



GREENHOUSE CHURCH

# CORE DOCUMENTS



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ordinary people become passionate  
followers of Jesus Christ.*

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# OUR MISSION AND VISION

## OUR MISSION

Greenhouse Church exists to help ordinary people become passionate followers of Jesus Christ.

## OUR VISION

We see churches of real disciples, not part-time believers; people that love God as Father, follow Him as Rabbi, and honor Him as King; people that give themselves for one another, and the cause of the lost and the least.

We see churches of passion; people who stand so amazed at God's grace that they can't help but live lives of adventure and generosity; God leading us to spend ourselves for those who could never pay us back; strong with children, students, missions, and the poor. We have been sent.

We see churches where people feel like they can belong before they believe and believe before they behave. We also see bodies with too much brown to be called a white church, and too much Hispanic to be called a black church; with too many kids to be called an old church, and too many wise ones to be called a young church – churches that model the diversity of God's kingdom.

We see congregations that love God with more than Sundays and care for people with more

than words. We see characteristically Spirit-filled churches that move in undeniable power yet stay non-religious and creative. We see churches where people become whole – in spirit, soul, and body.

We see communities where the potential of all the members get realized, as people recognize that they are called, whether they work in a church building or the marketplace. We see teams that are led by people who are greater on the inside than they are on the outside.

We see a movement of disciples who reorient their lives around Jesus' call to make more disciples. We see a multiplying network of churches and Microchurches that unashamedly and fiercely love their neighbor both locally and globally. We see ordinary people mobilized to go and change the world.

We see mentoring churches and missions outposts, worshiping families and authentic communities. We see houses of prayer. We see a church as supernatural as its Master, because He promised nothing less.

***We are the church.***

# WHAT IS LIVING GREEN?

The name Greenhouse comes from our discipleship philosophy. A disciple is someone who worships Jesus, is on mission, and in authentic community. We represent mission and community with blue extending to the world and people around us, while our relationship with God is represented by yellow.

Our vision is that we aren't just one of these three components, but a thriving mix of all; this is where we came up with the idea of "green." We see a house of green disciples that are constantly pursuing God and His Kingdom mission with the people around them.



## OUR FIRST VIRTUE:

# PRAYER

Father, we are a movement of the first love. The first command is our first priority: Love the Lord your God. Your face O Lord we seek. Our deep desire is not ministry growth or success. We want You, Father. Whatever we do in ministry, may it be the result of this experiment: what happens when a group of people set apart their lives to seeking your face? The outgrowth of that then, is to seek the lost, the least, and the true Church. But this is our ultimate dream: to participate in ministry defined by its pursuit of You, so that it is so very clear that You are glorious. This is first. Primary. The center.

So we pray for harvest, innovation, leadership, supernatural provision, gifts of the Spirit, creativity, powerful sermons, inspired Bible studies, unity, resources, divine appointments, expanded vision, physical strength, open doors, management excellence, protection, incredible times of worship. But what we want most is You. To know You. To be found in You. We want to do what we do - not out of an achiever need to accomplish, not out of a competitor's need to win, not because it's what everybody else is doing - or because nobody else has done it yet ... we want to live the natural outgrowth of our relationship, intimacy, and friendship with You. Thus, our main thing is not leadership or preaching; it is seeking You. This is our life. We are God-seekers.

The need of our day is not another successful church. The need is a work characterized by You, not by business principles, hard work and natural talent. We seek You. We are defined by You. Your face O Lord we will seek.

We are not to take this for granted with our people or our leaders. This is not merely one of our many activities; this is the main thing. No minimum requirement mentality. At the center of our leadership is leveraging every bit of our influence to cause people to seek You. This is our call: to make people thirsty enough to drink living water and woo them by the Spirit to seek Your face.

For the unregenerate we call this evangelism. But there is another form of evangelism needed for the believer. We get lost too. We lose our way. But this we know, because we have done the experiment a million times: our call gets rediscovered in the pursuit of God. Vision becomes sharp in the Secret Place. Mission comes alive when our hearts are set on seeking You. Leadership is amazing when the leader brings direction that came from hours spent burning in Your presence. Words have authority when the tongue has been silenced in a time of listening. Hope is rekindled, faith is stirred, peace is obtained, promises are embraced, fears are stilled, opposition is exposed. Draw us in O Lord!

We don't just need another good church. Or another missional movement. Or another group of natural Christians. What we bring to the table is a God-obsession that translates into a God-pursuit, and then leads us to a radical mission and radical community. Amen.



# FLUENCIES



*“We want an authentic community of passionate Jesus-followers that are more influenced by Kingdom culture than any other.”*

Every leader in Greenhouse needs to possess certain “fluencies.” This is beyond a creedal affirmation; it is the competency and the ability to reproduce a reality. You are fluent when you can flow, which is why fluency is rarely acquired unless you immerse yourself in a culture. The keyword here is culture.

Culture: the art of developing the intellectual and moral faculties especially by education; expert care and training; the integrated pattern of human knowledge, belief, and behavior that depends upon man’s capacity for learning and transmitting knowledge to succeeding generations.

We are trying to create a unique and passionate culture, a kingdom of Jesus culture. We are not liberal or conservative, progressive or traditional; we aspire to be the Church. We want the kingdom of God. We want an alternative, inclusive culture, much like what we discover in the book of Acts. They were far from perfect, but they reproduced the culture of heaven on earth. And they turned their world upside down. Note the following:

**Ephesians 4:20** - *“But you have not so learned Christ.”*

**2 Timothy 3:14, 2:2** - *“But you must continue in the things which you have learned and been assured of, knowing from whom you have learned them ... and the things that you have heard from me among many witnesses, commit these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also.”*

We aren’t kidding ourselves into believing that our native cultures do not influence the way we view reality. We recognize that we all bring biases to our study of Scripture and our pursuit of God. Yet we find ourselves captivated by the possibility that God Himself is able to influence us more deeply than our earthly culture, and the book of Acts seems to show such an object lesson. God wants to create a culture that corresponds to a prayer that says, “on earth as it is in Heaven.” What is the Church? It is God’s way of answering this prayer. The Church is God’s way of passing on Kingdom culture. This is the essence of discipleship, which is why our leaders must be fluent.

