

Dover Connections Project

Mission, Values, Vision

Our Mission: Connect People to Christ

We value...

- Praying as a primary source to discern God's will
- Using spiritual gifts to implement God's will
- Conversing with people about personal faith
- Connecting people to a local church
- Developing believers as followers of Jesus Christ
- Celebrating God's work

We envision...

God's Spirit is moving within the Dover family of churches through "Connect People to Christ" (CPC). With prayerful discernment, God's voice led the churches to participate in CPC as part of the Great Commission (Matthew 28:19-20).

As Paul encouraged the Church to reach out to share Christ using ways that fit the people of that time and culture (1 Corinthians 9:19-22), Dover churches are reaching out to help people know and follow Jesus in our time and culture. Each church has a God-sized vision and a local focus.

Each participating Dover church sees clearly God's vision for their unique church family context. Each visualizes what God calls their church to do and they do it. Local church CPC teams have recognized God's gifts and sharpened their spiritual skills. They have implemented innovative, faith-informed strategies from a wide variety of approaches they found during the CPC campaign.

Within the local church, the spiritual strategy of "Connect People to Christ" centers on helping people "take the next spiritual step." Some took the first spiritual step to consider Christ's claims. Others entered into a personal relationship with Christ. Still others connected to a family of faith to grow with Christ.

All together, under-churched and unconnected people in our communities are being touched by the unchanging Good News of Jesus and His family. For everyone who hears of God's good work in Connect People to Christ, the stories that come out of CPC inspire hope and celebration.

Connecting People to Christ

Every member of the Dover Connections Team believes God has given each follower of Christ the joy of sharing the Good News we have received. On October 29, ministers and leaders from 33 Dover churches gathered to hear about a project to connect people to Christ. The Connections Project will help Dover Baptists discover and connect with people who do not connect with Dover churches.

Connect People to Christ will use a variety of media to raise the spiritual awareness of people throughout the region. The first media campaign will take place in the fall of 2010 leading up to Christmas. The second campaign will lead up to Easter 2011. Dover will pay for these campaigns.

Every Dover church that chooses to participate in the project will benefit from working to connect people to Christ at the same time. It starts with a commitment to the project and the other participating churches. That decision takes the form of a church vote and a covenant between the church and Dover Baptist Association.

The covenant involves promises by the church and Dover. Once it makes the commitment to participate, the church elects a connections team leader, someone other than the pastor. The team leader will serve as the primary church contact with Dover for the connections project.

The pastor, the team leader, and perhaps others in the church recruit a team to work with the leader. The team will lead the church's efforts to connect with its community.

Dover has committed resources to provide training for the church teams. The training will help each church look at itself and its community. How has the church changed in the last few years? How has the community changed? Who are the people in your community who do not attend your church? What do people experience when they connect with the church?

Each participating church will start something new, and the training will help the church evaluate its options. Who decides what the church will start? The church's connections team will lead the church to make its own decisions about that. The church will start at least one new thing—a ministry, a group, a class, or something else—to help it connect with people in its community that it does not connect with now. The church will decide what resources it will use to start its new thing. These decisions belong to the church. Every participating church will try something new or different, something that fits its personality and gifts, to connect people to Christ in its community.

Each participating church has the option of accepting a special offer from LifeWay. Bill Alphin of the Virginia Baptist Mission Board serves as a resource to the Connections Team. Thanks to his efforts, LifeWay will make the services of a consultant available to each qualifying Dover church. Each consultant, a trained minister of education, will work with the pastor and church leaders to evaluate the church's

ministries. After an initial weekend with the church, the consultant will serve as a resource to the pastor and the church. Each qualifying church will pay just four nights' lodging for its consultant and one dollar for every person enrolled in its Sunday School.

(NOTE: January 6-8 the consultant project leader will conduct interviews with pastors of churches that want to accept this offer. This will help the consultant project leader understand the church's needs and evaluate its readiness to participate. The project leader will match a qualified consultant with each church. The pastor should contact the Dover office to arrange an interview appointment.)

