

MULTIPLICATION OF DISCIPLES, LEADERS, AND CHURCHES

Rev. Keith Boyette



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DISCIPLESHIP IS TYPICALLY SEEN AS AN EDUCATIONAL PROCESS DESIGNED TO ORIENT NEW BELIEVERS TO THE BIBLICAL AND EVERYDAY PRACTICES OF A CHURCH.

2

TYPICAL ELEMENTS OF DISCIPLESHIP

- Seeking God
- Obeying God and Denying Self
- Serving God and Others (Spiritual Gifts)
- Exercising Faith (Means of Grace)
- Bible Engagement
- Building Relationships
- Living Unashamed
- Sharing Christ

3

DEFINITIONS

Discipleship – The process by which a person is resourced and challenged to follow Jesus more closely, be changed by Jesus, and commit to the mission of Jesus, including making additional disciples.

Disciple Making – Entering into relationships to intentionally help people follow Jesus, be changed by Jesus, and join the mission of Jesus (Matthew 28:18-20)

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DEFINITIONS

Disciple Making Culture – the beliefs, habits, and narrative of a church constantly repeated with congruence and intentionality that makes it clear to almost everyone, all the time, including newcomers, that disciple making is what everyone does in this church.

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DEFINITIONS

Disciple Making Church – a church where disciple making is the core DNA and culture of the church, where the average church member makes disciples to the fourth generation (2 Timothy 2:2), and this disciple making activity is regularly produced in significant and diverse streams within the church. These streams multiply consistently into new churches.

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Are we producing consumers/cultural Christians OR biblical Christians who *go* and multiply?

- Consumers/Cultural
- Passive
 - Informational – Accumulation of Knowledge
 - Seeks Comfort
 - Risk Averse
 - Minimalist

- Biblical
- Active
 - Transformational – Application of Knowledge
 - Obedience
 - High Commitment
 - Not put off by risk
 - Maximalist

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Discovery Bible Study

- What does this story tell me about God?
- What does this story tell me about people?
- If this is really God's word, what changes would I have to make in my life?
- Who am I going to tell?

Find one Person of Peace -- WOOLY

- Welcoming
- Open "Oikos"
- Listen & Respond
- You – who fits?

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DISCIPLE MAKER ASSESSMENT

You can learn more about the Disciple Maker Assessment at <https://exponential.org/disciple-maker-assessment/>. Persons can take the assessment at <https://church-multiplication.com/disciplemaker/>. Once you complete the assessment, you will receive a document entitled "DiscipleMaker Assessment Results." That will provide "Your Overall Assessment," "Your Pattern," and a number of helpful resources for next steps.

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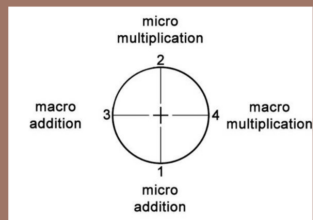
All multiplication has addition at its core: reaching the next one.

Micro or local strategy close to home for adding the next one AND a macro strategy for multiplying your impact beyond your local context.

Adding fuels multiplying.

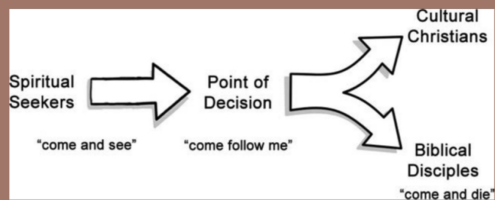
10

Addition – Multiplication Cross Hair



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Micro-Addition: Adding One Disciple (Adding Spiritual Infants)



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Micro-Multiplication: Making biblical disciples
(Disciples who make disciples)

Macro-Addition – Adding capacity for disciple making within the local church

Macro-Multiplication – Adding capacity by starting new churches – Adding Kingdom capacity for making biblical disciples beyond our local church.

