

Network Field Guide

OVERVIEW & PROCESS | SPRING 2023



RESOUND
NETWORK

Why Resound Network?

THE REALITY

Across Missouri, 48% of MBC churches are in decline and another 18% plateaued. Apart from a movement of God, far too many churches will close their doors in the coming years.



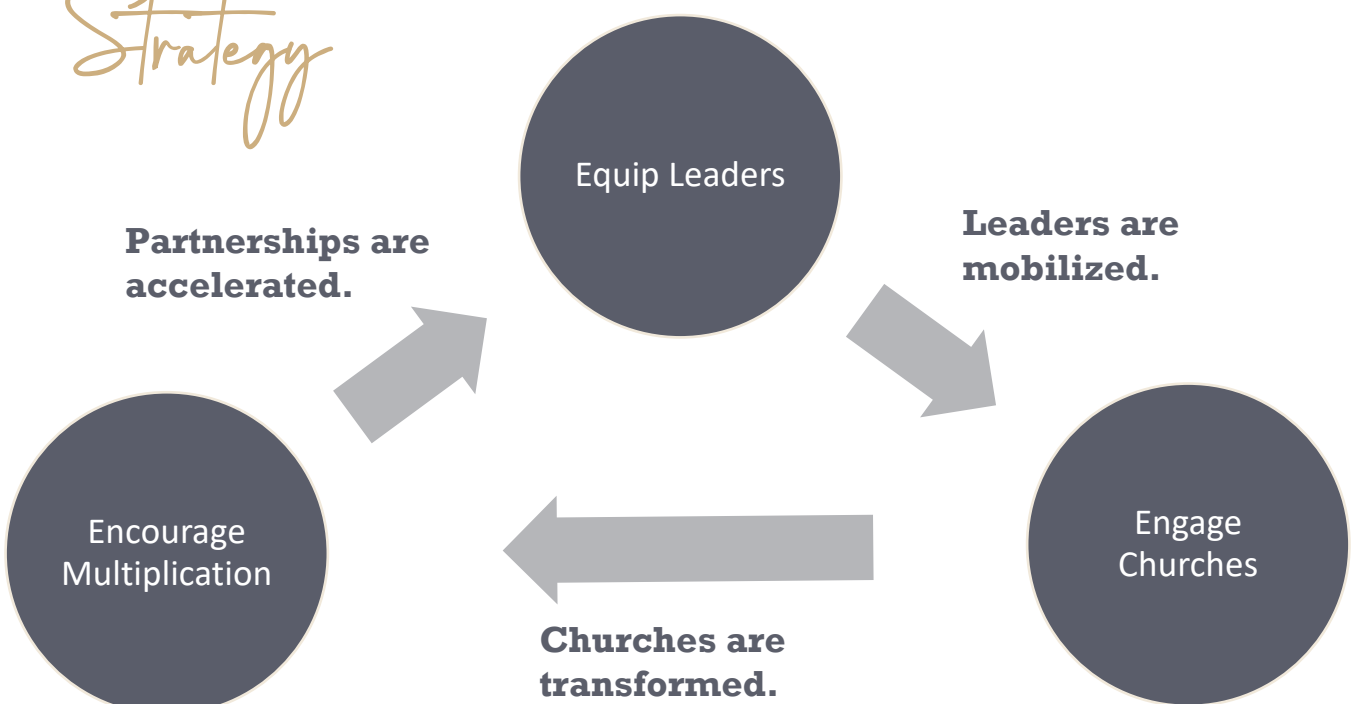
Vision

A movement of revitalized and replanted churches resounding for God's glory.

Mission

Catalyze church revitalization and replanting through partnership.

Strategy



Values & Target

The Resound Network is committed to...