Dover has committed up to \$50,000 for matching grants to help participating churches take bold new steps to connect people to Christ. In Connect People to Christ, churches will start a variety of new things. Why start something new? Growing things change. What new thing has your church done to connect people to Christ?

Participating churches will commit to follow up with the new people they connect with. They will also commit to make reports and share stories with the association. They will tell what they started and how many they connected with. They will help the association know the difference God made in

someone's life. Dover will devote its 2011 Annual Meeting program to celebrating God's work in telling some of these stories.

Imagine the inspiring stories we might hear as Dover churches engage their communities and work on connecting more people to Christ. Who will your church help connect to Christ?

Think of the stories of church transformation. What will some church leader say about having new vision for connecting people to Christ? Think of the stories Dover ministers will have to share.

How will the connections project change your church? Participating Dover churches will work to start new things in 2010 and 2011. What if you and your

church do something new to connect people to Christ in 2010 and 2011? What will have happened in this generation if what you and your church do in 2010 and 2011 continues in 2012 and beyond?

Churches will form a church connections team which the association will help train. The church team will help the church look at itself and discover people in its community. The church will do something new to connect with them and work to connect them to Christ. It will report to the association and the other participating churches. Together, Dover Baptists will "spur one another on toward love and good deeds" (Hebrews 10:24 NIV).

The association will join each participating church in making one more commitment. We will pray for one another and for those waiting for someone to connect them to Christ.

In December we sing, "Joy to the world! The Lord is come." God wants everyone to know that joy. Connect someone to Christ!

—Steve Allsbrook

What if you and your church do something new to connect people to Christ in 2010 and 2011? What will have happened in this generation if what you and your church do in 2010 and 2011 continues in 2012 and beyond?

Dover Connections Project—A Covenant Between Partners in the Gospel

In all my prayers for all of you, I always pray with joy because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now...

—Philippians 1:4-5 NIV

Believing that God has connected us in various ways and that we can strengthen and encourage one another as we serve Jesus Christ together, _____ Church and Dover Baptist Association make this covenant to work together to connect people to Christ.

As we serve Christ in this project, we will respect the autonomy of each partnering church and the association. We understand that our partnership will involve mutual commitments from the resources entrusted to us. This covenant constitutes the basic agreement and forms the basis for additional agreements we may enter into as part of the Connections Project.

The church agrees that it will do at least the following:

- Enter into this covenant by church vote or other means the church uses to make such a binding decision and commitment
- Elect or appoint a Connections Team leader—someone other than the pastor—and secure a Connections Team that represents the church
- Support the Connections Project in prayer
- Participate in Connections Project training events and other meetings related to the project as requested by the Dover Connections Team
- Determine at least one new way to connect to people who do not currently attend the church and commit the resources necessary to connect with them
- Choose at least one new ministry to connect with people who do not currently attend the church and commit the resources necessary to conduct that ministry
- Follow up with the new people with whom the church connects
- Report the results of its work, including reports of what the church did, how it worked, and related individual stories
- Participate in the celebration event(s) held by the association

The association agrees that it will do at least the following:

- Enter into this covenant by action of the Dover Connections Team
- Provide overall coordination for the Connections Project and include leaders from participating churches in that coordination
- Ask the churches that form the association to support the Connections Project in prayer
- Provide training events and other meetings to facilitate, encourage, and celebrate the work of God through the individual and collective work of the churches and related stories
- Provide and administer grants to assist participating churches that request financial help to begin their new ministries

- As opportunities arise, make necessary commitments to help participating churches have options for new ministries (e.g., consultant project through LifeWay, More to Life, etc.)
- Conduct a media campaign(s) with which participating churches may coordinate their efforts to connect to new people
- Track reports from the churches and provide a means for sharing what the churches report
- Conduct a celebration event(s)

This covenant shall take effect upon the latter of the dates signed below. It shall conclude with the Connections Project Celebration event, such event tentatively scheduled to occur in conjunction with Dover Baptist Association’s 2011 Annual Meeting.