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Levels 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5

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Multiplication Assessment – Level 3 Church (Adding)

A Level 3 Church may be internally reproducing but is only sending by accident when someone decides to go. They may not be producing any or many biblical disciples (thus there is no momentum for multiplication), yet they are growing locally by addition.

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MULTIPLICATION TENSIONS

Tension of Motives – Proximity – Here vs. There

Tension of Measurement – What will we measure to determine if we are on track?

Tension of Methods – How do we allocate our time, talents, and treasures to building local AND Kingdom capacity

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CHURCH MULTIPLICATION COVENANT

- To be entered into only after a season of extraordinary prayer.
- Count the cost of the commitments you make. Be all in!
- Identifies “next steps” to move toward multiplication by making commitments in Decision Making (Disciple Making, Multiplication), Culture, Practical Steps.
- Requires intentionality, constant prayer, accountability, and regular evaluation. Determine a scorecard to measure each commitment made.

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INTENTIONALLY DEVELOP MULTIPLICATION DNA

- Identifying ourselves in relation to the defining reality of Jesus as Lord
- Prioritizing disciple making and biblical discipleship
- Practicing incarnational forms of mission
- Cultivating communities that thrive in risk and adventure
- Develop scalable organization that can spread across a wide distance
- Generate a missional leadership culture

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GO DEEPER

Download and read "Becoming a Level Five Multiplying Church Field Guide." Access a free copy at <http://bit.ly/4fRY1cL>.

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WHAT IS A CHURCH?

In the Global Methodist Church, a church is a gathered community of believers under the Lordship of Christ in which the Word of God is preached by divinely called persons, the sacraments are regularly administered, and worship, edification of believers, and participation in God's redemptive mission in the world occur under the discipline of the Holy Spirit.

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CHURCH PLANT SPONSOR GUIDELINES

- Spiritual Support
- Yearly Goals
- Missional Plan
- Discipleship
- Budget
- Additional Commitments

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DISCIPLE-MAKING AND CHURCH MULTIPLICATION RESOURCE GUIDE

Keith Boyette

Disciple-Making Culture -- I believe that an existing congregation has the greatest likelihood of planting a new church if it has a disciple-making culture especially if the new church will have some geographical proximity to the existing church. Here are several resources that might be helpful in developing a disciple-making culture:

- Exponential and Discipleship.org have developed a Disciple Maker Assessment. You can learn more about the Disciple Maker Assessment at <https://exponential.org/disciple-maker-assessment/>. Persons can take the assessment at <https://church-multiplication.com/disciplemaker/>. Once you complete the assessment, you will receive a document entitled "DiscipleMaker Assessment Results." That will provide "Your Overall Assessment," "Your Pattern," and a number of helpful resources for next steps.
- [Discipleship.org](https://discipleship.org) produces a number of helpful resources. You can learn more about their offerings at <https://discipleship.org>. You can subscribe to their e-newsletter [here](#).
- [Renew.org](https://renew.org) is a collaborative network equipping disciples, disciple makers, and church planters. They offer a number of resources including a regular newsletter which you can subscribe to [here](#).

Church Multiplication

- Next Steps in Church Multiplication (attached) — prepared by the [Center for Church Multiplication at Asbury Theological Seminary](#)
- [The River Network](#) provides training and resources to support both disciple making and church planting.
- [Planters Field Training Academy](#) offers online training in church planting.
- Exponential offers a wealth of resources to encourage church multiplication. You can learn more about Exponential at <https://exponential.org>. They develop and distribute free E-Books. I highly recommend *Becoming A Level Five Multiplying Church Field Guide*. You can download a PDF of this E-Book at <http://bit.ly/4fRY1cL>.
- You can access a 17-minute video addressing a Biblical Metaphor for Multiplication at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YFnuA5lakUo&t=220s>. This video provides helpful information for casting a vision for church multiplication.
- Exponential has developed a Multiplication Assessment to assist a local church in understanding where it has been, currently is, and aspires to be with respect to the goal of multiplying churches. The assessment is only used as a diagnostic tool to assist your church in identifying next steps to becoming a multiplying church. It takes 20 minutes to complete the assessment. To complete the assessment, you need to have access to attendance numbers, church budget,

number of full time equivalent employees, and number of commitments to Christ for the most recently concluded year and one year before that. You can access the Multiplication Assessment at <https://exponential.org/five-levels-assessment/>.

