



# CHURCH MERGERS AND/OR ADOPTIONS

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 Jim Tomberlin & Warren Bird. Book: Better Together: Making Church Mergers Work. \* Theunstuckgroup.com

## Getting Started

### How Healthy are we in Moving in Vision, Outreach & Growth?

- |            |                 |
|------------|-----------------|
| 1. Running | 5. Wandering    |
| 2. Jogging | 6. Wounded/Sick |
| 3. Walking | 7. Hospitalized |
| 4. Limping | 8. Life Support |

### Which Pastor Type is Best for Us?

- Chaplain** - Preach; Visit; Maintain
- Teacher** - Preach; Educate; Admin.
- Healer** - Preach; Counsel; Prepare
- Builder** - Preach; Charge; Change

### 4 Basic Transition Options

- Search for a new pastor**
- Equally merge with a church**  
*Share pastors, staff, assets  
 Name change for both*
- Be adopted by a large church**  
*Dissolve; Transfer property/assets  
 Join large church; New DNA & site*
- Sell or Transfer property/assets**  
*Give proceeds to 501(c)3's*

### 4 Key Questions

- Which is best for our church?
- Which helps us accomplish more?
- Which serves our community best?
- Which best builds God's Kingdom?

## 9 Reasons to Merge

- To become a more vibrant & impactful church
- To strengthen our financial status
- To better sustain and utilize our facilities
- To strengthen a growing partner church
- To rescue a struggling partner church
- To provide needed space & be revitalized
- To fill the gap left by waves of retiring pastors
- To heal from painful past, wounds, and splits
- To assist church plants and multi-ethnic works

## 6 Common Merger Mistakes

- Undefined Relationship.** Marriage? Adoption? Rebirth? Replant? Campus site?
- Unclear Mission.** New identity? Destination?
- Backward Focus.** Focus forward, glance back.
- Shaky Control.** Who leads now? Who is out?
- Poor Communication.** Constantly clarify!
- Ignoring member grief.** Loss breeds grief's 5 stages (denial, bargaining, anger, depression, acceptance). Can take years to work through.

## 6 Keys for Multi-site Adoptions

- Clarify Purpose.** Replicate our brand or DNA
- Define Why.** Reach more; Maximize resources
- Choose Model.** One church/many sites; Video?
- Hire Campus Pastor.** Most critical!!  
 Aligned vision/mission?  Relational skills?  
 2nd Chair leader?  Proactive work?  
 Leads through others?  Passion for city?
- Confirm Location**  
 15-30 min. drive time?  Workable venue?  
 Willing & ready folks?  Have a presence?
- Build a Team**  
 Current staff and volunteer capacity?  
 Able to start with 50 core + 50 participants?  
 Strategic empowering of staff & volunteers?  
 Ample goals, structure, training & resources?

## DIFFUSION OF INNOVATION

How quickly people accept and adapt to change.