In the event of unforeseen circumstances, either party may withdraw from this covenant upon thirty (30) days written notice of its action of a like vote or other similar means of making the decision by which it entered this covenant.

Out of our desire to serve Christ together and to connect people to Christ, we freely enter this covenant and commit ourselves and our resources to fulfill its purpose.

Approved for _____
Church

Approved for Dover Baptist Association

By _____

By _____

On _____, 20__

On _____, 20__

[Signed]

[Signed]

Title: _____

Title: _____

Dover Connections Project

Some Questions and Answers about the Dover Connections Project

1. Why is Dover Baptist Association putting its resources into the Dover Connections Project?

Association leaders believe that we have a Great Commission to connect people to Christ. God blessed Dover with a surprise gift. A variety of Dover Baptist leaders asked God to show the association what to do with that money. Together, we have discerned that God has entrusted that money to Dover Baptists for connecting people to Christ across the area served by Dover churches. The association invites every church that has a passion for connecting people to Christ to partner with the association. We believe God has given Dover Baptists that money to connect to under-churched people in the communities we serve.

2. What is the process for participating in the Dover Connections Project?

A church must decide to participate in the project and enter into the Connections Project Covenant with Dover Baptist Association. The church makes the decision in a business meeting or by any other means that it normally makes decisions that commit the church to a course of action. *The signed covenant must be received in the Dover office by March 31, 2010.*

3. Where can our church get a copy of the Dover Connections Project Covenant?

Your church or its pastor may have already received a copy. If not, you can get one from the Dover office or by visiting www.doverbaptist.org.

4. Can our church explore the project before we sign the covenant?

Yes. An interested church can give the association a letter indicating it wants to gather information and will consider participating in the Dover Connections Project. However, only a signed covenant will qualify the church to participate in the Dover Connections Project beyond March 31, 2010. Pastors of churches that apply for and are selected to participate in the Connections Consultant Project option will participate in interviews January 6-8, 2010. However, the church must sign the Dover Connections Project Covenant in order to participate in the MEC Project.

5. Will this cost the church any money?

The association will pay for the basic costs of the Dover Connections Project and the area-wide media campaign(s) using funds described in Question 1. The church will invest the time and energy of its paid and volunteer leaders. It will use its facilities. Each participating church will conduct at least one new ministry. The church will decide what it does, and the church will likely have some cost associated with that. (Dover Baptist Association has set aside a portion of the gift to help churches that ask for matching funds to receive help paying part of their costs.) If a church chooses the MEC Project option (see Question 4), that option has some additional costs such as a fee of \$1 per person based on average Sunday School attendance and the costs of four nights' lodging and meals for the church's consultant.

6. Each participating church must conduct a new ministry(s). What qualifies as a new ministry?

Each participating church will look at its community, look at itself, and see where it does and does not connect to the people in its community. The participating church will look for ways to connect to the under-churched people who do not attend that church. The church will decide what new ministry(s) to conduct. Whatever ministry the church chooses must address several elements. For example, it must help the church offer something to connect to the under-churched people it discovers around the church. The church must identify the ministry as new to the church, or, in the case of something the church may have done in the past, as changed to make it more effective in connecting people to Christ and/or to the church. The church must also tell how it will follow up with the people it connects to through the new ministry.

7. If our church participates in the MEC Project, will the consultant match our church?

If your church participates in the Connections Consultant Project option, the MEC Project Coordinator will identify any church characteristics or other needs that require special attention for a successful match. For example, the coordinator will work to make sure that a larger church has a consultant with similar experience and that churches with one paid staff member have a consultant who knows smaller church work. The coordinator will interview the pastor of every church that wants to consider the MEC Project option. That interview will give the coordinator and the pastor an opportunity to discuss such specific characteristics and needs.

8. Where do we start?

Let the Dover office know of your interest today. Visit www.doverbaptist.org or ask the Dover office for the information your church leaders need to consider how God is leading your church to respond to this invitation. Share information with your church leaders and with the congregation such as the "Connecting People to Christ" article that appears on Page 2 of the December 2009 "Dover Diary." If your church wants to participate in the Dover Connections Project, approve that and get the signed covenant to the Dover office by March 31, 2010.

