

## **Canadian Global Ministries – a new paradigm (April 2005) (or Toward a New Way of Doing Things in the Great Beyond)**

### *Philosophy of Ministry*

Our vision statement says we want “to see **healthy churches** within the reach of all people in Canada and beyond.” This sets our primary task as church planting and church development with healthy church measurables. We will do this in contexts where healthy churches are still needed, both in Canada and beyond. We will develop leaders and share resources in a manner that enables the development of healthy churches.

For more than a century The Free Methodist Church in Canada functioned under the ecclesiastical responsibility of the North American (United States) General Conference. During this time Canadian missionaries and financial resources were deployed at the direction of the US-based international mission department. After the Canadian FMC became a self-governing General Conference in 1990, this pattern was continued into the new century. By 2005, however, **a new model had emerged** whereby the Canadian and U.S. churches deploy their own personnel and resources in accordance with their own vision, policies and procedures, while remaining in a cooperative relationship internationally.

As the Canadian Free Methodist Church our primary means for planting and developing healthy churches is through **empowering local church initiatives**. Ministry extends primarily from local church vision rather than from denominational ‘head office’ initiative. The empowerment model suggests that information and resources will be shared widely so that local churches can make informed decisions; that ministry frameworks will be established collaboratively to guide local church initiatives; and that churches will function in a connectional, team-based, manner.

The international context for ministry is such that appropriate missiological principles need to be applied in the practice of cross-cultural gospel communication. Canadian cross-cultural ministry **personnel need to find their place alongside Christians of many cultural and national backgrounds who are also being faithful in the communication of the Jesus story**. In those, as yet, unreached places where cross-cultural workers are required to aid in the founding of seminal Christian communities, our personnel will develop language and cultural skills to enable adequate contextual ministry engagement. In locations where indigenous Christians are already communicating the gospel and forming Christian communities will we seek to determine what form our encouragement might take, supporting local workers and/or sending Canadian workers to partner with them.

The caliber, relevance, and sustainability of our global ministries will be ensured through the **training, development and coaching of competent cross-cultural personnel**. Our desire will be to deploy quality cross-cultural workers rather than quantity. A cross-cultural personnel process will be integrated with the normal personnel process of The Free Methodist Church in Canada.

Our primary method for initiating new ministry will be by means of **following natural, God-enabled, connections in a strategic manner**. We will develop broad strategic goals for initiating new global ministry, while seeking to discern natural connections and concerns represented in the ministries of our Canadian churches.

Local church initiatives which result in partnerships with FM bodies around the world will be conducted in a manner which encourages **responsible development and capacity-building practices**.

The sending of long-term, cross-cultural workers will be done in a **connectional manner**, amongst our Canadian churches and with the wider body of Free Methodists in the world.

### *Implications*

The resource tool *Benchmarks for healthy churches reflecting local-global ministry practices* encourages **local churches to be engaged in a proactive manner** in Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria and the ends of the earth. The National Leadership Team will serve as a resource for local churches seeking to implement ministry outreach in each of these spheres of influence.

In locations where mission work has been initiated by a fellow General Conference or FM mission agency, The FMCiC will develop **partnership agreements for the sending of missionaries to work in a fraternal manner**.

Where The FMCiC pursues **mission initiatives in new countries** we will assume primary oversight in a cooperative manner with other FM bodies ministering in the same region.

We will set **personnel policies** for the specific qualifications and training required of long-term cross-cultural personnel within the context of the normal qualifications for ministry personnel of The FMCiC. Performance appraisals will be conducted in a manner consistent with the practices of the oversight body.

The FMCiC will provide **oversight of personnel** working in countries where ministry has been initiated by The FMCiC. Partner bodies will provide oversight of Canadian personnel working under their auspices.

**Financial structures of support** will be developed consistent with FMCiC policies and practices.

**Ministry Teams and Short-term workers** (VISA) will be processed by The FMCiC and deployed in a collaborative manner with FM bodies providing primary oversight in the ministry destination.