

The Missional Dilemma



**2011 Study Leave
Report and Reflections**

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New Zealand**

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Introduction:

In pursuit of the Missional Community.

This study leave builds on our 2003 study leave in which I explored the question of how we reach those beyond the church walls. There is a huge difference between those who the Christian community engages and those it does not. My question was then: How do we reach the 80% of the community who do not interface with the church. This has been a long ministry theme for me and while I have developed some ideas that I work out in ministry I am still searching for answers.

My goal this time was to engage discussion with those who are developing Missional Communities. We spent time with Alex and Hannah Absalom in Ohio, USA and also with Kerry and Eunice Thorpe in Canterbury, UK. Both are involved in missional or fresh expressions of church not only as practitioners but in Alex's case, he has written (with Mike Breen) very practically on the topic.

In our time in Canterbury, UK we visited St George's, Deal (their vision statement is appended) for a Sunday service and Seasalter Christian Centre where we had a long discussion with the vicar: Rev'd Canon Steve Coneys and a member of the congregation David Kemp, a former Canterbury diocesan secretary. We also visited the Thanet Centre of Mission and talked with Captain Andrew Chadwick CA- Church Army officer

A bonus to the trip was to be invited to visit an emerging Missional Community in Wooler, north England on the border with Scotland. This was a Baptist initiative and one struggling in isolation. It proved to be a helpful time of reflection and conversation.

Another aspect of the study leave was the Partners in Harvest conference in Toronto, Canada which brought together three different moves of God in the current era. Toronto Christian Fellowship with its emphasis on the Father Heart of God and grace, the International House of Prayer (IHOP) in Kansas city with an emphasis on intimacy with Jesus and Bethel Church, Redding with its emphasis on the Holy Spirit, and evangelism with signs and wonders. It was a challenging conference. I especially appreciated what Bill Johnson and John Arnott had to say.

The third feature of this study leave was to attend the Bridge Builders Training event in Durham, UK - Trainer of Trainers course. This course trained us in the use of some of the Bridge Builders material that aims to develop and change the culture of the church around our management of conflict. A brilliant week and the best training I have ever done on how to run a workshop.

The Missional Dilemma

My questions:

1. Can an inherited/attractional church become a Missional Community? If so how?
2. What leadership qualities/skills and character are required?
3. Can the Nelson Diocese become a Missional Diocese?

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Transitioning Churches into Missional Communities

One thing that has become very clear is that the task of transitioning a church into a missional community is a long one. There is neither instant answer nor a ready plan.

Can it be done? Yes but again there is clearly no shortcuts. Nor can there be an assumption that once the church has become missional that it will stay that way. The power to re-conform to attractional modes of behaviour is very strong. Also the question of continuance of the missional mode of ministry became for us a very disturbing question that I will speak about later.

In the following writing I set out a number of points that are necessary for this journey towards missional community to happen. What surprises me most is this: before we began this study leave I was almost convinced that the possibility of growing a church into a missional community was very slight. Now I think it can but with real difficulty. It will require a cost and risk. I wonder if cost will be too high. I have never doubted the possibility of attractional/inherited church improving its ability to engage the community, that is, to do better at what it is called to do. Indeed a lot of what is being called missional church is very often just that. For this I am grateful.

However it needs to be noted that what follows is not a criticism of church as we know it but rather an attempt to plot a course that will enable church to grow into a missional community or give life to a number of such communities.

Mission and Leadership:

If this journey is to be taken up the church's leadership needs to embrace the following:

(a) A clear understanding of what it means to be a missional church.

There is much confusion over what a missional community is. In the majority of conversations that have been had over the recent years the tendency has been to define missional activity by what is really attractional - inherited church doing what it should be doing. If this observation is correct then our success of forming a truly missional church will founder on the same rocks as the plan to raise the consciousness of evangelism into the active ministry of the church during the Decade for Evangelism in the 90's. All we did was a lot of talk, ran a few missions that made very little difference at the end of the day. Why? Because (1) there was little belief in evangelism and (2) it was being stuck onto the side of the church as an added extra.

The same will happen to Fresh Expressions, Missional Communities, Emerging Church or what other name it will be given. To become missional requires a major change in the essential character of the church. The change has to effect deep within the church's DNA.

It has also become clear to me that when the discussion and practice of Missional Church began it was understood as a noun – a name for a new and creative form of ministry outside of established forms and practice. As time has gone on it has become commonly used as an adjective; a description of what the church is aiming to do out of its known world. This shift in language has been very confusing and perplexing for me as I had clearly understood the former and felt misunderstood and at times made to feel wrong in my understanding however I now see that we are talking about different things. I believe that this shift was feared by those who prepared the mission shaped church. George Lings was often heard to say that rather than achieving a mission shaped church we will get a mission flavoured church. To quote: *"there is a serious danger that churches are only opting to become a bit more mission-flavoured ... churches tweak the worship they offer and the evangelism they do."*¹

Lings is concerned that this "mission-flavoured" approach will only connect with "church fringe" members; it will not achieve the longer, more challenging task of connecting with the "de-churched" or the "non-churched".

¹ Encounters on the Edge called "Discernment in Mission" published on 22nd May 2006 Church Army researcher, George Lings

For further discussion of this see (See Appendix 6) and an article by Ken Morgan

Definitions Missional Communities

Breen and Absalom define Missional Community this way:

A group of anything from twenty to more than fifty people who are united through Christian community, around a common service and witness to a particular neighbourhood or network of relationships. With a strong value on life together, the group has the expressed intention of seeing those the group impacts choose to start following Jesus, through this more flexible and locally incarnated expression of the church. The result often is that the group grows and ultimately multiplies into further missional communities. They are most often networked within a larger church community (often with many other missional communities). These mid-sized communities, led by laity, are “lightweight and low maintenance” and most often gather formally and informally numerous times a month in the group’s missional context.

See Appendix 1 for several full and useful definitions of missional communities.

My Definition

A missional community is a relational group whose intention is to enter their community to incarnate the gospel alongside those with whom they live, work and socially engage. It is alongside each other they journey towards the destiny God has for them and us. In this journey the not-yet-Christian gets to engage with and experience the gospel in the lives of those who orientate their life around Jesus and love him and their neighbour enough to make them the object of their affection regardless of their response to the gospel. Like fellow journeyers they carry the Christ-light that they willingly share. They are disciple makers in the fullest and richest sense of that word.

So what? Definitions are ...

Aligning the church to these definitions is difficult as they all imply a release of control and allowing lay people to do what they do best; i.e. to get alongside not-yet-Christians. This then raises a whole new set of questions the first one being: What does the missional church need from its people? What skills and expectation? What faith journey will prepare the community? What initiatives will be allowed and how much authority will the people be given? What training will be required?

Care needs to be taken as we face these questions because traditional forms of biblical, theological and pastoral training may not be the most efficient way to go - if it was church in the west would not be in decline. For years the church has poured out sermons, courses, training, etc with limited or no ultimate affect on the growth of the church. Something has gone very wrong.

While in the Ohio with Alex Absalom we attended River Tree Christian Church, of which he is a staff member. They had just started a new series of sermons which had a catch line something like this. Normal isn’t working so let’s do it weird!! My question is: How prepared are we to be weird?

Underlying this conversation is the challenge “To what extent do we trust those who make up the church? Do we really trust those who are lay? If the answer is yes then how are we demonstrating that trust? My observation is that we fall short on this just as we often fail to trust the different. If anything I have noted that trust of lay people has diminished over the years and more emphasis has been put on higher theological education with a decreasing acceptance of practical ministry skills. Worse still is an apparent dilemma of “what do we do with theologically trained lay people” – as one bishop said to me – “we don’t really know what to do with them”!!! On another occasion I was told by a vicar: I don’t trust lay people to do the job! But as the definitions state there is an expectation that lay people will lead missional communities however there is also talk about needing

to ordain or at least deacon those who will engage this ministry. This is not trust but rather an attempt to control and institutionalize the ministry. Something that, in my view, is counterproductive if we are serious about building missional communities.

If the above definitions are truly reflective of what a missional church is like then we will simply have to learn a whole new set of skills that release “lay people” and the “different” into ministry.

If this journey is to be taken up the church’s leadership needs to embrace the following:

(b) Work to sell the vision.

This means knowing the vision and making it mission the centre of the church’s life, faith and ministry. The primary character of the church’s existence will become missional. Mission was never meant to be one aspect of the church’s life but the very centre of its life and most certainly not an add-on.

Selling the vision of missional communities will not be automatically grasped by church leadership and membership. So deeply ingrained is the character of the attractional church, (i.e. “You come to us ...” with a high view of “we have always done it this way”) that to simply announce that from now on we will function as a missional community will have no effect. Not only does it take a long while to help a congregation, let alone its leadership, to journey towards the idea of becoming missional it will also take a long time for the institutional system (our default setting) to adjust to a new mode of church life. So heavy-weight is the church institution that it will keep pulling the missional endeavour back to the way we have always done church.

What has become alarming for me on this study leave was to find that church leadership that was abuzz with the language of missional church 5 to 8 years ago is now showing signs of pulling back and those in pioneer leadership in missional communities not getting the backing they need and in some cases finding themselves the butt of diocesan criticism. This does not speak well for the future of missional communities. This is in spite of development of pioneer ministry training. As part of a conversation it was suggested that pioneer training went something like 95% conventional training and 4% pioneer. I have no concrete evidence for this but my source was well informed. If nothing else it does suggest that some work needs to be done to ensure that pioneer training does achieve its intended aim.

However we did observe, with delight, that when a church has made the shift to being missional there is a wonderfully refreshing shift in language and character in the gathered community. It clearly embodies a mind and will towards those who they interface with in the community. Their natural conversation is about how they are engaging not yet Christians and it was fun. Rather than hearing excuses as to why this Sunday is not as good as ...! A line I have frequently heard from ministers and people when visiting - and said as much myself at times. Instead you hear about how members are missionally active doing something somewhere. There was a real sense that the whole church community was made up of folk actively engaged in ministry elsewhere and they are being supported by prayer and interest by those in formal church. Notices carry a forward vision that is looking at what will be the next engagement with their community at large. It is most exciting and refreshing.

Two examples we visited - one on a Sunday (St Georges, Deal: see appendix 2) and the other a meeting with the senior minister and a church member (Seasalter: see appendix 3) both churches have 17/18 plus years behind them as missional churches. There is no short cut to this journey and to sell the missional vision requires a clear understanding of this and the willingness to face the challenge and the cost. These discussions were further enhanced by a visit with Captain Andrew Chadwick CA, Thanet Centre of Mission (see Appendix 4), and the discussions held in Wooler, North England.

If this journey is to be taken up the church’s leadership needs to embrace the following:

(c) Begin to form missional communities.

As some begin to grasp the vision of missional church they are encouraged to establish a missional community/group. For this to happen there needs to be a radical rethink about leadership. I propose in this section to

explore this. As I will say later, the forms of leadership that are currently used in the church give us the church that we currently have. To give life to a new form of faith community - missional communities - will take a different form of leadership. Having said this I am also of the conviction that this change in leadership will helpfully reshape attractional church towards a missional framework.

Years ago Michael Griffith in his book "Cinderella with Amnesia" (IVP 1970) wrote about styles of church structure pointing the reader towards "interdependence" as being the necessary character for a healthy church. At the time this had a profound influence on my thinking. It is with some excitement that I found that it has resurfaced again in Murray Perry's book "Building Kingdom Churches"

He writes: "The interdependent church focuses on Kingdom partnerships. It is relationally-based, network style structure rather than a hierarchy." While it is similar to other styles of leadership currently evident in the church, in the interdependent church everyone is part of something bigger than themselves however it is a partnership of priests who have joined together going after the same vision. There is no "church" to build as the people are the church. "Individual believers living for Christ in real life contexts is the goal of the interdependent church. Gatherings are really only to celebrate this fact and support one another in the process."²

The interdependent church is outward, missional church where everyone is meant to engage with not yet Christians. "Because each person is vital to the success of the whole, the interdependent church ultimately cannot move forward with just a great staff. The church fundamentally changes when each person walks into the room (and into the community of believers), because each person brings their own set of gifts and callings from God."³(p90-91). The shape of ministry is determined by the mix of members rather than by a proposed programme.

Each member is highly valued and encouraged to grow to their full potential in Christ. Its members are captivated by a huge vision and are never satisfied with looking inwards. It is those beyond the church walls that keeps them motivated and charged. Each member is challenged to step out and risk trying new things and take responsibility for their faith and faith adventures. While they look to the church community for accountability and support they are free to engage with the community in any way that works for them.

"The interdependent church means that each person is vital but not controlled; individuals are honoured and respected; and the church is unleashed. Without walls and rules to hold it back. While this paradigm of interdependence may at first glance appear unrealistic or even anarchistic to some, it is quite the opposite. Proverbs 29:18 tells us that the absence of vision, not control, that causes people to act in unrestrained ways. A holy vision for a kingdom of priests functioning together in mutual honour, mutual submission and interdependency is the God-given dream inside the hearts of God's people! Given the opportunity to honour that dream the church will model kingdom living in a fresh way, and we will all be pleasantly surprised with the outcome."⁴

In our view the labels of Clergy and Laity are minimised even disbanded entirely. The goal is to develop equality across the church that honours and empowers all equally. A person's qualification or specific institutional authority is part of the mix that empowers the group as a whole not a label to separate or segregate the ministering team.

