

A PROPOSAL FOR DUPLEX MODEL AUTONOMY

To: The Session

From: English Ministry Council (“EMC”)

Date: February 24, 2001

Re: A Proposal to the Session Regarding Duplex Model Autonomy

I. Preliminary Thoughts.

Anticipating the need for a ministry geared for their children and following generations of Korean Americans, the leadership at Young Nak Presbyterian Church founded the English Ministry over ten years ago in pioneering fashion. The intent was to establish an English speaking constituent in the church whose number would grow so as to receive the responsibility someday over the whole Young Nak Church. Other churches quickly followed suit with the beginnings of a movement toward an English speaking, second-generation ministry, but the results have been largely dismal. Aside from a few independent churches, the model has been to nurture an English speaking sub-congregation with neither the responsibility nor the sense of ownership required to sustain and grow churches.

One article states the present status of the second-generation ministry as follows: “While the church has become a center for the first generation immigrants, the same is not true for the second generation Koreans. For whatever reason, many second generation Koreans are abandoning their churches at an alarming rate. . . . Many second generation Koreans do not see the church as their own, but rather as their parents’ church. The lack of ownership is a serious issue.” Song, Minho, *Dying for Change: Korean Immigrant Churches in Inter-Generational Transition*, 1996. Something has to be done to change the direction of the second-generation ministry.

Young Nak has taken some affirmative steps toward autonomy. The EMC has been established; however, it is subject to the Session. The Session has allowed the English Ministry to establish an EM Meeting of Officers, but the Session has never officially adopted the policy manual for EM. There is the semblance of a congregational meeting of EM, although here is no official one. Presently, EM is financially semi-autonomous: it has its own budget and is financially self-sufficient. Yet its budget is subject to the approval of the Session and the KM Congregational Meeting. In addition, EM does not have authority over any personnel decisions.

At least one EM started by a KM recently took a different approach. Torrance Presbyterian Church successfully moved toward full autonomy. The first generation Session voted to grant full autonomy to the English Ministry under the same Duplex

Model discussed in this proposal. Subsequently, the English Ministry members took responsibility for themselves and created a new legal entity, adopted bylaws, applied for membership with the denomination, and established a Session.

We have been told that Rev. Hee Min Park and the Session generally agree that our EM should someday be autonomous under the Duplex Model, but the schedule for autonomy has never been decided. Like many of the elders, we believe that the appropriate time has come to make a decision on EM's future.

This proposal sets forth (1) a definition of autonomy; (2) the reasons for autonomy; (3) a proposal for autonomy; and (4) a timetable regarding the same.

II. The Definition of Autonomy.

Autonomy means that Young Nak EM becomes a sister congregation of Young Nak KM. This necessarily means that EM must have its own governing body—the Session—and a Congregational Meeting, subject to the doctrine, government, and polity of KPCA. EM will continue to be located at Young Nak's campus (there are many benefits for both the KM and EM), but EM will have the authority to make its own decisions about finances, personnel, and ministry directions and issues.

Many Korean American scholars who have written on the issue of Korean American second generation ministries have called this model the “Duplex Model” because there are two churches under one roof.

III. The Rationale for Autonomy.

1. EM is a congregation, separate and distinct from KM.

Even the current EM by function is not a ministry of the KM. It is a congregation of its own. It has its own pastors, choir, praise team, Sunday school, adult education programs, singles program, couples program, home fellowship groups, missionaries, and even a semi-governing body (EMC). EM has all of the attributes of a church in that it encompasses a diverse age group and includes many families.

2. The present structure hinders the EM congregation from taking complete responsibility for the church.

Presently, the EM congregation does not have any authority over major issues such as budget and personnel. The congregation does not have the power to approve the budget (although it has acted as though it has the power). If EM were to require a new EM pastor, the congregation would not have any approval authority, nor would EMC have any official authority. The structure prevents us from becoming fully mature and taking full responsibility for ourselves. We lack self-determination. This has various repercussions in our relationship to the church, including low financial commitment, lack of long-term commitment to the church (e.g., “church hopping”), and failure to step up to

the responsibility of the church. For example, it would be difficult to hold a large fundraiser for a new English Ministry building without this important sense of ownership.

3. EM will not in the foreseeable future “take over” KM.

The Korean speaking ministry will continue and will remain extremely important for the foreseeable future. There are new immigrants from Korea coming into the United States, and the Korean-speaking ministry is crucial for them. Both EM and KM should continue to grow. The next generation of leadership for KM should be those who are in their 30s and 40s and are a part of KM now. As such, EM will not “take over” the entire church in the foreseeable future. Although it is natural for the KM to think that EM will be a congregation that takes over the church and keep the Korean Christian tradition going, the second generation church will wither away while waiting to take responsibility for itself.

4. Autonomy will strengthen EM: A Missions Analogy.

The history of missions has proven that the success or failure of missions enterprise has always been dependent on whether the missionaries were able to establish indigenous churches that could stand on their own, even if the missionaries were capable of speaking the language and thereby capable of ministering to them. The same model of success can be applied to second-generation ministries. The success of the second-generation Korean American church depends on whether they can stand on their own. If they are not given the opportunity to stand on their own, the “mission” to second-generation Korean Americans will invariably fail.