- The Virginia Conference Church Multiplication Team, with support from Exponential, has developed the attached Individual Multiplier Covenant and the attached Church Multiplication Covenant. The Church Multiplication Covenant lists lots of options for ways in which a congregation can become involved in the process of church multiplication. The local church chooses which activities it wants to commit to in the coming year. This makes growing a multiplication culture concrete.

Discovery Bible Study -- One of the most promising vehicles for disciple making and church multiplication is Discovery Bible Study. I attach a summary document which provides some background information on Discovery Bible Study. You can get a sense of what happens at a typical Discovery Bible Study in a 3-minute video at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=K3evOGh-Hfs&t=3s>. An overview of the typical flow of a DBS group can be found at www.dbsguide.org. Suggested Bible Passages to be explored at a DBS group gathering can also be found at www.dbsguide.org. The website also lists additional possible studies using the DBS methodology. If you would like to explore the impact of DMM working through Ordinary People, I recommend that you watch all or a portion of the video "Ordinary People — A Documentary Film" produced in 2022 at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N_YgYbgnR8I. The video is 90 minutes long but it is well worth the investment of time.

Next Steps in Church Multiplication

Thank you for connecting with the Center for Church Multiplication (CCM) at Asbury Theological Seminary.

Our mission is to work collaboratively with Asbury Theological Seminary to recruit, support, train, and connect Spirit-filled church planters who plant healthy, multiplying, and sustainable churches in every context on earth. The Center also engages global conversations on church multiplication to share ideas and learn from others with a posture of humility, curiosity, and grace.

Whether you are an experienced church planter or exploring church multiplication for the first time, we hope that we can encourage your passion for church multiplication and connect you to helpful resources.

No matter where you are in your journey of being or becoming a church planter, here are some next steps to consider:

Do now what you plan to do in the future

- Get involved in a church planting effort locally.
- Get mentored by the church planter of that church by working alongside them.

Regularly engage with non-Christians

- Find a way to regularly engage with non-believers in your community.
- Do something with non-believers that you enjoy doing. Find a point of mutual interest.
- As your credibility grows, invite them to start a [Discovery Bible Study](#) (DBS).

Pray

- All church planting movements are preceded by earnest prayer.
- Gather for prayer with like-minded people and pray for the people in the community where you hope to plant a church.

Explore church multiplication and disciple-making principles in books. Select one or two books from the following list and get started on learning more:

- *Contagious Disciple Making: Leading Others on a Journey of Discovery* by David Watson
- *Organic Outreach for Ordinary People: Sharing Good News Naturally* by Kevin Harney
- *Church Planting Revolution* by Winfield Bevins
- *The Forgotten Ways: Reactivating Apostolic Movements* by Alan Hirsch
- *From Megachurch to Multiplication: A Church's Journey Toward Movement* by Chris Galanos
- *Global Church Planting: Biblical Principles and Best Practices for Multiplication* by Craig Ott
- *Apostolic Church Planting: Birthing New Churches from New Believers* by J.D. Payne
- *The Trellis and the Vine* by Colin Marshall

- *Motus Dei: The Movement of God to Disciple the Nations* by Warrick Farah
- *One Eighty: A Return to Disciple-Making* by Jef Vanderstelt
- *Practicing the Way: Be with Jesus. Become like him. Do as he did* by John Mark Comer
- *Together for the City: How Collaborative Church Planting Leads to Citywide Movements* by Neil Powell
- *The Disciple Makerspace* by JR Rushik
- *Cabbages in the Desert* by Aila Tasse with Dave Coles.
- *Living Fire: advancing God's Kingdom in Challenging Places* by Aychi B.R.
- *Church Planting Movements* by David Garrison
- *The Honest Guide to Church Planting* by Tom Bennardo.
- *The Craft of Church Planting* by Christian Selvaratnam
- *Church Plantology: The Art and Science of Planting Churches* by Peyton Jones
- *Brave Cities: The Archaeology, Artistry, and Architecture of Kingdom Ecosystems* by Taylor McCall and Hugh Halter
- *The River Church* by Larry Walkemeyer