Mark Perry describes it like this:

The large foundation and base is the authority of the believer. This levels the playing field, de-emphasizes position and title, keeps our Christianity based in faith rather than subjectivity, and makes the promises of God equally accessible to every believer. Just above that is relational authority that is cultivated both vertically, in a personal relationship with God, and horizontally, in

² Murray Perry's book "Building Kingdom Churches" A hand book for Western Christians. (Xulon Press, 2005). Pages 90

³ Ibid page 91

⁴ Ibid pages 91-92

relationship with people. It is the endorsement of our credibility by the Holy Spirit, who puts authority on our words and deeds. He “backs up our acts.” And finally, like those riskier but potentially rewarding investments, delegated authority in the church has a small, powerful role to play. Delegated authority released well can help the heart of individual believers to soar and reach their full potential in Christ but handled poorly through overemphasis, delegated authority can cause difficulty and injury⁵

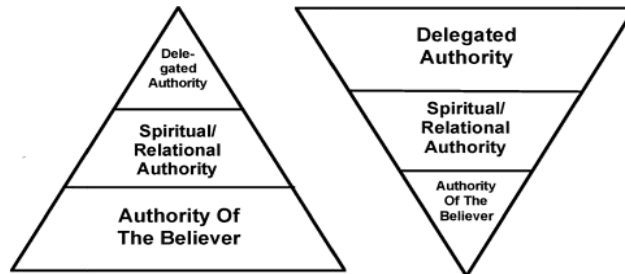


Fig. A

Fig. B

Arriving at a place where we take this view of leadership does not happen instantly but comes as a process of choices and learning to live on the edge. It is then into this discussion that I found Mike Breen and Alex Absalom place a powerful leadership construct. They speak of it as: **Low control and high accountability.**

They write of it in their book “Building Missional Communities” but what follows is how Paul Maconochie of St Thomas’ Church, Sheffield talks about this kind of leadership style which is needed for missional communities.

Low Control, High Accountability⁶

St. Thomas’ Church is a large, urban Anglican / Baptist church in Sheffield. We have central gatherings on Sundays, but the majority of our members meet out across the city in more than 120 ‘Missional Communities’. We have worked hard over the last fifteen years or so to build a culture of ‘Low Control, High Accountability’. The aim of this is to release all-member ministry to a high degree.

Low Control – Individual members of the church, couples or families are encouraged to seek God for a ‘missional call’. This might be as simple as reaching out to people in their local neighbourhood, but can also be around interests, sports, the workplace etc. and includes several groups who reach out specifically to people who have been marginalised by society such as asylum-seekers or addicts. As members of the church get a sense of what they are being called to do, they can either join an existing group (Missional Community) with a similar vision, or even start a new group themselves and invite others to join it. The leadership team of the church never tell people to join a particular group (to us that would be ‘social engineering’ and would be too high-control) but we will advise people about the groups that exist and help them to find a suitable one. Many Missional Communities are up to thirty or forty people in size and meet away from the main church on Sundays for up to three weeks per month. This means that we very rarely gather the whole church at once – in fact we do not have a building large enough to do this.

High Accountability – All group leaders are asked to join ‘peer huddles’ with the leaders of at least two other groups. They meet at least once a month to discuss how the groups are going and also how their own spiritual life is progressing. They also all attend a 6-monthly ‘Learning Community’. This is a weekend event where all of the group leaders (currently about 200 people) meet up and share with the other leaders what is happening in their group.

⁵ Ibid page 101

⁶ http://www.baptist.org.uk/justice/racial-justice-resources/doc_view/895-low-control-high-accountability.html

This is done in three stages:

‘What is’ – an honest evaluation of how the group is doing relative to their vision. This would include things that are not so good and also the ‘good news’ stories. Reports would talk about how the group is doing spiritually, pastorally and missionally. Other leaders have the space to comment on these reports and speak with each other to help each other to reflect on how the group is doing.

‘What could be’ – time to listen to visiting speakers and folks from within the church who are seeing real breakthrough. The aim of this is to help faith to rise in the Missional Community Leaders and to train and equip them.

‘What will be’ – Leaders develop detailed measurable, achievable plans for the next 6 months on how the group will move forward. They will feed back on how they have done based on those plans in six months time at the next Learning Community.

In addition to the Peer Huddles and the Learning Communities, we put on optional monthly training seminars for leaders. We have a full-time ‘Missional Communities Co-ordinator’ who also keeps people connected, sends out weekly emails etc.

Critique:

The advantage of this way of ‘doing church’ is that we gain the resources of the large church but keep the missional and pastoral effectiveness of the small local church. We are currently seeing tremendous growth (of about 300 people every 6 months), almost entirely from previously un-churched people. We are seeing people come to the Lord on a daily basis. We have found this approach particularly effective with marginalised people. We currently have a Missional Community of Iranian asylum-seekers which has grown to about 50 people, for example. All of them have converted from Islam. We are also seeing very rapid growth on the council estates of Sheffield, where many Missional Community Leaders have moved home on to the estates to reach out to the people living there.

The disadvantage can be an over-fragmentation of the body. The Iranians, for example, do come to the central church on a Sunday where we have Farsi translation through headphones, but apart from that they stay as a relatively separate community. Many of the Missional Communities are so focused on what they do that they do not think much about the others. There are also age-group specific communities such as young-adult communities which are effective missionally but who do not connect well with other generations within the church. We effectively become a church made up of many sub-cultures, without the integration which would be desirable.

I have included in Appendix 5 a blog by Doug Paul: Low-control high-accountability-in-real-time, Doug Paul makes a practical contribution to the “how” we achieve this kind of leadership

There is something in this Low Control - High Accountability leadership style and it is worth exploring further. Mike Breen and Alex Absalom quote the following from the Harvard Business Review December 2009. **To Be a Better Leader, Give Up Authority** - by A.D. Amar, Carsten Hentrich, and Vlatka Hlupic⁷

In chaotic times, an executive’s instinct may be to strive for greater efficiency by tightening control. But the truth is that relinquishing authority and giving employees considerable autonomy can boost innovation and success at knowledge firms, even during crises. Our research provides hard evidence that leaders who give in to the urge to clamp down can end up doing their companies a serious disservice.

⁷ <http://hbr.org/2009/12/to-be-a-better-leader-give-up-authority/ar/1>

Although business thinkers have long proposed that companies can engage workers and stimulate innovation by abdicating control—establishing nonhierarchical teams that focus on various issues and allowing those teams to make most of the company’s decisions—guidance on implementing such a policy is lacking. So is evidence of its consequences. Indeed, companies that actually practice abdication of control are rare. Two of them, however, compellingly demonstrate that if it’s implemented properly, this counterintuitive idea can dramatically improve results.

The HBR authors conclude the following:

1. Organizations that are “reliant on knowledge and innovation should abandon the traditional structure in which decision rights are reserved for people at the top.”
2. “We have found that contrary to what CEO’s assume, leadership is not really about delegating tasks and monitoring results; it is about imbuing the entire workplace with a sense of responsibility for the business.” They call this mutualism, whereby staff are measured against qualitative values such as trust, responsibility, and innovation.
3. What is even more interesting is that the companies that are successfully implementing such an approach end up with an accompanying process that facilitates high accountability, often through peer relationships that allow the most effective leaders to come to the front.

Because this seems to be a really critical key to developing Missional Communities I have included Glen Schneiders⁸ reflections on this: (Crossroads Christian Church, Georgetown Campus, Lexington, KY)

What might happen if those with the most control gave away as much power as possible? What might occur if entrusted subordinates were deeply accountable for their character and the way they lead? This cannot happen overnight – they cannot be left alone to make independent decisions. The Low Control, High Accountability leader will increasingly delegate and allow subordinates to do things their way, while giving them clear feedback to help hone their skills.

I have always been astonished by the way Jesus turned over the day-to-day operation of growing the church to his followers (after lots of training opportunities). He made this promise to them, “I can guarantee this truth: Those who believe in me will do the things that I am doing. They will do even greater things because I am going to the Father.” John 14:12 (God’s Word Translation)

If we are serious about building Missional Communities we also need to be serious about the priesthood of all believers and the ministry of all. Low control and high accountability I believe is the leadership tool needed to entrust ALL into ministry. With this in mind let us take one step further.

Five fold ministry gifts - five ministry communities

Ephesians 4 Unity with Christ

¹ *As a prisoner of the Lord, I beg you to live in a way that is worthy of the people God has chosen to be his own.* ² *Always be humble and gentle. Patiently put up with each other and love each other.* ³ *Try your best to let God's Spirit keep your hearts united. Do this by living at peace.* ⁴ *All of you are part of the same body. There is only one Spirit of God, just as you were given one hope when you were chosen to be God's people.* ⁵ *We have only one Lord, one faith, and one baptism.* ⁶ *There is one God who is the Father of all people. Not only is God above all others, but he works by using all of us, and he lives in all of us.*

⁷ ***Christ has generously divided out his gifts to us.*** ⁸ *As the Scriptures say, "When he went up to the highest place, he led away many prisoners and gave gifts to people."...* ¹¹ ***Christ chose some of us to be apostles, prophets, missionaries, pastors, and teachers,*** ¹² *so that his people would learn to serve and his body would grow strong.* ¹³ *This will continue until we are united by our faith and by our understanding of the Son of God. Then we will be mature, just as Christ is, and we will be completely like him.*

⁸ <http://georgetowncampus.wordpress.com/2011/06/>

As we have explored the leadership question to find a way forward in building Missional Communities we have stumbled over a radical rethink of the Ministry Gifts of Ephesians. So deeply has this become shaped in our thinking that it now outweighs our previously held view of the three fold ministry order as expressed within our church of deacon, priest and bishop. Traditionally the Ephesians gifts have been pushed into the three fold construct. However, for us, this has never been very convincing and often has given weight to Pastors and Teachers who by nature and character tend towards maintaining the church order and institution. They are not typically pioneering and the conflict between the pastor teachers and apostolic, prophetic and evangelistic ministry is as old as the book of Acts.

It seems to us that we need to find a new order and respect for each of the five fold gifts. Alan Hirsh gives some interesting insights into this in the following article:

Three Overlooked Leadership Roles

We're familiar with pastors and teachers, but today's world needs a leadership team that includes three biblical but forgotten functions.

... My entire denomination needed to shift toward a missional culture if it was to grow and survive. But how?

We needed a new type of leadership, one with the courage to question the status quo, to dream of new possibilities, and to innovate new ways of being the people of God in a post-Christian culture. We need missionaries to the West, but our seminaries were not producing them. If we take the five categories of church leadership from Ephesians 4:11, they were training leaders to be teachers and pastors for established congregations, but where were the evangelists, the prophets, and the apostles to lead the mission of the gospel into the world?

Missional churches require all five aspects of ministry leadership on the team. Apostles, Prophets, Evangelists, Shepherds, and Teachers—I refer to these together as APEST. But when I looked at my church and most others, I saw congregations dominated by leaders who were shepherds and teachers. What happened to the other leadership types? Where have all the APEs gone?

During Christendom, the centuries when Christianity dominated the culture, the church acquired a fundamentally non-missional posture. Mission beyond the walls of the institution was downplayed because every citizen was deemed at least a nominal Christian already. What was needed were pastoral and teaching ministries to care for and instruct the congregation, and to draw underdeveloped Christians back into the church on Sunday.

So, these two functions were eventually instituted as the leadership offices in the church, and the other three roles listed in Ephesians 4 (apostles, prophets, and evangelists) faded away as largely unnecessary. The system of church leadership we inherited from Christendom heavily favours maintenance and pastoral care, thus neglecting the church's larger mission and ministry.

Consequently the A, P, and E leadership functions were marginalized from the church's leadership structure.

In my years of ministry, I've seen how many churches sideline people with more APE type gifts. Of course, this is not to say that apostolic, prophetic, and evangelistic ministries have totally disappeared. Many within the church have managed to fill these roles without necessarily being tagged "apostles" or "prophets," but, by and large, these lacked formal recognition, and they have tended to be exercised outside the context of the local church.

For example, the work of St. Patrick and the Celtic movement, that of John Wesley, William Booth, and many others is clearly of a different type than that of a shepherd-teacher. And it is not hard to see how the exiling of apostles, prophets, and evangelists gave rise to the development of parachurch agencies and missionary orders, each with a somewhat atomized ministry focus.

The Navigators, for instance, arose out of a need to evangelize and disciple people outside of the church structures because the church was neither effective nor interested. Sojourners emerged to represent the social justice concerns that the church was largely ignoring, as did World Vision, the aid and development agency.

This divorce of APE from ST has been disastrous for the local church and has damaged the cause of Christ and his mission. In my opinion, this contraction of fivefold to twofold ministry(ST) is one of the main factors in the decline of evangelical Christianity in the West. If we want a vibrant missional church, we simply have to have a missional leadership structure with all five functions engaged. It's that simple!

We need more than a pastor and/or teacher leading a congregation. A missional church requires pioneering, innovative, organizationally adaptive, and externally focused leadership, and this means a five-fold understanding of ministry leadership. (*The emphasis is mine*) Let me describe each of the APEST roles, the core task of each, and the impact when one dominates or works in isolation from the others.

APOSTLES extend the gospel. As the "sent ones," they ensure that the faith is transmitted from one context to another and from one generation to the next. They are always thinking about the future, bridging barriers, establishing the church in new contexts, developing leaders, networking trans-locally. Yes, if you focus solely on initiating new ideas and rapid expansion, you can leave people and organizations wounded. The shepherding and teaching functions are needed to ensure people are cared for rather than simply used.

PROPHETS know God's will. They are particularly attuned to God and his truth for today. They bring correction and challenge the dominant assumptions we inherit from the culture. They insist that the community obey what God has commanded. They question the status quo. Without the other types of leaders in place, prophets can become belligerent activists or, paradoxically, disengage from the imperfection of reality and become other-worldly.

EVANGELISTS recruit. These infectious communicators of the gospel message recruit others to the cause. They call for a personal response to God's redemption in Christ, and also draw believers to engage the wider mission, growing the church. Evangelists can be so focused on reaching those outside the church that maturing and strengthening those inside is neglected.