We want an authentic community of passionate Jesus-followers that are more influenced by Kingdom culture than any other.

What follows are specific fluencies we require of our leadership:

# GREEN FLUENCY

There are many ways to describe the Church. The people of God. Two or more gathered in the name of Jesus. The Bride of Christ. The Body. Yet at the functional level, our ecclesial minimum, and our discipleship approach looks like this: When you find a group devoted to worship, mission, and community you find the Church.

The implications of this are profound. This means there are many religious buildings and Christian groups that sing songs, facilitate monologues, and call themselves “church” – but that does not make it so. This is why there are huts and caves and homes all over the world that look highly plain on the outside, but on the inside you find a worshipping community on mission. And that is Church.

When the yellow of our devotion to God (worship) meets the blue of our devotion to people (mission and community), we reach the deep green of the Church. The kingdom of God comes to earth.

We call people to live in the green. We scrutinize the health of our families and microchurches and discipleship by whether or not we are living in

the green. We recognize and resist the dangers of organized religion to complicate the simplicity of our call. Note the order. Worship is first. There is a reason that the first of the Ten Commandments involves worshiping only God. The second involves idols, a function of worship. All of the other commands - most involving people - will be an outgrowth of these first commands. You never break commandments 3-10 unless you have first violated number one and two. Indeed, our lives flow out of our worship. We absolutely must disciple people and lead churches with this truth in mind.

*“You can’t really ‘go’ to church;  
you have to ‘be’ the church.”*

Yet part of the litmus test of true worship is mission. Once we connect to God in worship we cannot help but receive his passion for a lost and suffering world. He gives us a new heart, and this new heart leads us into mission. People who worship God begin to care about what He cares about. We always embrace the interests of the people with whom we share our heart.



When we worship and engage in mission with other people, community is the natural result. We see this with soldiers in battle. Diverse men and women, who possibly would have never come together, become a band of brothers and sisters uniting around a mission.



This is how God has wired us. And this is why we call people to realize that in a world where people are afflicted with loneliness, we do not encounter authentic community by looking for community; it is the result of encountering God and getting on mission – together. Don't "go to church" looking for friends; go to church looking for God and mission, and you'll always have friends. That's why you can't really "go" to church; you have to "be" the church.



And that is what makes Greenhouse tick. Only God can make things grow, but we provide an environment where he can work his wonders.



# GRACE FLUENCY

We are justified by grace through faith. And we are sanctified by grace through faith. Perhaps the greatest theological contribution of the Protestant Reformation was the second of these two statements. And perhaps the greatest theological challenge of most believers is precisely this: although they believe that the grace of God is enough to justify, forgive, and pardon them, they functionally believe that future growth and progress will be the result of their hard work and striving. In other words, Jesus got this ball rolling, but I'll have to take it from here.

Please don't miss this, when we allow our sanctification (ongoing progress) to feed on our justification (finished work), we thrive. But when the opposite occurs, we base the stability of our justification on the instability of our sanctification, and we fall deeper into sin and despair. It was the unmerited favor and work of Jesus that saved us, and it is the unmerited favor and work of Jesus that grows us. This is why Paul said that all he talked about was Christ and Him crucified (1 Corinthians 2:2). Apparently, every word of wisdom and moral exhortation was directly tied back to the Gospel of grace.

This means the key to growing in the Kingdom is the same key to getting in the Kingdom: a life-altering encounter with the amazing grace of God. Good news! It is the good news (about what Jesus has done and is doing), not the good advice (about what we do) or the bad news (about what we have or have not done). Our teaching will clearly involve moral imperatives and instruction, yet it must find its roots in the finished work of Jesus on the Cross, and the ongoing work of Jesus through His Spirit. Gospel freedom – not legalistic guilt - is the fuel for every call to obedience and mission.

Thus, we acknowledge that transformation is not the result of trying harder, but beholding more deeply the grace and person of Jesus. Just as the serpent was lifted up in the wilderness, when the people gazed upon it, they were changed. When we gaze upon Christ and Him crucified, we are transformed.

We do recognize that the Gospel of grace is a challenge for non-first-century people to comprehend. Substitutionary atonement is a Jewish concept. Words like propitiation, adoption, and covenant require explanation. Yet we affirm these truths, and consider the effort to explain them well worth the energy. We need to be fluent in life-altering thoughts like these. Jesus took my place (substitution) and covered me (atonement) by exhausting all the wrath against me (propitiation). He lived the life I should have lived, and died the death I should have died. He took what I deserve, and now I get what He deserves. I never have to wonder what I did to deserve this; Jesus took what I deserve. Therefore, I am His. If we will lead people to know who they are, they will increasingly act out of that identity.



# GOD-SEEKING FLUENCY

Ministry for God without intimacy with God is a dead work. Mission to the world without a connection with the God who loves the world is a filthy rag. Anything of eternal consequence flows out of our relationship with Father. Far too much of the ministry being attempted today is deprived of the soul-morphing effect of an intimate encounter with God.

David said, “The intimate friendship of the Lord is reserved for those who fear him, and he makes known to them his covenant” (Psalm 25:14). His response? “My eyes are ever towards the Lord” (25:15). This fluency speaks to the need for intimacy with God.

This lack of intimacy is a fundamental problem for so many Christians in general and leaders in particular. It’s like a travel agent selling time shares for a property she’s never seen. Or a vegan waiter pushing meat loaf he’s never tasted. The pictures look good and the food smells great, but the experience is second-hand. Far too many believers are bored with their relationship with God. Like spiritual pornographers, they attend (and lead!) religious gatherings to watch other people encounter God, while they themselves are lifeless and dull, wearied by the “duties” associated with “serving” God.

Spiritual leaders must have first-hand experiences with God in order to lead people to have first-hand experiences with God. We intend to mobilize movements of people who will make the first commandment their first priority. We love God. And how does this manifest in the real world? We begin by seeking God.

