

Church Planting Commission (CPC)
Sandra Montes-Martinez (staff liaison)
2024 Report

MISSION & VISION

The WDC Church Planting Commission (CPC) provides leadership and resources for church planting initiatives and fosters relationships with emerging Anabaptist/Mennonite groups. The Church Planting Commission helps emerging groups and their leaders connect with the congregations, resources, staff, and structure of Western District Conference.

CPC Members

Alberto Parchmont, Adela Gutierrez, Katherine Graber, Steve Nikkel, Jim Unruh, and Marlene McKitrick. Staff: Sandra Montes Martinez (Associate Conference Minister). Violeta Ajquejay Suastegui (Ministry Assistant).

Current Church Plants

- ❖ **Palabra Viva, Liberal, KS**, pastored by Jaime Rocha.

- ❖ **Casa de Restauración, Houston, TX**, pastored by Aurora Parchmont

- ❖ **Arca de Salvación, Uspantán, Guatemala**, pastored by Juan Jesus Toc y Julio Menchu.

As we reflect on the past year, we are filled with gratitude for the progress and impact of our church planting efforts. Our mission to spread the gospel and establish new communities of faith continues to thrive, thanks to unwavering support of individuals and the Western District Conference congregations. This report outlines our key strategic initiatives and future goals.

CPC Strategic Plan

The Western District Conference (WDC) Church Planting Commission's strategic plan announced in 2022 sets five clear visions to strengthen our community, and foster growth through key initiatives. Here is how each initiative plays a vital role and how we are working to achieve our goals:

1. Plant Churches.

At the heart of the CPC's strategic plan is the initiative to plant new churches. This involves identifying and nurturing new church plant locations, providing the necessary resources, and supporting church planters as they establish vibrant, sustainable congregations. During this year we have been preparing a learning tour that will tour new church plants, encouraging new projects and understanding the field work of an emerging church.

2. Empower Anabaptist Church Planters Development.

The CPC committed to empowering Anabaptist church planters through comprehensive development programs and partnerships. This includes providing training, mentorship, and resources tailored to the unique needs of Anabaptist leaders. By equipping our church planters with the skills and knowledge necessary for effective ministry, we ensure that competent and inspired leaders lead new congregations.

Western District Conference (WDC) through CPC has responded to the needs of the congregation partnering with the Hispanic Ministry of Mennonite Education Agency (MEA) and SEMILLA (Latin American Anabaptist Seminary), Guatemala City. to provide theological formation to the leadership and congregation members of Arca de Salvacion in Uspantán through the Anabaptist Biblical Institute (IBA). Since May 23, 2024, this initiative is offering structured theological education that combines Anabaptist principles with local cultural understanding.

This partnership aims to empower local leaders with the knowledge and skills necessary to lead and nurture their communities in faith.

3. Strengthen Communication and Partnerships with WDC Congregations.

Effective communication and strong partnerships with established WDC congregations are crucial for the success of our church planting efforts. We had focused on fostering collaboration, sharing best practices, and building a supportive network among WDC congregations through Sister Church partnership. Strengthening these connections ensures that new church plants receive the support and guidance they need from established churches.

4. Encourage Connections to Communities and Individuals Who Would Feel at Home in Anabaptism.

We aim to reach out to communities and individuals who resonate with Anabaptist values and beliefs. This initiative involves targeted outreach, cultural events, and community engagement activities designed to introduce people to Anabaptism and create a welcoming environment for them to explore their faith.

5. Encourage WDC Congregations to Be Alert to Unique Opportunities and Assets for Supporting Church Planting Projects.

The CPC working with the Church Planting Support Team encourages all congregations to remain vigilant and take initiative-taking in identifying unique opportunities and leveraging their assets to support church planting projects. By being attuned to the specific needs and strengths within their communities, CPC encourages these relationships through monthly articles on our website.

Established congregations can play a pivotal role in the success of new church plants.

Each of these initiatives is critical to the growth and impact of the WDC Church Planting Commission's strategic plan. Your support—whether in praying, financially, through volunteerism, or by spreading the word—plays a pivotal role in bringing these initiatives to life. Together, we can plant new churches, empower church planters, strengthen our community connections, honor cultural diversity, and welcome more individuals to the faith. Additionally, by staying alert to unique opportunities within our congregations, we can further enhance our church planting efforts and ensure their long-term success.

Join us in supporting the WDC Church Planting Commission's strategic plan. Your involvement will help build a network of thriving, impactful peace churches and ensure the growth and vitality of our congregations for years to come.