Read and re-read Luke and Acts

Explore Websites related to church multiplication:

- Multiplication model: <https://www.experiencelifenow.com/>
- Disciple Making Movement resources: <https://newgenerations.org/books/>
- Discovery Bible Study: <https://discoverapp.org/discovery-bible-study>
- Disciple making training: <https://zume.training/>
- Contagious Disciple Making: <https://www.contagiousdisciplemaking.com/>
- New Thing: <https://newthing.org/>
- Church Economists: <https://churcheconomists.com/> (sustainability assessment)

Join a Network supporting church planters:

- Movement Leaders Collective: <https://movementleaderscollective.com>
- Exponential network: <https://exponential.org/>
- Mosaix: <https://mosaix.info/> (multiethnic church planting)
- Acts 29 network: <https://www.acts29.com/>
- City to City Network: <https://citytocityna.com/>
- Church Development Network: <https://churchdevelopment.network/>
- Association of Related Churches (ARC): <https://www.arcchurches.com/>
- Brave Future: <https://www.bravefuture.org/about>
- Underground network: <https://www.undergroundnetwork.org/>
- Undercurrent network: <https://www.undercurrentnetwork.com/>
- Inspire Movement: <https://inspiremovement.org/>
- SEND Network: <https://www.namb.net/send-network/>
- Wesleyan Church: <https://www.wesleyan.org/cmadv>
- V3 Network: <https://thev3movement.org/>
- Church Multiplication Network: <https://www.churchmultiplication.net/>
- Motus Dei - a "learn tank" for kingdom movements: <https://www.motusdei.network/>
- GACX, a global alliance for church multiplication: <https://gacx.io/>
- Lausanne Church Planting Issue Network: <https://churchplanting.lausanne.org/>
- 24:14, for those involved in church planting movements: <https://2414now.net/>
- Church Planting Leadership Fellowship: <https://exponential.org/cplf/>
- National Church Planting Process (Europe): <https://nc2p.org/>

Receive training in Church Multiplication through Asbury Seminary

Enroll in the [Certificate in Church Multiplication](#), program or in the church planting track of the [MA](#) or [DMin](#) programs at Asbury Theological Seminary.

Contact other organizations that train church planters:

- The River Network: <https://therivernetwork.org/home>
- <https://newbreedtraining.com/>
- Dynamic Church Planting International: <https://dcpi.org/>
- Stadia: <https://stadia.org/services/>
- Strategic Launch: <https://launchstrong.com/>
- Fuller Church Planting Initiative: <https://churchplanting.fuller.edu/planters/>

Understand your role on a church planting team

If the triune God has never worked alone, can we? Just as God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit have always worked interdependently, we engage in God's mission within the context of interdependent teams.

- Review [Re-Forma's list of competencies](#) necessary for church leaders and church planters. This list of 37 outcomes is approved by the World Evangelical Alliance and is applicable worldwide.
- Take the [CliftonStrengths Assessment](#) or the [APEST vocational assessment](#) or the [Taylor Johnson Temperament Analysis](#) or the [Birkman Method](#) or other helpful assessments to understand your God-given strengths, personality, and best contribution to a team.
- Ask God to provide partners in church planting whose gifts complement your own.

Mapping

- Map where the church is and where it isn't in your city (geographically, racially, socio-economically, socio-culturally) or in the community where you hope to expand Christ's church.
- Understand why the church hasn't thrived in certain areas and among certain groups. What are the underlying issues - with past expressions of the church, with that location, with that context?
- Prayerfully consider going where the church isn't.

