are 18 Hispanic and 12 other ethnicities represented among church planting coaches, and more than 10 ethnic trainers, 12 Hispanic assessors for Send Network Assessment, and both a Hispanic and Chinese pastor ambassador.

To assist in the engagement with African-American pastors and churches, NAMB has enlisted the assistance of an African-American church ambassador. In this role, Dennis Mitchell led a series of initiatives intended to mobilize African-American churches' missional involvement with NAMB. Some of the initiatives/successes are as follows:

- Met with 10 African-American pastors from the southeast to discuss mission partnerships and networking opportunities.
- Co-facilitated with Bob White, NAMB's pastor ambassador to South Carolina, and Jerry Daniel of NAMB staff, a gathering in the Chester Baptist Association of seven National Baptist churches to join the SBC.
- Presented mission/church planting partnership opportunities to 14 African-American pastors in the Gwinnett Baptist Association at the invitation of the associational missionary.
- In response to the disasters that impacted the U.S. Virgin Islands and on behalf of the eight predominantly African-American Southern Baptist churches on the Islands, planned and co-facilitated a collaborative initiative in partnership with the SBC Executive Committee, LifeWay, NAMB, the National African American Fellowship and the Florida Baptist Convention. The objective of this Virgin Island Partnership Initiative is to enlist and mobilize African-American churches to adopt/partner with SBC African-American churches in the Islands. As a follow up, in January and February, six pastors visited the Islands to conduct disaster relief needs assessments and participated in the three ministry and evangelistic crusades.
- In July, arranged to bring eight pastors and their wives from the Virgin Islands to Black Church Leadership and Family Conference in Ridgecrest, North Carolina, for encouragement and emotional support. At the conference, enlisted at least one partner for each Virgin Island church.
- Planned and coordinated NAMB's participation in the Black Church Leadership and Family Conference, highlighted by a dinner for mission leaders in which 300 pastors and mission team leaders attended.
- In October, met with Alabama Baptist Convention's church planting leadership team in which seven African-American pastors and five African-American church planters discussed mission and networking partnership opportunities in Alabama and across the U.S. This group committed to meet again to begin identifying specific partnership opportunities and joint engagement initiatives.

- Coordinated a meeting with 15 National African American Fellowship officers and leaders to receive an update on the work of NAMB. Kim Robinson shared NAMB’ expanded emphasis on strengthening relationships with SBC pastors and the NAMB ambassador initiative.

Promoting leadership development among ethnically diverse church leaders is also important to NAMB. In 2018, NAMB trained three Hispanic church planter coaches from across the United States. We connected 12 Hispanic church planters to the field and helped three churches find Hispanic pastors. NAMB staff also led three church planting conferences in Ohio, South Carolina and Georgia for those planting among Muslim people groups and led six ethnic pastors’/planters’ gatherings, which included Pakistanis, Middle Easterners, Indians, Burmese, Nepalese and Ethiopians. In addition, 10 planters, representing Middle Eastern, South Asian (Pakistanis, Asian Indians), West African, Burmese and Kenyan were deployed to plant in Send Cities and other places in North America. NAMB staff also conducted a multi-ethnic coach training and trained leaders from Chinese, Filipino, Hmong, Japanese and Vietnamese leaders to coach church planters. Staff had the opportunity to speak at the annual meetings, leadership training conferences, and second-generation retreats of the Chinese, Filipino, Japanese and Vietnamese fellowships/networks. Nine planters were deployed to the field to plant among these people groups. In addition, staff were able to teach in ethnic seminaries on church planting.

Representation of ethnic church leaders is evident among the 691 new church starts that Southern Baptists partners reported for the church plant class of 2017, 59.04% of which recorded its primary ethnicity as non-Anglo.

- African-American 9.70%
- Hispanic 14.91%
- Native American 1.01%
- Asian or Pacific Islander 7.53%
- Other 24.31%

Of the 244 plants in Send Cities reported in the class 2017, 59.66% were reported as non-Anglo:

- African-American 11.59%
- Hispanic 12.02%
- Asian or Pacific Islander 10.73%
- Multi-Ethnic 10.30%
- Other 12.88%

5. Specifically, in what ways does NAMB reach across the SBC’s broad ethnic diversity through the Send Network and through Send Relief? Please give examples.

SBC church plant statistics each year continue to demonstrate that the Send Network planting strategy results in plants (see chart in Ministry Inquiry #4) which are a reflection of the communities they are reaching with the gospel—great diversity in ethnicity, age and socioeconomic categories. To reach the cities this is an absolute necessity. In the past year, several open positions were filled with ethnic Send City missionaries and church planting catalysts who provide church planting oversight in specific geographical areas. These join many existing ethnic planters and church planting catalysts serving in

diverse communities. We also welcomed a new national staff member who is working to mobilize more ethnic churches to be partners in church planting efforts.

To encourage and further support these efforts, NAMB continues to work toward making all church planter and missionary pathways and resources available in as many languages as possible. An example of this is the Send Network assessment retreat. The assessment retreat is the culmination of the assessment experience for the potential planter and provides the final evaluation of readiness for the individual to plant. To serve those who are not able to communicate well in English, Send Network now provides assessment materials and retreats in Spanish (in South Florida) and French (in Montreal). In addition, Send Network's church planting projector tool is available in English, French and Spanish. NAMB provides church planting coaching to planters who speak Spanish, Mandarin, Cantonese, Arabic, Vietnamese and Filipino. We are also planning an adaptation of the Multiplication Pipeline material to be made available in Spanish in early 2019.

We train ethnic pastors in topics such as evangelism, church planting, church leadership, and second-generation church planting. We had 25+ of such regional workshops in the past year, connecting personally with more than 350 pastors. We are providing more than 38,500 New Testaments in Spanish for pastors to lead their members in personal evangelism. We also prepared and distributed 10 videos about the Hispanic reality in the United States and are coordinating with LifeWay to provide a translation of *Kingdom First* in Korean (this has already been translated into Spanish).

We hosted a Spanish-speaking fellowship and time of prayer at SBC 2018, as well as a fellowship time with Vietnamese and Filipino pastors. We presented greetings, report and potential partnership topics at the Annual Korean Baptist Convention and are working closely with the Korean Baptist Fellowship and with the Korean English Pastors Association to increase second-generation Korean churches.