1. *Enjoying the King*
 - a. *We are devoted to the King & His Kingdom.*
 - b. *We are motivated by God & the Gospel.*
2. *Loving His Bride*
 - a. *We are marked by humility & courage.*
 - b. *We are committed to partnership & autonomy.*
3. *Pursuing His Target*
 - a. *We are engaged with proactivity & intentionality.*
 - b. *We are focused on transformation & health.*



A Biblical Healthy Church Target

- *Healthy Identities*
 - *Worshippers*
 - *Local churches are created as worshipers of God to reflect His character, gather to worship Him together, and serve Him above all else. They must be centered upon Jesus and the Gospel in all they do, and they are to find their power in the Spirit.*
(1 Peter 2:4-9; Ephesians 3:8-10; Romans 11:36)
 - *Family*
 - *Local churches are created as family with one another. The community of believers is called to sacrificially love and serve one another, bear one another's burdens, forgive one another, encourage one another, and even rebuke one another.*
(John 13:24-25; Ephesians 2:11-22; 1 Peter 2:9-10; "One Another" passages throughout NT)
 - *Missionaries*
 - *Local churches are created as missionaries to the world. Every church is called to make disciples faithfully and boldly in her local context and to partner in missions efforts to make disciples of all nations.*
(1 Peter 2:11-12; Matthew 5:13-16, 28:18-20; John 20:21-23; Acts 1:8; 2 Corinthians 5:1)

A Biblical Healthy Church Target (continued)

- *Healthy Foundations*

- *Gospel*

- *The good news about Jesus must be the center of every local church. Believing and applying the Gospel is our only hope for salvation and church revitalization. Churches must never move on from the Gospel but be saturated by it. (1 Peter 2:4-8; Colossians 2:6-7; 1 Corinthians 15:1-4; 1 Timothy 3:16)*

- *Scripture*

- *Scripture is the inerrant, inspired Word of God. The Bible is the sufficient source for life and godliness as well as for the revitalization and replanting of churches. Thus, the faithful, clear preaching of God's Word is essential. (2 Timothy 3:16-17; Psalm 119)*

- *Prayer*

- *God intends to do greater works through us than Jesus did, and prayer is the primary means by which He keeps us reliant upon Him and enables us to do His works in power. The Spirit empowers revitalization through prayer. (Acts 2:42, 4:29-31; 6:6-7; 9:3; John 14:12-14; Colossians 4:2)*

- *Healthy Structures*

- *Leadership*

- *While every church member is a minister, God gifts the church with pastors as servant leaders who provide oversight of souls, sound preaching, godly examples, and overarching leadership and direction for the church. Also, God provides deacons as leading servants to care for the church's unity & physical needs. (Philippians 2, 1 Peter 5:1-5, Ephesians. 4:7-16, Hebrews 13:17, Mark 10:42-45)*

- *Membership*

- *Every believer is called to covenant with a local church through membership in order to live out the one another commands of the New Testament, submit to specific pastors' leadership, and be accountable to a particular congregation as they seek to persevere together in pursuing holiness and God's mission. (Romans 12:3-13; Hebrews 13:17; Matthew 18:15-20; Acts 6:3; 13:2-3; 15:22; 1 Corinthians 5:2; 2 Corinthians 2:6)*

- *Discipleship*

- *From evangelizing the lost to building up the saints, churches are called to make disciples, and healthy churches will have intentional strategies and structures to involve people in discipleship no matter where they are on their spiritual journey. (2 Timothy 2:1-2; Titus 2:3-5; John 20:21-23; Acts 1:8; Matthew 28:18-20)*

Process Overview

Church health does not recover via a program, although it may involve programs. The Network process is designed to lead a church in self-discovery and guide it toward recommendations for its future, allowing the congregation before God to affirm a future course.

Check out the [Resound One Sheet Overview](#) for a big-picture summary of our processes and tools for strong and struggling churches.

Prior to the first meeting, the process begins when a church contacts the MBC/Resound Network.

- The Zone Catalyst is notified and contacts the church to coordinate an explore meeting.
- The Zone Catalyst contacts the church's DOM to invite him to collaborate.



EXPLORE

An initial conversation with church leaders to explore the church's past and present reality as well as the network's process.

Because we don't do things to or for churches, the congregation must vote to enter the next stage of the process.



DISCOVER

Alongside the church, the network team will conduct an in-depth assessment of the church's health and community.

PRESENT/ RECOMMEND



The network team will present the findings from the assessments to leaders as well as the congregation.

Next, the team will share customized recommendations for the church to consider and vote upon.



AFFIRM & IMPLEMENT

If the church affirms the recommendations, the network team will walk alongside them to implement the recommendations.