We know this is a long list! But we hope you will find ideas on this list which are helpful for you. Select one next step which is most applicable for your context. Keep moving forward step by step. Over time, you will be amazed at the progress you make.

Most importantly, draw near to Christ and invest in his church. Church multiplication begins with a deep love for Christ and the community of people who follow him. Love God. Truly love your neighbors. And love Christ's church.

Let us know how you progress through these steps and what you found most helpful.

Connect with the CCM team at: church.planting@asburyseminary.edu

Subject: Disciple Making Movements and Discovery Bible Study

Date: Thursday, July 10, 2025 at 10:19:04 AM Eastern Daylight Time

From: Keith Boyette

To: davkarbean, Mary Sullivan-Trent, Norma Aguilar, f.l.kinzer@gmail.com, jason@birthmarkministries.org, Tera Ertz, David Ford, Yeonmi Kang

CC: Greg West, Brandon Nichols

Friends,

On July 5 and 6, I attended a training event for Disciple Making Movements (DMM) and Discovery Bible Study (DBS). The training was presented by the Global Ekklesia Network (a loose coalition of Anglo, Hispanic, Nepalese, and Ukrainian leaders in Northern Virginia).

DMM and DBS focuses on “obedience-based discipleship that sees disciples reproducing disciples, leaders reproducing leaders, and churches reproducing churches.”

DBS groups constitute the core feature of DMMs, although DBS groups can operate independently of a DMM. A DBS group is generally composed of 2-6 people facilitated by a person of peace (POP). Generally the other members of the DBS group have been invited by the POP. The DBS group generally meets weekly usually at a location other than a church facility.

The working principle of DBS groups is that “we discover from Scripture what God wants us to know. It is not a teaching method as much as a learning through questions and facilitation method.” You can get a sense of what happens in a typical DBS group meeting by watching a 3-minute video at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=K3evOGh-HfsCt=178s>. Please note DBS groups were pioneered by David L. Watson (not the David Watson who is president of Asbury Theological Seminary).

An overview of the typical flow of a DBS group can be found at www.dbsguide.org. Suggested Bible Passages to be explored at a DBS group gathering can also be found at www.dbsguide.org. The website also lists additional possible studies using the DBS methodology.

During the training, we were participants in a DBS group meeting. I found the process inviting, easily accessible, and inspiring. Participants leave each meeting with two commitments they craft — 1) what should I do in the coming week in response to this passage, and 2) who should I share this with? The first question is key to the discipling process. The second question is key to enabling disciples to make disciples. When participants return for the next week's gathering, they briefly report how they did in implementing these two commitments.

A DMM empowers persons to lead DBS groups, provides ongoing coaching for DBS leaders, gathers DBS groups which relate to the DMM for periodic gatherings, has the potential to form these DBS groups into a micro church, and serves as a hub to encourage the development of and effectiveness of DBS groups. A DMM casts vision that every Jesus follower is a disciple-maker and values training every person to go out among the lost to make disciples and help plant new groups/churches.

I have a wealth of additional information on the character of and how you identify persons of peace (POP), how to cultivate POP, how to encourage and facilitate the launch of DBS groups, and the role of the DMM catalyst.

If you would like to explore the impact of DMM working through Ordinary People, I recommend that you watch all or a portion of the

video “Ordinary People — A Documentary Film” produced in 2022 at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N_YgYbgnR8I. The video is 90 minutes long but it is well worth the investment of time.

Finally, I commend the website, [Experience Life Now](#), which recounts the story of how a megachurch transformed into a DMM birthing 1,173 churches in 36 states and 64 countries. This website has a wealth of resources on DMM and DBS.

I would like for you to join me in prayerfully discerning whether God is inviting us as a church multiplication team to bring DMM and DBS training to the Virginia Conference of the Global Methodist Church. I will invite us to have an initial conversation on this matter at our August 2025 meeting.

Please contact me if you have any questions.