The new resource [Undivided: Your Church & Racial Reconciliation](#) was widely distributed starting in June at the SBC meeting. In this free, 5-week video series and discussion guide, pastors J.D. Greear and Dharti Lewis unpack what it looks like to move a church toward genuine gospel community across racial lines. Undivided videos and discussion guide contents can be downloaded from the website, or can be ordered as free DVD, USB and discussion guide from the [NAMB Store](#). Following the release of the resource, NAMB hosted an "Undivided" breakout session consisting of two panel discussions addressing racial reconciliation within the Southern Baptist Convention at the SBC in Dallas.

The commitment of Send Relief is to direct all opportunities for compassion ministries to the entire, diverse SBC family with the desire that these opportunities are catalysts for sharing the hope of the gospel with people of every race, tongue and tribe. Send Relief provides research and mission awareness for specific human needs that result from poverty and social injustice. Victims of poverty and social injustice are not limited to any specific segment of the population but reach across all.

Send Relief is uniquely positioned to directly engage across racial, ethnic and economically diverse groups in all five of its focus areas: poverty, foster care and adoption, human trafficking, refugees and internationals and crisis response. Each of these areas naturally bridge many SBC churches to engage inner cities, various nationalities and those of varied economic circumstances.

Puerto Rico is a major focus of attention in church planting and crisis response efforts. In 2018, a ministry center in Guaynabo, Puerto Rico, was opened with the specific focus on hurricane Maria recovery and rebuild. The center houses short-term mission teams and has the capacity to serve 100 volunteers on a weekly basis. Long term, this ministry center will support ongoing mercy and compassion ministries with a specific focus on poverty needs. In addition, this center will become a significant resource that church leaders throughout North America can use by coming and seeing effective ministries at work, which will assist them in bringing new ministries into their own communities. Currently, we have more than 50 SBC churches and another 10 church plants reaching the island.

Through the [GenSend](#) ministry, which focuses on equipping college students to engage in compassion ministries, Send Relief placed 247 students in 17 Send Cities this past summer to connect with various people groups within these large urban areas. GenSend Spring Break engaged 736 students in six locations: Immokalee, Fla.; Miami Fla.; New Orleans, La.; Puerto Rico; St. Louis, Mo.; Houston, Texas. GenSend continues to be a great educational platform for college students in creating awareness of ethnic diversity. In 2018, two GenSend Summer opportunities were located at Send Relief's Appalachia (Ashland, Ky.) and our Clarkston, Ga., ministry centers. For more detailed information on GenSend, see Accomplishment VI.

Mental Health Resource

- 6. In response to a Ronnie Floyd motion, June 2013, Houston, TX, requesting that the Executive Committee and SBC Entities assist churches with mental health ministries, the Executive Committee appointed an advisory group, Fall 2013, to determine ways in which Southern Baptist entities and Southern Baptist churches can best help those who are in need of mental health assistance. The final report of this advisory group was presented to the SBC Executive Committee, Fall 2014.**

In the 2015 & 2016 Ministry Report(s) the following question was asked of each SBC entity:

Please give a progress report on what NAMB has implemented to assist Southern Baptist churches with training and equipping people with mental health challenges and how will NAMB continue to seek ways to work in cooperation with SBC entities and others to address the severe challenges imposed by mental illness?

In this year's Annual Ministry Report please provide the following:

If NAMB feels that reporting on this subject is within its purview, or falls within the scope of its ministry assignment(s), or has made any progress in the area of assisting churches with training and equipping people with mental health challenges, or has developed or identified resources to assist SBC churches in the area of mental health ministry, please provide a detailed progress report.

As NAMB comes alongside pastors, churches, and missions personnel to help equip them to share the hope of the gospel with all people, we recognize the need for informed awareness on how mental health issues affect people's understanding of and receptivity to the gospel; however, specific expertise for this topic is best exhibited through the ministries of SBC chaplains. These men and women are excellent resources that local churches can consult for their mental health care ministry and training programs.

Since NAMB acts as the endorsing agency for Southern Baptist chaplains, and since military chaplains, specifically, minister to men and women who are dealing with combat-related mental health issues (and are often dealing with their own), the NAMB Chaplaincy team sees itself addressing mental health issues as they relate to the chaplaincy's pastoral care role within the context of their respective institutional settings. As we develop mental health ministry resources for use by SBC endorsed chaplains, the broader SBC ministry community (pastors, churches, and SBC agencies and organizations) will benefit as well, especially since members of the clergy are the number one resource people go to when seeking help for mental illness.

The NAMB Chaplaincy team has collaborative relationships with various community and national mental health care providers, institutions, and nonprofit faith-based organizations in order to learn best practices and to develop a comprehensive mental health care ministry strategy for individuals, chaplains, staff members and their family members in institutional settings. The Chaplaincy team also maintains an ongoing dialog with the Department of Veterans Affairs' Mental Health Integration for Chaplain Services (MHICS) program, a one-year training that aims to better equip military chaplains in the provision of care to Veterans and Service members suffering mental health problems.

Our executive director for Chaplaincy has engaged a number of state conventions regarding mental health ministry strategies and training and resources for pastors and SBC churches, especially in those states where congregations have experienced an unusual percentage of suicides or suicidal ideations.

The Chaplaincy team has developed and made available mental health ministry training resources from six regional SBC Chaplain training events held in 2016-2017 for all endorsed Southern Baptist chaplains. "The Intersection of Chaplaincy and Mental Health" led by Dr. Phil Conner, professor at Gateway Theological Seminary, and Dr. Michael Langston, professor at Columbia International University (both retired military chaplains), educated SBC chaplains and their spouses on the crisis of mental health facing the nation and equipped chaplains for mental health care ministry and training in their respective institutional and local church settings. These specific resources are available here:

[https://sub.namb.net/The-Intersection-of-Chaplain-MInistry-and-Mental-Health-Notes-RC-NC\[1\].pdf](https://sub.namb.net/The-Intersection-of-Chaplain-MInistry-and-Mental-Health-Notes-RC-NC[1].pdf) and <https://namb.wistia.com/projects/07krddfmbq>.

- 7. Please give examples of the effectiveness of Chaplain Ministry. Does NAMB make available to Southern Baptist churches resources and other assistance for those within the church or within the community who might be suffering with long term effects of war, domestic violence, and other issues routinely addressed through Chaplain Ministry?**

Southern Baptist chaplains are gospel-centric, multi-disciplined, Spirit-empowered, professionally trained men and women sent out by their local SBC churches to bring the transforming power of Jesus Christ into places that other members and church staff sometimes cannot go. Their ministry responsibilities require them to meet unique human needs demonstrated locally, nationally and globally, often within the context of a diverse, multi-faith setting.