SHEPHERDS nurture and protect. Caregivers of the community, they focus on the protection and spiritual maturity of God's flock, cultivating a loving and spiritually mature network of relationships, making and developing disciples. Shepherds can value stability to the detriment of the mission. They may also foster an unhealthy dependence between the church and themselves.

TEACHERS understand and explain. Communicators of God's truth and wisdom, they help others remain biblically grounded to better discern God's will, guiding others toward wisdom, helping the community remain faithful to Christ's word, and constructing a transferable doctrine. Without the input of the other functions, teachers can fall into dogmatism or dry intellectualism. They may fail to see the personal or missional aspects of the church's ministry.

When all five of these functions are present, the church operates at peak performance. To use Paul's

terms, it "grows," "matures," "builds itself up," and "reaches unity in the faith."

Sometimes it is easier for people to see the wisdom of this fivefold structure when it isn't presented in biblical language. If we apply a sociological approach to the differing ministry styles, we discover that Paul's missional ecclesiology is confirmed by the best current thinking in leadership theory and practice.

In most organizational systems, there is acknowledgement of the importance of these leadership functions:

- **The entrepreneur:** Innovator and cultural architect who initiates a new product, or service, and develops the organization.
- **The questioner:** Provocateur who probes awareness and fosters questioning of current programming leading to organizational learning.
- **The communicator:** Recruiter to the organization who markets the idea or product and gains loyalty to a brand or cause.
- **The humanizer:** People-oriented motivator who fosters a healthy relational environment through the management of meaning.
- **The philosopher:** Systems-thinker who is able to clearly articulate the organizational ideology in a way as to advance corporate learning.

Various leadership experts use different terms for these categories, but they would all recognize the vital contributions these different types of leaders bring to an organization. Leadership theory says that the conflicting agendas and motivations of these five kinds of leaders will tend to pull them in different directions. But if these five could be properly developed, focused, and coordinated, together they would create a very potent leadership team.

Imagine a leadership system in any setting (corporate, governmental, non-profit, educational, etc.) where the entrepreneurial innovator interacts dynamically with the disturber of the status quo. Imagine that both are in active dialogue and relationship with the passionate communicator/recruiter, the infectious person who carries the message beyond organizational borders and sells the idea/s or product/s. And these in turn are in constant engagement with the emotionally intelligent humanizer (HR) and the philosopher-leader who is able to articulate core ideas and pass them on. Clearly the combination of these different leadership styles is greater than the sum of its parts.

Because of our search for a more distinctly missional leadership model at South Melbourne Restoration Community, we decided about eight years ago to implement the APEST model at our church.

The first step was restructuring the leadership so we could ensure that all five ministries were present on the team. Each member of the team would represent one aspect of the fivefold model and be responsible for heading up a team related to that area of ministry.

We appointed an apostolic leader to oversee the team focusing on the translocal, missional, strategic, and experimental issues facing the church.

The prophetic leader initiated a team focused on listening to God, discerning his will for us, being aware of social justice issues we could address, and questioning the status quo of an increasingly middle class church.

The evangelist among us developed a team to oversee and develop outreach.

The shepherd's team strengthened community, cell-groups, worship, counselling, and generally enhanced the relational capacity of the church.

The teaching team's task was to create contexts for learning and develop the love of wisdom and understanding through Bible studies and theological discussion groups.

Our structure went from a traditional Christendom hierarchy with a shepherd/teacher at the top, to a team structure with all five ministry functions playing a vital role.
Yes, we can all just get along!

Admittedly, our working within this APEST structure did create significant debate at times. This is what makes having a traditional hierarchy attractive—one person makes the final decisions. But even the debates on our leadership team were thoroughly invigorating and led directly to the church's adopting a more aggressive missional posture.

The key was learning to manage the dynamic in order to draw upon the increased energy of the team and not be torn apart by opposing opinions. We adopted the approach advocated by Richard Pascale in his book, *Managing from the Edge*.

Pascale suggests two polarities that, if managed well, create synergy on the leadership team. He calls them "fit—split" and "contend—transcend." The term "fit" refers to that which binds an organization together. It is the group's common ethos and purpose. "Split" happens when we intentionally allow for diversity of expression and thought on the team.

"Contend" is the permission, even encouragement, given by leadership to disagree, debate, and dialogue around core tasks. "Transcend" is the collective agreement everyone makes to overcome disagreement in order to find new solutions.

When facing any ministry issue, we begin by committing ourselves to the common mission of the group. We covenant to do whatever it takes to see our mission fulfilled. But this kind of interpersonal commitment requires a bond that goes beyond the professional relationships that exist on many church staffs.

We lived out our unity in Christ by living together, struggling together, worshipping together, praying together, and facing our problems together. It was the healthy trust developed on the team (fit) that allowed divergent opinions (split) to be expressed without fear of offending one another. It was the strong sense of commitment to one another that gave each member permission to operate out of his or her own ministry biases, and then unapologetically represent their perspectives on the issue at hand.

The apostle would press the need to galvanize the community around mission and extension. The prophet would challenge just about everything and ask probing questions about how God fits into our grand schemes. The evangelist would always emphasize the need to bring people to faith and expand the reach of the gospel. The shepherd inevitably expressed concerns about how the community could remain healthy amid change. And the teacher tried to discern the validity of any new idea from Scripture and history.

The presence of these divergent interests inevitably caused debates and arguments (contend). But we did not try to resolve disagreement too quickly—much to the discomfort of the shepherd on the team. In my experience, the greatest tension usually arose between the apostle (with the missional drive) and the shepherd (with the community health impulse), but we almost always managed to overcome conflict through dialogue and prayer (transcend).

Remember, we were committed to stay with the problem until we had assessed all options and had, through dialogue and debate, arrived at the best solution. As a result, the outcomes we reached

were more full-orbed, faithful to God, sensitive to the needs of not-yet-believers, sustainable, mature, and theologically well grounded.

One of the techniques we used to help our team structure function is modelled from an idea developed by creative guru Edward DeBono.

Put on your APEST hats

"Thinking Hats" is a game in which participants adopt one another's perspectives in order to solve problems. DeBono's six hats represent six different modes of thinking. Participants agree to switch hats for a period of time in order to assume an approach to a problem other than the one they are naturally inclined toward.

The key is committing to think only in accord with the hat you are wearing. The goal is for each player to achieve a broader perspective.

We adapted DeBono's method to the APEST typology. With the "A" hat on, everyone is forced to think apostolically. When the "P" hat is on, the whole group steps into the prophetic perspective, and so forth. This practice trains everyone to think more holistically on any given subject, and it also teaches the team to value one another's perspective.

I have been in local, national, and "global" ministry for over 18 years, and I have had many successful leaders from outside the church tell me about their desire to be in "the ministry." But when they pursued this calling, they were turned away from the church because they didn't possess the right skills or gifts, meaning, they were not shepherds or teachers. Many of these gifted people have gone on to make a significant impact (and in many cases, a lot of money) in other domains, but it's hard to calculate the loss this has meant to the church and its mission.

It is time for the church to recognize the importance of welcoming leaders with all five of the Ephesians 4 functions into the church. Every significant missional movement has in some way incorporated the five functions into its system.

When apostles, prophets, evangelists, shepherds, and teachers are working together, a wonderful missional ecology is created. Not only is this a more biblically faithful model, it also provides a theologically rich, organically consistent, and organizationally comprehensive framework to help the church become more missionally effective and culturally agile. The time has come for the church in the West to rediscover the lost potential of biblical leadership that has been dormant for too long.

*Alan Hirsch is a leader of the Forge Mission Training Network in Australia, and author of The Forgotten Ways (Brazos, 2007)*⁹

Expanding Leadership into Communities of leaders

When we look at the church community and its leadership we have tended to have a mono view. That the appointed leader has the "gift" and everyone else is there to help them accomplish the/their mission. While this is an easier way to function it is both highly questionable and not altogether functional and certainly not disciple making, at least not in a New Testament sense of the word. If anything it promotes passive membership.

I want to suggest that rather than these gifts being located in one person that there are communities of people who are apostolic or prophetic or pastoral etc. We note in Ephesians 4:8 that he gave gifts to his people. Then in verse 11 he outlines what those gifts are. And it is in their partnership together that we find maturity. Maturity

⁹ Article Copyright © 2008 by the author or Christianity Today International/*Leadership Journal*.

is never gained by passively sitting in seats but by the active outworking of the gifts and abilities given. Therefore in any one church we should expect to find folk whose gifting preference is in any one of the five fold gifts and all will need encouragement to grow in partnership with others in their gift community and in their understanding of partnership with the other gifts.

What I have also come to understand is that those who train a gift community best are those with that gift. Teachers maybe good at laying out the biblical argument but they will do it like a teacher with a teacher's bias and at times antipathy towards those who are gifted differently to themselves. (See Alan Hirsh above) I have long favoured the Old Testament custom of a school of the prophets and that a similar group needs to exist in all groups for their growth and encouragement with the proviso that they also engaged with and learn from the other gifts communities.

I sadly hear that the prophetic people ought to be more pastoral i.e. sensitive towards the pastoral people. But do not hear that the pastoral folk need to learn to be more sensitive towards the prophetic. It is a note worth making that those who make up the APE often carry deep wounds from Pastor/Teachers who have failed to appreciate them. We hear about the teacher/pastors wounds without respect for the diversity.

This is one of the reasons that skilled mediation and collaborative training needs to be undertaken. This is frequently spoken of in the missional discussion and yet, in my experience, too often dismissed.

The Anglican Church has a long and rich tradition of being a caring church so the question can rightly be asked, what does "care" look like for each of the five gifts. For the Apostle it may be seeing that the church is on track and its people are growing and functioning responsibly or a business person providing work for people. For the Prophet it may mean ensuring that people are hearing and obeying the word of God - remember Jesus only did what he saw the Father doing (Jn5:19). For the evangelist they care that those who are not yet Christians get to hear the gospel and for Christians that they accept and act on their responsibility to witness. For the Pastor or Shepherd that people are fully cared for and their practical and emotional, mental and spiritual needs are seen to, however this is far more than just the practical needs like food and housing, as important as these are, but also include healing, healing of memories, and deliverance. For the teachers they will care by wanting to see that the scriptures are carefully and fully explained. Each gift group cares but does it differently. The difficulty with pastoral care - as one leading layman in the UK put it - is that "they are all being "B" nice - if they were being pastoral then some things would change". Unfortunately being nice has been made the higher value.

Arthur's table: A leadership model with a difference

One of the models of leadership that I have come to favour in recent years and has the potential to be very effective in the missional world. I call this model "Arthur's Table". There is a magnificent scene in the film "Arthur" where the bishop or cardinal - I forget which - comes in expecting to sit at the head of the table but, opps! There is no such place for the table is round. His discomfort and anger was obvious, to the amusement of the knights. Here is the principle. Arthur was the head but at the table he was an equal among equals. Together they faced the issues and resolved the problems. The model draws the best from each person, it honours them and allows them to contribute on an equal footing. It develops gifts and fosters possibilities that may be missed because of the equality that is fostered by the table. It naturally trains, both by developing and disciplining all who sit at the table. It counters dependency on one leader and expects the full and committed support of all. This is collaborative leadership at its best.

One final comment: Leadership is very often a learned skill as much as a gift. So the primary leader may come from anyone of the five gifts communities and will lead after that style.

If this journey is to be taken up the church's leadership needs to embrace the following:

(d) There is NO off the shelf answer.

There are examples, books and programme resources BUT not are package deals. Clearly each missional community has to work out what it is going to do with the context it finds itself.

Amongst those resources is Mike Breen and Alex Absalom's book: *Launching Missional Communities* - a field guide. 2010 Pub 3DM (See Appendix 7 for a review of this book)

Looking for the "Plan"

For those then who are looking for "the Missional Plan" will come away disappointed however there are lots of examples that can get the heart and mind working.

Bishop Graham Cray in his 3rd address to the Fresh Expressions conference July 2010 noted, "We cannot understand and standardise forms of church because God is doing a unique thing in each place."

He then proposed a flow chart:

Listening ⇨	Loving ⇨ Service	Building ⇨ Community	Exploring ⇨ Discipleship	Church ⇨ taking shape	Do it again
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He said all this needed to be underpinned by prayer, ongoing listening and relationships with the wider church.

He said that the primary call of the Christians community was to embody Jesus Christ within the local culture you are called to.

He made the point that the church is for "them" not "us"

It is about "planting" not "cloning"

To become incarnational communities for this to happen we must follow the Spirit.

He spoke at length about "Listening." This is how we might follow the Spirit in this task.

We are to prayerfully ask what God is saying to us in our context

What is the Spirit asking you to personally do?

Another point he made:

1. Variety is the sign of creativity.
2. It should not be embraced because it is popular or new but because they are a sign of the work of God and the Kingdom.
3. It will be costly and long term.

Cluster communities – a model for Missional Communities:

Book: Clusters: Midsized Missional Communities Mike Breen and Bob Hopkins Publisher:

Cluster churches passionately believe that the early church and subsequent church history reveals a significant emphasis on intermediate size groups for building community identity, a place of belonging where everyone is recognized and all can participate. More developed gifts can grow here and the mature bless the whole group. 1Corinthians 11-14 is a passage often used to describe what cluster life is about. There are other references in the Old and New Testament that are used to build their case. They also reference synagogues, which are made up of up to 10 males (with their families) as another example of an extended family size or a midsize group.

