



Better Together: Making Church Mergers Work

By Jim Tomberlin, Warren Bird

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Thousands of Protestant churches are perplexed by plateaued or declining attendance, while other congregations nearby thrive. Is there a way for them to combine forces, drawing on both their strengths, in ways that also increase their missional impact? Church merger consultant Jim Tomberlin, with co-writer Warren Bird, makes the case that mergers today work best not with two struggling churches but with a vital, momentum-filled lead church partnering with a joining church. In this new book, they provide a complete, practical, hands-on guide for church leaders of both struggling and vibrant churches so that they can understand the issues, develop strategies, and execute a variety of forms of merger for church expansion and renewal to reinvigorate declining churches and give them a "second life."

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Editorial Review

From the Inside Flap

BETTER TOGETHER

THOUSANDS of Protestant churches are perplexed by plateaued or declining enrollments, while other congregations nearby thrive. Is there a way for them to combine forces, drawing on both their strengths in ways that increase their missional impact?

Church merger consultant Jim Tomberlin and award-winning writer Warren Bird make the case that mergers today work best not with two struggling churches but with a vital, momentum-filled lead church partnering with one or more joining churches. Based on solid research and practical experience, the authors provide a hands-on guide so that lead churches and joining churches can each understand the issues, select an appropriate model, and develop strategies that will create a positive, healthy merger.

This much-needed resource describes the range of mergers for strong, stable, stuck, and struggling churches. While many congregations are motivated by survival, an increasing number identify "mission" as their primary impetus. No matter what type of merger a church may be considering, the authors address key questions about the process: How can a merger help a church go forward? How will a merger process unfold? Where can a declining church find another congregation to join? What are the pitfalls that both pastor and congregation should avoid? How can "better together" lead to more, rather than fewer, life-giving, high-impact, reproducing churches?

No matter what your motivation for merging your church with another—to begin a new church lifecycle, cross racial lines, reach more people for Christ, multiply your church's impact, or better serve your local community—*Better Together* will give you the tools you need to create a thriving new entity.

From the Back Cover

***Praise for* BETTER TOGETHER**

"*Better Together* is certain to become the standard reference for churches that see mergers as a strategic tool for kingdom impact. Tomberlin and Bird give us useful language, a helpful guide to the opportunities and challenges of church mergers, and the tools to navigate a successful merger." —**ANDY STANLEY**, senior pastor, North Point Ministries, Alpharetta, Georgia

"As part of the Ginghamburg team that engineered a merger to create a 'new', thriving, urban congregation, I deeply appreciate the information, inspiration, and practical toolkit in *Better Together*. It will help your church navigate the pitfalls and potholes that we had to discover the hard way." —**KAREN SMITH**, executive director, Missional Operations, Ginghamburg Church, Tipp City, Ohio

"*Better Together* will become the go-to book on how to do mergers well—the kind of mergers that are about multiplication more than subtraction and expansion more than elimination. Jim Tomberlin and Warren Bird provide invaluable help through research, great examples, practical guidance, and helpful language." —**ED STETZER**, president, LifeWay Research; author and blogger, edstetzer.com

"As Mars Hill expands, we are experiencing exactly what Tomberlin and Bird are reporting—multisite churches have an opportunity to merge with existing churches to multiply gospel effectiveness. This is a very timely and helpful book for our church and many others." —**MARK DRISCOLL**, founding pastor, Mars Hill Church; founder, Resurgence; co-founder, Acts 29 Church Planting Network

"Jim Tomberlin and Warren Bird are on the front lines of a church world changing so rapidly most of us have a hard time keeping up. *Better Together* is the best kind of work: based on real-life facts, marked by thoughtful interpretation, and filled with a vision for the beauty and flourishing of the church. This book could open untold doors for your church and ministry." —**JOHN ORTBERG**, senior pastor, Menlo Park Presbyterian Church; author, *The Me I Want to Be*

About the Author

Jim Tomberlin, Th.M., is an ordained minister who has served in a variety of ministries, including pioneering the multisite strategy at Willow Creek Community Church in Chicago. He is the founder of MultiSite Solutions, devoted to multisite and merger consultation.

Warren Bird, Ph.D., an ordained minister, is the research director at Leadership Network. He has conducted numerous interviews and surveys on topics of church restarts, church planting, multisites, and mergers, and is the coauthor of twenty-three books including *Culture Shift*, *Viral Churches*, and *The Other 80 Percent*, all from Jossey-Bass.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

John Newton:

Do you have favorite book? In case you have, what is your favorite's book? Book is very important thing for us to be aware of everything in the world. Each publication has different aim or perhaps goal; it means that reserve has different type. Some people truly feel enjoy to spend their time for you to read a book. These are reading whatever they acquire because their hobby will be reading a book. Why not the person who don't like studying a book? Sometime, man feel need book once they found difficult problem or maybe exercise. Well, probably you will need this Better Together: Making Church Mergers Work.

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Darren Perez:

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