Dover Connections Project

Church Team Job Descriptions

The Dover Connections Project Covenant says that each participating church will elect a church Connections Project Team and team leader. This document describes the positions and functions of the church team.

The church's Connections Project Team shall consist of a team leader and at least one other person. The church's pastor (or a church staff member designated by the pastor) shall serve as a voting team member by virtue of office. All team members, including the pastor, will have to attend some meetings as requested by the Dover Connections Team.

The role of the **Pastor** or pastor's designee on the church's Connections Team helps keep information flowing. The Pastor can complement the work of the Connections Team in every area of church life. The presence of the pastor also gives credence to the significant role the Connections Team will play in leading the church to connect with new people and conduct a new ministry(s). *The Dover Connections Team assumes that the most effective church Connections Teams will have the hearty support and encouragement of their pastor.*

The **Connections Team Leader** shall serve as the chief contact between Dover Baptist Association, the Dover Connections Team, and the church. The Team Leader (or another team member—see “Administration”) will lead the team to cast a vision among the church's members, a vision for connecting people to Christ. The team leader has the responsibility to call and lead team meetings, to arrange for devotional times and sharing of connection stories at team meetings, to keep accurate records related to the Connections Project, and to convey information between Dover and the church. The Dover Connections Team may invite the Team Leader (or other church Connections Team member) to help with the overall development and coordination of the Connections Project. The leader will call and attend meetings of the church team and other church meetings as required to fulfill the church team's task of leading the church to connect with new people, conduct a new ministry(s), and report the results.

Functions of Other Connections Team Members*

Prayer. The team member who serves as **Prayer Coordinator** has the duty to lead the team to develop a heart for connecting people with Christ. The Prayer Coordinator will lead the team in praying, in asking for prayers from the church, and in sharing how God answered the prayers. The Prayer Coordinator has a primary role in supporting the team and the church as it discerns God's leading for connecting with new people and conducting a new ministry(s).

Administration. With the Team Leader, the team member who serves as **Administrative Coordinator** has the duty to lead the team to cast a vision for the church to connect with its community. The Administrative Coordinator will also lead the team in logistical matters related to connecting people to Christ and to the church. Administrative functions include coordinating the church's Connections Project with the church's calendar, budget, and other resources needed for connecting with new people and conducting a new ministry(s).

Communication/Media. The team member who serves as **Communication/Media Coordinator** has the duty to lead the team in internal and external communications. The Communication/Media Coordinator will lead the team in identifying and using various media for sharing information within the congregation and in the community the church serves. The Dover Connections Team expects to conduct an area-wide media campaign(s) leading up to Christmas 2010 and Easter 2011. The Communication/Media Coordinator will help the church build on this campaign(s) for connecting with new people and conducting a new ministry(s).

Training. The team member who serves as **Training Coordinator** has the duty to lead the team in promoting church readiness to connect people to Christ and to connect the church with people in its community. The Training Coordinator will help identify church leaders to be trained, schedule training events, and otherwise help connect church leaders with the resources they need for connecting new people with Christ and the church, conducting a new ministry(s), and reporting the results.

*Note: Each of these functions has a component that includes sharing information with the church. The team may elect to have a primary spokesperson or have all team members take a turn in sharing information with the church as needed.

Dover Connections Project

Timeline (as of March 1, 2010)