Cluster churches still believe in larger worship opportunities which they call, **Celebration**. This is where two or more clusters come together for worship, equipping, prayer and encouragement. They just do not build "church life" around the large worship celebration times. They believe the "norm" of the Christian faith is authentic rela-

tionships which best happens in clusters. As a result, some churches have weekly celebrations, while others might only meet as a large church once a month.

Clusters are not about buildings, a religious event or one special day of the week. Clusters are about relationships! Relationships within the group, relationships with pre-Christians who are invited to participate in cluster gatherings or in the ministry/missional focus like feeding the hungry, adoption/foster care or an interest/hobby like aerobics, scrap booking, etc. Relationships between the leaders with their coaches.

The “cluster” philosophy can look different in different settings, but here are some general characteristics:

- **An average cluster group ranges from 15 to 65 people**

Clusters are designed to be an extended family size group.

- **Made up of 3 or more small groups**

The healthiest clusters have small groups that meet regularly for a higher level of accountability. Men’s groups, women’s groups, couples, children, etc. can be part of the makeup of these small groups.

- **United around a common missional vision**

Clusters are defined by a strong mission focus such urban ministry, orphan ministry, reaching young adults or young families, feeding the hungry, etc. Breen says, “Those that lack a clear unified mission stagger and die”. A cluster leader says, “Clusters are small enough to share a common vision and large enough to carry it out.”

- **Ideally, organically grown from a single small group**

It is exciting to see one small group reach many for Christ and birth new small groups from within the cluster as it grows.

- **Low control, high accountability**

Leaders of clusters are not professionals! They are given freedom to develop their vision and shepherd their flock as God directs. They are accountable to a coach or pastor and they attend regular coach huddles.

- **Each cluster strives for a balance of UP-IN-OUT**

They believe that groups live out personal and group life in three dimensions: *UP* (Identity defined by intimate time spent in intimate relationship with the Father) *IN* (Relationships defined by a community following together after God) *OUT* (Purpose defined by a lifestyle that makes a difference in this world).

- **Cluster life is 7 days a week community life**

They meet together in variety of formats from the cluster meetings, small group meetings, doing their missional ministry, barbeques, accountability groups, etc. No matter what the setting is you can always count on meals together!

- **Children are valued as part of the cluster meetings**

“We believe that kids ‘get’ church when they experience it and see it modelled in everyday life”. One of the pastors from an Oklahoma church says his 9 and 11 year old have grown up in a house church cluster, that’s all they know.

- **Clusters can meet at different times and in different places**

Clusters meet anywhere from once a month to weekly. Some might meet on a weekday, every week with no small groups, but a typical cluster of cells might meet three times a month in small groups and once all together. The venues are as variable as their mission focus, and they are likely to be 'on pilgrimage' since their venue needs to change as they grow. Meetings have a strong fellowship and food element, worship, prayer, Bible readings & study, stories, etc.

If this journey is to be taken up the church's leadership needs to embrace the following:

(e) There needs to be a plan and policy directed towards ministry continuance in the Missional Mode.

As already indicated we have become very concerned about the lack of discussion around the development of missional communities beyond the current leadership team. What happens when the senior minister leaves or whoever has had the responsibility to develop missional communities? We have heard disturbing stories of churches that have walked away from their journey when these changes have occurred, abandoning the emerging faith communities and one was left with feeling "what is the point" what is the point of pushing upstream - because that is what it is like being the butt of criticisms and judgments. When finally you get some useful results it is all left to die. Hmm! Not very encouraging.

I was delighted to see that George Lings and the Church Army Research unit devoted a recent paper to the topic of ministry leadership succession. I have included it as Appendix 7. This is an urgent discussion and any help that we can get resource this discussion must be welcomed.

This discussion also features when there is an intention to develop missional communities. What kind of leader is being sought? Search committees or boards of nomination by their nature tend to be conservative and loaded with the Pastor/Teacher agenda. This does not bode well for the future. While with Alex Absalom we tossed around a few ideas for questions one might ask a possible applicant:

1. Define Missional
2. What is your personal experience of "going"?
3. Scale 1 to 10, how good are you at releasing others into ministry?
4. Describe some situations where you have done this?
5. How would you coach a church leader whose leadership style is overly-controlling?
6. How do you keep those you lead appropriately accountable?
7. What would you expect to see in a mature disciple of Jesus?
8. What does a disciple making church look like?
9. How would you start to transition a church into a disciple making mode?
10. How would you start to transition a church into a missional mode?
11. If appointed, what will your measurements of success be for this church over the next 5 years?
12. What would qualify someone to lead a missional community?

Alex suggested that I contact the Diocese of Tasmania and ask what selections questions they have. Alex was invited to speak to the Diocese of Tasmania on Missional Communities in 2011.

Tasmania: Ross Nicholson, Launceston, Tasmania

TOM selection questions: Diane Kershaw

Disciple making and the missional community.

Where does disciple making fit in the missional community. The truth is it has more to do with disciple making than possibly any other form of church because that is what it is all about.

The question has been asked: Does Messy church make disciples? To this we must ask: Does church make disciples? No one does a very good job but we try and to suggest that new forms of church don't is to throw stones in glass houses. I have heard some very positive and exciting steps being taken in discipleship while at a Messy church evening conference when in Canterbury UK with Lucy Moore (founder of Messy Church) as the speaker/presenter. At the end of the evening she addressed this question. Discipleship must be the aim of all church builders.

Information, Formation, Transformation – the discipleship journey

I have long wondered about the effectiveness of what we do and teach. There has been an implication that if we "say it" we have "done it". If we preach it, folk are disciplined. If we read it, we will know it. At every level this

is not, nor has ever been, true. However it is the way we behave. It was on reflecting on this that I began to see another dynamic that we have either not noticed or ignored.

It has become plain to me that we travel through a three stage journey from what we hear (sometimes no more than introduction) to what we know and what we know becomes part of us and begins to change the world around us. I have called these three stages Information, Formation, Transformation

Information:

This is when we get to hear the stuff for the first time but it requires more than just one time hearing. It requires as many as 60 hours of hearing, talking, thinking and experimenting. Even then this only to get you to a place where you begin to naturally and instinctively apply what you are learning.

When we have arrived at that point the information has now become formed within you. It is the beginning of **formation**. As yet I have not fully worked out what the time frame is between formation and transformation.

Transformation is when what has been formed in us begins to change the world we live in.

Now if this is true then we have a serious problem in the church.

We have been very good at the information phase. We like talking and often one is left with the impression that that is all we need to do and the task is done. Coupled with this is an impression that only the professionals (the ordained) can do the talking. They know the stuff! The capabilities of those who are not ordained seem to be highly questioned and if strong leadership emerges from them, unless it can be harnessed to the approved system, is actively displaced.

Preaching is largely an ineffective tool for disciple making, Home groups studies are often a feel good exercise. Discussion groups and planning days are often the wonders of the moment but fail to change the course and direction of the church community.

What is needed is an approach that will build on understanding the journey to formation. This will take a lot longer than a 20 minute talk/sermon or an hour's study group discussion or even a year's study. This may be depressing but there is hope – we need to become far more strategic in how we teach and train so that it becomes a continuum of learning and experimenting with reflection and accountability, all in an environment of trust and safety. I am still working on this but it does have a lot to do with what has been written above.

A Dilemma

It is suggested - argued that a missional community needs to be made up to 20 to 50 people. This is the average size congregation in NZ. Because Missional Communities are designed to multiply. The small group of 3-12 for a group of this size the process of multiplication is too painful. A small group can multiply no more than three times after that they refuse to risk the pain again.

This throws up a challenge to the way we have thought. It will force the question: Can we ever become missional? If there answer is yes then we need to plan the journey very carefully with an honest acceptance that it will take time.

Bridge Builders – Trainer of Trainers course 18 to 20 October 2011

As already mentioned in the introduction of this paper I found this course offered the best training in workshop taking I have ever undertaken. This alone would have made the course worth attending. But it offered so much more than this. The course included teaching, group work and practice. Practical in focus, the sessions demonstrated Bridge Builders' active approach to education and learning.

Training of Trainers course was held in Durham at an industrial conference centre. In opening up their material we were being trained in their approach to conflict management and subsequent to the course we have received a master copy of their material so that we can use it to train others in a day long workshop.

Bridge Builders' vision is to help Christians and the church to learn to handle conflict, deal with our differences, engage respectfully with one another, and make decisions in collaborative and consensual ways – so that we can live out the gospel that Jesus revealed. Their expectation is that this will transform the church's witness and out-reach to the world.

Each day included times of prayer and worship.

Programme Overview

Tuesday 18 October (9:00am-5:30pm)

· Introductions · Establishing the Environment and Setting the Scene · Using the Human Rainbow · The Story of Two Congregations · Moving from Divided by to Bound Together by Conflict

Wednesday 19 October (9:00am-5:30pm)

· The Call to Reconciliation: Drawing on Biblical Resources · Personal Styles Inventory and Presentation of Styles · Resolving Conflict: Exploring Positions and Underlying Concerns · The Escalation of Conflict

Thursday 20 October (9:00am-4:00pm)

· Conflict and Communication: Deliberate Listening · Challenges, Methodology and Practicalities · Designing Learner-Centred Training · Conclusion and Review

The Three Stream Convergence

3 - 6 OCT 2011 Toronto, Canada

We headed back to Toronto and the Partners in Harvest (PIH) conference which brought together Catch the Fire Ministries (Toronto Airport Christian Fellowship) with an emphasis on the Father Heart of God and his grace, the International House of Prayer with an emphasis on intimacy with Jesus and Bethel Church, Redding, California (Bill Johnson) with an emphasis on the Holy Spirit and signs and wonders.

Background:

Several years ago the Lord spoke to Patricia Bootsma of Jubilee Christian Fellowship that there would be a convergence of the three streams in the Body of Christ - Toronto, Kansas City and Redding. Toronto, with its revelation of the Father's Love, Inner Healing and the River of God, Kansas City with the emphasis of Jesus' soon return, intimacy, and the Tabernacle of David (Worship and Prayer movement) and Redding's wisdom in walking in the Power of the Spirit, Signs and Wonders and Evangelism. The converging of these three streams will bring a fuller revelation of the Trinity to the Body of Christ, help usher in the Great End Time Revival and raise the water level (Ezekiel's River) to an extent we can only attain together. We are seeing the fulfilment of that prophecy in this year's PIH International conference. We are so blessed to have Bill & Beni Johnson from Redding, CA, Wes Hall from IHOP in Kansas City and John & Carol Arnott from Catch the Fire Toronto all together in one conference. We are believing for the convergence of these streams to connect us in unity for the fullness of Glory to be revealed.

We were really excited to be back at a church that we had already visited on a number of occasions; it was a bit like coming home. We stayed in a B & B run by a church member. This was great as several other leaders were also staying there. It does something to you when you are with 2000 to 2500 people worshipping God and engaging with his word.

It is very difficult to summarise the content of the conference with six or more speakers so here are some quotes from the conference that stood out for me:

Wes Hall – International House Of Prayer

The foundation of prayer is that God is in love with you, longs for you and believes in you. He is looking for us to put the first commandment in place: You will love no other gods before me.

Seven biblical kinds of prayer:

1. Cooperative prayer – do it together and in agreement around his agenda – this gives confidence (Joel 2)
2. Night and Day dimensions (1 Thessalonians 3:10) Agreement as to who God is. Prayer as incense (Revelation 8:4)
3. Earthly and heavenly dimensions – Prayers of the saints who have gone before (Revelation 5:8)
4. Supernatural dimensions – the Spirit makes intercession for us (Romans 8:26)
5. Singing dimension. Singing prayers/worship (Ephesians 5:19)
6. Word dimension: Praying the scriptures
7. Intimacy dimension. Empowered by intimacy, love with Jesus: He likes us.

Bill Johnson

We are to host the presence of the Lord. In our time church has become a place where we gather around a sermon. Israel (in the OT) gathered around his presence. Life lived out of his presence brings breakthrough and renewal.

Something about Jesus has to be captured: He illustrates God perfectly

The Old Testament is filled with questions – Jesus is the answer.

Jesus did everything as a man. This means that I am compelled to follow his example.

If we find that God is silent it is because He has already given us the answer. If I can't recognise the answer

then what have I prayed?
Answers to prayer are supposed to keep us in prayer.
Diversify your prayer investment.
We all have an open heaven over us
I must live conscious of what God has given in his presence.
We are wired to recognise his presence.
Don't seek his presence for the sake of ministry, seek his presence for Him.
The dove (the Holy Spirit) is always looking for somewhere to rest.
He is eager to rest upon willing people. Jesus is eager to minister to people.
The more the church finds out who she is the less she wants to be rescued.
We are the ceiling that the next generation will walk on.
I can't let anything get bigger than his presence.
If you host him you don't know what is going to happen
The bible doesn't say arise and reflect but arise and shine.

He changes the nature of who we are.
He is extremely interested in the renewal of the mind.
The renewal of the mind = transformation.
A renewed mind transforms people.
Transformed people transform cities.
Culture:= How you do life
The way life is done in heaven is the way it is to be done on earth (The Lord's prayer)
We will always reflect the world we are most aware of.

Heaven is filled with honour
The culture of honour is the atmosphere which releases life and miracles.
Honour is a tool to get into a place of influence NOT control.
Honour is the point of contact for what a person carries.
When you honour an anointing you are honouring God – His Spirit.
If we don't recognise the gift we will fail to honour the gift in the person.
Learning how to recognise God's presence is the key.
If we don't do this we will miss it when God wants to use someone without "title" etc
As Kingdom culture affects you it becomes easy to affect the community you are in
Turn you affections towards him and he comes quickly
What you are most conscious of will change the atmosphere around you.
"The Word attracts conflict"
That is how it becomes established in our life
If there is no conflict it becomes a theory
The greatest thing against us is that we have great theology but no evidence.
There is no reward where there are no options. His desire is to reward.
The power of heaven backs up the revelation.
Questions have no power unless you will them.
You have the power to undermine the revelation.
Revelation is not to expose the weakness but to give the opportunity to succeed.
Powerlessness is inexcusable when we have the resurrection power of God within us.
We are to be living examples of the resurrected Christ.
Miracles are not the whole gospel but the gospel is not whole without them.
The Lord doesn't mind questions, but our questions are never to put him on trial.
We can't hold God hostage to our questions

John Arnott:

Revival is happening - he went on to talk about the growth of the church worldwide especially in Africa, Asia and South America.