MULTIPLY

After three to five years, or earlier if appropriate, the church is encouraged to partner with other churches in need to continue the movement of revitalization and replanting throughout Missouri and beyond.

Pathways

Having discovered a church's unique context, opportunities, and challenges, one of the following customizable pathways will be recommended with clear, actionable steps for the church to implement. Check out the helpful definitions regarding pathways in the [NAMB Replant Guide](#) (pgs. 22-29)



Revitalize

The extended pursuit of renewed health and effectiveness through an intentional and strategic change process.



Replant

The decisive transformation of a church in order to experience new life through partnership with another church via relaunch, adoption, merger, or foster care.



Repurpose

The creative stewardship of facilities and resources through the development of a ministry center or an investment in strategic ministry partners.



Process - Step by Step

Our entire process with churches is tracked through Trello. To become familiar with Trello and test out how the system works, check out our [Network Trello Training Board](#). When you are comfortable with the system and ready to engage a church, contact resound@mobaptist.org to request access to the Resound Network Trello Board.

First Contact with the Church

- Enter the church into the Resound Network Trello Tracking System (MBC Staff)
- Respond to the church point of contact (pastor, lay leader, deacon chair etc.)
- Determine type of request: Level 1 - Resource, or Level 2 - Consultation (see below)
- Explain the consultation process.
- MBC Staff refer Church Trello Card to Zone Catalyst who will set an appointment to meet with the leader(s) of the church requesting assistance
 - Timeliness is vital in following up with a church after initial contact.
 - Zone Catalyst contacts the DOM to notify him of the church in his area that has requested network assistance, invites him to attend the meeting when appropriate.¹
 - MBC Staff drafts an overview survey of ACP trend lines for the past 20 years for the initial meeting, sends to Zone Catalyst or places in online file.
 - Zone Catalyst fills out report of initial phone call with the church.

Types of Requests:

Level 1 - Resource Recommendation: a church contacting the MBC and requesting information and resourcing but not consultation

- Ministry Programming (VBS, age-graded, deacons etc.)
- Revitalization resource only
- Referral to ministry partners: Assoc, NAMB, etc.

Level 2 - Church Consultation: a church contacting the MBC who desires a consultation process.

Explore: learning the issues and concerns of the church

Discover: taking a deeper look at the trend lines, data, and history,

¹ Since the network has been invited, we are not requesting permission, but we are inviting the DOM to collaborate in the process.

and surveying the congregation and community to determine church needs and ministry impact and readiness for change.

Present: sharing the findings with the following groups: the leaders who invited us in, key decision makers, stakeholders (deacons, trustees, committee heads, etc.) and finally the church body.

Recommend: Resound Network leaders will make recommendations based upon the information obtained in the discovery phase.

Affirm: the church makes a decision as a body on the recommendations after having the opportunity to consider them.

Implement: if recommendations are affirmed the Resound Network will work with local leaders on implementing those recommendations.

I. Explore: First Meeting with the Church

Understand their story/history

Questions to ask:

- **What brought us to this meeting today?**
 - **Evaluative Questions:**
 - Has your church seen active attendance decline for more than three years?
 - Is your church struggling just to pay your bills in a timely manner? Has your church been unable to pay your pastor the amount you think he should be paid?
 - Are you unable to attract young people and young families to become members and be involved in the life of your church?
 - Do you feel that your church is somehow disengaged from the surrounding neighborhood?
 - Would anyone in the neighborhood care if your church closed?
 - If your current trends continue in both attendance and giving, do you fear your church will have to close within the next five years?²
 - Share their ACP chart and ask questions regarding changes.
 - Share a bell curve image and discuss the church life cycle ([resource here](#)).
Ask the church: where do you believe your church is in the life cycle?
- **How did the church get to this place?**
- **What commitments is the church ready to make to understand options for its future? (Explain the commitments for the process below)**

Because the process of consultation is time and resource intensive, the network asks for a signed covenant ensuring the church understands the requirement for data

² A yes or positive answer to three or more indicates the church is in need of replanting/revitalization.

sharing, assessments, and multiple meetings with the network team. The zone catalyst will secure the covenant and guide those involved in the consultation process through the development and presentation of the recommendation.

Network consultation and resources are provided for churches who make a commitment by church action (vote) to enter into a consultation agreement.