Our eternal position changes the moment we reorient our trust from our righteousness to Jesus’. We change. We are born from above. But we still have an ongoing need for this same kind of reorientation at the practical level. This involves our activity, attention, and energy. The human soul is a fickle thing. Nothing short of direct abiding in Jesus and allowing His words to abide in us will do the trick.

**Mark 1:35** - *“And rising very early in the morning, while it was still dark, he departed and went out to a desolate place, and there he prayed.”*

If we want to reflect our King, and represent our King, we must imitate our King. And before the sun had even risen, He would find a solitary place – a place to shut the door on distraction. To shut the door on temptation. To shut the door on all competitors for his attention. Because behind the shut door Father gets the monopoly. In fact, this is precisely how Jesus taught us to seek His face: go, shut the door, and pray to your Father who is in secret (Matthew 6:6).

We challenge people to be extravagant in their devotion. We equip people to move from duty to delight. We expect every leader to spend the first fruit of their day in the Secret Place. We expect every pastor to commit two hours per day in the Secret Place. We call people to the place of encounter with God.

*“Our eternal position changes the moment we reorient our trust from our righteousness to Jesus’.”*

# SCRIPTURE FLUENCY

The role of Scripture cannot be overstated. One of Jesus' very definitions of a disciple points directly to his word: "If you abide in My word, you are truly My disciples, and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free" (John 8:31-32).

Disciples are people who abide in the Word of God. They prioritize hearing, reading, studying, meditating, memorizing, and applying the words of Scripture.

We affirm the Bible, including the 39 books of the Old Covenant and the 27 books of the New Covenant, as God's written revelation to humanity. It is the indispensable and infallible record of God's self-disclosure. The Bible is the authoritative and normative rule and guide for the Christian life, conduct, and doctrine. Greenhouse leaders are expected to rightly handle the word of truth. At the concrete level, this means we encourage leaders, teachers, and students to be able to study Scripture with an inductive approach. We expect disciples to do faithful exegesis (what the Scriptures meant then and there) as well as hermeneutics. This begins with observation. Start with prayer. What is happening in this passage? Ask the who-what-when-where-how-why questions. Note key words, thoughts, etc.

Then move into interpretation. What does this

passage mean? How does this line up with other scripture? Each book is to be studied diligently and handled faithfully, within both the immediate context and ultimate context. We are to always ask, what was the original human author's intent in writing this? But then we recognize the invisible divine Author and ask, what is His intent in including this passage in Scripture? The idea is not to read our opinions and biases into the passage; what does the Holy Spirit mean?

Finally, we move into application. We recognize the danger of being "hearers only." Therefore we approach the Scriptures with a heart to go deeply enough to put these words into practice. Jesus warned of the leaven of the "doctrine" of the Pharisees (Matt. 16:12). He would go on to claim that their preaching was right, but their practice was wrong (Matt. 23:3). According to Jesus, the doctrine that matters is the doctrine you actually put into practice. Hence, fueled by Gospel grace, with eyes for Jesus, every sermon, study, and teaching leads to response. We must always ask, what are we going to DO about this?

In the end, we call people to a Jesus-center. If we read the Bible, but fail to arrive at Jesus, we have engaged in vain religion. We remember that this faith is not just a belief in a book, but a living trust in a Person. Thus, we read the Scriptures



*“If you abide in My word, you are truly My disciples, and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.”*

*John 8:31-32*

with eyes for Jesus. We embrace a Christo-centric, redemptive-historical approach to Scripture. The Bible is not a just book full of teachings with stories thrown in to illustrate the points. It is one glorious story of redemption, with teachings and principles thrown in to tell the story.



# SPIRIT FLUENCY

**Greenhouse leaders are expected to be both biblically grounded and practically experienced in the workings of the Spirit.**

The prophets said the sign of the end times was legitimate but widespread Holy Spirit activity (Joel 2). Jesus promised His ongoing work would be through the Person of the Spirit. The early church made decisions with statements like, “It seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us...” (Acts 15:28) Seemed? How could they make such a claim? Because, as Paul would say, they “kept in step” with the Spirit (Galatians 5:25). Paul would go so far as to say we “live by the Spirit.”

While most Christians functionally minimize this to mean “living biblically”, the book of Acts presents a much richer experience. And herein lies the fluency challenge: experience. Most cessationists (those who believe that the miraculous gifts and manifestations of the Spirit have ceased) argue that Spirit-filled believers base their theology on experience. While many do, the reality is that many cessationists base their theology on lack of experience.

Thus, we begin with the Bible. We conclude that the gifts and power and presence and guidance of the Spirit is abundantly available in our day, and we draw this conclusion from Scripture. Not subjective and unbiblical mysticism. Every leader must be ready to teach and lead people in things of the Spirit. This will often mean asking good questions.

**Acts 19:2** - *“Did you receive the Spirit when you believed?”*

These were Paul’s opening words upon meeting a new group of disciples in the city of Ephesus. If the Gospel of grace was his first priority, one could make a strong case for the reality of the Spirit as his second. Why was this so? Because, if you read the first 18 chapters of the book, you find a church that seemed obsessed with a very direct and constant relationship with God the Holy Spirit. Positionally, we know that

every believer has the Spirit living in them. Yet every believer is not always “filled” with and encountering the Spirit.

There truly are experiences with God subsequent to salvation. It’s not that Jesus is not enough; it’s that we need to go all the way with the Jesus who is enough. We agree with Martin Lloyd Jones: “There is nothing, I am convinced, that so ‘quenches’ the Spirit as the teaching which identifies the baptism of the Holy Ghost with regeneration ... Got it all? Well, if you have ‘got it all’, I simply ask in the Name of God, why are you as you are? If you have ‘got it all’, why are you so unlike the Apostles, why are you so unlike the New Testament Christians?”

Thus, we call our people to both understand the blessed reality of being eternally sealed with the Spirit, while being called to continually be filled with the Spirit. In practical terms we “ask for the Spirit” in prayer, “earnestly desire” spiritual gifts in our gatherings, and make room for such a reality. We then “test the spirits” (1 John 4:1) and “weigh what is said.” (1 Cor 14:29) 1 Corinthians 14 is a gold mine for biblical order.

