

Why Start A Triad

A Model for Church Planting Partnerships in the Vineyard



*“If you want to go fast — go alone.
If you want to go far — go together.”*

— AFRICAN PROVERB

What is a partnership?

Multiply Vineyard believes that every single Vineyard church can be a parent of new churches and is committed to providing resources for pastors, local churches, and church planters to help them participate in what God is inviting them into. One effective resource that we have is our church planting partnerships.

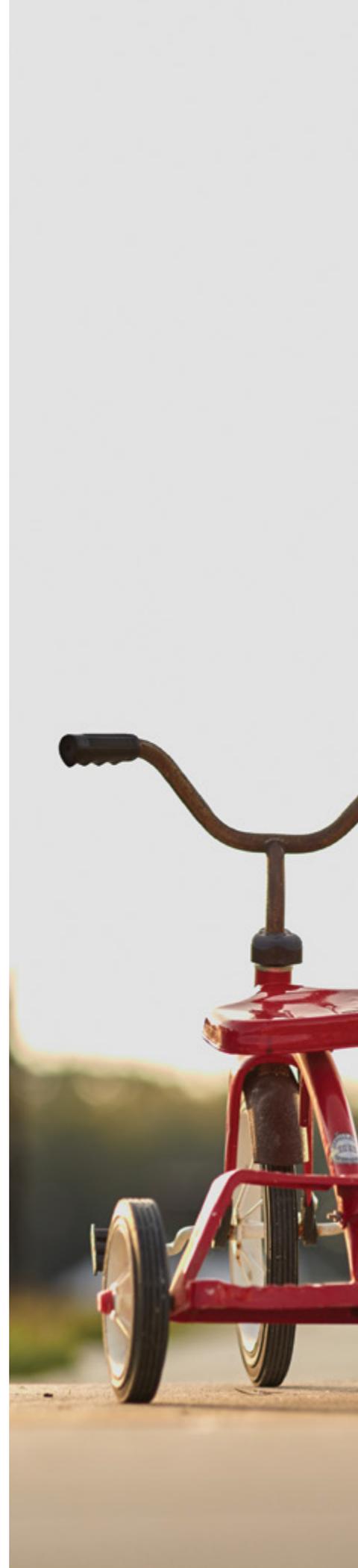
A church planting partnership consists of pastors and churches who voluntarily come together to plant churches in a specific target area; these areas may be geographic, demographic, or interest-based. Together, along with the people living in the target areas, partnerships develop a vision, develop strategic plans and set specific goals towards starting churches in neighboring towns and cities.

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Contributing Authors:

Luke Geraty, Michael Houle, Ross Nelson & Joel Seymour



Introduction

We have found that using a simple triad model can be significantly more effective in empowering pastors to set and achieve goals of church planting.

Planting churches is without question a difficult road to walk down, and many pastors and church leaders hesitate to try it for fear of not having enough of resources to pull it off effectively. The time, energy, people, and financial commitments can seem overwhelming and, for some, make planting churches seem impossible.

Yet, Jesus calls us to multiply our communities. We do this by bringing the power and presence of the risen Christ to more folks in our communities, as well as the cities and towns just down the road.

Forming church planting triads empowers pastors to:

- 1. Cultivate vision and support**
- 2. Build shared resources**
- 3. Plant more churches**

