Church Planting and Church Growth

Richard Priestley
Church Army USA

"Do you not say `Four months more, and then the harvest?' I tell you, open your eyes and look at the fields! They are ripe for harvest." John 4:35

With thanks to George Lings of the Sheffield Centre, UK, for the missiological and theological insight.
Church Growth Principles

• developed after much study through the last century from the missions and churches around the world.
• Roland Allen; Donald Mcgavren
• Institute of World Mission
The Development of Church Growth Principles

- Church growth in the Bible
- Church growth in history
- Church growth Today

Church Growth Principles

Your Church
McGavran – Understanding Church Growth

1. Proclaiming Christ
2. Finding the lost
3. Nurturing new believers
4. Spirit filled Biblical teaching
5. Holy and connected
Ten signs of Church Growth
Roy Pointer

1. Constant Prayer
2. Respect for Biblical authority
3. Effective leadership
4. Mobilized membership
5. Eventful Worship
Ten signs of Church Growth cont.

6. Continuous Evangelism
7. Community Life
8. Compassionate service
9. Openness to change
10. Released resources
7 Vital signs of a growing church – Peter Wagner

1. Dynamic leadership
2. Gift centered lay ministry
3. Big enough church
4. Celebration + Congregation + Cell + Church
5. Homogeneous Unit
6. Effective Evangelistic methods
7. First things first – give people God
Homogenous Unit Principle

- "People most easily (like to) become Christians without crossing racial/linguistic/class/cultural barriers."

Therefore:

- H. U. groups of christians (churches) are the most effective in evangelism.
Historical Church Growth Principle

When the church expresses the gospel and the life of the Gospel community in terms of the target subculture, this results in effective mission and evangelism.
Positives of H.U.P.

- To impose another culture as part of the Gospel package = Cultural Imperialism
- An attempt to mix/level cultures into a colourless uniformity could be seen as a denial of the creator...An affront to Creation!
- Preserving cultural diversity - honours creator God, respects human, enriches life, promotes evangelism.
Downside of H.U.P.

- Seems to deny reconciling work of the Cross - Unity ("neither Jew nor Greek …" Gal 3.28).
- Seems to accept prejudice... segregation
- Where is the challenge to mix ... be one. .. "that the world might believe Jn 17 21". The challenge to accept one another and not withdraw from fellowship with one another.
Youth and Church ....

She said my appearance wasn't acceptable in church....

and that my clothes should be more normal and practical.

Then in came the vicar.

Is there some kind of credibility gap?
“your church is primarily set up to minister to the over forties at the expense of young people”

Encounters on the Edge
NO 4 p 15

Forever young?
Young people are growing up in a different world to that experienced by previous generations. The life experience of young people in modern industrial societies has changed quite significantly over the last two decades.

Furlong and Cartmel Young People and social change 1997

Culture or Generation gap?

The primary frontier which needs to be crossed in mission to young people is not so much a generation gap as a profound change in culture.

Youth a Part para 2.11
I realised, when I came back to America, that on the home front I had left behind me one of the most exotic tribes of all - the young people of America. They have their own form of dress... food, music, ritual, language, values - these are the things that make up a tribe, or a subculture as they have been called. It is to that tribe, as they are, that the gospel must be brought. ...

You must have the courage to go with them to a place that neither you nor they have been before”

Vincent Donovan
Preface to 2nd Edition of Christianity Rediscovered
It follows that Youth Congregations are not a bridging strategy. They are not a temporary holding camp where young people can be acclimatised to existing church. It is not a bridge to the real thing. These groupings take responsibility for worship, pastoral care, mission and evangelism. To their members they are the only real things they know. It is an experience of the Church of Jesus Christ.“

Graham Cray 1998

A Reality

Effective mission must be allowed to create problems of unity

Graham Cray To Church Planting Conference May 1999
A post-modern LANDSCAPE

Relativistic Pluralism
Cultural complexity & diversity - niches
Rapidly evolving

Time constraints and pressure to Perform
Pic ‘n’ mix Morality/ “enthusiastic Dualism”

Cynicism about morality and control

Family fragmentation
Distrust of Institutions
suspect authoritarian/domineering Leadership