# DISCIPLESHIP FLUENCY

We make disciples. Not religious services. Not song lists. Not interesting sermons. This is the Great Commission. On the day of judgment, we will stand before God and give an account for this command. Are we bringing disciples with us into eternity? It is beyond tragic that the average Christian has never “made” one disciple.

The church does not move forward without an intense commitment to discipleship. This was Jesus’ final command - to go and make disciples. There is no such thing as a discipleship formula, but the fundamental components Jesus gave us to make disciples can be summed up in these two mandates: baptizing them and teaching them to observe (Matthew 28:19-20).

It is vital to understand that, according to Jesus, leading people to faith and going all in through baptism is one part of the discipleship process. He did not separate evangelism and discipleship, like most Christians do today. That said, we will discuss evangelism in a fluency all its own. You might say that discipleship requires two types of immersion; the first is in water. But the second is in one another’s lives.

Discipleship requires face time, real relationships, and life lived together. We need leaders who are living lives worth imitating and who then allow others to live life with them in a way that affords them opportunities to imitate what they see. “Follow me as I follow Christ” (1 Corinthians 11:1). This is the crux of teaching them to obey, because the doctrine that matters is the doctrine you do. It takes a doer of the Word to reproduce a doer of the Word. We are not looking for Bible trivia, but lives centered on and transformed by the Word and Spirit of God... and the best way to have that take place is to first see that lived out by others. Intimate imitation is key to cultivating a culture of disciples who make disciples.

*“The church does not move forward without intense commitment to discipleship.”*

Yet the Word is key. “If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed.” (John 8:31) Disciple makers are shooting for Word-abiding. Accountability to train is absolutely vital: reading, study,



memorization, preaching, meditation are all pivotal ingredients.

We also recognize biblical stages of faith and expect leaders to develop a fluency in identifying a disciple's level of maturity. 1 John seems to indicate that people progress from being "little children" to "young men" and finally "grown men".



# MULTIPLICATION FLUENCY

As leaders, multiplication must be at the core of everything we do; discipleship, apprenticeship, microchurch, macrochurch, teaching, family life, etc. The entire movement stops if our leaders do not understand, fully embrace, and live out this call to multiply themselves at every level. We are not spiritual mules; we take seriously the call to be fruitful and multiply and expect our leaders to give themselves to this endeavor.

Part of multiplication is the result of simply being. Like reproduces like. Fire will not produce ice, and distracted Christians will not produce focused disciples. Thus, we need to live a life that is truly worth following since so much of what we reproduce will be done accidentally. God will not be mocked, a man will reap what he sows. If we sow seeds in prayer and generosity, for example, we will reap a harvest of prayer and generosity.

Once we live a life worth following, we must embrace the with-factor. People must be invited to be WITH us to varying degrees. Much of our discipleship is the result of people being consistently exposed to the intangibles of our lives. Herein lies the fluency challenge. Most Christian ministry seems to expect multiplication to be the result of good, solid Bible teaching. Indeed the apostle Paul included this in his approach with Timothy:

“You, however, have followed my teaching...” But notice that he did not stop there: and also “my conduct, my aim in life, my faith, my patience, my love, my steadfastness, my persecutions and sufferings that happened to me...” (2 Timothy 3:10-11). Timothy got to see how Paul responded to victory, or defeat, or infirmity. He was able to observe what would thrill the soul of Paul. He got to hear him pray and watch him wait.

Sages have pointed out that we can teach what we know, but we reproduce who we are. Yet this only happens if we become intentional. Thus, we must invite peo-

ple into our lives and cast a vision of multiplication. Multiplication is the result of an intentional pursuit to reproduce yourself as a leader, even desiring your apprentice to do greater works than you. Sounds like Jesus.

In microchurches this starts from Day 1. If there is not a vision for multiplication from the very beginning, then it will not happen. Leaders need to have 2 Timothy 2:2 eyes to see spiritual giftings, leadership potential, and disciple-making ability in everyone around him/her. We do not want one-generation leaders; we want exponential disciple-makers who are looking to leave lasting discipleship legacies that continue from generation to generation.

Leaders need to own discipleship and see it in others. But it cannot stop with the person in front of you; exponential leaders look and see multiple generations of disciples coming from a single person and do what it takes to make that a reality.

*“Multiplication is the result of an intentional pursuit to reproduce yourself as a leader, even desiring your apprentice to do greater works than you.”*

# MICROCHURCH FLUENCY

It all begins with an idea. Maybe you want to launch a business. Maybe you want to turn a hobby into something more. Or maybe you have a creative project to share with the world. Whatever it is, taking our cue from the early church, we embrace a both/and approach to Church.

In the book of Acts we encounter a community of disciples who met together in both the large group gathering (e.g. “in the temple”) and in the small group gathering (“from house to house”). “Church” was both organized and scheduled as well as fluid and spontaneous. It was not limited to weekends in a building. Discipleship was not limited to once a week in a home. These happened every time believers came together in the name and power of Jesus.

It is vital to recognize that these first believ-

ers gathered constantly and made use of any and every environment to do so. While we have been heavily influenced by the house church and organic church movements, we do not share their disregard for the large-group gathering. Thus, we utilize large groups to bring the apostle’s teaching, clarify vision, stir faith, build culture, worship passionately, tell our stories, etc. Yet we recognize that there are so many parts of discipleship that will never occur within the macrochurch alone. We need the microchurch expression.

Microchurches are where we gather intimately and equip more specifically to do the work of the ministry and “be” the Church. Microchurches are where people are personally pastored. There are many gifts that do not have as much place in a macrochurch gathering, but are vital and essential for the church to be fully expressed in a





microchurch setting. There are many prayers to be prayed, specific needs to be met, burdens to be carried, questions to be asked, and homes to be opened – all of which require the microchurch expression.