Building Healthy, Deep Friendships

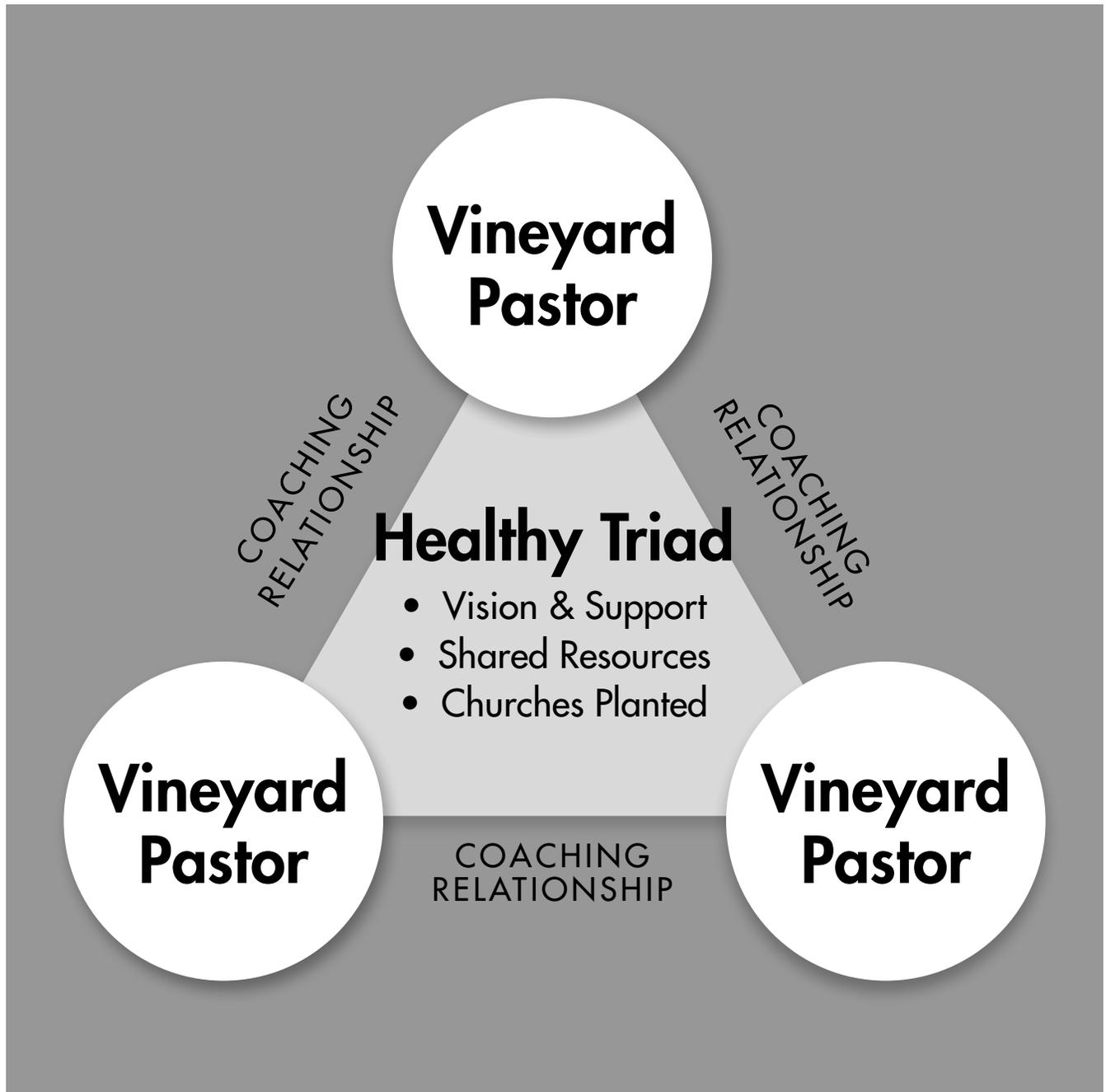
Beyond that, though, there is an incredible relational value to planting churches with a triad model. We consistently hear that the most impactful part of forming a triad is the depth of relationships that develop while pastors are seeking to achieve big goals together. These deeper relationships then form the basis for a strong support network for your church and yourself. A triad spreads out the responsibility and pressure of church planting so that we are more free to celebrate the mission that Jesus has put before us and enjoy the abundant life he gives us in the process.

This document is an overview of the values of triads as well as best practices that help keep them healthy and accomplish their vision.

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Visualizing a Triad

This visual shows what a healthy triad looks like. It shows the relationship between pastors in a partnership and the things that they're contributing to it.