Chaplains are pastors or laypeople with specialized ministry training to serve in institutional settings, such as correctional facilities, disaster relief, health care, hospice, military, public safety, corporate and community service. They share the gospel, encourage Christians in their relationship with Jesus Christ and offer words of comfort and hope to those suffering physical, emotional, mental, relational or spiritual trauma.

Chaplains serve at the cutting edge where ministry and social structures intersect together. They commit themselves to being available to those who are suffering, alienated or confused from their life experiences. They struggle with those who have perplexing questions about life and death, suffering and the struggle for hope. Chaplains offer prayers, pastoral care and resources that lead people to renewal and reconciliation with God. In so doing, they are part of the professional, interdisciplinary team within the institution where they provide ministry. The duality of serving both the church and institution is key to understanding the challenges and opportunities for this specialized ministry.

The NAMB Chaplaincy team provides resources and periodic training on post-traumatic stress to endorsed Southern Baptist chaplains, local churches and denominational agencies and entities. This training is essential for military chaplains who frequently provide training and pastoral care to combat veterans and their families. Additionally, the Chaplaincy team has initiated collaborative relationships with various mental health-care providers, institutions and faith-based organizations in order to provide a comprehensive post-traumatic stress ministry strategy to Southern Baptists and their families who work in institutional settings.

The Chaplaincy team is in the process of revising a Bible-based resource (<https://www.namb.net/pdf/biblical-response-to-post-traumatic-stress-disorder>) that offers spiritual solutions for struggles with Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder.

Chaplains are encouraged to engage their local churches, bringing their training and experience to help meet the needs of the local body of believers in various ways. Local churches should consider including SBC chaplains for assistance in their development of post-traumatic stress ministry training and pastoral care.

8. What specific efforts is NAMB making to protect against sexual abuse?

The North American Mission Board is committed to zero tolerance for sexual abuse and has policies and practices in place to protect children. In addition, NAMB has established a personal code of conduct all staff/mission personnel must affirm each year.

All NAMB endorsed missionaries must complete the Awareness Training part of the [MinistrySafe](#) program as part of the approval process. MinistrySafe was created by legal professionals who are sexual abuse

experts. The program helps ministries meet legal standards of care and reduce the risk of sexual abuse by creating preventative measures tailored to fit the needs of churches, camps and ministry programs.

This training provides information to identify behaviors associated with child abuse such as Abuser Characteristics, The Grooming Process (process by which an abuser prepares a child for inappropriate sexual behavior), Methods to Reduce the Risk, Peer to Peer Abuse, What to Do When a Child Reports Abuse, Impact on Children, and Responsibility to Report.

To address related concerns, NAMB trustees have adopted several policies that apply to all NAMB employees:

- Reporting Crimes. The following is from NAMB's employee manual: *In the event a NAMB employee witnesses a crime (either violent or non-violent), or suspects that a crime is being committed or has been committed, while in any NAMB facility or while on NAMB business, the employee must immediately report the incident to local law enforcement personnel and then inform the Chief Human Resources Officer. (NAMB Policy Manual, sec. 2.2.4)*
- Open Door and Whistle Blower Policies. The following is from NAMB's employee manual: *NAMB is committed to the highest standards of ethical, moral, and legal conduct and is committed to maintaining as much openness and transparency as is prudent for a large and diverse organization. The Board, President, and Senior Leadership Team desire to hear about problems at all levels of the organization that need their attention. In addition to the normal channels of communication in NAMB's organizational structure, the Board has approved two special channels of communication. The Open Door Policy is in place to provide an alternate communications channel for primarily personnel matters. The Whistle Blower Policy is intended to encourage and protect employees who raise concerns about suspected misconduct, dishonesty, and fraud, when they choose not to do so through normal channels of communication. These two special policies result from a desire to respect all employees as professionals contributing to the Lord's work through NAMB and from a realization that if employees do not feel they can communicate effectively within NAMB, the consequences of their speaking directly to the public can be quite damaging to NAMB, its employees, and to the Kingdom.*
- Personal Conduct. NAMB trustees have approved a Personal Conduct Code that all staff and endorsed missionaries must sign each year. The following is from NAMB's employee manual: *The Board specifically adopts as policy the provisions of the [NAMB Code of Conduct](#) which relate to interpersonal relationships with the opposite sex. NAMB employees shall not show affection that could be questioned; shall use caution when answering cards, letters, and email notes from the opposite sex; and, if married, other than his or her spouse or another family member, shall not be in a residence alone, have a meal alone, or be in a car alone with the opposite sex. (NAMB Policy Manual, sec. 4.1)*

The conduct code sets an overall tone at NAMB that we expect staff and missionaries to conduct themselves at the highest standards of behavior in their interactions with each other and specifically with members of the opposite sex, to the extent of not even engaging in behavior that could raise questions.

NAMB Specific Questions

9. **Please give a brief update about NAMB’s ministry assignment for assisting Southern Baptist churches in the area of church planting. What would NAMB like Southern Baptists to know about the overall status of church planting? What is the biggest challenge to Southern Baptist’s efforts in starting healthy and reproducing churches?**

NAMB believes Jesus gave the assignment of church planting to the Church. With that in mind, NAMB does everything it can to assist Southern Baptist churches with that mission. The goal is to help churches plant 1,200 churches each year; however, there are challenges in reaching that. Only half of applicants who complete NAMB’s online church planter assessment score high enough to receive an invitation to one of NAMB’s assessment retreats. Of those who attend an assessment, 62 percent are approved for moving forward as a church planter. In order to end up with 1,200 church planting missionaries each year, we need 4,000 applicants. To help churches develop leaders who may one day become church planters, NAMB has developed the Multiplication Pipeline (formerly known as Church Planting Pipeline). This process allows churches to discover and develop more missional church members who have the potential to become church planters and church planting team members right in their churches. There are currently 186 churches that have implemented the Multiplication Pipeline.

Church planters who have met the high standards of assessment and who are in the pre-launch to 5 years of their plant are continually equipped through training and coaching to develop healthy churches with a multiplying mindset. They are connected with a sending or supporting church to further encourage and help them. In addition, NAMB-endorsed missionaries across the United States and Canada are deployed to specifically assist SBC churches and those they send in the task of church planting. These personnel are invaluable to the work and success of plants.