Churches who agree to Network Process commit to the following:

1. Data and demographic information sharing with Network leaders.
2. At minimum 2-3 presentations of data findings to leaders, key stakeholders (deacons, church council, committee heads, etc.)
3. A church-wide presentation of findings and recommendations from the Network
4. A church-wide response to the recommendations made (via vote).
5. Cover the travel expenses of all volunteer network team members working outside their association.
6. Debrief meeting with key leaders to either take next steps with implementation, or to address potential conflict that may arise based upon the outcome of the vote.

II. Discover: The Church & Community

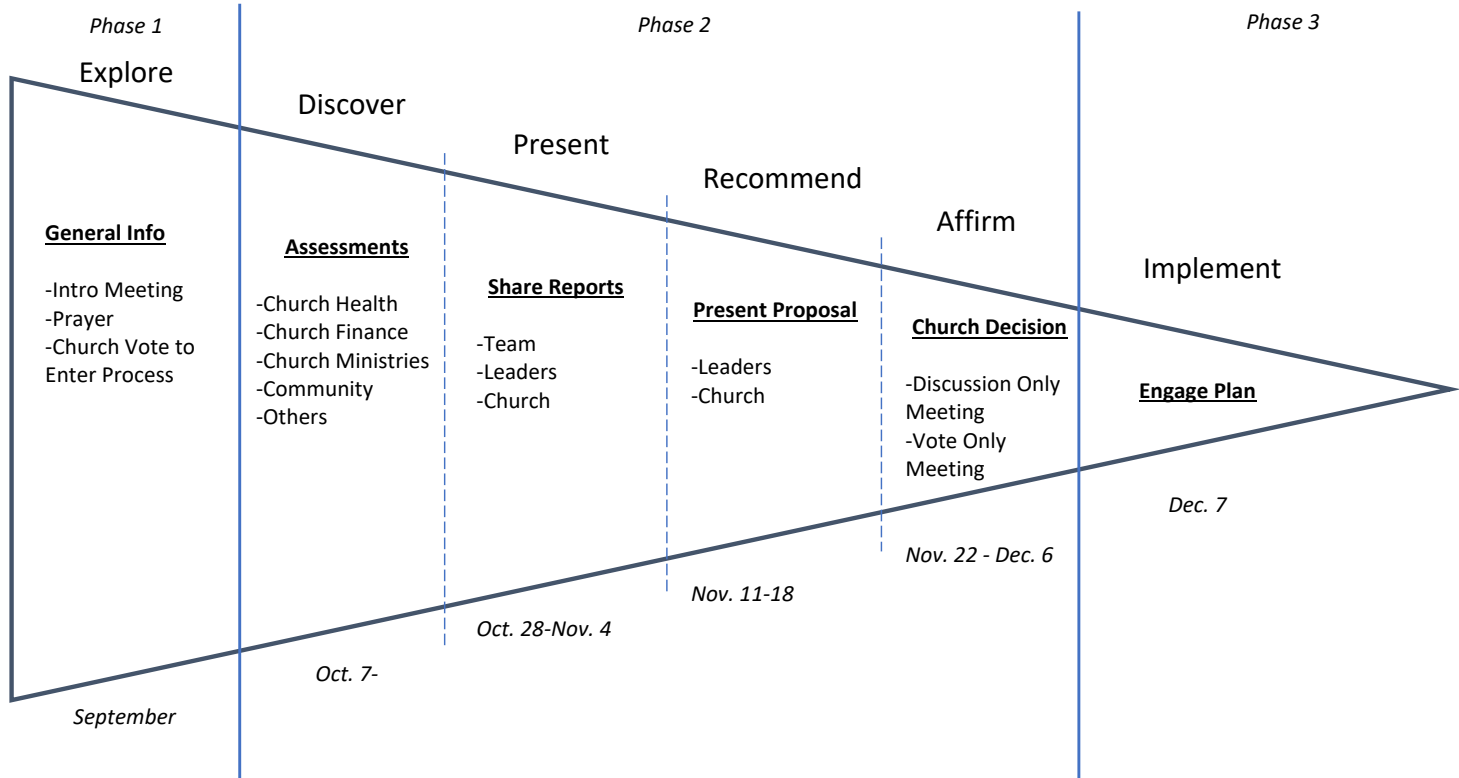
- As the work of discovery begins, the church must seek spiritual renewal before the Lord as well. [*The Renew & Resound: 40 Day Devotional Guide by the Resound Network*](#) provides a congregation with the resources to cultivate personal and spiritual renewal. Included in the guide is a pastor's toolkit that provides helpful small group, sermon series, and other tools to utilize with the *Renew & Resound* guide.