Media driven Opinion
Be human let them know you
Flexible and Adaptable
Integrity Authenticity & Vulnerability
Demonstrate your values - lifestyle will talk
Show Christianity “works”, then it’s true not v.v.
Social Involvement as a key
use Story long before argument
don’t Expect quick results - its relational
dependence on God is still IN
a 21st C CHURCH style

Be, Belong, Believe, Behave

Community and accessible belonging

Honest openness about tough issues
non judgmental, unshockable - grace not law

Accountable Discipleship

Passion and Vision from the centre
Sunday quality without “sell”
embrace mystery, symbol & ambiguity
Church will be wheat and weeds mixed
emphasise Journey
Christ is for whole life not just church
Global Picture: Rapid Expansion

- 80,000 - 100,000 new believers daily.
- 3,500 new churches planted every week.
- Last 5 years greatest church growth ever.

Christianity is not growing in North America
USA: % Church Attendance

- 1972: 50%
- 1991: 49%
- 1992: 47%
- 1993: 45%
- 1995: 44%
- 1997: 43%
Healthy, Reproducing Churches Are Needed...

To make more and better disciples of all people groups in North America ... and beyond.
Your Personal Commitment to Mission

- Mobilizing others begins with modeling.
  - Do you have a passion for lost people?
  - Do you pray for revival?
  - Do you share your faith?
Theological principles that affect Church Planting

- God’s Mission
- The incarnation
- The Kingdom
- The church as Apostolic
God’s Mission (Missio Dei)

• Why Church plant at all?
  – Is saving individual people a sufficient reason
  – Is the starting of new outward looking churches, in itself, the goal?

NO
Moltmann - 1977

“It is not that the church has a mission of salvation to fulfill in the world; it is the mission of the Son and the Spirit through the Father, that includes the church.”

Robert Warren – 1997

“Participating in the Mission Dei will involve shifting the emphasis from a focus on the life of the church to a concern for the world in its needs, joys and struggles.”
Why plant churches?

- To join in with God’s mission of love to the world
- There is church because there is mission
Which was the first Christian sending community that started a plant?

- out of a commitment to mission and the overflow of its own loving life
- gave one third of its resources
- sent a small vulnerable, cross-cultural plant to begin a radically new work and to reproduce after its kind
The first community to Church Plant was…

The Trinity
The Trinity

• western philosophical conundrum to be solved
• Roman governmental instinct for division of divine tasks
• Living community of loving bliss and joy (Eastern Orthodox)
God the Trinity – Community in Mission

• John 20:21
“As the FATHER sent ME (Jesus) so I send you, and He breathed the HOLY SPIRIT on them.”
“As the Father SENT me SO I SEND YOU, and He breathed the Holy Spirit on them.”
The Incarnation

• Demonstrates the style in which Missio Dei is carried out
  – “In the past God spoke to our forefathers through the prophets at many times and in various ways, but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, and through whom he made the universe. The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by his powerful word." *Heb 1 1-3*
  
  – “The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us.” *John 1.14*
The Incarnation

- God truly becoming human
- Was culture specific
The Incarnation -

- Has a cost

- Is vulnerable

“Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus: Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, but made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient to death—even death on a cross!” *Philippians 2:5-8*
The Incarnation ties us to Jesus’ patterns

A Church;

- will know vulnerability and strength made perfect in weakness
- A church will be for a particular place and time
- should live out the way that Jesus communicated by word deed and being.
- must proclaim good news - in what it says and by what it is in its relationships
The Kingdom

The Church is

• IMPERFECT SIGN
• KINGDOM IS MADE MANIFEST
• a SIGN of Christ's present and coming Kingdom.
Living the Kingdom out

- The Kingdom is embodied by those disciples who live its values together in community

- It is the Kingdom that should define the church - not the other way round
The Church as Apostolic

- John 7:29  I know him, for I come from him, and he sent me."
- 13:20 Truly, truly, I say to you, he who receives any one whom I send receives me; and he who receives me receives him who sent me."
- 17:18 As you sent me into the world, so I have sent them into the world.
- 20:21 Jesus said to them again, "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, even so I send you."
- Hebrews 3:1 Fix your eyes on Jesus, the apostle…
Why is the church apostolic?