- **Send City missionaries** work in NAMB’s 35 focus areas (31 Send Cities, 2 strategic areas of South Florida and Puerto Rico, collegiate communities and military communities) to ensure that strategies for reaching the lost and congregationalizing them into new churches is taking place. These missionaries assist in the discovery and development of individuals for planting, and they work with churches that desire to come alongside these new congregations. They also ensure that the Send Network support systems (training, coaching and care) are functioning well in each Send location so that the planters/plants have every opportunity to be healthy.
- **Church Planting Catalysts (CPCs)** work alongside the Send City missionaries and throughout North America outside the South. CPCs work with local churches to help discover and develop future planters. They are also instrumental in helping potential planters navigate through application, assessment and endorsement. Once a planter is endorsed, the CPC walks with him through the journey of planting, often acting as a mentor/guide for the new church plant.

Our [Catch the Vision](#) (CTV) tours are one way we help churches that are interested in church planting see the needs and how they can help. In 2018, the focus of CTVs shifted to smaller tours hosted by individual

Send City missionaries. Each of these events were designed to enlist partnering churches in support of NAMB's Send strategy. Pastors and other church leaders were introduced to active church planters in the Send focus areas, learned how their churches could come alongside these specific church plants as a supporting church and how their congregation could participate in the outreach, evangelism and ministry strategies used by church planters.

For additional insight into the status of church planting, see Accomplishment I.

10. What is the status of church planting collaboration between NAMB and state conventions? Assuming there is room for improvement in the working relationship between state convention(s) and NAMB, please share any strategic, and high value - high leverage opportunities which are planned for the coming year(s).

Communication and collaboration are essential requirements between NAMB and state conventions to effectively and efficiently plant healthy, evangelistic churches in North America that will win people to Christ and disciple them into disciple-makers and produce more churches.

NAMB's president relates directly to state convention leaders throughout the year and meets with them at their annual meeting in February. He also meets with them in smaller groups throughout the year. For instance, he meets with the South state executives annually. Additional smaller meetings take place throughout the year, and he meets with any state executive upon request. From time to time, he will pull small groups of state executives together to discuss strategies.

NAMB's president and director of Convention Relations maintain ongoing relationships, budgets, cooperative agreements and general convention situations. There is an ongoing communications process which includes personal on-site visits with convention partners as well as quarterly phone calls or web meetings. Collaborative strategy is always a topic of discussion throughout these points of contact. Additionally, the director of Convention Relations also works with the SBC associational directors of missions.

With conventions outside the south, there is constant communication/collaboration between NAMB regional directors and convention church planting leadership (SDOM/Church Planting Leader). This communication includes strategy discussions, personnel decisions (evaluation/hiring of CPCs), funding of plants, assessment of potential planters and other needs.

In September, we hosted a field leader summit with all church planting catalysts and state church planting leaders for encouragement, equipping and strategy development.

In last year's report, we noted the development of a church planting pilot project which was designed and implemented with a group of convention partners from the Northeast Region, Canada Region, and other SDOMs/executive directors. The pilot helped address the consistency of those potential church planters who were declared "ready to plant" through assessments and the amount of funding provided across different convention lines. The pilot has expanded to five conventions that are actively involved and two that will be participating in 2019. Seven additional conventions have requested to begin using this model of funding.

South conventions use as much or as little as NAMB has to offer in church planting assessments. Many convention partners outside of the south are using Send Network's entire planter pathway from assessment to care.

11. Please provide a progress report, including any new direction(s) for the Church Planting Catalyst (CPC) initiative across the SBC.

The Church Planting Catalyst (CPC) has been a NAMB missionary category for many years, especially in state conventions outside the South region. The majority of CPCs are full-time staff with responsibility for a specific geography or people. Over the course of the last two years, we have undertaken a different approach in partnership with some convention partners when there is a vacancy in one of these positions. We are utilizing funding for multiple individuals, which expands the reach. These individuals are deemed by the partner convention and NAMB to have the best church planting catalytic skills. These positions are part-time, which allow the conventions to broaden their reach for the same financial investment and use their best church plant multipliers to further the work. We refer to these part-time personnel as church-based CPCs.

Of the roughly 119 CPCs, 80 are full-time and 39 are church-based. While their duties are the same, the expectation of number of plants each year is different. Currently, full-time CPCs are expected to assist in the planting of at least four churches each year. For church-based CPCs, that number is less. All new CPCs go through an orientation time, and regional training events are provided each year for all CPCs to attend.

Overall, NAMB, under the president's leadership, has a proven track record of the work of CPCs in all conventions. NAMB's focus on more church-based CPCs will continue to allow better coverage for conventions, increasing effectiveness in church planting efforts.

12. How does an increased acquisition of properties in the Send Cities relate to the overall accomplishment of NAMB's ministry assignment to assist churches in the area of church planting?

To assist in catalyzing church planting across the United States and Canada, NAMB has acquired residential properties located in these countries' most dense, most expensive and least-reached cities. These resources have enabled multiplying churches to accelerate their work of discovering, developing and deploying church planters, while simultaneously alleviating the significant barrier that unaffordable housing poses for these church planting missionary families in transition. The current portfolio of properties has saved these collective families millions of dollars in housing costs during the most critical and vulnerable times of their ministry.

The portfolio is managed by NAMB's Missionary Property Services team, with NAMB's Send City missionary serving as the local point of contact. Only NAMB-assessed and endorsed missionaries who are on a trajectory to be lead church planters are approved to occupy the properties and can do so for up to 24 months. During this period, the church planter is in residency at a multiplying church and has opportunity to develop a contextualized church planting strategy with the leadership and guidance of a seasoned church planting practitioner.

Increased acquisition of residential property allows NAMB to serve more church planting missionaries and their families. Additionally, more assets positioned in close proximity to multiplying churches assists them in discovering and developing missionary candidates, therefore increasing the number of potential church planters. For example, on average, a collection of 50 properties saves missionary families approximately \$1.5 million per year in housing costs and those same 50 properties will provide transitional housing for 500-600 church planting families over a 15-year period.

13. How do church revitalization efforts, church re-plant(s) efforts, and new church plants “intersect” within the context of NAMB’s ministry assignments? What does this look like for the coming year (2019)? How would NAMB characterize its role in the area of church revitalization?

For the purpose of definition:

- **Church Replanting** is focused on churches that are within 3 to 5 years of closure.
- **Church Revitalization** is focused on churches that find themselves in a state of decline, spanning several years and decades but not in danger of closure.