One of the stunning teachings of the New Testament is found in Ephesians four. Paul claims that the Church will build itself up in love when every part contributes. The context is explicit (and subversive to modern readers) as it specifically refers to five gifts or roles to be played: apostles, prophets, evangelists, shepherds, and teachers. It is our experience that when a microchurch has each of these roles represented, that becomes a healthy group. Greenhouse leaders need to be fluent and competent in looking for, identifying, and releasing for ministry each of these gifts.

From a leadership standpoint, we have to be honest: not everyone is called to lead 50, 100, 1,000 or 10,000 people. But there are many followers of Jesus who are called to lead smaller expressions of 5, 10, or 30. Our brothers and sisters in the Chinese and South Korean churches have tapped into this truth, as they have seen hundreds of thousands of microchurch expressions multiply and flourish in the past century.

We do not consider our “Church” to simply be a gathering of individuals. Greenhouse is a family of microchurches.



# EVANGELISM FLUENCY

## **We absolutely expect harvest.**

In the book of Acts the Lord added to their numbers regularly those who were being saved. We must make disciples who understand that soul-winning is the normal Christian lifestyle.

The first part of discipleship is baptizing. We are to lead people across the line of faith. We fully recognize that Salvation is of the Lord, and yet we know that He uses vessels. While there is nothing wrong in leading people to repent in prayer, the clear pivotal moment for the early church (as seen in Acts) was baptism. Baptism is clear: there is an outward response to an inward reality, and that inward reality is this: I am all in. I repent from my sin and repent toward my Savior. It is on Jesus' terms not mine. His righteousness, not mine. I trust Jesus.

We do not believe that the joy of harvest is reserved for the small minority of Christians with a talent in persuasion. While everybody is not an evangelist, every Christian is called to be evangelistic. In God's sovereignty every believer has a network of relationships and neighbors that nobody else will ever touch. We believe every disciple has certain evangelism "styles" that should be discovered and practiced. But we must teach people that we never get good at things we do not practice. Thus, we call all believers to begin like this: Intercede, invest, and invite. We start with intercession (prayer). We invest in the relationship. And we look for the opportunity to invite the loved one to an appropriate God setting (dinner, activity, microchurch, macrochurch, etc.).

Every disciple should be taught to share their testimony, and be fluent enough in the Gospel to share the good news with the people in their lives. He who wins souls is wise. It requires a measure of wisdom to set up our ministry in ways conducive toward soul-winning. Our corporate gatherings, whether macrochurch or microchurch, must be places to build up the faith family. Yet, just like any godly family, we open our home

to people outside the family. Then we practice hospitality while they are with us. This means that we are forever mindful of the outsiders among us and communicate in ways so that they do not feel left out.

Our teachers are to communicate as if there are lost people in the room. If we will, eventually there will be. We also encourage our pastors and leaders to regularly speak and listen to unchurched voices, to be able to effectively answer questions real people are asking.

We do not believe somebody “making a decision” saves a person; Jesus does. It is the work of God. And yet we recognize the mandate to call people to faith. Upon hearing Peter preach, the hearers asked, “What shall we do?” Peter did not say, well there is nothing you can do; any response would be works-salvation. Rather, he told them to respond: repent and be baptized. We “proclaim repentance and forgiveness of sins” (Luke 24:47).

The only way to follow up with a new believer is to know who is a new believer. Thus, trusting God’s sovereignty to call people to Himself, we invite people to act on the grace of God.

# DIVERSITY FLUENCY

Leaders must become fluent in working toward the vision of a diverse, integrated and interdependent church.

Jesus' mandate goes like this: on earth as it is in heaven. What is it like in heaven? "Worthy are You ... for You were slain, by Your blood you ransomed people for God from every tribe and language and people and nation, and You have made them a kingdom and priests to our God, and they shall reign..." (Rev. 5:9-10). Different tribes. Varied languages. Diverse peoples.

Diversity is not easy. It is not natural. But it is absolutely glorious when it occurs. Jesus goes so far as to pray, "that they may all be one, just as You, Father, are in Me, and I in You, so that the world may believe that You have sent Me" (John 17:21).

There is a direct correlation between our fluency in unity and our mission to this world. Here is the fluency challenge: Part of "the world" system is a gravitational pull toward homogeneity (sameness). While we are in the world, we are not of the world. Social scientists tell us that we tend to like people who are like us. We are naturally attracted to people with similar attitudes, customs, backgrounds, and preferences. Churches are particu-

larly prone to becoming gatherings of people who do little more than reinforce our personal status quo. And yet the Church is God's challenge of the status quo.

Because we have been given the ministry of reconciliation, we are to regularly communicate the call to build churches and microchurches of unity in diversity. We recognize and verbalize the truth that the "kingdom" presented in Scripture is made up of a very diverse group. Multi-racial, multi-ethnic, multi-national, multilingual, multi-generational. The greater the diversity, the greater the ability to manifest this kingdom on earth as it is in heaven. It is like a sign and a wonder in the hands of God. It is also a tool through which God reveals parts of His kingdom that do not manifest through one culture or perspective by itself.

We acknowledge that there is a 100% chance that we will be offensive, and we will be offended. We expect it, and choose this path anyway.

This fluency requires great wisdom. We do not call people to cease being who they are. We do not command people to give up their culture to be like another earthly culture; we call them to submit their culture to the kingdom of Jesus. We resist the temptation to lean politically left or right, under-



standing that each perspective comes with both insights and blind spots. We admit the temptation to believe that “they” are all the same, but “we” are unique. We recognize that all dark people, light people, eastern people, western people, old people, young people do not think the same. We cannot approximate their viewpoint. There is a diversity and fullness even among culturally similar people. We think through preferences (like music). We think carefully about the sensitivity of our language. And we prepare to repent regularly.

Ultimately we realize the temptation to exaggerate our differences and ignore our commonalities. And here is our supreme commonality: Jesus. We adore and seek and experience Jesus. Together.

# SERVANT LEADERSHIP

It's not enough to be good; we need to be wise. It's not enough to seek God; we need to mobilize people to seek God. It's not enough to do the works of the ministry; we need to equip the saints to do the work of ministry. This requires leadership.

Max DePree describes it well. The first job of a leader is to define reality. The last is to say thank you. And in between the two the leader becomes a servant.