In Christ,

Keith Boyette

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540-538-3202

CHURCH MULTIPLICATION COVENANT

By God's grace, and to advance God's Kingdom, we, the pastor and lay leadership of _____ Church, commit to pursuing the checked next step(s) to becoming a Multiplying Church – *a church that either plants or meaningfully participates in the planting of churches which plant churches to the fourth generation*. We affirm that this is a solemn commitment to God, understanding the cost and significance of this calling. We commit to measuring our progress in each area checked, to regularly evaluating our progress in realizing the checked action step(s), to reporting our progress in each area checked, and to updating our commitment on an annual basis or more frequently as circumstances warrant.

Place a check mark in each bullet point to which the church is committing and sign and date the covenant as indicated.

▪ **Decision Making**

Disciple Making

- We will intentionally make disciple making and raising up disciple makers a key part of our vision, values, culture, and measure of fruitfulness as a church and regularly teach on the topic in our weekly messages and in our groups or classes.
- We will intentionally develop and grow a disciple making culture by regularly sharing the core beliefs, habits, and stories of our congregation that demonstrates to almost everyone, all the time, including newcomers, the disciple making priority for everyone in this church.
- We will take steps to become a Level _____ Disciple Making Church.

Multiplication

- We will make church multiplication a key part of our vision, values, culture, and measure of fruitfulness as a church and identify concrete ways to implement our growth as a multiplying church.
- We will make planting or partnering with other churches to plant churches a key factor in making church decisions that impact our future as a congregation (e.g., decisions affecting staffing, facilities, budget, programs, etc.).
- We will plant or partner with other churches to plant churches with at least the same importance and urgency as we pursue local church growth and starting new programs, services, and sites.

▪ **Culture**

- We will visibly and regularly cast vision for our members and attenders to grow in discipleship and disciple making.
- We will visibly and regularly cast vision for our members to go and be part of teams that are planting churches.

- We will implement strategies that naturally mobilize everyday missionaries and potential members of church planting teams without undue reliance on our staff or programs.
- We will encourage our staff, lay leadership, and laity to enter into the attached Individual Covenant of Multiplication.
- **Practical Steps**
 - We will intentionally pray (and fast) for our congregation to be a disciple making church and for our members and attenders to be disciple makers.
 - We will intentionally participate in district and conference prayer (and fasting) initiatives focused on disciple making and multiplication.
 - We will develop, implement, and hold ourselves accountable to an intentional pathway of discipleship and encourage each of our members to participate in such a pathway.
 - We will encourage and facilitate key leaders of our congregation attending training events focused on intentional discipleship in our church.
 - We will develop, maintain, and hold ourselves accountable to a plan for increasing the disciple making capacity of our members and attenders, and of our church.
 - We will have each of our leaders take a disciple making assessment and participate in resourcing in disciple making in response to their assessment.
 - We will encourage and facilitate key leaders of our congregation attending training events focused on disciple making.
 - We commit to a journey of learning more about church planting and multiplication.
 - We will develop, maintain, and hold ourselves accountable to a plan for increasing our multiplication activity and impact.
 - We will participate with other churches in partnerships and collaboration at either the local, district, or conference levels that is actively pursuing increased multiplication.
 - We will encourage and facilitate key leaders of our congregation attending training events focused on multiplication.
 - We will publicly and regularly encourage our members to give sacrificially above and beyond their tithe to the local church to support specific new churches.
 - We will invest at least ____% of the first fruits of our budget and any capital fundraising campaigns into church multiplication.
 - We will seek to be directly involved in church multiplication activities like recruiting, assessing, training, providing financial and other forms of support, and staying connected with best practices for church multiplication.
 - We will prioritize planting churches either as an initiative of our congregation or in partnership with other congregations over assuming debt for land and buildings.
 - We will participate directly or through collaboration with other churches in at least one church plant per year through the provision of human or financial resources.