October 29, 2009	Meeting to Give General Information to Dover Church Leaders
November-March	Churches vote/decide to participate and sign project covenant
<i>January 6-8, 2010 February 9-10, 2010</i>	<i>Interviews with pastors of churches that want to consider the Connections Consultant Project (CCP) option</i>
January 21, 2010	Meeting to Give General Information to Pastors
March 6, 2010	Mechanicsville Baptist Church 8:30 AM- 12:15 PM Recreation Center Training event for Pastors and church Connections Teams from participating churches and churches expecting to participate
<i>March 9, 2010</i>	<i>Connections Consultant Project Training Mechanicsville Baptist Church 7-9 PM John Bryant Room For Pastor, Sunday School Director, and church Connections Project Team (CPT) leader</i>
March 31, 2010	<u>Deadline for submitting signed Connections Project Covenant</u>
April 4, 2010	Easter
April 25, 2010	Dover Baptist Association Semiannual Meeting Dover Baptist Church 3 PM Commissioning of pastors and team leaders of participating churches
May 2010- September 2011	Churches study their communities and themselves, develop and conduct new ministry(s) to connect with new people, follow up with those people, and report results
<i>May 17, 2010</i>	<i>Connections Consultant Project Cool Spring Baptist Church 7-9 PM New Fellowship Hall For Pastor, Sunday School Director, CPT leader, age group leaders (preschool, children, youth, and adults), and outreach leader</i>
<i>June 3, 2010</i>	<i>Connections Consultant Project Growth and Evaluation Training Cool Spring Baptist Church 7-9 PM New Fellowship Hall Pastor, Sunday School Director, and CPT leader</i>

<i>July 22, 2010</i>	<i>Connections Consultant Project Leadership Team Training Cool Spring Baptist Church 7-9 PM New Fellowship Hall For Pastor, Sunday School director, CPT leader, age group leaders (preschool, children, youth, and adults), and outreach leader</i>
<i>October 1, 2010</i>	<i>CC Project Weekend 1 of 2–Strategy Development for the next 6 months. Friday evening banquet–Doubletree Hotel (5501 Eubank Road, Sandston. For pastor, Sunday School director, CPT leader, age group leaders (preschool, children, youth, and adults), and outreach leader–maximum of twelve persons per church</i>
<i>October 2-3, 2010</i>	<i>CC Project Weekend 1 of 2–Strategy Development for the next 6 months. On-site training with consultant For Pastor, Sunday School director, CPT leader, age group leaders (preschool, children, youth, and adults), outreach leader, and others as determined by the church</i>
<i>November 13, 2010</i>	<i>Connections Consultant Project Cool Spring Baptist Church 8:30 AM- 2 PM Sanctuary Age Group, Outreach, and Other Leaders Training</i>
October 24, 2010	Dover Baptist Association Annual Meeting Poplar Springs Baptist Church 3:30 PM
Fall/Advent 2010	Area-wide media campaign leading up to Christmas
Lent/Spring 2011	Area-wide media campaign leading up to Easter (April 24, 2011)
May 1, 2011	Dover Baptist Association Semiannual Meeting
<i>May 21-22, 2011</i>	<i>CC Project Weekend 1 of 2–Strategy Development for the next 12 months On-site training with consultant For Pastor, Sunday School director, CPT leader, age group leaders (preschool, children, youth, and adults), outreach leader, and others as determined by the church</i>
September 2011	Churches submit final reports for Connections Project Celebration
October 23, 2011	Dover Baptist Association Annual Meeting/Connections Project Celebration

Dover Connections Team

**Available Options for Participating Churches
(as of November 19, 2009)**

Churches that participate in the Dover Connections Project make a commitment to connect with people who do not attend their church. That commitment involves looking at the community, looking at the church, and seeing how they do and do not connect. It also involves conducting a new ministry(s) to connect with new people.

Dover Baptist Association's Connections Project Team will train church leaders in the basic functions that each participating church must accomplish to better understand its community and itself. Each church will make its own decisions about what the church does to connect to new people and what new ministry(s) it conducts.

The association's team will share information about selected project options a participating church may want to consider. In the case of the CC Project, this is a one-time opportunity for Dover churches. In the case of *More to Life*, the church may buy the materials directly and conduct a *More to Life* Group at any time, but the churches that offer *More to Life* during the Connections Project may benefit from additional resources.