Church replanting intersects within the context of two specific ministry assignments given to NAMB, namely:

- Assisting churches in planting healthy, multiplying, evangelistic Southern Baptist churches in the United States and Canada.
- Assisting churches in the ministries of evangelism and making disciples.

Related to assisting churches in planting healthy, multiplying, evangelistic Southern Baptist churches in the United States and Canada, we know that by reducing the death rate of churches through replanting, the number of healthy, multiplying and evangelistic churches in North America is increased. Replanting efforts are reducing the ratio of churches planted to churches closed which, in turn, increases the net number of healthy churches across the United States and Canada.

This is being accomplished in the following ways:

- Training and equipping of associational mission strategists, state convention partners and church planting catalysts in the principles and processes of replanting, as well as the identification and encouragement of potential replanters.
- Equipping replanters through local and national training events to lead congregations to health and vitality.
- Production of movement-specific resources that include articles, training manuals, [blog posts](#), podcasts and books.
- Strategic consultations in partnership with local, associational and state convention personnel and with Tom Rainer’s [Revitalize Network](#).

Related to assisting churches in the ministries of evangelism and making disciples, we know that by reducing the death rate of churches and by seeing churches replanted, the number of baptisms and disciples made through churches which would have otherwise closed is increased. The reduction of churches that have died, combined with the churches that have been replanted, represents churches that are back on mission. Replanting brings about a reinvigoration in churches that may have grown cold by reigniting them with a vision of their role in proclaiming the gospel to their communities and the practical instruction necessary to achieve this end.

One of the ways we help equip replanters and those who want greater involvement in revitalization and replanting efforts are through events. [Upcoming events](#) include:

- “Am I a Replanter?” which is aimed at helping potential replanters clarify and confirm the call to replant, will be held in March 2019 (Atlanta) and November 2019 (Las Vegas).
- Replant Practitioner training for associational mission strategists will be held in Alpharetta, Ga., in March 2019. They will receive specific process training on consulting with churches in decline and near death and explore strategies focused on helping them make God-honoring decisions regarding their future. There is a growing roster of 150+ registered for this training.
- The Replant team will provide support for current replanters and their wives in partnership with Timothy + Barnabas, focusing on addressing and equipping them to face the challenges experienced in years 1-5 of their replanting journey.
- The Replant Summit in August 2019, in partnership with Lifeway Music and Thom Rainer, will focus on worship ministries in replants and revitalizing churches.

In addition to the events noted above, the Replant team provides ongoing support through a variety of resources that assist replanters. These include:

- The [Revitalize and Replant Podcast](#), in partnership with Thom Rainer and LifeWay, consistently ranks the top 5 in its category and offers equipping and encouragement to a large audience with thousands of downloads each week.
- A weekly Facebook live video blog, “Mondays with Mark” reaches 1,000+ pastors and leaders weekly, focusing on issues related to revitalization and replanting.
- Monthly webinars featuring prominent replanters allow for extensive question and answer sessions for pastors and other attendees.
- A revised and updated [Replant Collective](#) equipping email shares resources and best practices twice a month with subscribers, which includes more than 450 pastors, associational mission strategists and other leaders.
- An online learning cohort for replanting and revitalizing pastors will launch in March 2019 through a partnership with Practical Shepherding and Brian Croft. This 40-week online cohort will focus on equipping and encouraging up to 250 men who are presently engaged in replanting or revitalizing a local church.
- Speaking and equipping events with state conventions and local associations are booked for 2019 and we are currently booking into 2020.

To meet the growing need of discovering, developing and deploying replanters, the Replant team is:

- Partnering with Send Network to provide replant-specific assessment support in four regional assessment centers.
- Facilitating the development of an associational replanter assessment which can be replicated by local partners in their context.
- Production of replanter-specific assessment components for use in any assessment context as needed.

In answer to the question of how NAMB characterizes its role in the area of church revitalization, NAMB's Replant team views the state convention and local association as the primary partners best equipped and situated to assist churches in traditional revitalization efforts.

We provide resources, conferencing and materials to help any church that seeks to reverse the trend of decline and once again become an evangelistic, outreach-oriented congregation. We have also developed a partnership with the [Revitalize Network](#) providing scholarships for churches, outside of the south, to receive a discount on the Revitalization Bundle which includes coaching in their revitalizing endeavors.

NAMB believes that no single entity can work alone on revitalizing the close to 40,000 Southern Baptist churches that need revitalizing. NAMB's strategy and approach involving local partners, creating connections and networking with accomplished practitioners, as well as the production, recommendation and dissemination of good resources, creates a greater impact, thus helping struggling churches return to health and vitality.

The majority of state conventions are developing revitalization strategies to serve these churches by addressing issues that encourage church health and leadership training. NAMB is seeking to come alongside state conventions to create an environment of sharing ideas, best practices and networks.

NAMB becomes more directly involved when a church reaches the end of its life cycle and is about to close its doors. Based upon an assessment of the church's situation, the Replant team can then become part of the process and help plant a new church out of the dying congregation. If, as part of that process, a new congregation is birthed with a new SBC identification number, then that church is counted as a church plant.

14. Are NAMB's church planting strategies and church revitalization strategies surmounting the perennial attrition rates commonly experienced in the SBC?

By just looking at the numbers – yes.

- Since 2010, on average, 1,043 congregations have been removed from the Annual Church Profile each year. During the same period, an average of 1,201 congregations have been added to the database.

- Thus, as expected, the number of total congregations (churches plus church type missions) as reported on the Annual Church Profile has shown an increase over the past 6 years (from 50,653 in 2011 to 51,914 in 2017).
- Reporting from LifeWay’s “State Convention and SBC Statistics” annual reports also show that the number of SBC churches has continued to increase slightly.

2017-- 47,544
 2016 – 47,272
 2015 – 46,793
 2014 – 46,499
 2013 – 46,125
 2012 – 46,034
 2011 – 45,764

To continue to see improvement in this area, NAMB understands the need for a twofold battlefield. Send Network works in partnership with churches and conventions with a goal to see 1,200 new, healthy, multiplying SBC churches planted each year. Additionally, the Replant team is focusing on identifying at-risk congregations and assisting in revitalization and replanting efforts.