We are in a Kairos moment – God is about to move again in a real way.

Unbelief from the past has conditioned us.
This prevented the preparation that was needed

What would you do if revival broke next week
We need to get our hearts into position

Healing is a strategy for taking your city for God (Matthew 8:16; 12:15; Luke 6:19)
Jesus saturated the nation with healing – wherever he went. He sent his disciples out to do the same. In Luke we read of another 70/72 going out to do the same = 83 people. What would 83 radical disciples healing everyone do- It gets influence.

Begin with the poor of the poor.

John 4:46ff:

People would have talked about what was happening. Eventually the people of influence catch on.
They also have problems. If those needs are met influence grows.

Luke 7:1-10

Impacted by the stories and seeks Jesus' help
What is the impact on the community when a person of influence is impacted by God?

Luke 8:40ff

Significant religious leader. What causes him to go seeking Jesus, breaking from popular opinion?

Desperation.

What would Jesus' eyes look like when he told this father, "Believe and she will be well."

Smith Wigglesworth favourite chorus: Only believe, only believe all things are possible only believe.

Jesus raises the girl: What do you think the effect of the influence would have been after this?

The strategy:

Every one commanded to go and do everything Jesus commanded

It works especially on unbelievers:

This healing belongs to me because of what Jesus has done. I receive my healing now.

Check it out

This is Jesus on the outside. Would you like him on the inside

This is a divine appointment

Start with what you have and he will give you more.

¹²Very truly I tell you, whoever believes in me will do the works I have been doing, and they will do even greater things than these, because I am going to the Father. ¹³And I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son. ¹⁴You may ask me for anything in my name, and I will do it. John 14:12-14
Everyone is to do this

Appendix 1: Definitions of Missional Communities

Mike Breen defines it like this:

Often times people use the phrase ‘missional community’ to describe the state of a group of people. It’s descriptive. The question seems to be, “Is this community missional?” Or, as Neil Cole says, “Is this community joining the mission that God is already doing?” Are we existing as a sent people? It is meant to be descriptive and rather general. The way that I have used this phrase in the past 20 years is a bit more specific and more as a proper noun. Just like the phrase ‘Worship Service’ denotes something quite specific, so the phrase ‘Missional Community’ originated as a very specific thing, identifying a type of missional vehicle that was created in the late 1980’s in the UK.

A Missional Community is a group of 20 to 50 people who exist, in Christian community, to reach either a particular neighbourhood or network of relationships. With a strong value on life together, the group has the expressed intention of seeing those they are in relationship with choose to start following Jesus through this more flexible and locally incarnated expression of the church. They exist to bring heaven to the particular slice of earth they believe God has given them to bless. The result is usually the growth and multiplication of more Missional Communities. These MCs are networked within a larger church community allowing for both a scattered and gathered church. These mid-sized communities, led by laity, are “lightweight and low maintenance” and most often meet 3-4 times a month in their missional context. Each MC attends to the three dimensions of life that Jesus himself attended to: Time with God (worship, prayer, scripture, teaching, giving thanks, etc), time with the body of believers building a vibrant and caring community, and time with those who don’t know Jesus yet.

MCs first began as missional small groups (groups of 8-15 people) more than 20 years ago in England. After a few years it became clear they were small enough to care, but not large enough to dare. Missional growth, multiplication and momentum was rare with these smaller, more missional groups. Leader burnout was common. Quite honestly, it took several years for this to surface as a recurring problem that needed to be dealt with. After a few more years of experimenting, mid-sized groups, about the size of an extended family, emerged as a missional and discipleship vehicle that was capable of the exponential growth and depth we see today. As Missional Communities continued to develop further and as we began to research why, something exciting came to light: Every culture (and sub-culture) gathers and finds identity in groups the size of extended families. When natural genetic extended families break down, people of all races, ethnicities and backgrounds organically begin to recreate the extended family. Missional Communities were simply tapping into something hardwired into human DNA.

In Sheffield, England at St Thomas Church, what I started with a few hundred people in these groups of 20-50 people, each reaching out to various mission contexts, has turned into thousands upon thousands of people in Missional Communities...in a city where less than 1% of people attend church. Untold numbers of people are finding Jesus. MCs for the creative class. MCs for former Iranian Muslims. MCs for former gang members and murderers who became Christians. MCs for students studying at the university. MCs for new parents. MCs for people living in particular neighbourhoods. MCs for the homeless. MCs for former prostitutes and drug addicts.

What Missional Communities do is find a crack or crevice of society and incarnate the Gospel of Jesus Christ to that specific culture of people by creating an extended family on mission together. And when this scattered church of Missional Communities gathers together as one large family, it is a picture of the coming Kingdom, or as Newbigin would say, “a sign, instrument and foretaste.” Every colour, age, race and religious background. That is what the ‘gathered’ worship service has been like.

Perhaps what is more exciting is that we have now seen it spread. Missional Communities aren’t something specific to England, Europe or even South America. Now in the United States, all across the country, hundreds and hundreds of churches are beginning to see this kind of vibrant, missional life in their own contexts. Urban churches. Suburban churches. Church plants. Mega churches. Lay leaders are being released into their destiny to lead the church of God in his mission of rescuing and redeeming the whole world. These leaders refuse to believe that being a disciple and being missional are mutually exclusive; in fact, they see it as inseparable. Mis-

sional Communities are simply a vehicle to send these leaders out into their divine calling.

***Mike Breen** has been an innovator in leading missional churches throughout Europe and the United States for more than 25 years. In his time at St Thomas Sheffield in the UK, he created and pioneered Missional Communities, mid-sized groups of 20-50 people on mission together. The result, less than 6 years later, was the largest church in England, and ultimately, one of the largest and now fastest growing churches in the whole of Europe. In 2006 Mike was approached by Leadership Network to lead an initiative into church planting. Through this partnership, more than 725 churches were planted in Europe in just three years. Today, Mike lives in South Carolina, leading 3DM, a movement/organization that is helping hundreds of established churches and church planters move into this discipling and missional way of being the church.*

Other definitions:

Jeff Vanderstelt definition of Missional Community:

A Missional Community is a **Family** of **Missionary Servants** who make **Disciples** who make Disciples.

Family – First of all a missional community is a group of believers who live and experience life together like a family. They see God as their Father because of their faith in the person and work of Jesus Christ and the new regeneration brought about by the Holy Spirit.

This means they have and know of a divine love that leads them to love one another as brothers and sisters. They treat one another as children of God deeply loved by the Father in everything – sharing their money, time, resources, needs, hurts, successes, etc... They know each other well. This knowledge includes knowing each other's stories and having familiarity with one another's strength and struggles in regards to belief in the gospel and its application to all of life.

They speak the gospel truth to one another, regularly building each other up in love. They also love the people around them as if they were part of the family, showing them what the love of the Father looks like and in so doing inviting them to experience life in the family of God.

(John 1:11-13; Rom. 12:10-16; Eph 5:1-2)

Missionaries – God's family is also sent like the Son by the Spirit to proclaim the good news of the kingdom – the gospel – and fulfil the commission of Jesus. A missional community is more than a bible study or a small group that cares for other believers.

A missional community is made up of Spirit-led and filled people who radically reorient their lives together for the mission of making disciples of a particular people and place where there is a gospel gap (no consistent gospel witness). This means people's schedule, resources and decisions are now collectively built around reaching people together.

(Matt. 3:16-4:1; Jn. 20:21; Acts 1:8; Acts 13:2)

Servants – Jesus is Lord and we are his Servants. A missional community serves those around them as though they are serving Jesus. In doing so, they give a foretaste of what life will be like under the rule and reign of Jesus Christ.

Living as servants to the King who serve others as he served, presents a tangible witness to Jesus' kingdom and the power of the gospel to change lives. A missional community serves in such a way that it demands a Gospel explanation – lives that cannot be explained in any other way than by the Gospel of the Kingdom of Jesus.

(Matt. 20:25-28; Jn. 13:1-17; Phil. 2:5-11; 1 Pet. 2:16)

Disciples – We are all learners of Jesus our rabbi who has given us his Spirit to teach us all that is true about Jesus and enable us to live it out his commands. Jesus commanded us to make disciples who believe the gospel, are established in a new identity and are able to obey all of his commands (Matt. 28:19-20). The missional com-

munity is the best context in which this can happen.

Disciples are made and developed: 1) through **life on life**, where there is visibility and accessibility 2) **in community**, where they can practice the *one anothers*, and 3) **on mission** where they learn how to proclaim the gospel and make disciples.

***Jeff Vanderstelt** is a Church Planter who leads Soma Communities, a body of church planting churches in the South Puget Sound. He also serves as the Vice President (West) of Acts 29 as well as the Church Planters Advisory Counsel for the Conservative Baptist NW Association. Jeff spends most of his time equipping church planters and church leaders in Gospel Centered Leadership and Missionally focused methodology. He has been planting churches for 7 years. Prior to that he was a youth pastor in four different churches over the span of 14 years, the most recent being Willow Creek Community Church in Chicago. Jeff has been married for 18 years to Jayne and together they love and shepherd 3 beautiful children in the Gospel and Mission of Jesus Christ.*

Felicity Dale definition of missional community:

All over the world God is using intentionally small and rapidly multiplying families of his people to bring extraordinary numbers of people into the Kingdom.

Here in the United States, unless the Lord intervenes, we are only a generation away from being a post-Christian nation. (Research shows that only 4% of Gen Y, the oldest of whom turned 30 in 2010, is in church regularly.) For the first time since this nation was founded, church is no longer at the center of society; it is rapidly becoming irrelevant.

For centuries, we have had an attractional model of church. (“Come to our church meeting. Come and hear our special speaker.”) And thankfully, over the years, many have met Jesus this way. But God has always intended church to go—to be missional. He asks us to join him in what he is doing outside the walls of our buildings—whether that is our church buildings, or, for those of us involved in simple/organic/house churches, our homes.

Missional communities are patterned on the principle of going, so they meet where life happens. They are families of God’s people, centred on Jesus, sharing life together, and intentionally reaching out with the Good News of the Kingdom.

Within a missional community, Jesus as head of his church is a practical reality. Their core skill is listening to Jesus, and responding to what he tells them. They share life together—for them, church is neither a location nor an event, but a series of relationships, firstly with Jesus and then with each other. The groups are small enough to obey the “one another’s” of the New Testament—to love one another, bear one another’s burdens, teach and admonish one another etc. Understanding and obeying God’s Word is their daily practice.

A missional community intentionally reaches out into the harvest in order to make disciples of not-yet-believers. Making disciples is key; Jesus will build his church. The group as a whole may focus on one particular harvest field, or it may equip and encourage each of its members to involve with their own circles of influence. Living a 24/7 Kingdom lifestyle will have an impact on “the kingdoms of this world”—business, media, the arts etc.

A missional community does not seek to get ever larger, but rather to multiply itself by releasing its members into the harvest.

Mission is at the very heart of the Godhead. God so loved the world that he gave his only son (John 3:16), and as the Father sent the Son, he now sends us (John 20:21). We, the body of Christ, are ambassadors for the Kingdom of God, joining God in his mission to reach a world that so desperately needs to hear the Good News.

***Felicity Dale** trained at Barts Hospital in London where along with her husband, Tony, she helped pioneer simple church concepts while in medical school and later in the East End of London. Now living in the United States, Felicity and Tony are actively engaged in training church planters. Felicity is a co-founder of House2House magazine, author of the *Getting Started* manual on planting house churches, and has co-authored several books with Tony, including *The Rabbit and the Elephant*, and*

*Simply Church.***Alan Hirsch definition of a missional community:**

(borrowed from his foreword to For The City by Matt Carter & Darrin Patrick)

I have a constant refrain now that goes something like this: that many of the problems of that the church now faces can be actually be resolved simply by thinking differently about the church and its God-designed mission in the world. In other words, by changing our metaphors, or paradigms of church, we can change the game. The name I give to this “different paradigm” of church is simply apostolic movement. Its not new, in fact it’s ancient, and it describes completely the fluidity and dynamism of the spiritual phenomenon we see evidenced in the pages of the New Testament itself. Some churches are now beginning to reframe themselves as movements, and they are unleashing the sheer power of New Testament ecclesiology as a result. This is the church as Jesus intended it to be...a Gospel empowered, unfettered people-movement, perfectly designed for nothing less than the transformation of the world and the destruction of the forces of evil (Matt.16:18).

If we understood ecclesia properly, and began to appropriate its meaning, then many of the problems we now face will be resolved. I will reserve what is said here to just two aspects of the term, both of which have significant paradigm shifting power. First, the word ecclesia encapsulates a very dynamic social force and manifests in a multi-dimensional way. I can’t find a better word in our current nomenclature, than to simply call it movement, or more technically because I like precise language, apostolic movement. By engaging this movemental view of ecclesia, we cannot simply limit ecclesia to that of a local church with a distinctive shaped building and a certain denominational preference and style. It is much more wide-ranging than that. Well of course, the church in the Bible is a people-movement right across the Empire! Thinking like a movement has massive implications for missional church. I believe that this helps us unlock the meaning and potential of church in our day.

