

The Year Leading Up To Your Launch

Six to Twelve Months Out

Personal

- After knowing where God has called you, move to that city and get settled with a home, job, school, etc.
- Pray!
- Select 3 or more personal intercessors to keep informed of prayer needs throughout

ARC

- Watch ARC 1.0 (Church Planter's Roundtable Online)
- Sign-up & attend ARC 2.0 (Advanced Training)
- Sign-up & attend ARC 3.0 (Assessment)
- Read <http://www.arcchurches.com/start-a-church>
- Get an ARC sponsoring church ([letter of commitment](#)).

Vision

- Set a launch date.
- Write out vision and mission statements
- Type up a church structure flow chart.
- Type up Statement of Faith.
- Select 3 – 5 overseers for pastor's personal accountability and support.
- Begin to select a Financial Board of Advisors (may be the overseers)

Financial Administration

- Set up an office (probably in your home) for financial, church, and office administration. Set up files for each.
- Get financial software and computer. (Quickbooks)
- You might need to hire an accountant to establish books and procedures.
- Come up with a list of resources for each area of ministry.
- Set up a general budget. ([Click here for samples](#))
- Set up a spreadsheet for tracking income and expenses.

Church Administration

- Get a Post Office box.
- Write a Ministry Development Plan - strategize for all area of ministry.
Write up task lists for each area of ministry.
List items to purchase for that ministry.
- Set up interoffice communication for pastor and launch team leaders (mailbox and folder system).

Federal Legal and Corporate Actions

- Determine (temporary) Board of Directors (may be overseers)
- Obtain EIN
- Craft Constitution and Bylaws
- Develop Organizational Board Meeting Minutes - Appoint Chairperson and Secretary, Directors elect themselves, appointment of officers, ratify the Articles, ratify the bylaws, pass resolution to open a checking account, pass resolution about borrowing money, pass resolution about out of pocket expenses for the Board and adopt policies like conflict of interest, reimbursement, salary, etc.
- Develop Corporate records kit
- Establish and Fulfill Ordination for Lead Pastor (file with state, if applicable)
- Apply for 501(c)(3)
- Adopt Chart of Accounts
- Payroll Tax Forms

State Legal and Corporate Actions

- Check for availability on the name of the church with the state.
- Incorporate in the state (see the State Corporation Commission).
- Register with the State Department of Revenue for income tax.
- Apply for Sales Tax Exemption exemption - where applicable

Dream Team

- Begin inviting people to move to your city to help get your church started.
- Begin weekly vision meetings for fellowship, planning, and leadership training.
Begin building a team of at least 35 adults before launch.

Learn from other Churches and Build Relationships with other Pastors

- Attend church planting conferences and visit other churches, large and established as well as new church plants, both in and out of town.

Promotion

- Once you have the church name registered, hire a graphic designer to help you establish a corporate identity and develop a logo, business papers, and business cards.
- Make sure you take pictures and video to document these early moments.

Website/Blog/Facebook/Social Networking

- Purchase domain name.
- Write content for website. Pages to focus: home, about, new to us, ministries, get involved, what to expect, FAQs page.
- Get site designed and developed.
- Start posting to your blog weekly.
- Create a Facebook page for your church.
- Create personal accounts on Facebook, Youtube, Twitter, & other sites

Financial Administration

- Open a bank checking account
- Get an offering envelope printed and use with your beginning launch group.

Leadership Procedures

- Write short-term ministry agreements for leaders who are developing ministries with specific goals and timetables for each area of ministry.
- Develop interoffice forms (Ministry Report, Expenditure Request, Reimbursement Request, Event Evaluation, copy requests, etc.)
- Develop logos for areas of ministry.
- Develop forms
- Connection Cards, Ministry Team cards (volunteer interest), and Honor Code

Children's Ministry

- Children's Ministry forms (application, accident report, activity consent, medical authorization, etc.)
- Registration system, tags
- Purchase children's curriculum
- Design brochures for each area of Children's Ministry

Storage Area

- Prepare shelves and tubs for organization
- Start making purchases for children's ministries.

Bulk Mail Permit

- Apply for nonprofit status with the USPS and get a permit number.

Three to Six Months Out

Personal

- Continue to develop your personal prayer life and Bible Study
- Continue to keep intercessors apprised of personal and planting needs
- Ask yourself, “What will I do today to let people know we are planting a church?”

ARC

- Complete ARC 4.0 (Coaching)
- Create an ongoing list of questions for your ARC coach.

Information Meetings

- Develop an invite card to pass out to people
- Have all your printed materials ready for display.
- Hold meetings to share church vision with anyone interested in joining the Dream Team.

Website

- Finalize the website and get someone to maintain the site.