Defining reality requires vision. What is vision? Bill Hybels describes it as a picture of the future that produces passion. Martin Luther King described a future where children of different races would run around and play together as equals. JFK spoke of a future when humans would walk on the moon. While leaders come in many shapes, sizes, and personalities, what the great ones have in common is this: they define reality.

For the Greenhouse leader, vision is not just about what could be; it is a matter of what should be. Proverbs 29:18 says, "Where there is no prophetic vision the people cast off restraint." This is huge, because without direction, people lose heart. But not just any direction will do. We recognize the "prophetic" nature of the vision required. We take our cues from God. What has He said in His Word? What is He saying through His Spirit? Once the vision is clear, it must be communicated. And then re-communicated. Because we are all like sheep; we go astray. Vision leaks. Our leaders are to set priorities, clarify direction, and hold us accountable to live up to our vision, purpose, and values, as they are also accountable. As the vision becomes reality, it is then the job of a leader to speak like Jesus: Well done. "Thank you." The leader is to encourage, inspire, and connect the dots back to the church's efforts and the vision presented.

This is a serious call. Leaders and teachers will receive a stricter judgment, which is why we are very committed to "knowing those who labor among us."

“Leadership, as understood in modern western popular culture, is not reflected with any real definition in the New Testament; it is not a New Testament word. There are clearly leaders who function as prophets, apostles, teachers, deacons, elders, etc., but none who fit the present-day secular model marked by a combination of individualism, self-dependence, task-orientation, supposed objectivity and personal ambition. We have therefore a significant problem. How can we develop leaders who are going to be rooted in biblical revelation unphased by the requirements of popular western culture?” (Viv Thomas) It’s all about following the example of the servant King Himself. Humility.

We are not running a business; we are servants – toilet cleaners - in the Lord’s church. We are tired of watching people enter church leadership full of passion and humility, only to come out standardized and prideful.

Jesus was so different. Oh, He had power, but He only used it to serve. Never to strut. Never to boast. Never for personal gain.

If you are considering leadership in Greenhouse you are not being invited to a place of power, you are being invited to be crucified with Christ and serve. What an honor.

*“It’s all about following the example of the servant King Himself. Humility.”*

# MISSIONS & GENEROSITY

## **We are a movement of generosity.**

Therefore every microchurch and local church should adopt an open-handed extravagance approach from day one. We recognize the subversive nature of extravagant generosity in a culture of greed. The average American church member gives 2.58% of their income. Once it makes it into the hands of churches, only about 2% makes it to missions and poor. That means Christians are only giving about two percent of two percent.

Our goal is for 50% of our funds to go to missions and the poor. This requires faith.

But we are also a movement of wisdom. We give first, save second, and spend third. We avoid debt, and do not spend the money we do not have. We are willing to wait for the provision of the Lord, and lead our churches to learn how to function in times of plenty or times of less. When choosing how to give and where to partner, good intentions are not enough. We recognize that it is possible to have good intentions about helping people, relieving the afflicted, sending out missionaries - but if it is not done in wisdom - we harm the very people we want to help. What does this missional wisdom look like?

We begin by praying through and identifying

the actual needs of an individual or community before moving into the realm of helping. A misdiagnosis of the problems related to poverty or brokenness results in remedies that are ineffectual and sometimes even harmful.

Next, we strive to partner with people, and not do for them what they are capable of doing for themselves. This avoids the danger of creating dependence and exacerbating feelings of inadequacy and shame to those in need.

Finally, we embrace a holistic approach to missions. Justice without Jesus is never true liberation. We desire to reach out to the whole person, meeting both spiritual and physical needs, and then connect that person to the local church so they can continue to grow as a disciple.

Here are the questions we ask in identifying the ministry we undertake and with whom we partner:

- » Does this “remember the poor”?
- » Does this reach the lesser reached and unreached?
- » Does this include indigenous partnership?
- » Is this work sustainable and reproducible?
- » Is this ministry prayer saturated?





*“Justice without **Jesus** is never true liberation.”*

# WHOLENESS FLUENCY

## **We long for people to be whole, in spirit, soul, and body.**

Central to wholeness is a passion for integrity. We are to recognize the pitfalls of spiritual leadership. Leaders are particularly vulnerable to pride. This is why we are reminded not to place people into leadership too quickly. It is extremely possible to be more gifted than godly – and this is a dangerous reality. We are to remember the long list of gifted men and women who possessed great ability with faulty character. Their ministries came tumbling down.

Hence, we call for leaders who are greater on the inside than on the outside. We take our cue from the apostle Paul: “Therefore, most gladly I will rather boast in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.” (2 Corinthians 12:9) Because a leader’s strengths will automatically be on public display, it requires intentionality to honestly communicate weakness and vulnerability. This demands courage and inner strength to help foster a culture where people can come just as they are, without being judged.

Authenticity, however, is not enough. Jesus did not come to make us real; He came to save His people from their sin.

Wholeness also demands holiness. We must be fluent in dealing with darkness in biblically effective ways. We will not gloss over the seriousness of sin or the constant temptation to religious pride. This means we deal with both legalistic self-righteousness and lawless unrighteousness. This means we look at fruits, but we deal with roots. We follow the fruit trail to the bottom of a pile where we find our idols. We ask questions about our sin: Why are we lying? Why are we giving into sexual immorality? Why do we overwork for money? We recognize that all sin problems are worship problems, as we set up some functional lord and savior instead of the true Lord and Savior Jesus.

Wholeness also demands freedom. Jesus came to destroy the works of the devil. Scripture presents a description of our problems that go beyond mere sin struggles. There are bondages to overcome. The Lord's prayer teaches us to pray for deliverance from the evil one. Demons cannot "possess" a child of God, but a child of God can surely have demonic problems in need of freedom. And the Gospel is good news for those in need of liberty. Disciples are to recognize the sobering reality that, until the Lord returns, we have a spiritual battle on our hands. Demons are like rats; sin and soul darkness are like trash.

