



ALWAYS  
FORWARD 

# Church Planter Assessment

*Discerning the right person, the right place, and the right time*

Assessment is a vital aspect of church planter preparation. The assessment process is a participation in corporate discernment through which trained and experienced leaders are invited to speak honestly into the potential planter's readiness to engage in the difficult work of church planting. Ultimately, assessment is a process of discerning if this is the right person, in the right place, at the right time. This process is meant to be highly relational and pastoral. If done well, assessment can truly be a gift to the candidate and his/her spouse and is an essential step for a diocese in deciding on church planting strategies and funding. The Always Forward Institute is here to walk alongside our dioceses in this important process.

Phase 1  
Inquiry

Phase 2  
Screening

Phase 3  
Interview

Phase 4  
Planting



Phase 1

**Inquiry**

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# 01 Inquiry

This phase is conducted within the diocese. Only the diocese can make the initial decision if the contact is a fit for a particular diocese's ethos and culture and if the diocese would like to invest further in this person. Always Forward (AF) will be happy to help the diocese develop an effective system of handling initial contact and having preliminary conversations. This process could include phone conversations, meetings, suggested reading/writing, etc. that will help the diocese decide if this candidate should move into further steps of discernment and assessment. If the decision is made to continue, the Canon contacts Always Forward to begin the next phase.

*If a potential candidate contacts the Always Forward office directly before having a conversation with a diocese, the candidate will be connected with a Canon for Church Planting of a specific diocese.*

Phase 2

# Screening

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## 02 Screening

In this phase, Always Forward will walk the candidate through the online portion of the assessment including:

- Enrollment in the AF online Ministry Grid system
- Online assessment preparation through short videos explaining the purpose and process of assessment
- The Lifeway online Church Planter Candidate Assessment, which consists of multiple instruments including a 360 evaluation
- The Planter Placement Assessment
- Planting Area Profile
- Pre-Interview Questions

The candidate's references and credentials are checked by the diocese using forms provided in the application.

Application and online assessment responses are reviewed by the diocese. The Always Forward team is available for consultation.

If it is decided by the diocese that the candidate should advance to the next step in the process, the candidate moves to the Interview Phase.

Cost: \$32 to Lifeway with Always Forward promo code (discounted CPCA fee, regular \$80)



**Phase 3**

# **Interview**

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## 03 Interview

Always Forward will schedule an Assessment Interview with the candidate (and spouse, if married). This interview will be facilitated by a trained Always Forward assessor and at least one, preferably two, assessor(s) provided by the diocese (ideally the diocesan assessor has taken the AF Assessor's Training as well).

The duration of the interview is up to 4 hours and will be conducted in person, via Zoom, or as part of an Assessment Retreat\*. If over Zoom, the interview can be completed in one session with a break or over two separate sessions.

After the interview, the assessors will corporately provide a written recommendation to the diocese and candidate based on review of the online diagnostics, pre-interview questions, and interview results. The recommendation will be one of three options:

- » **Green Light:** Recommendation for diocese to move candidate into official process of church planter training and coaching.
- » **Yellow Light:** Candidate has church planting potential with conditions that need to be fulfilled before being fully recommended. (Conditions may range from personal or financial health, to theological or practical skill concerns).
- » **Red light:** Candidate not recommended. (There are numerous possible reasons for such a recommendation. Many times the candidate is in agreement with this recommendation; for those who are not, AF will participate in any further discussions as asked for by diocesan leadership).

A clear rationale for the recommendation and suggested personalized next steps will be provided and discussed with the diocesan leadership.

Cost: \$500

\*For more information on hosting an Assessment Retreat see the final page of this document.



Phase 4

**Planting**

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*Send us out to do the work you have given us to do, to love and serve you as faithful witnesses of Christ our Lord.*

## Planter Training

Planting a church is a challenging work. It is more than starting a new worship service, it is starting a new organization from the ground up. Planters need training to prepare.

Always Forward offers a combination of online and intensive in-person training events specifically designed to help planters begin the work of planting in Word and Sacrament properly equipped.

## Planter Coaching

Every church planter needs a coach; not a mentor who gives advice, but a trained coach who intentionally works with the planter on a regular basis to develop and pursue a plan. Planters with a coach show a significant increase in success rate.

Always Forward has a network of trained coaches experienced in working with Anglican church planters. Let us help you find a fit for your planter.

# Other Offerings



We want to help!

[www.always-forward.com](http://www.always-forward.com)

[planting@anglicanchurch.net](mailto:planting@anglicanchurch.net)

## Training, Coaching, and Consulting

Always Forward provides support to help you develop the systems needed to support church planters. Contact us on how we can come alongside you to create systems for:

**Leadership Pipeline:** a clearly defined path for the raising up of new planting leaders

**Assessment:** a process to discern the presence of the proper gifts and graces within a potential church planter

**Training:** a process for equipping planters with the needed skills and knowledge

**Coaching:** a system by which a planter meets regularly with a coach for direction

**Ongoing Support:** an intentional focus on caring for planters relationally, emotionally, physically and spiritually in their work

**Funding:** a strategy to assist the planter in obtaining the funds needed for planting

**Strategic Oversight:** the people and teams specifically tasked with overseeing and advancing church planting

## Assessor Training

The process of assessment has significant impact on numerous lives. An assessor who takes part in the candidate interviews serves as a steward, an investigator, and a guide in this process. This takes more than simple intuition. Assessors should be trained to know how to read the applicants' screening results well and be prepared to conduct an insightful and pastorally sensitive interview. Our assessor training combines asynchronous and face-to-face instruction in order to prepare assessors for this important role. Contact us for more information.

## Assessment Retreats

If a diocese, group of dioceses, or a network has multiple candidates who need assessment, we can explore organizing an Assessment Retreat. An Assessment Retreat is a 2-3 night event that includes teaching, prayer, discussion as well as corporate discernment. These events have been proven to be extremely beneficial for the candidates and the church planting momentum of the diocese. Contact us for inquiries on this possibility.