- 15. Please provide a brief description of NAMB’s Send Relief initiatives. In the area of Disaster Relief, please provide a status report on how Southern Baptists are working together to provide relief when disaster occurs. How would NAMB characterize the effectiveness of state convention disaster relief teams working “in concert” with national disaster relief efforts, and is there a need for greater collaboration, a new approach, and/or new strategies in order to achieve a greater impact?**

[Send Relief](#) exists to become the go-to resource for mercy and compassion ministry within the SBC for churches and pastors. Send Relief provides pathways for churches to engage their communities more holistically by meeting human needs through ministries focusing on [poverty](#), [refugees and internationals](#), [foster care and adoption](#), [human trafficking](#) and [crisis response](#). Additionally, Send Relief materials, resources, volunteer opportunities, mission trips and training labs have the goal of evangelism in all aspects of ministry. Send Relief is active in seeing missionaries be developed in the key areas of compassion and mercy ministries noted above and has developed metrics and empirical goals to create an environment of accountability and integrity.

Send Relief provides opportunities for SBC churches to engage, participate and be trained for mercy and compassion ministry, both locally and nationally. Through training labs and hands-on experiences year-round at one of five ministry centers, churches can be prepared for and replicate ministries in their own communities. Send Relief’s current ministry center locations and focus areas for each are as follows:

- Clarkston, Ga.: Refugee and Internationals
- Appalachia (Ashland, Ky.): Poverty
- New Orleans, La.: Human Trafficking

- Guaynabo, Puerto Rico (opened in 2018): Crisis Response/Rebuild, Poverty
- New York City: Poverty

We anticipate a ministry center in Las Vegas, Nev., focused also on human trafficking, will join these five in early 2019.

In addition to these ministry centers, Send Relief provides resources, available on the new SendRelief.org site (launched in 2018), to help churches understand and address the unique needs of the five focused areas.

- Each focus area has a [prayer guide](#) and related [ministry resource guides](#), including a [community needs assessment guide](#), that can be downloaded for use by churches.
- The Adopting and Fostering Home podcast has released 48 episodes which provide insight into the joys and challenges through all phases of caring for vulnerable children in foster care and in the adoption journey.
- The Send Relief podcast has 32 episodes covering topics related to the focus areas.
- The new online Send Relief Portal provides for volunteer registrations, event management, payment and communications. This infrastructure allows for efficient mission trip management across the nation.
- To distinguish from Southern Baptist Disaster Relief (SBDR), the “disaster response” focus area for Send Relief has been broadened with the new identifier of “crisis response.”

For three years now, Send Relief has provided medical and dental units to help churches facilitate compassion and mercy ministries in their communities, especially to address inadequate care due to poverty. This year, these units served in 17 locations for a total of 65 ministry days, not including travel. Units were on mission in the following states: Alabama, Georgia, Missouri, South Dakota, Ohio, Mississippi, Virginia and Kentucky. Requests for the dental unit specifically are increasing, resulting in multiple requests for the same timeframe. The total number of clients served this year was 1,118. The estimated cost savings to the communities served was \$323,765.

GenSend, though not a focus area, is a critical component in Send Relief efforts. GenSend participants are college students who serve short-term in urban cities and rural environments, connecting with church planters as well as refugees and others in need in the community. GenSend summer and spring/fall/winter break mission experiences touch on most of the focus areas and nurture a generation of collegiate Christians to live their lives on mission. Efforts this year included:

- Breaks (Spring/Fall/Winter)
 - Six locations included Immokalee Fla., Miami Fla., New Orleans La., Guaynabo, Puerto Rico, St. Louis, Mo., and Houston, Texas. 736 students from 40 unique collegiate groups representing 32 states served a collective total of 5,187 days in ministry.
- Summer (6- and 8-week options)
 - 247 students served in 17 locations with an overall experience rating of “good or very good” from 95% of participants, collectively logging more than 23,000 ministry hours

where they had more than 1,500 gospel conversations and served 82 church plants/planters. Of the participants, 28% said they would move back to the city they served to live and serve post-college.

- GenSend Coach Training
 - In addition to participants, 24 coaches from 19 sites completed coaching training, with the goal of improving the overall effectiveness and quality of the GenSend experience.

In regard to Disaster Relief, the report which follows is based on national responses this year which include Hurricane Florence (North Carolina and South Carolina) and Hurricane Michael (Florida, Alabama and Georgia). Consistent with its ministry assignment, NAMB/Send Relief's primary mission is to provide response support as requested by each state Southern Baptist Disaster Relief director and representation to FEMA, American Red Cross, Salvation Army and other national organizations on behalf of SBDR.

The 2018 storm season was a model of cooperation when it comes to Southern Baptist Disaster Relief (SBDR) and NAMB/Send Relief working together to serve those in need and share the gospel. In fact, Lonnie Wilkey, editor of the *Tennessee Baptist and Reflector*, said in a November 8, 2018 editorial, "Thanks to Dr. [Kevin] Ezell and other NAMB leaders for supporting Southern Baptist Disaster Relief in such a positive manner. It is further confirmation that Southern Baptists can do more cooperatively than we can do apart. Southern Baptist disaster relief efforts are positive evidence of the power of cooperation." During Florence and Michael response:

- 2,200,000+ meals served
- 10,000+ homeowners supported through mud-outs and tree clearing/debris removal
- 3,900+ gospel conversations and 534 decisions for Christ
- 24,700+ loads of laundry done
- 72,500+ showers provided
- \$600,000+ in supplies and logistics support provided

Each entity did what they do best, complementing one another in service to disaster victims.

Southern Baptists are effectively working together to provide relief when disaster occurs, evidenced in the national Florence response, during which 25 of 42 state SBDR were engaged. During the Michael response, 27 of the 42 were engaged. Of note, many other states were engaged in local responses which prohibited them from participating in Florence and/or Michael.

In addition, the Send Relief warehouse in Ashland, Ky., was activated to ship supplies on a just-in-time basis for distribution by local pastors. About this effort, Randy Creamer, director of disaster relief and men's ministry for the South Carolina Baptist Convention, said, "The guys looked at their pastor packs, and their mouths dropped open when we told them the packs were for them and for their personal ministries in their communities. It's like Christmas in September." Pastor packs are a set of supplies to help a church support its community and includes a generator, chainsaw, personal protective equipment, water filter and work lights.

It is also important to note that in addition to the localized disasters that consumed SBDR resources and volunteers, because Hurricanes Florence and Michael happened so close together, many states were

serving in both responses simultaneously or one right after the other. Despite such challenges and the stretching of resources, it is clear there is a tremendous sense of community and support to work together in responding in times of greatest need within the ministry of SBDR and as supported by NAMB/Send Relief.