Ministry Development

- Develop short handbooks with policies and procedures for each area of ministry (Children, Students, Worship, Ushers, Greeters, Prayer Counselors, etc)

Series Development

- Decide on your first series, get a theme and start brainstorming ideas. Also think about the series you would like to do for the first few months.
- [Click here for sites with sermon resources](#)

Promotion

- Visitor brochure
- Message request, prayer and testimony cards.
- Order banners for children and student areas.

Growth Track

- Write lessons for the membership class. Begin preparing content for discipleship and leadership classes.
- [Growth Track resources available here](#)

Worship

- Get CCLI license.
- Begin developing a song list and files.
- Begin having worship practices. Develop a band.

Fundraising

- Raise \$30,000.00
- Send out letters asking for support (at least 300), DVD presentation
- Travel and preach at different churches
- Personal investment
- Businessmen (1-Share vision, 2-How vision helps city, 3-Ask for support)

Network

- Meet local pastors
- Have neighborhood parties
- Meet people and invite them into your home or meet for coffee
- Contact other ARC pastors
- Have information meetings
- Continue to invite people to join your Dream Team from inside and outside the community.

State government

- Get licensed to perform marriages.
- See about getting criminal record checks for volunteers to work with children and teens.

Location

- Get a building for Sunday morning services
- Obtain liability insurance (corporate, event and property, on storage too).

Three Months Out to Launch

Personal

- Continue to develop your prayer life and Bible study
- Personally prepare for a time of fasting before you launch
- Continue to keep intercessors apprised of your personal and planting needs
- Ask yourself, “What will I do today to let people know we are planting a church?”

Make large equipment purchases

- Instruments, projection screen and computer, sound system, audio duplicating machine, trailer and vehicle to pull it, platform decoration, nursery furniture, tables, and chairs, if needed.

Advertising

- Determine your target audience
- If doing a direct mail piece, have it designed.
- Meet with the post office to find the timing on how bulk mail is delivered.
- Chart out the time frame for design, printing and mailing so that it reaches households within the two weeks prior to launch.
- Swag items: T-shirts, Frisbees, Bumper Stickers, Magnets, Koozies, Water Bottles, Coffee Mugs (Get design and order 6 weeks ahead)
- Booth Display or Banner for Information Center (Order banner 6 weeks in advance).
- Press release to local news stations, newspapers.
- Newspaper ad
- Posters (windows of area businesses, community bulletin boards, etc)
- Flyers
- Approach athletic teams, restaurants, coffee houses, etc.

Signage and In-House Materials

- Order outdoor and indoor directional signs
- Get large outdoor banner for the front of the building
- Information to pass out with a Grand Opening bulletin
- Invitation to the Newcomer's Reception (3-4 weeks from the launch)
- Invitation to a membership class (some time after the Newcomer's Reception)
- Visitor brochure and Connection Card
- Prepare giveaways to pass out during the service
- Lanyards for workers
- Offering Envelopes and Buckets

Welcome Center

Prepare the Welcome Center and stock with the following information:

- Visitor brochures
- Connection cards
- Bulletins
- Invitations to Newcomer's Reception
- Membership Class Invites
- Facility Map
- Prayer and Testimony Cards
- Ministry Team Cards
- Message Request Cards
- Business Cards

Children's Ministry Registration

- Prepare registration tables for each area. Get banners for each area. Get a sign with ages for the table. Have a display with connection cards, a letter introducing the curriculum, visitor brochures, registration lists, nametag stickers, etc.

Plan a Meal for after the Service

Hire a caterer to serve a meal after the service so you have a chance to talk with people. Plan something fun for the kids (inflatable slide, carnival games, clown, etc).

Prepare Message for Grand Opening

Choose a message that explains the vision and mission of the church.

Prepare First Series

- Bulletin shells
- ProPresenter or PowerPoint slides
- Video
- Platform decoration
- CD stickers
- Music and countdown clock to play before the service starts
- Either start with your first series or announce the series you will start next week.

Final Preparation

- Do two practice services setting up everything and going through the entire service
- Plan a pre-launch party for volunteers the day before launch.
- Fast and pray in the final month. (Maybe do a month devotional together)

Recommended Organizations:

- StartChurch
 - Ask about StartRIGHT program and mention you are an “ARC church planter” for a discount.
 - Contact:
Nathan Camp | Email: nathan@startchurch.com | Phone: 770-638-3444 |
Fax: 866-716-0032
or visit www.startchurch.com/services
- Designer MD
 - Freelance Designer
 - Contact: Michael Durham michael@designermd.net
- JS Printing
 - For all quality printing needs. Mailers, Worship Guide, Connection Cards etc.
 - Contact: Richard Mitchell richard@jsprinting.com Owner
- Odle Group (T shirts)
 - Screen printing and embroidery
 - Shawn McCarthy smccarthy@ourshirtsdontsuck.com
- Group Imaging
 - Banners and Signage
 - groupimaging.com/