Thus, disciples must be alert and competent to regularly "take out the trash" as well as "dealing with the rats." Thus, leaders must live lives of wholeness, and then be able to effectively lead others to do the same. Ongoing wholeness will ultimately be the result of beholding and abiding in Jesus.

# JUSTICE FLUENCY

The Hebrew word for “justice,” mishpat, occurs more than 200 times in the Old Testament in various forms. The repeated theme of justice clearly denotes its significance in Scripture. Because justice matters to God, it needs to matter to us.

Justice occurs when a human, regardless of their social status, is treated in a way that acknowledges the image of God in their life. Throughout history, there have always been vulnerable groups of people who are more susceptible to mistreatment. Why should we be concerned about the vulnerable? According to the biblical justice that God sets forth, all humans are equal, all humans are created in His image, and all humans deserve to be treated with fairness and justice.

While humans may naturally tend more towards social concern or moral living, the way of Jesus always demands both. The Psalms teach that justice and righteousness are the foundation of God’s throne, and throughout Scripture, God has required His followers to be ruled by both.

The call to righteousness is inarguable. If we want to be faithful to all of the scripture, then the

call to justice is just as inescapable. “And what does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God” (Micah 6:8b).

We do justice when we give all human beings their due as image bearers of God. Doing justice includes not only the righting of wrongs, but also generosity and social concern, especially toward the poor and vulnerable. The combination of justice and righteousness that God demonstrates is a selfless way of life in which people do everything they can to ensure that others are treated equita-

*“Because justice matters to God,  
it needs to matter to us.”*

bly and injustices are fixed.

Standards of social justice may vary in their acceptance or relevance in a particular culture, but biblical justice is clear and unchanging. The church cannot waver in its pursuit of justice, mercy and humility. Justice should not be pursued because of its popularity in society, but it should

also not be abandoned or disqualified on the basis of what values society chooses to embrace. God's standard for justice never changes.

Finally, we recognize that justice without Jesus can never bring true freedom. We partner in the work of social justice in our communities, but never want to lose sight of the Great Commission. The justice-driven church must by necessity also be soul-driven. What good is it to meet material needs without offering eternal salvation? Thus, biblical justice is always evangelistic, as it reveals the character of the good and true judge, Jesus.

True justice leads to lives reconciled to Jesus and eternally transformed.

# APEST FLUENCY

We believe the church functions best when apostles, prophets, evangelists, shepherds, and teachers are moving in their gifts. The local body needs to be a collaborative Kingdom effort where all of these positions are represented in order for the church to thrive. We set a priority not only on the recognition of these gifts but also the foresight of leaders to ensure they are activated and functioning as they should within the local body.

We organize around APEST.

Although this is only specifically spelled out in detail in Ephesians 4, we recognize Paul's intrinsic attachment of the APEST gifts with the maturity of the body of Christ. Based on Scripture and our experience, we believe that this is one of the most helpful ways for the church to be structured. The APEST gifts are the building blocks of a strong, mature, properly functioning expression of God's people. This is true in discipleship, microchurch, house church, and macrochurch settings.

We refuse to buy into the post-enlightenment lie that followers of Jesus will grow if they consume enough preaching and podcasts. You don't grow from teachings alone. You grow when the APEST is present in your life. The secret to growth is not more knowledge; it is the full expression of the church manifested through the APEST.

**Ephesians 4:8,11** - *"When He ascended on high, He took many captives and gave gifts to His people... So Christ Himself gave..."*

It is easy to exalt one's own APEST position over others. Yet we believe that one role is not better than another. The APEST gifts are interdependent and there is powerful synergy when all positions work together. We want disciples who know their APEST call and are unafraid to be fully what God has called them to be. When leaders and disciples know their APEST, they are the most helpful and can unite to manifest the fullest expression of the church.

- APOSTLES** To pioneer, plant, and innovate to ensure the church expands to places that it has not been.
- PROPHETS** To discern spiritual realities, challenge the status quo, and encourage the church to radically pursue Jesus.
- EVANGELISTS** To gather, win souls, and keep the church's eyes on its mission to the lost.
- SHEPHERDS** To care for, cover, love, and fiercely protect God's people from wolves.
- TEACHERS** To communicate, systematize, and reveal the wisdom of God and His Word.

# PARTNERSHIP PRIORITIES

When we receive missions requests and partnership opportunities, we run them through the following lenses, asking these five questions:

## **1. Does this “remember the poor”? (Galatians 2:10)**

Jesus and his followers declared the good news of the kingdom through both words and deeds to the blind, the lame, the deaf, the mute, the leper, and the poor (Luke 7:18-23; 9:1-2; 10:9). Multitudes of biblical passages make clear that God measures cultures and peoples by what they do about the poorest among them. As the body of Christ, we are to create an alternative culture that declares this kingdom in both words and deed – especially to the least of these. We believe embracing our own mutual brokenness is central to poverty alleviation so that we can truly help others without hurting them and ourselves.

## **2. Does this reach the lesser reached?**

Jesus was quite clear in his command to bring the news of His kingdom to every single human on the planet. We are troubled by the incredibly high volume of missions dollars spent to reach the already reached, while the lesser-reached people groups remain untouched. We embrace the call to give of ourselves and go where others are not going, and reach out and love the isolated, unreached, and those deemed untouchable by society. Thus, we are particularly interested in partnering with ministries committed to bring the Gospel where it is not already common.

## **3. Does this include indigenous partnership?**

We recognize that good intentions are not enough, and working with people rather than for them is often the best avenue for helping that helps and does not harm. It is empowering, mobilizing, and dignity-laden. Working with local churches and local resources creates lasting change. Missions without indigenous partner-



ships communicates that solutions to the community's problems must come from outside of that community, instead of recognizing and affirming the God-given gifts and assets within every individual and community.

#### **4. Is this work sustainable and reproducible?**

We want to set up systems that are easily reproduced and maintainable so that every good work we put into practice does not create dependency on us. Disciples reproduce who they are, so we want our efforts, skills, and talents that we bring to the table to be reproduced and carried out in others after we are gone.