During these specific national responses, NAMB/Send Relief did not mobilize untrained volunteers under the Send Relief crisis response banner and did not launch a national fund-raising campaign as was done in 2017. Instead, NAMB/Send Relief supported national SBDR efforts with supplies, logistics and coordination of resources between states. In addition, NAMB's website included a special storm response page that directed volunteers and donors directly to the impacted states. NAMB's Marketing and Public Relations teams supported constant, comprehensive communications via Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Congressional status reports to each affected state and news articles published in Baptist Press and other media outlets. Feedback from the 42 SBDR members was highly favorable to this effort.

In addition, particularly in Florida, NAMB/Send Relief worked closely with the state's SBDR director to coordinate the visit of Vice President Mike Pence, Governor Rick Scott, FEMA Administrator Brock Long and others to an SBDR feeding site in Panama City. Governor Scott actually made three visits to Florida SBDR feeding sites. In addition, President Trump visited an SBDR feeding site in New Bern, N.C., during the Hurricane Florence recovery efforts. These visits provided tremendous opportunities to highlight the work of Southern Baptists during times of disaster to both key policy makers and a national audience.

As to whether there is a need for greater collaboration, a new approach, and/or new strategies in order to achieve a greater impact, there are always opportunities for improvement and ways to better serve in times of disaster. As both state DR directors and the Send Relief team assess and debrief from the 2018 season, we will look for ways to achieve even greater impact. That is part of the value of the SBDR roundtable, as it creates a forum for learning, listening, sharing and building even stronger partnerships and systems in the future.

For additional information on Send Relief efforts, see Accomplishment IV.

16. Please indicate how Southern Baptist churches are partnering with new church plants in the Send Cities or otherwise supporting the Send Cities initiative.

The Send City approach is not an initiative but rather strategic direction for church planting in North America. The strategy is seeing success as strong efforts continue in 35 Send focus areas (31 Send Cities, 2 strategic areas of South Florida and Puerto Rico, collegiate communities and military communities) to see more churches planted.

In each of the Send focus areas, we are seeing progress in implementing the Send Network planter pathway elements, from church planter orientation through church planter care. Supporting and sending churches are coming alongside planters to provide needed resources to enable them to be healthy and multiplying.

One way we nurture the supporting and sending church pool is to host Catch the Vision (CTV) tours in the cities. In 2018, NAMB focused on smaller CTV tours hosted by individual Send City missionaries. Each of these events were designed to enlist churches interested in partnering in support of NAMB's Send City strategy. Pastors and other church leaders were introduced to active church planters in the Send Cities, learned how their churches could come alongside these specific church plants as supporting churches and how their congregations could participate in the outreach, evangelism and ministry strategies used by church planters.

In 2019, NAMB will continue to host Catch the Vision tours in Send Cities and strategic areas as a way to encourage churches to partner with church planters and engage in mission and evangelism projects on the mission field. These on-site vision tours will be hosted by Send City missionaries and will give pastors and other church leaders opportunity to meet and dialogue with key multiplying church planters who are discovering, developing and sending out additional church planters in these areas. Additionally, NAMB will launch a new Catch the Vision Experience hosted at NAMB in Alpharetta, Ga., providing a more cost-efficient initial way for pastors to experience the diversity and challenges of planting in major urban areas. Pastors can see the scope and sense the momentum of Send Network and Send Relief initiatives across North America via the use of video technology in NAMB's theater. They will meet Send City missionaries and hear them interview some of the top planters in their cities by live-streaming video.

Earlier this year, NAMB added Puerto Rico as one of its Send strategic areas—meaning it will receive additional resources and missionaries from Send Network and Send Relief ministries. Puerto Rico will receive more funding for church planting, resources for church planters and increased attention by Send Relief. Baptist work in Puerto Rico began in 1965 with the planting of a church near a military base on the island. That church planted the first Hispanic SBC church on the island soon after. Currently, there are 74 Southern Baptist churches on the island, engaging a population of more than 3.4 million people. Carlos Rodriguez, Send Puerto Rico missionary, estimates that many Puerto Rico Baptist churches lost more than 30 percent of their attendees when they fled the island for the mainland after Hurricane Maria. Crisis response efforts have accelerated evangelism and church planting activity on the island.

There are currently 1,313 SBC churches involved as official Sending Churches for plants or multiple plants. Additionally, there are currently 4,135 SBC churches involved in a Supporting Church role. 965 of these supporting churches have thus far only committed to pray for a list of planters in a specific area through the [Pray for Planters](#) initiative as a first step in engagement.

17. Please give a brief report on NAMB's new direction and new initiatives related to its ministry assignment for evangelism.

While evangelism has been and will always be the thread that weaves through every aspect of NAMB, this year, at the urging and affirmation of messengers at the 2018 SBC in Dallas, NAMB formed the new Evangelism and Leadership group, and asked Johnny Hunt to lead it. Hunt will join NAMB as senior vice president on January 1, 2019.

This new group is charged with furthering the evangelistic vision, passion and leadership of Southern Baptist pastors, and will focus on equipping pastors with tools and leadership skills that will allow them to lead their churches to become more evangelistically active.

In the [news article](#) announcing Johnny Hunt's acceptance of the position, he said, "My priority will be to help facilitate the present and next generation of pastors to embrace gospel conversations, soul winning if you will, witnessing as a lifestyle. After being a pastor the last 42 years, with 32 of those years at First Baptist Woodstock, I have come to believe deeply that whatever is important to the pastor is what is important to the people. Evangelism must be the heartthrob of our pastors."

While NAMB has a [suite of evangelism tools and resources](#) that churches are currently using, the Evangelism and Leadership group will be evaluating and creating new ones to make available to churches. "Evangelism with Johnny Hunt," a regular podcast that begins in January 2019, will unpack a variety of evangelism topics. In addition, evangelism workshops and other focused events will provide pastors opportunity to share and learn from best practices.

Timothy+Barnabas, a leadership ministry which Hunt started, will celebrate its 25th anniversary in 2019. NAMB will now provide oversight and administration to Timothy+Barnabas events, which are dedicated to instruction and encouragement of pastors and their wives. This will include an emphasis on equipping pastors so that they can mobilize their churches for evangelism.

18. In the coming year, please give an update on how NAMB will assist churches in the area of evangelism and contextual disciple making (NAMB Ministry Assignment #2).

As noted in Ministry Inquiry #17, the new year will bring a new emphasis on evangelism with the formation of the Evangelism and Leadership group under the direction of Johnny Hunt.

