

Observations Following Changes To Date

Positive Observations

1. The multiplication of districts, district superintendents, and district MEG boards has a four year proven positive track record with identifiable strengths and non-strengths. Perhaps most significantly, the multiplication of districts and district superintendents has drawn the FMCSA pastoral team closer together.
2. The multiplication of district MEG boards has had the desired outcome of enhancing ordination and pastoral care processes.
3. Using the MAC as a crisis resolution team shows great promise.
4. The current MEG and MAC structures better represents the ethnic and gender diversity of the FMCSA.
5. The FMCSA has multiplied churches and ministries in Southern California, Ethiopia, Sudan, Kenya, Costa Rica, Antigua, and Madagascar.

Neutral and or Negative Observations

1. A 14-member MAC has proven itself to be too large for effective decision-making.
2. The current FMCSA structure remains far too Superintendent-centric.
3. The Conference leadership team operates in a near constant crisis mode.
4. Most of the FMCSA leadership team does not believe they have been adequately equipped to achieve the FMCSA vision and mission.
5. The neutral/negative traits listed above are proving to be counterproductive to our apostolic vision and our declared mission to be healthy biblical communities.
6. These neutral/negative traits limit the unique gift orientation of our leadership team.
7. These traits inhibit the capacity of the FMCSA leadership team to equip our pastoral and lay leaders with the necessary skills to achieve our vision and mission.
8. It is the conviction of the FMCSA leadership team that merely adjusting structure will NOT resolve our problems. The FMCSA must consider making some deep changes.

Conclusion

To date, the changes made within the FMCSA have largely represented structural adjustment within the current system. However, these modifications of structure have not addressed the fundamental issues that inhibit the FMCSA from achieving our Spirit-breathed vision and mission. The reality is that many, if not most, of the FMCSA congregations remain (by their own NCD ratings) unhealthy, and incapable of multiplying disciples, groups, leaders, and churches. It is time for Deep Change.

A Biblical Basis for Implimenting Deep Change

On October 1st 2008 the FMCSA will implement several fundamental (Deep) changes that are designed to fully align our leadership giftings and structures to our vision and mission. The Deep Change launches out of a commitment to a New Testament leadership principle.

“11. It was he (Jesus) who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers, 12. to prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up 13. Until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ.” (Eph. 4: 11-13)

Paul’s teaching presents the consideration that releasing gifted leaders as equippers into the Body of Christ is the ‘functional structure’ that is capable of building healthy biblical communities, that in turn multiply disciples, leaders, groups, and more churches.

Almost all of us have observed and taught the following key points out of this passage.

- There are at least five key spiritual leadership functions identified as equippers in the early church. They are apostle, prophet, evangelist, pastor, and teacher. All of these gifts were fully functional during the New Testament era.
- Some of these equipping gifts were to function ‘at large’ and others were to function at the local level. Working together, the Body of Christ was built up and became mature, attaining to the whole measure of Christ.
- The real strategic goal was to prepare God’s people for works of service with unity, knowledge of the Son, spiritual maturity, and the fullness of Christ as the ultimate objective.
- There are aspects to **the apostolic gifting** that are no longer practiced by the 21st Century Church. However, one function of an apostle that likely remains is to ensure that the church ‘stays’ committed to ‘going’. When the apostolic gifting is not empowered within the ‘at large church’ – the local churches tend to become a self-focused and stay oriented.
- The New Testament **prophetic gifting** has little to do with foretelling. Instead, this office operates out of a forth-telling mode. That is, the NT prophet role is to speak the heart of Christ to the Body of Christ for today.
- There is a high degree of discomfort with the apostle and prophet gifting in the 21st Century Evangelical church. In contrast, the modern church universally accepts the **gifts of evangelist, pastor, and teacher**. However, these often fail to function as equippers.
- The current FMCNA ministry leadership roles began out of an apostolic and prophetic sense, but evolved into a denominational management role with duties that frequently revolve around efforts to resolve local church crisis situations.
- If the FMCNA does not make deep changes associated with the office of Superintendent it is likely that our ministry family will experience slow death throughout the 21st Century. Perhaps the FMCSA is being asked by the Spirit to demonstrate a new way.

Deep Changes

#1 The FMCSC Office of Superintendent will seek to honor God's design for the church by operating out of visionary, apostolic, prophetic, and teaching (equipping) giftings.

Basic responsibilities of the newly configured Superintendent include:

- Leading the FMCSC into our Spirit-breathed vision, mission, and strategic ministry applications. (More practicing the presence of God, listening prayers, networking for leaders, and resources.)
- Leading and supporting the three Regional Superintendents and key Conference staff members.
- Representing the FMCSC to the FMCNA and FM World Missions. (Mainly traveling to denominational events and interacting with Bishop Matt.)
- Leading the major conference-wide events including Annual Conference, Learning Community, and Ministers Day Apart. (We will continue to move away from business as usual and make our events more equipping and celebration oriented.)
- Support and/or lead FMCSC initiated apostolic ministries, which at this time include FMCSC church planting projects, Eden Reforestation Projects, Ethiopia, Costa Rica, Sudan, Madagascar, Black Sheep, and Antigua.
- Lead and/or assist in the recruitment of senior and associate pastoral candidates.
- Assist, as requested by the Regional Superintendents, in ministry equipping efforts.
- Preach and teach at local churches as requested with an emphasis on vision casting.
- Lead the MAC in coordination with the Regional Superintendents and lay representatives.
- Seek the Lord's help in spiritual and financial resourcing which will benefit local ministries.

#2 The Office of Regional Superintendents will operate out of a pastoral and teaching (equipping) giftings. All three Regional Superintendents will serve as stationed superintendents. All three RS flow out of varying personalities – so approaches will not be uniform in nature. As well, please note that the office of Regional Superintendent is NOT an assistant TO the superintendent.

- The primary objective of the RS is to lead each congregation within the FMCSC towards healthy biblical community, and out of the local crisis management orientation.
- The primary tools for achieving this objective will be close relational interaction with each senior pastor and increased coaching / equipping to match the needs of each ministry setting.

- Lead the Regional MEG Board(s).
- To ensure that each region is seeking the Lord for the best means to achieve the FMCSA vision and strategic application.

#3 The MEG will continue to serve as the official ordaining tool that shapes and guides the pastoral team. In addition, the MEG will be utilized as the tool for addressing difficulties within the FMCSA pastoral team. (It is imperative that the RS not be viewed as the new heavy.)

#4 The MAC will continue to serve as the official appointment tool for senior and paid ministry staff. In addition, the MAC will be utilized as the tool for addressing difficulties and crisis situations within local FMCSA churches. (It is imperative that the principles in Matthew 18 be applied. This may result in the Superintendent being viewed as less of a heavy and more of a spiritual leader.)

#5 The District Superintendent role will be revised into a District Leader role. Non-authoritative relationships and loving accountability will be the primary function of the DL.

#6 The BOA and BOA Executive Committee will work in coordination with the Superintendent, Regional Superintendents, and District Leaders on probable revisions relating to conference finance policies, along with potential representative reconfiguration associated with the MEG, the MAC, and the BOA.