Secondly, the word has other very important meanings. In its original usage by the Greeks themselves, an ecclesia was not just an assembly or a gathering, as many suppose. If that’s all Paul wanted to convey, he could have used agora and panegyris as well as heorte, koinon, thiasos, synagoge, and synago, all of which refer to an assembly. Rather, the word ecclesia had a distinctly political (polis = city) aspect to it. In fact, it wasn’t a religious term at all, and neither was its original use limited to a religious gathering. In Paul’s time, an ecclesia was a gathering of the elders of a community. In smaller villages and towns across the Roman Empire, local elders would gather regularly to discuss and deliberate over a variety of social and political dilemmas facing the community. Neighbourhood disputes, arguments over estates of deceased persons, communal responses to natural disasters—these were the kinds of things the council of elders would consider. Today, this might be similar to a meeting in the local town hall of a group of community leaders. In other words, an ecclesia was a gathering of wise community leaders, brought together by their common vision for the harmony and well-being of the wider community. Ecclesia in this sense, was really a community-within-a-community whose very purpose was to add value to that community. It brought wisdom to the village. It helped the village be a better village. They were members of the village, and their destiny was as connected to the prosperity and peace of that community as anyone. Isn’t it interesting that the base, raw material he uses to develop his vision for us, is that of a group of people adding value to their village; people who bring wisdom and blessing to the entire community, not just delivering religious services on the weekend? If we allow this to soak in, we will begin to see ourselves very differently...as sent (missio) by Jesus into the villages of which they’re already a part. The destiny of Jesus’ people is tied into that of the broader community in which they exist. They are there to add value, to bring wisdom, to foster a better village. In short, to participate with the work of Kingdom of God going on all around them.

The language in our best theology is that a church exists as a “sign, symbol, and foretaste, of the Kingdom of God.” It’s a scratch-and-smell experience for the people around. When people rub up against the church, a Kingdom aroma should waft from it; they should catch a glimpse of life as God intended it to be lived in the first

place. And just so we don't forget, the reach of the Kingdom of God is not just local; it is regional, universal, in fact it is cosmic in scope. It's a big purpose and thinking about it in this way changes the game.

Alan Hirsch is the author of The Forgotten Ways, and co-author of Untamed, On The Verge, ReJesus, Right Here, Right Now, The Faith of Leap (among others). He is director of Future Travelers, and founding director of Forge Mission Training Network.

Appendix 2: St Georges Deal

St. George's, Deal is a growing, vibrant all-age community with its centre in the heart of Deal High Street. It is a church made up of missional communities (clusters) meeting out in various places where folk are growing in Christ, growing together in love and growing out in witness to others.

Worship takes place each Sunday at the Church Centre

The Vicars: Chris Spencer & Shiela Porter

Vision and Values

Vision

What do we see?

a vibrant church

We see a church that is Jesus-centred, innovative, growing, serving, culture-shaping and sharing with other churches the new things that God is doing among us

changing lives

We see multitudes of people of all ages whose hearts and lives have been transformed by the love of God becoming joyful, passionate and committed disciples of Jesus.

transforming the area of Deal and beyond

We see the society around us transformed by the values of the Kingdom of God as we engage in loving service in our families, workplaces and communities.

Strategy

How are we going to make this happen?

Shaping a church which can keep on growing

We will develop the Missional Community (Cluster) model so that we become a church made up of many diverse Missional Communities, served by a central church base.

By developing Leaders

By providing effective support and training of the leaders of Missional Communities (Clusters) as they grow in vision, character, ministry and leadership skills.

By multiplying Clusters

By encouraging the formation of new Missional Communities (Clusters) around new visions for mission.

Clusters are mid-sized communities working together to engage with a particular group or network of people with the good news of Jesus.

By strengthening the 'home base'

By maintaining and developing the central church 'home base' to support, resource and equip the life of Clusters.

The 'home base' will involve staff, volunteers, and members of Clusters offering their gifts to the whole church.

For those whose place of belonging and participation in mission is through the 'home base', we will establish home base Missional Communities, with cell groups.

The role of the 'home base' is to provide:

vibrant, relevant and refreshing 'Celebration' worship,

- teaching and training,
- a foundation of faithful and persistent prayer,
- fun, vibrant and relevant children's ministry,

- support ministries of pastoral care and prayer ministry,
- accountability and support for Cluster Leaders,
- effective administration of financial resources, buildings and support staff,
- running of regular Alpha courses.

By building on relationships with other pioneering churches

By taking opportunities to share the principles and story of missional communities with others, giving and receiving support from other churches as we continue to learn more about being a missionary church.

Values**A - All Involved**

We believe that it is the calling of every Christian to be fully involved in the ministry of the church. The level of our involvement will differ depending on our commitments, but God imparts special gifts to each and every one of us to be used within the body of Christ.

B - Becoming Disciples

We not only believe the bible to be the inspired Word of God, but we believe in its relevance for our lives today. This means that we value the importance of helping each other to apply its message specifically and practically. It also means that we see ourselves as life-long learners, willing to be disciplined and taught till the day we die.

C - Creating Community

The 2 greatest commandments centre on love. We therefore value the importance of relationships, along with all the skills and attitudes we need to live a life of love. Our Clusters and Cells are living communities where caring and fellowship become a 7 day a week experience. We believe that every Christian has a responsibility in this area.

D - Doing Evangelism

We believe that the Gospel of Jesus Christ is very good news to a broken world, and should be. Again, we understand that every Christian is called to do this, but in different ways and at different levels. Our Clusters are committed to building innumerable little bridges into people's lives, creating the safest and simplest route for people on their journey into faith.

E - Encountering God

We are committed to providing every opportunity for each person to encounter God in a living and life-changing way. In doing this, we value both the importance of corporate worship and celebration, as well as the significance of meeting God in solitude and in small groups.

Appendix 3: St Alphege, Seasalter at Seasalter Christian Centre

Rev'd Canon Steve Coneys:

St Alphege, Seasalter is church of all ages which values difference (4 different congregations), involvement, growth in faith, friendship, outreach and worship.

There are many ways to get involved and a network of cells - small groups which underpin the community's life. There is an active Youth Ministry, shared with the Whitstable Team Ministry, and a youth church called Y. The church offers and hosts many community links and initiatives at Seasalter Christian Centre. The church is presently considering new ways in which it can continue to be a welcoming, nurturing and growing Christian community.

Mission

The Anglican Consultative Council has identified five 'Marks of Mission', which should characterise every 'church'.

1. To proclaim the Good News of the Kingdom.
2. To teach, baptise and nurture new believers.
3. To respond to human need by loving service.
4. To seek to transform the unjust structures of society.
5. To strive to safeguard the integrity of creation, and sustain and renew the life of the earth.

Within the life of St Alphege, each of these 'Marks of Mission'; are responded to through outreach, youth groups, Alpha and our support of Fairtrade. By leading lives that follow the Mission we can come to know God and His love for all of us and begin to understand His purpose for us.

Values

All Involved	- Everyone plays their part
Bearing Witness	- Telling the Christian story
Creating Community	- Loving and belonging
Deepening Discipleship	- Following Jesus, becoming more like Him
Encountering God	- Experiencing His presence
Fun and Food	- Laughing and sharing
Giving Generously	- Giving with gladness

History

Early Seasalter

Seasalter, situated on the North Kent coast between Faversham and Whitstable, has a long history of human occupation and of Christian witness. Already a bustling settlement in the Iron Age, the village was, as its name suggests, a centre for salt production. After the founding of Christ Church Priory in Canterbury the village and lands were taken into its possession, and the Domesday Book notes that Seasalter "properly belongs to the kitchen of the Archbishop ". At this time a Saxon church dedicated to Saint Peter stood at a site somewhere off the coast beyond the Blue Anchor pub; the great storm of 1099 engulfed it and effectively moved the coastline inland, and the present 'Old Church' was built on higher ground during the 12th century.

Saint Alphege

St Alphege was born of a noble family near Bath in 954 and died in 1012. He was Archbishop of Canterbury from 1005 at a time when England was being ravaged by the Danes. He was captured and taken to Greenwich, but would not allow a ransom to be paid.

On April 19th 1012, during a drunken feast, the Danes pelted him with bones, and he was killed with a blow to his head by an axe. His body was buried at Saint Paul's in London. However in 1023 King Canute decided to return the saint's body to Canterbury, and according to legend, Alphege was transported down the Thames and lay for 3 days in the Saxon church at Seasalter before his final journey to Canterbury. The church changed its dedication to that of "Saint Alphege" and our special saint is still fondly and proudly remembered today.

Alphege reminds us that being a Christian will be demanding and even costly. By an act of prescience, St Thomas Becket, in his last sermon at Canterbury before his murder, praised Alphege as the first Canterbury martyr. Jesus said, "If anyone wants to come with me, they must forget self, carry their cross and follow me. For whoever wants to save their own life will lose it; but whoever loses their life for me and the gospel will save it." Mark 8 (34-35)

The Growth of Whitstable and Seasalter

With the arrival of the railway and Whitstable's growing importance as a fishing port, there was clearly a need for a Christian presence in the town centre. In 1844 the first stone of the new Saint Alphege church in Whitstable High Street was laid. At the same time the by now dilapidated 'Old' St Alphege church at Seasalter was partly demolished, so that only the tiny ancient chancel and sanctuary remained. However, in more recent times, Seasalter has seen an explosion of new housing and our beloved ancient 'Old Church' remains at the heart of a

thriving Christian community and a district of more than 7,000 inhabitants.

We praise God for the continuous presence of his people in this place over more than 1,400 years. Come and visit Saint Alphege Old Church and experience the atmosphere of prayer which has been offered across the centuries.

Recent History

There has been a church in Seasalter for well over a thousand years. In more recent times the church has grown, with new congregations moving out from the tiny Old Church to Joy Lane School and to the Christian Centre on Faversham Road. The Old Church itself continues to be a much loved place of worship, and will remain so. In 2006 we believed that the time was right to build a new centre for the community, which would provide not only for the church's needs but be a resource for all the people of Seasalter and beyond. A meeting place available to those who work to create the support and belonging which we all wish for, but which is so easily lost in our culture.

In addition to accommodating children and young people's groups in more modern and spacious accommodation, the new building offers an enlarged worship space with room for the church to continue its growth. New users are anticipated from the health and social service sectors in addition to those already based at the Christian Centre. The new Christian Centre opened at Easter 2007.

In summary the new Christian Centre offers - activities for children and young people - support for families - care and friendship for the elderly - resources for community health, education and welfare.

Appendix 4: Thanet Centre of Mission

Andrew Chadwick works for Harvest Cell Church and the Thanet Deanery to encourage and resource Fresh Expressions and mission. There are many opportunities to be involved with ministry whether in schools, nursing homes or through Kidz Klub partnering local churches to reach those not yet Christian. One of Andrew's key tasks he has is to help create Fresh Expressions across the deanery in building relationships with secular agencies and organisations to share the 'good news' and the love of Christ.

Andrew has two key areas of ministry; one is his leadership role within Harvest (Cell Church) and his other work is across the deanery. There are many other projects in the pipeline and emerging. Some of the key projects that Andrew has helped pioneer include: Thanet Kidz Klub's which was launch in May 2010 to reach un-churched 5-11 year olds, Prayer Care visiting teams to befriend care home residents and staff, NET evangelists group who practice and train others in evangelism.

Team: Andrew Chadwick Sarah-Joy Woodcock Stuart Budden

Sarah-Joy Woodcock is the Kidz Klub Co-ordinator / Mission Enabler for the Centre of Mission. This is a partnership with Thanet Kidz Klub. .

Appendix 5: An example of Low Control, High Accountability at work:

If you've read any of Mike Breen's stuff or have ever heard him talk, the man will never shut up about the leadership environment of "low control/high accountability." And to be honest, if I had coined the phrase of something that brilliant, I wouldn't ever stop saying it either. However, it wasn't until just a few weeks ago that I got to see this principle played out in real time in our community.

July 19 was our *very first week* meeting in our Missional Communities rather than a Core Group worship service. I get to the Chapel where we meet, I walk in and I see the tag-team duo of our Family Missional Community (name TBD) sitting in the front row, obviously in a deep conversation with some concern on their faces. This has me a little worried. This is our first week and because we want everything we do on these nights to be easily replicated, there is nothing electronic used...just an unplugged guitar, our voices, etc for worship. So I'm literally walking into the Chapel 15 minutes before we're going to start...and they seem pretty concerned.

I start putting a few things up front and then just casually ask how they're feeling about tonight (since they will

be leading it, not me). Previously in the week they'd put together an outline with flow of the night, the brief teaching one of them was going to give and some great facilitated discussion to deepen the teaching. It was a fantastic night ahead of them. One of the guys responds, "I'm a little concerned about tonight. I feel like people are really expecting to get some hard details on what this MC is going to be doing, the structure, rhythms, etc. and we aren't giving them *any* details. We're saying it'll be in one week. I think that's a mistake. I think we may have some pretty irritated people if we do that."

As soon as he said that, I immediately felt myself getting defensive. The idea of waiting a week to give details was my idea and I had some really good reasons why we needed to wait...reasons they knew. I can't remember exactly how I responded, but I noticed it was very defensive, my body language probably came off as a little irritated...it was probably fairly obvious I thought we should stick to the plan. But then it hit me...this isn't my Missional Community on two very distinct levels. 1) These two guys are leading it and they will be the ones pouring their blood, sweat and tears into making it successful. 2) Ultimately God is the one leading every MC and it's all his. (It's worth noting here that I have some control freak issues).

As soon as this hit me, I was able to completely relax. I opened up the dialogue. Probed. Asked questions. Asked how they would prefer to structure the night. I made sure not to say how I would do it. The conversation lasted for probably 25 minutes (eating straight into the time we were supposed to start, so we quickly grabbed a side room). At last I just said, "Guys, this is your group. It's your call. What do you want to do?"