• Because it was sent
What is the connection Ephesians 4.11 list of Ministries and Church Planting?

- Why are the Ephesians ministries in the order given?

Because that is the order in which church happens
Church planting is foundational to what the Church is.

Planters and evangelists are more important than pastors and teachers.

- If we do not do our work, they have nothing to pastor and teach!
In pioneer mission the “flow” of ministry is

As Christendom is established the emphasis becomes

As the extent of lapsing increases, in addition we need

As post-Christian and pre-Christian groups re-emerge there arises the rediscovery of

BUT....
If the country is becoming a mission field, not an evangelism field there is a change of direction and mindset

Church & the Evangelist

“out and back”

The Apostolic ……

“out and who knows where?”
A theology of Church Planting incorporates

- God’s mission
- The Incarnation
- The Kingdom
- The Church as Apostolic
Church Growth means Planting Churches

Churches that are:
- Healthy
- Culturally relevant
- Planting Churches
ABC’s of Natural Church Development
What's That

NATURAL
CHURCH
DEVELOPMENT
Models & principles

Model:
- Imitation
- 1:1

Principles:
- Abstraction
- Individualization
International Research Project

- 1,000 churches
- 32 countries
- 18 languages
- 6 continents
Quality Characteristics

- Empowering \(\rightarrow\) Leadership
- Gift-oriented \(\rightarrow\) Ministry
- Passionate \(\rightarrow\) Spirituality
- Functional \(\rightarrow\) Structures
- Inspiring \(\rightarrow\) Worship
- Holistic \(\rightarrow\) Small Groups
- Need-oriented \(\rightarrow\) Evangelism
- Loving \(\rightarrow\) Relationships

The Adjective is the key!
Quality Characteristics

Three things can be said with a high degree of certainty:

• These are universally valid principles
• They can also be transferred to our own situation
• Each of these has a positive relationship with both the quality and the quantitative growth of the church
Healthy churches are growing churches

... quality can be measured!
Mark 4:26-29

A man scatters seed…
the seed sprouts and
grows…
All by itself the soil
produces grain…
Raising the quality of the minimum factor often results in quantitative growth.
NCD Key Question

How can we release the potential that God has placed within every church?
The NCD Cycle

Phase 1: Prepare for Survey
Phase 2: Do the Survey
Phase 3: Analyze Survey Results
Phase 4: Develop Action Plan
Phase 5: Implement & monitor
Phase 6: Evaluate and Repeat
Helpful Resources

- Natural Church Development (Schwarz)
  - Explanation of NCD basics
- ABC’s of Natural Church Development (Schwarz)
  - Abbreviated explanation of NCD
- Releasing Your Church’s Potential (Logan/Clegg)
- CoachNet web-based resourcing
  - www.coachnet.org
Healthy Churches are Multiplying Churches

- The NCD quality index of multiplying churches is higher than the quality index of other churches and,
- Multiplying churches grow faster.
- The fruit of a healthy disciple is more disciples, and the fruit of a healthy church is more churches. This outward focus is also one of the factors in keeping a local church healthy. Staying "on mission" helps to foster a faith-filled spiritual atmosphere.
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<thead>
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<th>Target Group</th>
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<th>The Non-churched</th>
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<td>Pre-Christian</td>
<td>Post Christian</td>
<td>Anti Christian</td>
</tr>
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<td>WORSHIP</td>
<td>EVANGELISM</td>
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<td>Cool</td>
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<td>Control</td>
<td>Dialogue</td>
<td>Partnership</td>
<td>Listen ?</td>
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3 key questions ...

“What is the **mission** to this area?”

“What kind of **community** is needed to sustain the mission?”

“What set of **spiritual disciplines** is required to sustain the community in that mission?”

Based on questions asked by Church of Saviour Washington DC
3-D Models of Church Planting

Church Plants are not 1 or 2 dimensional but 3
3 Dimensions of a Church Plant

1. The Mission Goals – Who for?
2. The Mission Resources – Who by?
3. The Mission Partners – Who with?
Mission Goals

3-D Models of Church Planting

Mission Partners

- De-churched / non-churched
- Network / neighborhood
- Progression / pioneer / re-plant
- Cell / congregation

Mission resources