Lead the church through in-depth assessments of the church and community.

- Church designates a small discovery team to execute the assessments with one or two points of contact who have been directed to provide the following information: membership roster, financial reports and listing of assets, constitution and bylaws, ministry information, and other data as requested.
- *As you lead the process, identifying a person of peace who will champion the process and recommendations is vital.* This person needs to be involved from the beginning, influential in the church, and included in the presentation.
- Meet with the discovery team ([see a template meeting agenda here](#)) to plan execution of the discovery phase and present with a tentative timeline for the process (editable version on Trello).
 - This funnel graph may be helpful during the explore phase as well. Providing a visual timeline can be helpful for the church as they vote.
 - Timeliness is vital for churches throughout the process, especially for those without pastors. Utilizing the funnel graph on the next page enables churches to have clear expectations and see progress.

Resound Network Process

September – December Sample Schedule



- Church health surveys and additional assessments: Network leads determine which they will use. A toolbox of assessments is available on the Network Trello board. Options include but aren't limited to the following:
 1. General Church Survey – This survey provides insight to the church's demographics and allows each church member to express their perspective on the current reality of the church through open-ended questions.
 2. Facilities Assessment – This tool is executed by the network team and provides outside eyes on facility strengths and weaknesses.
 3. Ministry Assessment – This tool provides ministry leaders an opportunity to share their perspective regarding the strengths and weaknesses of the ministries they lead.
 4. Corpus Assessments: These assessments cost \$200 each.
 - a. Pastoral Readiness Assessment & Coaching Plan
 - i. Provides a 360 assessment of the pastor around his biblical roles of elder, overseer, and shepherd.
 - b. Vision Receptivity Assessment (Church Culture Assess.)

- i. Provides a self-assessment of 10-12 church leaders regarding the cultural obstacles for leading change.
 5. Community Demographics – The Resound MBC staff will run demographics at no cost to the church, and these reports provide insight into who makes up the community.
 6. Community Leader Interviews – These interviews provide an opportunity to get a unique perspective on the needs and opportunities within the community.
 7. Community Surveys – These surveys, executed by the church members, provide insight into the church’s reputation, the community’s perception of its strengths and weaknesses, and potential opportunities to serve the community.
- Resound Network Health Assessment (**Required**): This lengthy assessment is used to assess actions and attitudes rather than programs and structure.
 - Church profile created in Google Drive by MBC Staff provides online forms for executing the health assessment, general survey, and community surveys.
 - Schedule or equip church to do interviews with church members, key leaders, community members, etc.

For churches in severe crisis, in which revitalization is clearly not an option, see [“Churches in Crisis: Facing the Final Crossroads”](#). We have provided an adapted/shortened form of the process in order to come alongside churches in crisis in a timely manner.

III. Present & Recommend

- Present the report and findings of the Discovery stage to the key leaders who requested assistance.
- Work with your Resound teammates and others in the Network to develop and refine the recommendations you will provide to the church.
- Work with leaders to set a timeline for presenting the data and recommendations to the church and holding the vote. Help them clarify who can vote, what percentage is required, and how to handle other potential voting issues.
- Dialogue with the leadership team, listen to their concerns and suggestions regarding recommendations, and plan the presentation to the congregation.
 - Church leadership may provide some shape to the recommendations but should not overrule the Network’s recommendation.
- Hold a town hall meeting with the entire church to present the report of findings made during the Discovery phase and provide opportunity for Q&A.
- Make a clear recommendation to the church and present it to them for their action/consideration.

- Options for the church may include those listed in [NAMB's Replanting Guide](#) or [Recommendations Quick Reference](#) sheet or others as identified by the Network Leads as used in their associations.
- A clear distinction between [Revitalization and Replanting](#) should be made when presenting options to churches.
- The church considers and then takes action on the recommendation in a business meeting setting.