One of the guys seemed like he could go either way. The other felt very strongly the details needed to be given. So the details were given.

The fun end to the story would be that it went BEAUTIFULLY and it was unequivocally the right leadership call on their parts: That's not how it ended up.

They did give some details, or at least as many as they were able to give. The problem is that the details weren't all fleshed out yet. There was a 10,000 foot view of the communal rhythms, but as soon as the can of worms was opened, people wanted the 10 foot view. And the view didn't exist yet. The worms were out. In the end, many of the people seemed to walk away excited, but somewhat frustrated and confused. This church experience is different enough, but now they didn't have clarity either. At the end of the night as people were being dismissed, I spoke up for the first time and said, "Listen, I know you probably have a lot of questions or concerns, but you need to know those need to be pointed towards these two guys. They are your leaders. I'll pour myself into them and they will do the same for you." I literally watched as people who were getting ready to approach me...physically turned and then approached the two MC leaders.

I went out to dinner with the leader who felt strongly about making the call as well as a few other people close to him and watched as they, more or less, raked him over the coals for ambiguity with the details.

"What about this? What about that? This here doesn't make sense. What are we doing? This isn't going to work."

It was frustrating and painful to watch. He did a great job holding his own, but what the situation produced was an almost visceral response from a few people. It also produced a lot of anxiety and angst that next week, and it was quickly apparent that this next Sunday, needed to be a home run. Because a lot of the details were only partially developed, the ideas came off as half-baked and perhaps even a little flaky. It was not reality, but a quick snapshot for people into the process of honing an idea into something more concrete. But they were expecting concrete. It really had everything to do with expectations. As soon as the can was opened, people were expecting nailed down details. And those simply weren't ready yet.

Both of these leaders felt a mixture of emotions. I think both were excited because they realized the journey they had begun and it's absolutely exhilarating. But they also got a taste of what it's like to be the person up front...you're the one who is taking the shots all of a sudden. There were emotions of anger, frustration, discour-

agement, anxiety, trepidation and for at least one, it seemed to be written across his forehead: "I'm not sure I can do this."

I, however, had never been more confident in their abilities. They had taken some pretty hard punches and were still standing and still believed in what they were doing. Maybe their confidence was shaken a little, but mine was only strengthened. I only believed in them more because of the situation.

Over the course of the next week I cleared a lot of my schedule and met with them either together or separately at least 5 times. Some of it was merely social and letting my confidence become theirs, some of it was for strategy sessions for the next Sunday. They knew that next Sunday was important and they knew they needed to nail down some details (most of which, actually, were easy to nail down once the two of them sat down and started hashing it out). They put together an outline for that Sunday. They drew a list of "Things that we know" and "Things that we don't know and would like input on." The "what we do know" list was much longer than the other. They discussed what processes were needed for resolving the things they didn't know. They essentially took the punches, stood back up and crafted their message for the next Sunday based on the reality that existed.

It was also an important time in teaching the Leadership Square. They had approached the previous Sunday trying to build consensus, talking about input and building this MC as a group. The problem is that in this stage of development, it required L1 Leadership, not L3 Leadership. The guys needed to be direct, clear, concise. "Here's what's happening. Here's the vision. Here's the plan." If I stepped in and really said anything in this week, this was it: This is a time for being direct. This is the style of leadership needed at this phase of MC development. Both of these guys are naturally L3 leaders, great at discussion, bringing in other voices, building consensus through sharing together. Both of them were suddenly on a steep learning curve for L1. If I did anything in this week, it was to try to paint the type of leadership needed for the upcoming Sunday and in the months to come.

I sat down with them, showed them the process to walk through, they walked through it together, making the decisions themselves, they developed a plan, put together Sunday's time...and they nailed it. I mean it was beautiful. The whole feel of the room changed when I walked into it once they were done (I've been spending time on Sunday nights with another MC). They took some punches, absorbed them, and delivered. It was absolutely amazing to watch.

I would venture to say that both of these guys learned quite a bit this week; about themselves, about leading, about the process. None of this happens if I controlled the situation and made the decision for them. Their decisions created a situation that needed to be dealt with but they dealt with them and it turned out great.

I didn't control the situation, I simply held them accountable to the plans and decisions they made. By making the crucial decision to let them choose their path...a new path for them as leaders was paved.

Here's the big question: Who was right? Was I right that they should wait or were they right that details needed to be given? Honestly, I don't know if there is a right answer. Perhaps that is some of the point. Both sides had pros and cons. Their decision pulled the band-aid off quickly and entered the community into some controlled chaos which produced fantastic results and taught invaluable leadership lessons. Furthermore, their decision did something my way never would: It produced a situation that gave a window into how people would react under pressure and stress, it showed us what was really going on. It told us their fears, hopes and anxieties. Knowing these things will be crucial in crafting the next two months of this MC. That doesn't happen with the way I would have done it.

In the end, I think people might have *more respect* for each of these leaders. Even if I would have chosen differently, we can't argue with those results, can we? And that's what an environment of low control/high accountability will produce: leaders who feel empowered to blaze their own path as God gives them vision with a support structure to lead them through the learning curve.

***So I just read through what I have written in this posting and it sounds so smooth and coolly decided while all of this was happening. This certainly was not the case. This was an incredibly hard week for me, but also a rewarding one. I didn't like giving up control...it felt weird, uncomfortable, it made me anxious and nervous. Knowing that a certain amount of chaos existed and a certain amount of discontent within the community was there *and to choose not to directly handle it myself* was a sheer battle of the wills! I had to make a conscious decision to do it. This isn't natural for me...but I want it to be. So for me, in my journey as a leader, this was an important step, because it was the first step in creating this kind of leadership environment. It is also the only way that we can reproduce leaders and our whole structure of church is based on reproducing leaders.

<http://dougpaullblog.com/2009/08/low-controlhigh-accountability-in-real-time/>

Appendix 6: Mission-shaped or Mission 'flavoured'

In a recent article, George Lings (author of Mission-Shaped Church report) expressed concern that many of the emerging expressions of church were not mission-shaped, but rather mission flavoured. What's the difference? From his experiences as a church planting coach and trainer with Church Resource Ministries Australia, Ken Morgan writes...

Just the same, only different

Every Sunday morning about sixty or seventy people take over the 'Green McCaw' café located in a suburban shopping strip. The small space is packed to the door and people sit around tables to enjoy the music, listen to a brief and punchy message, hear stories and generally celebrate the good things that God is doing in their community.

It's a pretty unlikely crew – a millionaire businessman sits at the same table as a recovering heroin addict. The head bouncer from the local pub is there, along with IT professionals, welfare dependent single mums and an array of others. The young pastors are desperately seeking a larger space to meet.

About half the people attending that morning have come to faith among this group. The rest were either part of the original planting team or have re-connected with church after a break.

Sunday afternoons, in another city meets another church, which looks virtually the same. The look and feel is café casual, although they meet in a school hall. The music is not too different, the message just as relevant and punchy. The crowd lacks some of the diversity, but numbers about eighty or so. All-in-all, you'd struggle to see from the outside how very, very different these two churches are.

What's the difference?

Our first example began six years ago as a team of about ten people. For the first two years they had no public worship service, committing most of their time to building relationships with unchurched people, doing simple acts of service, making disciples one by one and gathering them into small groups. When the people they were reaching kept asking to 'start church', they commenced a monthly service. They moved to a fortnightly service only when they had enough people involved to sustain both grass-roots mission activity and the public service. They've only recently increased the frequency to weekly. Because a favourite pastime in their area is relaxing in a café, they chose a one as a meeting place. Founded and formed by mission, this is a mission-shaped church.

Although a little bigger, the second example church is only eighteen months old. The origins of the church are found in a small group of young adults, frustrated by the rigidity of the traditional church they attended. They wanted something fresh, contemporary and informal - something they could invite their friends to.

The group worked hard to bring their dream to reality. They put together a detailed strategic plan, pulled together ideas, people and resources and even gained the blessing of their home church. Local government demographics told them that middle class 18-40 year-olds abounded in their suburb, so everything about the service - from funky music to plunger coffee – was chosen with these in mind. Their first service was everything they had

hoped, and since then a steady flow of new faces has delighted the leadership group.

While the new church appears to be a resounding success, a few nagging doubts rattle about in the minds of the leaders. Firstly, almost all the newcomers are from other churches. Some stay, some attend for a few weeks and move on. Everyone is encouraged to invite their friends, but all their friends are Christians.

Secondly, the church's efforts at outreach don't seem to be effective in bringing people into the church. They've done everything from a 'battle of the bands' to offering free marriage counselling (stat's showed a high marriage breakdown rate in the area), but there's been no 'flow on' from these to the worship service. Thirdly, the core team is growing tired of the effort required to maintain the current standard in the weekly service, plus the outreach activities. Because successful, large churches emphasise excellence, the leaders have drummed into the worship team to give their all. But now the team is starting to lose their energy and creative edge.

Contemporary and cool as it may be, the second example is mission-flavoured.

The Differences

<i>Mission-Shaped Church...</i>	<i>Mission-Flavoured Church...</i>
Had its origin in a call to mission	Was born in reaction to the established church
Began work with the unchurched and their needs	Began work with the church and their preferences
Made serving the lost its first priority	Made a hip worship service their first priority
Launched its public worship service according to health indicators	Launched their public worship service according to a schedule
Sought to discover and meet the needs of unchurched by engaging with them in relationship, then serving them in a relational 'peer' approach	Perceived the needs of the unchurched from a distance and opted for a 'provider-client' approach to serving them
Allowed those new to the faith to influence its form and style.	Designed its look and feel based on its own idea of what the community needed.
Became 'insiders' in their local culture – 'Bringing Jesus to them'	Remained 'outsiders' in their local culture, trying to 'Bring them to Jesus'

5 Lessons for Fresh Expressions of Church

1. Clarify the call

The basis for mission-shaped church is a call to mission, rather than frustration that your own needs aren't met. As far as possible, deal with your frustrations and other gripes before you set off to plant.

2. Begin with the end in mind

Right from the start, spend significant time with those you're trying to reach. Your job is to be good news, not a purveyor of goods and services, religious or otherwise.

3. Keep public worship services in perspective

In a mission-shaped framework, a public worship service should be the overflow of mission and its fruits, rather than preceding it. It will therefore be shaped by those who've come to faith through mission. The form it takes may or may not follow the style and symbols of the receptor culture.

4. Make time for unchurched people

Public worship services are usually very resource-hungry. Beware of committing too much of your people's time

and energy to the service at the expense of relational time with the unchurched.

5. Let programs serve relationships

Programs as a concept are value-neutral. They succeed or fail as outreach tools largely on the basis of whether they provide a context for relationships to form and grow. Remember, outreach and evangelism aren't the same thing.

A final thought. . .

Many large, attractive churches successfully reach unchurched people using a 'come to Jesus' model. And some of them began by launching a public worship service. This is valid and worthwhile ministry. Mission-shaped church is not a replacement for this model, but an alternative approach that will reach a different sector of society.

Ken Morgan

Ken Morgan trained at Tabor College, Melbourne while working among youth in outer-eastern suburbs. He currently serves with Church Resource Ministries training and coaching church planters, and consulting to denominations. With his wife Janet and their two daughters, Ken makes his home in the Yarra Valley outside Melbourne.

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Appendix 7: A review of "Launching Missional Communities - a field guide".

2010 Pub 3DM by Mike Breen and Alex Absalom's.

A Review: (by Josh Rowley)

Launching Missional Communities is, as its subtitle promises, "a field guide." It's a practical resource for both leaders of established churches and church planters who desire to take part in the creation of faith communities that move beyond the attractional model. Throughout, Mike Breen and Alex Absalom make concrete suggestions that are based largely on their experience starting missional communities in England.

Aware that *missional* is now a "buzzword" (p. 24), Breen and Absalom helpfully define "missional communities" as "[a] group of anything from twenty to more than fifty people who are united, through Christian community, around a common service and witness to a particular neighbourhood or network of relationships" (p. 18). In the pages following, they expand on this definition, writing that a missional community should (among other things) have no more than seventy people, be Jesus-centred, be focused on "a particular neighbourhood" or people-group, "not require that members be professing Christians to belong," mix "service and verbal witness," and have flat or shared leadership (p. 20). The bulk of the book's explicit theology follows this definition (pp. 24-29), and the bulk of this theology is based on the New Testament's story of Jesus and the earliest churches. Because "Jesus...was attractional and missional," argue the authors, so too should communities of Jesus-followers be attractional and missional. They add that the Western church already knows how to do attractional and now needs a "missional emphasis" (p. 24).

Similarly, they "love Sunday celebrations" (p. 33); yet the book makes clear repeatedly that these celebrations should not be the primary focus of the church. Breen and Absalom discuss at length the house-churches of the New Testament, small communities that did not have large worship services; later, they suggest a monthly calendar for missional communities that has one free Sunday (no worship gathering) each month, and they affirm the example of a church that has multiple missional communities meeting frequently but only a monthly all-church worship gathering (p. 199). The purpose served by attractional worship gatherings is celebration, not making disciples. "What we see in the United States today is churches, by and large, trying to make a contemporary cathedral experience every Sunday morning. When at least 85% of our dollars, energy, and human resources go to that one day a week, how can churches really expect to also engage in meaningful mission and discipleship? There's simply nothing left in the tank" (p. 52).