#### **5. Is this ministry prayer saturated?**

"As long as they sought the Lord, God made him prosper" (2 Chronicles 26:5). We desire to partner in mission with those who radically seek the face of God. We want every missional endeavor to be covered in prayer and fasting so that everything we do flows out of seeking the Lord. We want to partner on earth with where we see His Spirit moving. Only by first seeking Him will we be able to move in His power, speaking for the voiceless, empowering the downcast, and helping the oppressed.

# WE ARE: BOTH/AND

**Acts 2:42-47** - *“And they devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers. And awe came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were being done through the apostles. And all who believed were together and had all things in common. And they were selling their possessions and belongings and distributing the proceeds to all, as any had need.*”

*And day by day, attending the temple together and breaking bread in their homes, they received their food with glad and generous hearts, praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to their number day by day those who were being saved.”*

We love this passage. It is one of the earliest and purest descriptions of the church found in the New Testament. Believers meeting and living life together, but not just in buildings. Not just on Sundays. Not just in a church service. They met continually as they tried to learn how to live out the way of Jesus in every aspect of their lives.

But even in this raw, organic pursuit of Jesus the early church developed a bare bones structure that has been successfully used throughout church history. Their way of discipleship could be trans-

ferred and caught regardless of the socio-political landscape, making it immune to any backlash or persecution:

They met together in the temple courts and broke bread in their homes...

What a beautiful representation of how the early disciples lived out the way of Jesus: worshipping together, on mission together, and in community with one another. In the temple but also in their homes. In both their public life and in their private lives. There was a macro expression of the church gathering as well as micro expressions. There was an extended family of the faith that transcended any boundaries or barriers that would have traditionally held them back and kept Jews and Gentiles from coming together. It was countercultural. It was untraditional. It was beautiful.

We at the Greenhouse are so moved by this depiction of the early church that we are devoted to seeing this 1st century reality manifested in the 21st century church.

We recognize that it is not only the structure that brings life but a focus, love and desperation for Jesus. We understand that you can build it

and they might not come, which is why we are not putting our trust in buildings, programs, or the newest church conference hype.

We are simply trying to reconnect with the ways the early church practiced radical, life-on-life discipleship that ended up changing our world forever.

It's not that we are opposed to Sunday morning gatherings. If lost people are hearing about Jesus, followers of Jesus are being refreshed, and souls are being recalibrated with His rhythms, we celebrate. We don't think that traditional weekend gatherings are a bad thing; we just don't think they are the only thing.

Faith is more than just Sundays. Discipleship is not simply taught; it is caught. Jesus told His disciples to follow Him, and for the next three years they did. Paul told his disciples to follow him as he followed Christ. And he didn't just mean when church gatherings were taking place. In the same way, we are calling disciples to a 24/7 lifestyle... because Sundays alone won't cut it.

This is why we take the Acts 2 both/and approach to church life. We believe there are things the macrochurch (weekend gatherings)

can do that the microchurch (weekly community gatherings) cannot. We also believe there are things that can happen at the microchurch gathering which are crucial for real discipleship to take place; things that simply cannot happen at the macrochurch gathering.

We believe both of these types of expressions have a place in creating an authentic discipleship culture that captures the essence of the Acts 2 church.

And this paradigm has wildly directed our church planting approach. We are a both/and church planting movement. We will not separate the macro and micro gatherings. This is our ecclesial minimum and a must for Greenhouse church planters. The both/and approach is immovable, but how this fleshes itself out is up to the apostolic creativity of the planter.

# GOD-SEEKING CULTURE

More than anything else, we are a movement of Godseekers. We want to see ministry that overflows out of our time with Jesus. We want to see miracles and mighty moves of supernatural power that only come from an ardent commitment to the secret place. We desire for the presence of God to saturate every prayer, word, action, disciple, and ministry that we touch.

We also realize that leadership sets the tone. Revolutions are not started by people who conform to the status quo. They are started by passion-filled zealots who deeply believe in and will die for what they stand for. And we take Jesus at His word: "If you abide in me and my words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you." (John 15:7) We will set the pace as leaders to be all-out God-seekers, which is why we ask any pastor in the movement to seek God at least two hours a day and any staff member to seek God at least an hour a day.

We want to see churches as supernatural as its Master, because He promised nothing less!

# WE PLANT DISCIPLES

## **We don't plant churches.**

Jesus never told us to plant churches. He told us to make disciples, so our church planting strategy is simply this: We. Plant. Disciples.

There is no other way to Biblically wrap our heads around this. The world is over-saturated with Sunday gatherings. But a lot of those gatherings lack the one thing that actually make up a church that is being faithful to Jesus's call: disciples. Godseeking, soul-winning, disciples who make other disciples.

We realize that when you plant disciples, regardless of the number of people or the way they gather, the full expression of the church always follows. If you plant disciples, you always get a church. When you plant a church, you rarely get more than a Sunday service.

We are not after Sunday services. We are not after the traditional ABCs of church: attendance, buildings, and cash flow. We are unabashedly going after capital D disciples. We are not trying to fill pews with believers who are disgruntled with the church they just came from. We want to run after the lost and raise them up to be disciple makers themselves. We want a book of Acts church in the 21st century. We want to help ordinary people become passionate followers of Jesus Christ.

We want to plant disciples.

# GREENHOUSE DEFINITIONS

**LIVING IN  
THE GREEN**

the embodiment of worship, mission, and community found in the life of a disciple and in the lives of disciples when they gather together

**CHURCH**

a worshiping community on mission

**DISCIPLE**

a follower of Jesus who is living in the green

**DISCIPLE MAKER**

a follower of Jesus who is living in the green and intentionally reproducing these ways in others

**SUNDAY  
GATHERING**

weekend gatherings that create culture and unity through vision, teaching, worship, and harvest

**MACROCHURCH**

large group, weekend gathering that creates culture and unity through vision, teaching, worship, and harvest

**HOUSE CHURCH**

smaller weekend gathering expression of 5-40 people that incorporates the elements of a macrochurch gathering on a smaller scale

**MICROCHURCH**

smaller, weekly gathering where we cultivate a lifestyle of living in the green, being disciples, and making disciples





**GREENHOUSE**  
CHURCH