



DISCIPLESHIP PLANNING AND FUNDING PROCESS| Pastors

Every church must have “an active Discipleship Plan in place, which includes both the spiritual nurture of the church and the work of planning and fostering evangelism.” (SDA Church Manual, 2022 ed. p. 134)

To help churches develop and fund their Discipleship Plans, the Michigan Conference provides a Discipleship Plan form that includes proposed events and estimated expenses.

As a pastor, here’s what you need to know about completing and submitting a church Discipleship Plan form:

The Discipleship Plan

- The Discipleship Plan includes soul-winning activities plus the expenses you expect those activities to require. While obviously these amounts won’t be exact, you should have a reasonable approximation of what you expect to spend on each phase of soul-winning labor and, in turn, help your church(es) budget for the coming year’s total evangelism expenses.
- In that spirit of preparing for evangelism expenses, the Discipleship Plan includes a line for reporting the church’s monthly evangelism budget. While there are different ways churches manage their finances, this line item is intended to encourage churches to be purposeful in how they plan to financially support their evangelistic labor.
- All churches must complete and submit a Discipleship Plan. Even if a church intends to fully fund its outreach efforts and requests no additional district funds, the process of evangelism planning is still vital to the health and growth of every local church.

Preparing and Submitting Discipleship Plans

- Submit your church’s Discipleship Plan to your district superintendent (not to the conference office) on or before December 1. Your superintendent will review your plans and help with any questions or concerns you might have.
- Since the church board is responsible to develop and maintain the church’s Discipleship Plan (see SDA Church Manual, 2022 ed. p. 137), planning the coming year’s evangelism strategy should not be done by the pastor alone or put off until the last minute. Be sure to give ample time and priority in your board agendas well ahead of the December 1 deadline to prayerfully develop the Discipleship Plan as a team.
- Early in the new year, your district superintendent will coordinate the distribution of the district’s evangelism funds. When that distribution has been finalized, the district superintendent will forward all approved plans to the conference office for financial processing no later than March 1. Your church should receive a check for its approved evangelism funds shortly thereafter.