After introducing a number of "key concepts," Breen and Absalom move to sharing a "launch guide." They recommend that persons interested in starting a missional community visit missional communities, observe what kingdom work is already being done in their context, and participate in this community (here they name everything from hanging out in coffee shops to playing sports to walking neighbourhoods at different times of day) (pp. 83-84). The guide first addresses established churches that want to start missional communities and then addresses church planters. To the latter, the authors recommend beginning with a "huddle" of eight people and gathering with these people for meals, prayer, mission, Bible study, and conversations over a six- to nine-month period; six to eight months into this experiment, the group should begin to discuss expanding, targeting "a certain group of people or geographical place" and hoping to become (eventually) multiple missional communities of twenty to no more than seventy people (pp. 116-121). A monthly rhythm might have people gathering in their missional communities three times per month and missional communities coming together for worship celebrations one to three times per month (p. 126, 145). A typical gathering of a missional community "might include" meal-sharing, fellowship, sharing, singing, prayer, the communal study of Scripture, and planning of "mission activities"--in short, they are little churches (p. 141).

The book concludes with practical advice on how to engage different people groups (including children--the authors think there are more positives than negatives to having children and adults together [p. 158]) and with examples of missional communities. Refreshingly, the authors are not preoccupied with numerical growth; about it, they simply write: "There is no secret formula for growth in ministry. If your MC/church is healthy, it will grow" (p. 128). A strength of the book is its readability. A weakness is its heavy reliance on right-of-centre writers; the centre-left voice of the missional conversation is limited to single references to David Bosch, N. T. Wright, James Dunn, and Leslie Newbigin, respectively.

<http://postyesterdaychurch.blogspot.co.nz/2011/05/whats-missional-community-book-review.html>

Appendix 8: Leadership succession or continuance



TSC Research Bulletin; Winter 2011/12

Leadership Succession

When Leaders Leave



We have become increasingly aware of the problems encountered by fresh expressions of church when the founder moves on. So for this bulletin we are focusing on both the associated issues and a number of different approaches which hope to counter these.

During the last few years I have had the chance to hear over 70 pioneers talk about the challenges and opportunities they are finding as they start new contextual churches. During these conversations I have been surprised by the short-term responses pioneers have given. I've seen very able and inspirational pioneers start new churches but having not thought or planned beyond the next six or twelve months. Perhaps the immediacy of the task, the pressure to start something and the lack of long term direction or support from the diocese combine in creating this environment.

Many pioneers employed full time to start fresh expressions have little or no guidance from the diocese or parish as to the long-term plans. This is especially the case for those in their curacies where no provision for the church is made beyond the three or so years of the curacy. A number of pioneers I spoke to seemed disempowered by this. They struggled to make long term plans, focused on the immediate, and left thinking about long-term issues of sustainability and leadership succession until they had heard from the diocese about future plans, which was often very last minute.

Pioneers working within a more traditional model of congregational church planting tend to be more active in developing leaders, often through small group leadership and active roles in the services. New members of these types of churches are often existing or lapsed Christians who bring with them a level of Christian knowledge and skills which make the transition into leadership relatively straightforward. Pioneers in this

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model of church planting appeared more able to develop financial sustainability within a short period of time, with the congregation able to fund future leaders, whether brought in from outside the new congregation or grown from within.

Pioneers who are working further from the normal reach of church - with people who have had very little or no previous contact with church - are developing a variety of contextually influenced churches. These understandably take longer to develop. Arguably the more contextual a church is, the more difficult it will be to bring a new leader in when the founder moves on, due to the unique expression of faith and practice which is developing.

Raising up indigenous leaders may also take longer than in more traditional church plants. This is partly due to the whole process of developing church practices taking longer, and also because members are likely to be starting without a background of church experience or belief. Frustratingly indigenous leaders able to lead the fresh expression of church may not fit the requirements for authorised leadership and so be asked to gain more experience and training elsewhere. A number of founders, having developed leaders to





continue the church, have lost key leaders because of this and the fresh expression of church has significantly suffered.

Pioneers starting and sustaining fresh expressions of church in their spare time grow in a model which often depends on the work of a few leaders. In some cases this creates a stable transition between leaders as it's not dependent on one paid leader, so does not go through the same transition period when the leader moves on. In some cases a highly committed couple may support a church for years; examples of this are often found with more vulnerable people groups such as those leading fresh expressions with adults with learning disabilities. However, spare time leadership in these cases is demanding and encouraging new leaders or volunteers is very difficult. It should be noted that whilst these churches led by spare time leaders may

not encounter the problems of paid leadership succession, these churches are more vulnerable and less likely to remain sustainable over the long-term (see Encounters on the Edge no. 50 for more details).

If we are to see fresh expressions of church develop into maturity, issues of leadership succession need to be addressed. In this bulletin we delve deeper into some of these issues and suggest a number of ways forward, including developing indigenous leadership, finding ways to authorise indigenous leaders, multiplying leadership and developing a deeper understanding of pioneer ministry beyond the initial start-up phase.

Beth Keith



Jumping Beechers Brook



Difficulties arise here in long-standing churches and recent ones. The decline at large churches is often linked to succession problems. The previous leader may have been the glue holding diverse elements together, the draw that attracted new members and the holder of pastoral capital built over many years. Add a newcomer with different vision, priorities or gifts and conflict and a partial exodus may follow.

In the young church, add to all this that the last leader was the founder. Bob Hopkins and I have likened the longer story of a young church to the Grand National and the loss of the founder we called Beechers Brook. It can be jumped, but that's where most horses come to grief. My survey of the fifty-seven stories told thus far in the Encounters series offers some comment. Sixteen founders are still in the saddle. In twenty-one stories the founder was replaced and life continued well, with some fresh expressions of Church now with their third leader.

However, on the debit side fourteen churches ceased to exist. In eight of these cases either the departure of the founder was without replacement, or a poor appointment was made after the founder left. In my view this was the major cause of their demise. Thus the Beechers Brook analogy has some force. In addition

there have been three cases where the church left the Church of England, one factor being that an Anglican full-time stipendiary leader was not replaced and local lay post-denominational or free church inclined leadership saw no virtue in remaining. In nine of these fourteen cases the young church was too dependent on the considerable ministry gifts, available time and co-ordinating skills of the leader to survive their departure.

Patterns of effective and dynastic succession at very large churches will not help us here, in that few young churches have the money or permission to groom or recruit, grow and install a successor. In addition, in young churches there probably is the need for the second leader to have overlapping but different gifts to the pioneer/founder. We currently have no system to spot, train and deploy such pioneer-sustainers or sustainer-innovators. Yet sustainable development is a watchword ecologically and ought to be in the economy of church life. It is an area that needs further thought, wisdom to spot people who would be good successors and courage to commit resources to that process.

George Lings





Leadership Succession Issues in Church Planting



We have often worked alongside Stuart Murray-Williams over the years, and given his wealth of experience in this area we asked him to contribute some thoughts to this Research Bulletin.

Stuart works as a trainer and consultant under the auspices of the Anabaptist Network. Based in Bristol, he travels widely in the UK and overseas and works with local churches, mission agencies, denominational leaders, conferences and individuals.

Questions about leadership succession in church planting contexts arise in various ways:

- If the church is planted by a team deployed by a 'mother church', when should the new church appoint its own leaders who are no longer under the supervision of the sending church?
- If the leadership of the 'mother church' changes and the new leaders have different expectations of what is being planted, or are opposed to church planting in principle, what can be done to safeguard this venture?
- If the church is planted by a team deployed by a mission agency, should this team at some point withdraw so that indigenous leaders can emerge, and when should this happen? Or can the team evolve into church leadership?
- If the leader of the church planting team is primarily gifted at initiating new ventures rather than sustaining and developing them, when and how should this pioneer be encouraged to move on and what kind of leadership is needed in the next phase?
- If the pioneer is operating in a denomination which has a policy of redeploying staff at regular intervals, what steps can be taken to raise up indigenous leaders ready to assume responsibility when this happens? And should this policy be challenged?
- What level of spiritual maturity is required of potential leaders? Are they expected to receive training or accreditation? What cultural

assumptions about the nature of leadership are operative? Are there communities in which it is impossible to find suitable indigenous leaders?

- In traditions or denominations in which certain activities are restricted to ordained and accredited leaders, can church planting experiences encourage reflection on the validity and missional impact of such restrictions?

There is no space in this short article to address all of these questions. But there are some general principles worth considering.

Firstly, it is helpful if these kinds of issues are identified and explored at the outset of a church planting initiative and agreement reached on how leadership succession will be addressed, although not every eventuality can be anticipated. External consultancy may be helpful.

Secondly, care should be taken that the new church does not become unduly dependent on the pioneer and so finds it traumatic when that person withdraws. For this and many other reasons, planting teams are usually preferable to lone pioneers.

Thirdly, 'indigenous' leadership means different things in different contexts, but the goal of church planting is for the Christian community that emerges to be deeply rooted in its local context and shaped by members of that locality or people group. This may mean the church turns out differently from what was envisioned, which can be a cause of tension.

Finally, church planters should prioritise the identification, nurture and empowerment of potential indigenous leaders, devoting considerable time to this, but should not rush the process or burden these people with unrealistic expectations. The transition process need not be abrupt and in some situations need not involve the pioneer leaving.



Stuart Murray-Williams



The Sheffield Centre is a research team whose role is to discover, develop and communicate our findings in evangelism and mission to Church Army and the wider Church.



Authorised and Productive



Both leadership and succession have a whole host of books written on them. In our Church's longer history, succession - or maintaining the orthodoxy of links in the chain back to the Apostles and the continuity of the church through time - was perhaps a more significant factor in Church decision making than local leadership changes.

More recently in our Western culture leadership has become emphasised, often with all our hopes pinned to the idea. The sense of continuity has not been entirely lost, but our sudden nervousness and cultural and financial instability when a 'Great Leader' dies, retires or stops playing football is evident. For some it is a gaping hole of uncertainty to be got past as quickly as possible, for others a chance to reflect, to renegotiate power, roles and purpose. We could learn a great deal from our Christian heritage about this, but also from other sources. One such source is the field of Systems Leadership.

In this field, a system is defined as 'a specific methodology for organising activities in order to achieve a purpose'. This can sound de-humanising, but its focus on the task to be done, rather than the personalities involved, can be liberating.

Often they are not consciously conceived, but every church has and needs systems to survive. Simply put, such systems can be authorised or unauthorised, and can be productive or counter-productive. The matrix below gives a way of understanding how these four elements relate.

A Systems Matrix

From 'Improving the Design & Implementation of Systems',
Macdonald Associates Consultancy

	Productive	Counter-productive
Authorised	A Well designed and implemented	B Restrictive practices which have been adopted by the organisation
Unauthorised	C 'Cutting corners' in order to get the work done (still a positive motivation)	D Alternative leadership based on the mis-use of 'power' - stealing, bullying, racism...

One would hope in a healthy church that most things are functioning in quadrant A. In any developing system (such as the development of core values or leadership roles in a fresh expression) there will be the need for creative imagination to move counter-productive assumptions or practices from quadrants B or D, possibly through C, to quadrant A.

In our established churches, some examples might be:

- For quadrant B: A restrictive model of leadership that assumes one externally deployed priest will be sufficient to lead a community
- For quadrant C: Pioneering a new work with non-churched people and securing permission later
- For quadrant D: A senior, long-standing member of the congregation intimidating others to get their own way on the shape of the church during an interregnum

We have systems for dealing with interregnums in established churches. The connected issues will be related but different in the variety and diversity of fresh expressions that are developing across the country. Working this out will be the work of faithful, Spirit-led contextual re-imagining of our church practices and heritage for a new culture, sometimes known as double listening.

Jesus might have used the new wineskins parable for such situations. By looking at the issue of leadership succession through a systems approach, in much more detail than I have been able to here, a helpful process could be developed to discover what is needed by a given fresh expression of Church when their leader moves on. In time this could lead to an authorised and productive process for dealing with succession that is both locally tailored and nationally recognised.



Laurence Keith



Swimming Against the Tide:

The Value of Values



I came across some useful advice on leadership succession a few years ago. I'd been interviewing leaders on how a sense of community is best nurtured in young churches – my professional quest to find real life examples that prove depth and quality of community life can be reality rather than mere aspiration.

Comments on leadership succession were made on the back of discussions around the importance of values for any church serious about nurturing its community life. Once a young church has some idea of its core values, interviewees said it was a precious gift in helping to recruit future leaders. A candidate's ability to understand a church's bespoke values should be the most important criteria in appointing them as a leader.

Problem solved?

Not really. There are wider forces at work that have the potential to get in the way. Expectations for how long the founding pioneer needs to stay are often as short as three years (a by-product of a seed-corn funding mentality perhaps?). This means a founding leader may move on before the church has identified their values, making the induction of any outside successive leader to its values premature. Interviews confirmed that establishing values in a church planted from scratch will take far longer than three years. Therefore founding leaders need to be resourced to stay longer.

Furthermore, clergy deployment patterns limit the chances for a minister to join a church as a learner to

understand its values before applying for the post of leader. Using placements or sabbatical time may be creative ways forward but outsiders have to be fast learners. Learning to identify and work with values doesn't feature prominently, if at all, in current ministry formation, which needs addressing if understanding values is deemed to be key.

The monastic pattern of electing a new leader from within the existing church membership, who knows and lives the values of the community, may be the best solution. However, issues of appropriate ongoing training, remuneration and leadership recognition need to be taken seriously for this to work well.

Once again, this proposed solution for leadership succession within fresh expressions seems at odds with 'the system' which is geared towards finding outside successive leaders for long-established churches. It's a shame. Our young churches would certainly benefit from more realistic time frames, participation before application by potential successive outside leaders and ways of championing young churches who raise up successive leaders from within (rather than regarding them a strange anomaly). It's a tall order with so many financial and ministerial pressures facing the wider church.

No wonder we have a problem.

Claire Dalpra



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