This new group is charged with furthering the evangelistic vision, passion and leadership of Southern Baptist pastors and will focus on equipping pastors with tools and leadership skills that will allow them to lead their churches to become more evangelistically active.

That NAMB employ "senior level leadership" tasked with "involving churches, associations and state conventions in outreach to the lost, as well as providing evangelism training and resources" was one of the recommendations from the [Evangelism Task Force report](#) given this past summer at the SBC in Dallas. Other recommendations from the report included:

- That churches "conduct annual witness training events" and "adopt a goal for baptisms."
- That pastors "model personal evangelism" and "present public gospel invitations of various kinds, calling unbelievers to repent and believe."
- That seminaries "consider enhancing their curricular requirements in evangelism."
- That the SBC Executive Committee designate a Sunday as "Baptism Day" on the convention's calendar.

- That all Southern Baptists “renew with great urgency the priority of evangelizing the next generations” and use “God-called evangelists” as “a wonderful asset in evangelistic endeavors of various kinds.”

The new group will work to implement and help partners implement these recommendations. While NAMB has a [suite of evangelism tools and resources](#) that churches are currently using, the Evangelism and Leadership group will be evaluating and creating new ones to make available to churches and will assist pastors in leading their churches in evangelism. “Evangelism with Johnny Hunt,” a regular podcast that begins in January 2019, will unpack a variety of evangelism topics.

[Engage 24 evangelism workshops](#) are already scheduled for 2019 in Phoenix (February), Michigan (April) and Virginia (May). These workshops provide hands-on, practical training by some of the most evangelistic pastors in the SBC.

NAMB will give oversight to the new annual Baptism Day emphasis. In 2019, this day will be observed on September 8. Resources to promote the day will be announced in spring 2019.

In addition, NAMB will work alongside SBC President J.D. Greear in promoting his two-year emphasis of Gospel Above All, with resources that complement the four pillars of the emphasis.

19. What must Southern Baptists do, in the coming months and years, to offset a multi decade decline in Southern Baptist baptisms?

According to the 2017 ACP:

- 30.05% of reporting churches reported zero baptisms
 - This is up from 29% in 2016 and from 24.3% in 2007
- 50.2 of reporting churches reported two or fewer baptisms
 - This is up from 48% in 2016
- 69.3% of reporting churches reported five or fewer baptisms
 - This is up from 67.3% in 2016
- The *median Baptisms remained at 3 per year, the same as in 2016.
 - * Median is the 50th percentile. For example, half of the reporting SBC churches in 2017 had more than 3 baptisms and half of the reporting SBC churches baptized less than 3.

To offset the continuing decline in baptisms, Southern Baptists must return to “the main thing”—the Great Commission. Pastors must champion the cause of evangelism. While the pastor is not the only person who should have a heart for evangelism in the church, a passion and fervor for evangelism must start with him. Whatever is important to the pastor will be important to his congregation. The pastor must not only preach the importance of evangelism, he must also model it, demonstrating the gospel in both word and deed in every aspect of ministry.

While pastors should have the best tools and resources possible—and NAMB will continue to improve existing ones and create more—to help people effectively evangelize, the resources will mean nothing—and will have little effect—if those using them do not have a heart and passion for the lost. We must help pastors ignite that passion in their people. That begins with discipleship.

In the [Disciple-making Task Force report](#) given at this past summer’s SBC in Dallas, Pastor Robby Gallaty, who served as chair of the task force, posed the question to messengers: “Could it be that we have considered baptism to be the finish line and not the starting line? Could it be that we have spent a lot of our time teaching people what they're saved from, and we haven't spent time teaching people what they're saved for?” Gallaty told messengers that Southern Baptist churches have baptized 7.1 million people over the past 20 years—yet overall weekly church attendance has declined over that same period. At the beginning of the report, NAMB President Kevin Ezell stated, "Southern Baptist Convention, we do have an evangelism issue that we need to address," yet it is "symptomatic of an even deeper problem that we have when it comes to discipleship—to make disciples that make disciples that make disciples. We believe that it is key to turning around evangelism in the Southern Baptist Convention.”

The task force made three recommendations to churches:

- Increase efforts toward Bible engagement. This is more than just reading the Word. It is allowing the Word of God and God Himself to lead us and change our direction, our actions and our thinking. When people engage the Bible, they give more, serve more, go more and evangelize more.
- Examine the connection between salvation decisions and group involvement. Pastors and church leaders need to work to connect those they baptize with a small group who will help these new believers practice and learn how to engage the Bible. Every pastor should examine how their church helps new believers transition into a discipleship group.
- Examine the number of groups that multiply on a regular basis. Every church also needs to understand the importance of encouraging their small groups to become multiplying groups. A small group’s failure to grow and multiply is a good indicator that the group may not be serving the purpose of making disciples. A disciple should be making disciples, regularly bringing new believers into the fold through evangelism.

As Southern Baptists have been seeking ways to stem the downturn in baptisms and church attendance, the task force's research indicated that if churches had simply retained those they had baptized, then the SBC's membership figures would be doubled. The task force discovered a disconnect between tracking baptisms and incorporating those new converts into an active life of discipleship and service within the local church.

20. What has proven to be NAMB’s most reliable metric indicating future accomplishments of, or challenges to NAMB across all of its ministry assignments? Why is that metric the one NAMB believes is most important to watch relative to NAMB’s ministry assignments?

As noted in last year’s report, NAMB exists to connect churches with their next mission opportunity because churches that begin engaging in mission activity (at even the slightest level) have shown to continue growing in their involvement.

- Churches engaged in mission activity are more outward focused and will be more evangelistic.
- Churches engaged in mission activity naturally raise up and train more volunteers, leaders, planters and missionaries.
- Churches engaged in mission activity will see and understand more about the needs of people and they will support mission endeavors financially (e.g., Cooperative Program, mission giving, plants, mission trips).

Therefore, the one key metric for NAMB is Church Engagement.

In 2010, it was estimated that less than 4% of all SBC churches were directly involved in Church Planting in any way. Today that number is more than 10%.

- There are currently 1,313 SBC churches involved as official Sending Churches for plants or multiple plants.
- Additionally, there are currently 4,135 SBC churches involved in a Supporting Church role. 965 of these supporting churches have thus far only committed to pray for a list of planters in a specific area through the “Pray for Planters” initiative as a first step in engagement.

A continued and consistent increase in church engagement will be crucial to NAMB maximizing its efforts in fulfilling its ministry assignments. More information about NAMB’s strategy to assist churches to connect to their next mission opportunity can be found on NAMB.net.