5. EM Pastors should be subject only to EM’s governing body.

EM pastors cannot be the visionaries EM members want them to be because someone other than EM is in control. If the EM pastor’s vision, for example, differs from that of KM Session’s vision for EM, he cannot pursue his vision. This puts the pastors in the position of being followers rather than leaders. The difference is real for EM and for them. Furthermore, EM pastors’ work and direction are subject to KM’s Senior Pastor and the Session. Some of the EM pastors are pulled away to do KM work in addition to EM work.

6. The church’s growth may be crippled if EM is not allowed to accept the responsibility of decision making.

EM’s leadership is presently in their 30s and 40s. Many of us may not continue in this church if we cannot have full control of our affairs. It is hard to imagine that when EM’s leadership is in our 40s and 50s, we will be subject to KM’s Session, who may be in their 50s and 60s. What will probably happen is that most EM members in their 40s and 50s will move to other churches, and EM will continue to be a church of people in their 20s to some in their 40s. We are already experiencing an efflux of people from our congregation. In order to mature, EM must be given the responsibility of adulthood. EM

is not seeking control of the church. Only Christ our Lord is the head of the church; however, EM must be in the position where its leaders are in the position to discern the will of our Lord regarding the direction, vision, and operation of the church.

7. The Joint KM-EM Session Model is not workable or efficient.

Under the Joint KM-EM Session Model, EM will presumably elect its own elders and join the KM-churchwide Session. This is not workable. The KM Session speaks Korean and has some members who do not speak English. Several of our EM leaders who are in the position of being elected as elders do not speak Korean (about a third of our present EMC do not speak Korean, and most of the others speak limited Korean). Furthermore, EM will continue to be a minority voice in a KM dominated Session. EM elders will never be a majority unless EM is given the authority to grow into the congregation that the Holy Spirit will lead EM to be. The only workable solution is to allow EM to be completely autonomous with its own Session. Furthermore, there is no reason EM elders should have any influence over the detailed workings of the KM and vice versa. It takes valuable time away from each of our leaders to consider the affairs of what is effectively a separate church.

8. The Two-Session Committee Model is not workable or efficient.

The idea that there should be one session but two session committees--one for KM and one for EM--is not efficient or workable. It presents a host of questions and does not effectively address the ownership issue and/or empower the EM congregation. To whom is the Session Committee subject? Is a decision made by the EM Session Committee subject to veto by the entire Session? If it is, it is not very different from the present model. EMC effectively operates like a designee/committee of the Session. How will the Session operate? Will the Session meeting be conducted in English or Korean? Who will elect EM elders? Can the KM Congregational Meeting effectively delegate authority to elect EM elders to the EM congregational meeting? Who will hire EM personnel, including pastors? Who will oversee EM pastors? In practical terms, it is not clear whether there will be more autonomy under this model than under the existing model of governance. All of the concerns related to the Joint EM-KM Session model apply to this model. This structure does not give financial, personnel, or directional autonomy to the EM congregation.

IV. A Proposal for the Duplex Model of Autonomy.

1. EMC formally requests the Session to approve this Duplex Model of Autonomy.
2. EM commits to stay within the physical campus of Young Nak. EM will demonstrate this commitment by inserting a provision in the EM bylaws or policy manual stating that a decision to move the physical location of the church would require a approval of a three-fourths of the EM congregation (not just the EM Session). We want to give the KM Session assurance that EM will not move out based on any whim of the EM Session.

3. The KM and EM Sessions should establish a “Joint-Session Committee” (composed of a few elders from each Session) to coordinate the continued relationship between the churches for the mutual benefit of both churches. The idea of the Joint-Session comes from the Constitution of KPCA. Also, EM and KM can send one of its elders to each other’s Session to serve as a liaison between the two Sessions.
4. If the Session approves of the Duplex Model of autonomy, EMC will draft EM bylaws (or policy manual) and seek EM congregational approval of the same.
5. If the EM Congregation approves of the same, EM will apply for membership with KPCA and be subject to all the doctrines, rules, and polity of the Constitution of KPCA.
6. If the EM Congregation approves the proposed bylaws (or policy manual), the congregation will elect an appropriate number of elders according to the provisions of the applicable bylaws (policy manual) and the Constitution (of the KPCA General Assembly).
7. Upon the election, education, and ordination of EM elders, EM will establish a Session.

V. Proposed Timeline:

February 24, 2001:	EMC Approval of the Duplex Model Proposal
March, 2001- June/July 2001:	EMC submission of a formal proposal for the Duplex Model to the Session, along with a Korean translation of the same. We ask the Session to decide within the following 3-4 months.
June/July, 2001- July/September , 2001:	Upon Session’s approval, drafting of new bylaws by EMC.
July/September, 2001:	Seeking of EM Congregation’s approval of EM bylaws and seeking of membership with KPCA.
November, 2001- November, 2001:	Nomination of EM elders.
November/December, 2001:	Election of EM Elders.
November, 2002:	Education and Examination of EM Elders.

December, 2002/
January, 2003:

Ordination of EM Elders and establishment of EM
Session.