

Reactivating the Church as Movement

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Preamble

Over the course of its 2,000-year history, the Church has continued Christ's ministry on earth while adopting structures and organizations to fulfill its mission. Yet today, we find ourselves at a critical threshold—an extraordinary challenge to transcend inherited frameworks as we continue to pursue God's will for this generation.

In this era of upheaval and possibility, the Church must embody a more dynamic, adaptive, and mission-shaped expression. These circumstances invite us to rediscover the movemental ecclesiology of the early Church—a way of being that thrives in the margins, makes vibrant disciples, multiplies churches, meets persecution with faithful resilience, and effects deep societal transformation. This is a recovery of the Church's essential movemental DNA, a call to live boldly in Spirit-led advance.

We long to see all God's people making disciples and bringing lost people to saving knowledge of Christ, toward the vision of God's glory filling the whole earth. We invite the global body of Christ into this grand adventure—a journey of creativity and courage, driven by the Spirit, to fulfill our divine purpose as instruments of God's kingdom.

Core Affirmations

1. **The Centrality of Jesus Christ.** As the eternal Word who perfectly reveals God, Jesus himself animates the heart of all initiatives that faithfully bear his name. His life, teaching, death, resurrection, ascension, reign, and promised return form the cornerstone upon which all missional identity is built. In following Jesus, the head of the Church, we are inspired by his exemplary humanity, sacrificial love, redeeming death, and humble obedience to the Father—a divine model for how we approach life and work. We embrace the Father's sovereign plan in sending the Son, acknowledging the essential role of the Holy Spirit who empowers and sustains every aspect of our Christian journey. Through this Trinitarian vision, we commit to ensuring that Jesus remains central in movements, guiding us toward genuine transformation and kingdom advancement. (John 1:18; Colossians 1:15-20; Hebrews 1:1-3)

2. **Scripture as the Foundation.** We affirm the inspiration and authority of the Bible as our basis for faith and life. Scripture is the living curriculum that shapes our fellowship and directs our mission. We also affirm historic biblical confessions of the faith, such as the Apostles' Creed, the Nicene Creed, and the Lausanne Covenant. (2 Timothy 3:16-17; Hebrews 4:12)
3. **God is the Author of Movements.** God is the true author of every movement of disciples and churches. The Holy Spirit is always at work, calling all people to embody the ways, works, and words of Jesus. The lifeblood of movements is the active presence of God transforming, empowering, and expanding his kingdom in the hearts of people and communities. This is frequently accompanied by transformed lives, answered prayers, dreams, visions, and demonstrations of God's power. At the same time, human agents partner with the movement of the Spirit through faithful obedience to the teachings of Scripture embodied and passed on by ordinary believers. Our role is to faithfully align with Christ and his Word as we pray, plant, and water the seeds that God can grow into a movement. (Matthew 16:18; Luke 10:1-11; Acts 2:1-18, 40-47; 1 Corinthians 3:6; Colossians 1:6; 2 Thessalonians 3:1)
4. **Disciples Making Disciples.** A disciple follows the ways, words, and works of Jesus to become more like him in all areas of life. We are called not only to be disciples of Jesus ourselves, but also to the ongoing task of disciple-making. Jesus intends every follower of his to live as a reproducing disciple. At the heart of movements is the multiplication of disciples who make disciples who make disciples, resulting in churches that reproduce churches. (Matthew 4:18-22; John 15:1-17; 2 Timothy 2:1-2; James 1:22-25)
5. **Healthy Multiplication.** Growth, fruitfulness, and reproduction are a natural part of God's creation and lie at the heart of his design for a maturing church. Within every seed is the potential for a tree, and within every tree, the potential for an entire forest. In the same way, God has created every disciple and church with the spiritual potential to reproduce fruitful, maturing disciples and churches. Spirit-empowered movements are characterized by ongoing multiplication of: 1) disciples, 2) churches, 3) leaders, and 4) movements themselves. (Genesis 1:28; Mark 4:26-32; 1 Corinthians 3:5-9; 1 Thessalonians 1:7-8)
6. **Generative Ecclesiology.** We affirm the intrinsic value of all types of churches, but also recognize the need to move beyond the limitations of pastor-centric, attractional ecclesiology found in much of the Christian tradition. We invite the Church to adopt a movemental ecclesiology that releases and empowers every

disciple, male and female, regardless of race, ethnic background, age, economic, political, or social status, believing in the potential of all believers (the priesthood of all believers) to play an active role in the Church's mission. As a spiritual family, the Church should not simply grow larger, but reproduce generationally. Movemental churches are adaptable, thrive under adverse conditions, and equip all disciples through the biblical framework of Ephesians 4:11. Here we affirm the apostolic, prophetic, and evangelistic functions (to initiate and expand) alongside that of the pastoral and teaching functions (to nurture and sustain). (Acts 13:1-5; 1 Corinthians 12:12-14; Galatians 3:28; Ephesians 4:11-13; 1 Peter 2:9-10)