IV. Implement

- Whether a negative or positive vote of the church occurs, an important meeting to consider hosting is a debrief meeting in order to discuss what's next.
 - If the vote is negative, this provides the opportunity for churches to understand why, consider next steps, and pursue reconciliation if the vote was close or contentious. It also allows for the Network to understand the church's perspective more and learn from the experience.
 - If the vote is positive, this provides a natural time to celebrate, cultivate unity with those who voted no, and to kickstart implementation plans.
- Upon a positive vote affirming the recommendation, Network Team Leads will walk with a church to implement the proposed recommendations.
 - In the case of a revitalization recommendation when a church is searching for their next lead pastor, utilize these [sample meeting agendas](#) for developing the specific plans for implementation.
 - When a church has a pastor and is pursuing a revitalization recommendation, utilize [ReFocus](#) or another strategic planning process to help them build their specific implementation plan in light of the recommendations. Contact Resound Network MBC staff to coordinate utilizing ReFocus with a church.
 - Other tools for implementation to consider:
 - Coaching for the pastor with the [Corpus PRA tool](#).
 - Spiritual gifts surveys to mobilize the congregation.
 - When implementing replant recommendations, the first steps require spiritual preparation for the congregation and searching for a partner. As needed, consult with Resound MBC staff for support in the process.
 - When implementing repurpose recommendations, consider the suggested steps and checklists in our [Repurposing Guide](#).

V. Multiply

At the 3+ year mark, the church serves to help other churches who are in need of assistance and support through any of the following steps.

- Sharing their stories of renewal
- Providing support as an encourager congregation to a struggling church
- Serving as a sending, strategic, or supporting church to a struggling church.
 - **Supporting Partner** — Pray for, provide for, and/or participate in a revitalization or relaunch effort through leadership coaching, establishment of a temporary leadership team, administrative or ministry support, intentional prayer and encouragement plans, etc.
 - **Strategic Partner** — Pursue a unique opportunity to resound by partnering with a struggling church to replant or repurpose through adoption, a merger, establishing a campus or a ministry center, etc.
 - **Sending Partner** — Prepare revitalizers, replanters, and teams to deploy through casting vision, creating residencies, or coordinating cohorts.
- Explore these possibilities through the [Partnership Profile Tool](#)

Network Resources*

A wide range of resources are available for the work of church revitalization. We recognize that that church revitalization is first and foremost a spiritual work and therefore resources that deal with the spiritual condition of the members (especially the decision makers) of the church are vitally important.

The Network team has compiled a list of helpful resources which they have utilized in working with churches leading them toward greater health and vitality.

- [Recommended Resources by Topic/Issue](#)

Often churches the Network engages will be deeply discouraged or divided. Pursuing renewal and reconciliation in the midst of the process will lay a vital part of the spiritual foundation for the church as she pursues revitalization. The following resources are recommended to stoke renewal or reconciliation.

- [Renew & Resound: 40 Day Devotional Guide by the Resound Network](#)
- [Flickering Lamps by Henry & Richard Blackaby](#)
- [A Call to Solemn Assembly by Richard Owen Roberts](#)
- [The Peacemaker by Ken Sande](#)

Foundational Resources for Developing Revitalization Leaders

- [Resound Network Training Opportunities](#)
- [Reclaimed Church](#) by Bill Henard
- [Reclaiming Glory](#) by Mark Clifton
- [From Embers to a Flame](#) by Harry Reeder
- [Biblical Church Revitalization](#) by Brian Croft
- [Am I a Replanter](#) by Bob Bickford & Mark Hallock
- [Leading Major Change](#) by Jeff Iorg
- [Pathways to Partnership](#) by Bob Bickford & Mark Hallock
- [Partnership Profile Tool](#) by Resound Network

Resound Network Stories

Often churches considering the process are helped by viewing our video resources that include our Network overview as well as stories of various kinds of revitalization and replanting. Check those out here: www.resoundnetwork.com/stories. Also, we have several pastors and church leaders who are willing to share their testimonies regarding Resound. Contact your zone catalyst or Resound Network staff for references.