Connections Consultant (CC) Project

In partnership with LifeWay and the Virginia Baptist Mission Board, churches that participate in the Dover Connections Project may choose to have the consulting services of an experienced minister of education. The project coordinator will match each church with an appropriate consulting minister of education. During this project, the consulting minister of education will visit the church field, work with church leaders, have monthly coaching calls with the pastor, and return to the church field to review and celebrate the church's progress. Basic costs are \$1 per person based on average Sunday School attendance plus motel and meals for the consultant for four nights. (*See the attached description for more details.*)

More to Life (MtL) Project

More to Life comes to us from the ministry of Dennis Pethers. LifeWay has arranged to publish this tool for helping people connect with Christ (to be released in December 2009). The basic plan involves a one-on-one relationship between a follower of Christ and an under-churched person. A church can offer a small group that meets four times in a casual setting (e.g., a home) which the follower of Christ and the under-churched person attend together. *More to Life* focuses on helping a person take the next step toward a relationship with Christ. Dover has requested that our churches be included in the first Virginia Baptist group to receive training in *More to Life*.

To participate in either project or to get more information, please e-mail steve@doverbaptist.org or contact the Dover office, 804-550-1980.

2010-2011 DOVER CONNECTIONS CONSULTANT PROJECT

Description

The Connections Consultant project is one that LifeWay has developed to help churches better connect or reconnect with their community. It is a strategic planning and development project that provides an on-site consultant to work with a host church over an eighteen month period. The goal is to assist churches to develop strategic plans for reaching people and then provide training and coaching to help the church accomplish those plans. The consultant makes two on-site visits to the church. These visits are scheduled over a weekend. The dates are determined jointly with other participating churches through the project coordinator and the association. In addition, the consultant contacts the pastor once a month for a coaching consultation. This project is a cooperative venture between LifeWay Christian Resources, Dover Baptist Association, and the Virginia Baptist Mission Board. The consultants serve as ministers of education in their own local church.

Focus

The Focus of the project is on church outreach and discipleship. Sunday School is usually the largest discipleship and outreach organization in the church. So in most situations the Sunday School will be a major but not exclusive focus of the project.

Church Responsibilities and Expectations

1. Full participation and support by the pastor and staff in the project.
2. Enlistment of a leadership team to steer the project in the church. This team will include key Sunday School leaders.
3. The church provides for the cost of hotel lodging for two nights and takes care of the consultant's meals during each of the two weekend consultation visits.
4. The church pays the association a one-time fee of \$1.00 per person based on average Sunday School attendance. This money is used to help offset the cost of the Friday night leadership banquets. (Participating churches will bring key leaders to three banquets.)
5. The pastor and church leadership are expected to covenant mutual cooperation with the consultant and the projects sponsors to help ensure a successful outcome.

Project Partner's Responsibilities

1. The Association provides financial support for the project coordinator.
2. Partners invite churches to participate in the project. Project participation is by invitation only.
3. Partners provide enlistment, training and coaching of church consultants.
4. Partners provide demographic support to participating churches.
5. Partners provide support for church leadership development and training as needed to ensure the success of the project.

Consultant Responsibilities

1. Consultants travel to the church field at their own expense.
2. Consultants telephone the pastor each month for coaching conversations.
3. Consultants provide leadership for the onsite planning and training.
4. Consultants provide reports to the church and the project coordinator.
5. Consultants are expected to guide the church in strategic planning and execution of the plans, and not make decisions or recommendations without church leadership input and mutual agreement.

Project Timetable

1. The first step will be interviews with pastors of potential participating churches, January 6-8, 2010.
2. Two onsite consultation weekends will be scheduled to take place during 2010-2011. These consultation weekends are usually scheduled about six months apart.
3. Schedule associational leadership training for church leaders in support of the project.
4. Consultants will be enlisted and appropriately matched to churches by the project coordinator.
5. The project will be before the October 2011 Dover annual meeting in time to provide reports in a timely fashion for the annual meeting.

Project Partnership Contacts

- Sharon Smith, Project Coordinator for LifeWay Christian Resources
- Steve Allsbrook, Director of Missions for the Dover Baptist Association
 - Wayne Smith—Dover Connections Team Leader
 - Dean Frazier—Dover Connections Training Group Leader
- Bill Alphin, Christian Faith Formation Coordinator for Virginia Baptist Mission Board