

FAQ

1. Can my church be in a MAG with churches that are not a part of ECO?

- Yes, but proceed with caution. One of the distinctives of ECO is the shared theological foundation on which each congregation stands and is bound by through the Essential Tenets. If your church wants to partner with another church in a different denomination, agree to disagree about differences in theology and agree to the shared objective of MAG work – to hold each other accountable and to spur one another on in love and good deeds.

2. We already have relationships with churches in our community. Can we be in a MAG together?

- Yes, but see Q1. Also, often churches will partner together in shared mission activities in a local context (i.e. work together supporting a local food bank; partner together on an afterschool program for kids of working parents, etc.) These are all great missional ministries. However, the work of a Mission Affinity Group goes beyond simply working together in local area mission and outreach opportunities. The intent of the MAG is to develop a deep level of accountability, authenticity, trust and encouragement among leaders of the congregations of the MAG members. The goal of the work of a MAG is to ensure that each ECO congregation is living into the mission of ECO – to build flourishing churches that make disciples of Jesus Christ.

3. Can MAGs be formed beyond presbytery bounds?

- Yes, of course! In ECO, it is the presbytery's responsibility to ensure that each of its member congregations is a part of a MAG. However, congregations may find an affinity with another church in another part of the country and that is certainly permissible and encouraged.

4. Do pastors of MAGs have to be in a Pastoral Covenant Group together?

- No. Some MAGs have formed out of relationships that groups of pastors have had together, and that's great. Pastoral Covenant Groups are self-selective, and there is no requirement by ECO that the pastors of MAG member churches be in a PCG.

5. Can we have less than three churches or can we have more than five churches in a MAG?

- These numbers of MAG members are suggestions and not requirements. While two churches partnering together in a MAG may make sense, it may seem a little unwieldy to have more than five churches in a MAG. If the churches and their sessions are small, then it could work.

6. Does ECO assign us to a MAG?

- No, ECO does not assign you into a MAG. Each presbytery has a MAG Advocate – a designated person who assists congregations at a presbytery level with getting connected into a MAG. It is the responsibility of each ECO congregation to find a MAG and conduct the work of the MAG.

7. What if we don't want to be in a MAG?

- Sorry, Charlie... being in a MAG is not optional for ECO congregations. It is a life-giving "shall" required of all ECO churches. Overwhelmingly the response from pastors and elders who have participated in a MAG has been awesome. Give it a shot and see just what the Holy Spirit will do!

8. Should we have the same elders attend the ongoing meetings?

- This is completely up to your leadership and your MAG. You may agree to have some consistency in elder participation for the sake of the development of the relationship of the MAG, but there is no requirement from ECO's perspective that the same elders participate in each MAG meeting.