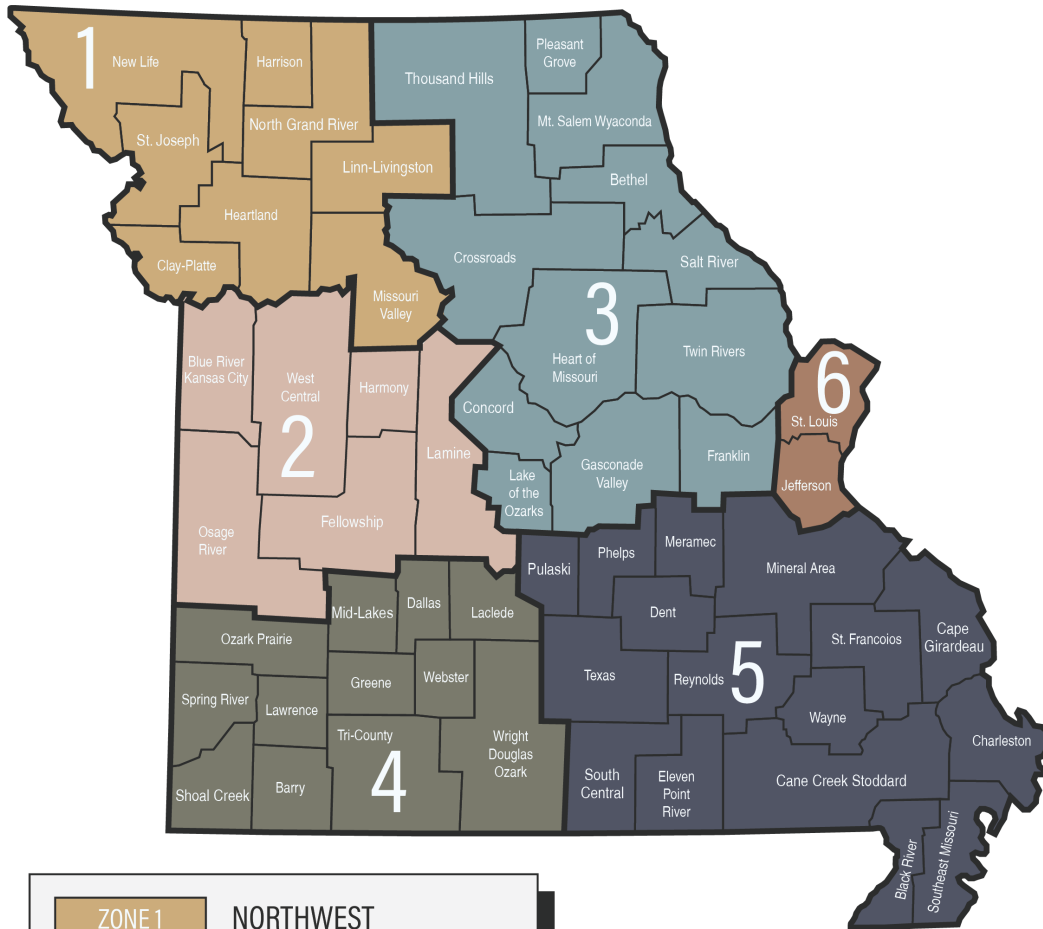
Corpus Partnership

We have partnered with Corpus to train several of our Network leaders in their ReFocus Process and Corpus Assessments. (See [Resound One Sheet Overview](#))

- [ReFocus](#) – A vision, mission, and strategy development process that can be recommended for churches receiving a revitalization recommendation in order to clarify long-term vision and strategy as well as steps for its pursuit.
- [Corpus Assessments](#) – Pastor Assessment & Coaching Tool to be utilized within the network process or as a stand-alone leader development tool.

*To find many of the resources listed throughout the Field Guide go to: resoundnetwork.com/resources or resoundnetwork.com/resources/team

Resound Network Zone Map



ZONE CATALYSTS

Zone 1: Northwest – Gary Mathes

Zone 2: Central West – Gregg Boll

Zone 3: Northeast – Preston Thompson & Bob Feeler

Zone 4: Southwest – Alan Brock & Kirk Baker

Zone 5: Southeast – John Vernon

Zone 6: Metro Saint Louis – Evan Skelton



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