7. **Integrating *Motus Dei* with *Missio Dei*.** God is multiplying movements of multiplying disciples and churches across the globe. This is *motus Dei*—the movement of God to disciple the nations. *Motus Dei* stresses the dynamic, generative nature of God's redemptive work in the world. It adds to the concept of *missio Dei* by highlighting disciple multiplication amid all that God does to achieve his purposes. As *missio Dei* invites Christians to participate in God's mission, *motus Dei* invites them to join in his movement to redeem people from every tribe, people, nation, and language on earth. (Matthew 28:19; John 20:21; Revelation 7:9-10)
8. **Principled Incarnational Engagement.** Just as Jesus incarnated God's saving presence among us, we too must strive to see the gospel embodied in diverse contexts. This demands not only the continuing contextualization of the gospel message, but also the contextualizing of the church itself in ways faithful to Scripture. Ecclesial forms developed within specific cultural contexts should not simply be imposed on other contexts. Instead, we must create space for the kind of ecclesial innovation that arises from incarnational mission—allowing an indigenous church to take root and flourish in every culture. We affirm that it is underlying biblical and social principles—expressed in a variety of missional methods—that foster kingdom reproduction. In the New Testament, essential elements of church were adapted and reproduced by authentic and dedicated disciples. For this to occur, movements often *simplify in order to multiply*—nurturing appropriate structures and practices to empower and mobilize every believer for mission and disciple-making. (1 Corinthians 9:19-23; Philippians 2:5-11)
9. **Church as a Living Network.** Movements are extended families of disciples and churches, characterized by the Holy Spirit empowering ordinary people to provide a variety of servant leadership roles. Authority is distributed across the network according to roles and responsibility, not in a positional hierarchy like

worldly institutions. Movemental progress advances through networks and collaborations that share resources, knowledge, and support, fostering mutual accountability and collective impact. (Matthew 20:25-28; Acts 2:46-47; Ephesians 2:13-22; 1 Peter 2:4-5, 9-10; 5:1-5)

10. **Holistic Mission.** The movement of God encompasses both spiritual and social dimensions. Movements address the spiritual, physical, emotional, and social needs of individuals and communities, embodying the holistic ethos of Jesus. As disciples obey everything Jesus commands, their communities, societies, and nations are transformed. (Mark 1:32-39; Luke 4:16-19; Acts 2:42-47; 6:1-8)

11. **Unity and Partnership:** All churches are vital members of God's family having unique contributions to God's global mission. Movemental ecclesiology does not reject other ecclesiological models, but seeks to complement them and extend kingdom impact. As diverse expressions with one spirit, we have the potential to accelerate and deepen disciple-making and kingdom transformation among every people and nation. This includes places where the Church is flourishing, has previously flourished, and where it has not yet been. (John 17:20-23; 1 Corinthians 12:12-13; Philemon 6)

12. **Prayer, Fasting, and Perseverance in Suffering.** Movements are fueled through abundant prayer, fasting, and faithful perseverance in suffering. Prayer connects us to God's heart and keeps us aligned with his will. Fasting sharpens our focus on Him. Suffering strengthens our faith and dependence on the Holy Spirit. These practices help shape the Church to reflect Jesus and move forward with humility and fruitfulness. (Luke 4:1-14, 6:12-19, Acts 4:23-31; Colossians 1:24, 4:2-6)

Conclusion

As we seek to deepen the global Church's understanding and practice of *motus Dei* through movemental ecclesiology, we commit to healthy multiplication under Christ's lordship. We remain rooted in the Bible and follow the Holy Spirit's guidance, recognizing and relying on his work among us. We invite all believers to join this movement journey as we strive to make disciples of all nations, transforming lives and communities for the glory of God.