Sharing Vision and Goals

Identify Potential Partners Based on Shared Vision

The key to success in any triad is having the right three people involved. First, you'll want to find people in the same general area as you. Part of the benefit of a triad is that you are all close enough to the churches you are planting to really support them. We have found that partners who are within a couple hours distance of each other and the potential plant city is crucial. Second, all three of you will need to share the same vision and passion for church planting. If you don't have those things in common, the odds are against you being able to work together effectively. Once you think you've located a couple potential partners, contact them and pitch your vision for forming a triad.

Flesh Out Your Vision Together

Before you can start actually working together, the three of you will need to flesh out where you are hoping to go and what you are hoping to accomplish. Make sure you all agree on a clear vision and set some specific goals. Having these hammered out will help keep you all on track and provide a reminder from time to time for why you are really getting together. As we say in the Vineyard, we want to "do what the Father is doing." When you are working on vision and goals, keep prayer a central part of your process. The joy of three people praying together is that you all gain greater perspective of what the Father is doing in your area.

Get Specific and Set Goals

One of the first steps, if you haven't done it already, is identifying towns or neighborhoods where you could potentially send church plants. See where the Father is working in your area and begin to pray over those communities. It is a good idea to involve your church by creating a prayer card with the names of the towns and cities the Lord has directed your partnership towards. Keep your list broad and don't eliminate any community based on its size. Identify areas which could use a church. Remember, we just want to go where the humans are. Set some specific goals as you begin to identify where to go first. A good goal is one where you know what it will look like to reach it. Set "[S.M.A.R.T. goals](#)"—goals that are Specific (What, exactly, is it that I want to achieve?), Measurable (How will I know I've achieved it?), Attainable (What is realistic for me to accomplish?), Relevant (Why am I doing this?), and Time Bound (By what time/date will I accomplish this?).

Identify Shared Resources

As part of goal setting, begin to look at what resources each church brings to the table. Resources such as potential leaders, finances, and outreach volunteers will make your goals much closer to becoming a reality. The great advantage to a triad great is that three smaller churches can together provide resources, that one church could not do alone. See more about shared resources on page 9.

Structuring Triads for Success

Select a Point Person

You'll need to decide on a point person for the group who will run meetings and help keep things moving in the group. Although all three triad members are equal partners in terms of opinions, value, and decisions, a person who can help guide the meetings and keep track of the details is key to success. Select a person who will help the group stay organized and focused.

Create a Meeting Schedule

After you have formed a triad, you'll need to set up regular meetings with the group. Consistent meeting dates and times are important to the success of the group and help keep everyone accountable and moving forward in your vision and goals. We recommend meeting at a set date, place, and time on a monthly basis. You can all decide whether it works for you to meet face to face or via phone or video conference software.

A Typical Meeting

Meetings should have a set agenda that is finalized and sent to the group ahead of time by your point person. A typical agenda will include a check-in time for each person, time to discuss goals and progress made, coaching time, assigned tasks and resource discussion, and prayer time. We recommend allowing about 1 1/2 hours for a typical meeting.

Goals

One the biggest strengths of a triad is the accountability built into the meeting time. Taking time each meeting to check in on how members are progressing on their goals allows the triad to see how things are going, and what changes, if any, need to be made. Set aside time for this each meeting.

Coaching

[Coaching](#) should be done in each meeting as well. Each person in the triad should have an opportunity to coach and be coached by the other triad members. Coaching helps each member get clarity and come up with solutions when they are stuck.





The Catalyst of Coaching Relationships

[Coaching](#) is a tested method of coming alongside people to encourage them, help them process ideas by asking them powerful questions, and help them identify where God is at work in their lives. Coaching is a very important tool among Vineyard leaders.

Importance of Coaching in the Triad

In triads, coaching is the method to the model; the language between the pastors who are seeking to challenge and support each other. In a triad, coaching helps create and maintain healthy, encouraging relationships within the group; leads to deeper growth; and makes the group more effective at strategic planning toward the goal of planting a new church.

How it Works

In a triad, each member participates as both the coach and the coachee. You all take turns asking questions and answering questions that are specifically created to help gain clarity and come up with creative solutions for the challenges that arise. In a given moment, the person who is not asking or answering observes and provides extra input where needed. Six powerful questions you could ask:

1. How are you? (We're looking for the real answer here, not pleasantries)
2. What are you celebrating/what's working?
3. What challenges are you experiencing?
4. What do you plan to do about/what are some ways you could address these challenges?
5. How can I help you?
6. How can I pray for you?

The coaching partners job is to listen carefully to both the triad member they are coaching and the Holy Spirit in order to guide the conversation well. See coaching in action with a church planter [here](#).

Learn How to Coach Each Other

Multiply Vineyard offers coaching and coach training for those interested, as well as many other coaching resources on [our website](#). Getting some coaching training is highly recommended for the success of your triad—it has been proven to greatly increase the effectiveness of people who use it time and time again.

Resource Sharing

Resources Between Triad Members

A triad framework allows churches to share resources to help make their church plants successful. Resource sharing makes it possible for churches of every size to participate in church planting.

The three perspectives of the established churches also help the church plant to identify potential needs, provide resources to help fill those needs, and offer wisdom so that needs are not overlooked.

How Triads Share Resources

Triads share resources in many different ways to plant churches together. They can share finances, outreach volunteers, worship material, children's resources, and even preaching resources. They can share resources on a permanent or temporary basis, knowing they will not have to do it on their own. One of the benefits of a triad is each church can participate at the level they have energy for or resources for that given season.

For example, one church may have money to give but not extra volunteers while the other two churches have little extra finances to give. On the other hand, one may have a couple driving from that area who are interested in being on the planting team and the other church may have extra sound equipment they could donate. Other ways to contribute include each church sending their "experts" in any given field (worship, children, outreach, assimilation, etc.) to help with leadership training.

Affinity Groups

Another way triads can work together is to form "affinity groups" among the various ministries in each of the local churches. An affinity group is made up of leaders with a shared passion or expertise from each of the triad member churches. Once those leaders are identified, the pastors invite those group members to begin to meet occasionally to share ideas, resources, and relationship.

For example, if a triad is working toward launching a new church plant, they could develop an affinity group with key leaders from the kids ministries of each church. These three kids ministry leaders would then meet together to discuss ways to provide support for the new church plant.



Resources For Triads

Connecting with the Multiply Vineyard Small Town Specialists

Help and Support Creating Triads

The Small Town Partnership is here to support pastors who are creating triads. Contact us with question or comments about triads and how to develop them: SmallTown@multiplyvineyard.org.

Small Town Webinars

We offer webinars throughout the year on real and practical issues facing church planters in small towns. All Multiply Vineyard webinars are listed at multiplyvineyard.org/events.

Quarterly Coaching

This coming year, for those who will be starting a new triad and those who are currently in a triad, we will be offering quarterly coaching with a coach trained specifically for triads. For more information, contact us at SmallTown@multiplyvineyard.org.

Next Steps

As you begin to pray over the possibility for creating or joining a church planting triad being to ask the Holy Spirit for guidance on these next steps:

1. Who are two other churches in your area you could partner with in order to plant more churches?
2. When will you share your vision with the two other churches and invite them into a church planting triad relationship?
3. What towns has God given you a heart for?
4. What resources could your church share?
5. Contact the Small Town team at smalltown@multiplyvineyard.org and let them know about your partnership. Partnerships will receive free quarterly coaching sessions.

*What towns has God given
you a heart for?*



Multiply Vineyard's vision is to extend the kingdom of God by helping our local churches fulfill their God-given call to multiply the church. We work alongside existing churches to help facilitate multiplication of new Vineyard churches who will in turn transform their local communities.

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