- We will seek to be as aggressive in identifying and sending leaders to start new churches as we are in accumulating lay leadership or staff members for our congregation.
- We will encourage our best leaders to go and be part of church plants.
- We will seek to continuously equip future church planters via an intentional internship or residency training program.

_____ **Church**

_____ **Date**

_____ **Pastor**

_____ **Lay Leader**

Print _____

Print _____

_____ **Chair, Church Council**

Print _____

A Covenant of Multiplication

By God's grace, and to advance God's Kingdom I, _____, commit to pursuing the life of a **Multiplier**—*a healthy, disciple-making leader who champions reproduction*—knowing that you reproduce who you are. This is a solemn commitment before God and His people, understanding the cost and significance of this calling...

- **Healthy:** I commit to prioritizing my spiritual, relational, physical, and mental / emotional, well-being as the foundation of fruitful leadership. By living a Christ-centered life, I aim to lead authentically and resiliently, creating consistent rhythms and practices for the long-term flourishing of my soul and ministry.

I commit to routinely checking the 4 gauges of a Multiplier:

- My spiritual gauge: Am I staying rooted in the presence and power of God?
 - My relational gauge: Am I investing in healthy, life-giving relationships?
 - My physical gauge: Am I caring for my body with rest, movement, and margin?
 - My mental gauge: Am I cultivating focus, clarity, and resilience?
- **Disciple-Making:** I commit to living as a disciple of Jesus who makes disciple-makers. I will intentionally cultivate relationships that foster gospel-centered transformation. To exemplify a Christ-centered life, I will prioritize authentic disciple-making, advancing the Church's mission to multiply disciples from my neighborhood to the nations. I commit to identify and personally walk beside at least one potential disciple-maker this year.
 - **Leader:** I commit to Spirit-led leadership rooted in humility, innovation, and service. I will steward my influence wisely, prioritize trust, and consistently mobilize others to thrive as we pursue Kingdom goals together.
 - **Champions Reproduction:** I am dedicated to championing reproduction at every level of my influence. I will actively seek opportunities for collaboration within my community and city, striving for unity in Kingdom work. Following the example of Jesus, I will lead with generosity, placing trust in God's plans and empowering others to pursue their unique callings, even when it extends beyond my own control and context. I will communicate potential opportunities for reproduction with my church community and take personal responsibility in acting on and encouraging others to act on those opportunities

My commitment to multiplication is fueled by a vision for gospel saturation and a desire for a movement for Jesus' mission, trusting God to move powerfully through His Church in the West and beyond.

This covenant is made before God and my **friends on mission**, seeking His grace to fulfill this sacred call. I trust in His strength, wisdom, and guidance as I walk forward in faith and surrender.

Signature

Date

Printed Name

ESSENTIAL ECCLESIOLOGY

In the Global Methodist Church, a church is a gathered community of believers under the Lordship of Christ in which the Word of God is preached by divinely called persons, the sacraments are regularly administered, and worship, edification of believers, and participation in God's redemptive mission in the world occur under the discipline of the Holy Spirit.

A. Doctrinal Anchors

Essential ecclesiology should reflect:

- The preaching of the pure Word of God by divinely called persons (Article XIII, Article of Religion; Article V, Confession of Faith)
- The administration of the sacraments (Article XIII, Articles of Religion; Article V, Confession of Faith)
- A gathered community of believers under the Lordship of Christ (Article XIII, Articles of Religion; Article V, Confession of Faith; Acts 2)
- Regular worship, edification (teaching), and redemptive acts occur under the discipline of the Holy Spirit (Article V, Confession of Faith)
- Mission and disciple-making (Book of Doctrines and Discipline ¶ 103.2)
- Accountability, leadership, and watchfulness in love (BDD ¶ 103.3–6)

B. Global Methodist Expressions of Essential Ecclesiology

Drawing from the BDD and historic, biblical ecclesial principles, a church should include:

1. Worship of Jesus as Lord (1 Corinthians 1:2)
2. Scripture preached, taught, and obeyed (1 Timothy 4:13)
3. Regular gathering of believers for discipleship & fellowship (Acts 2:42)
4. Practice of Baptism and Holy Communion (Acts 2:38; 1 Corinthians 11:23–26)
5. Recognized and credible spiritual authority (Acts 14:23)
6. Commitment to mission, discipleship, disciple-making, and multiplication (Matthew 28:19–20)
7. Evidence of the Holy Spirit's presence and fruit (1 Corinthians 3:16)
8. Commitment to Connectionalism (1 Corinthians 12:12–27; Romans 12:4–5)

CHURCH PLANT SPONSOR GUIDELINES

Virginia GMC Conference Church Multiplication Team

A new local church may be planted by any lay person or clergyperson of the Global Methodist Church with the sponsorship of a Global Methodist local church or group of churches (“the sponsoring church”). ¶ 450.1 of the Book of Doctrines and Discipline. These guidelines are to help the sponsoring church of a church plant engage in intentional relationship building and establish accountable practices for the spiritual and practical benefit of the church plant. The list below contains the main areas that a sponsoring church should inquire about. The sponsoring relationship is not limited to these areas and others may be added to fit the contextual needs of the church plant.

The sponsoring church shall inquire about six areas of the church plant in agreeing to be a sponsoring church – Spiritual support, yearly goals, missional plan, development of discipleship programs and/or discipleship pathway, the budget, and commitments made by the sponsoring church. These six areas should be reviewed and modified as necessary on an annual basis until the church plant is chartered. The sponsoring church relationship concludes once the church plant is chartered although the resulting congregations can thereafter continue to engage in cooperative or partnered ministry.

Spiritual Support

- Prayer support: How can the sponsoring church pray for the church plant? Are there any mentoring or coaching needs that the church plant needs to acquire?
- Do they need help identifying a person or program to walk them through a challenge?
- Are there spiritual resources that the sponsoring church can share that the church plant can use or needs?
- Pray for each other during in-person meetings.
- If the church plant does not have a leader with sacramental authority, how can the sponsoring church meet this need until it is no longer needed?

Yearly Goals

- What are the 3-5 goals that the church plant has for the year?
 - Inquire about these goals in quarterly meetings involving leaders of the church plant and the sponsoring church.
- Do the goals make sense? Do they cover the needs of the mission field? Do they address the next stages for the church plant?
- How is the core value of being a sending church reflected in the church plant's goals of disciples making disciples, leaders making leaders, and ultimately planting new churches from the church plant?
- The sponsoring church may help if asked and they are familiar with the church plant's context.

Missional Plan

- How is the church plant developing a DNA or culture of reaching new people, of disciples making disciples for Jesus, and becoming a sending church as a primary focus?
- What is the church plant's strategy to reach new people for Christ?
- Is the church plant developing a culture of reaching out and discipling people outside of their church walls? These can include prayer walks, canvassing neighborhoods, invite cards, Alpha groups, community projects, etc.

Discipleship

- What discipleship programs does the church plant have? What are they missing? What age groups do they cover?
- Are they developing discipleship options or have resources for those in different stages of faith?
- What steps are being implemented to encourage transformation vs. acquiring information? What provision is made for grace-filled accountability in growing in Christ?

Budget

- What picture does the budget give about the priorities of the church plant?
 - Is the budget appropriate for the church plant's stage of development and planned next step?
 - Is it missional? Are they adequately budgeting for community engagement and discipleship for their size and goals? Are staff members fairly-compensated, under-compensated, or over-compensated?

Optional Commitments Determined by the Sponsoring Church

- Sending leadership. Leadership sent by the Sponsoring Church should be on a short-term basis to help launch the church plant and get it started with solid footing and mentor incoming leadership. E.g. three months, six months, one year.
- Participation in community engagement efforts. A sponsoring church could send teams to participate in prayer walks, missional activities, invite people to church, etc.
- Financial Support. Sponsoring churches may commit funding to support the church plant. It is NOT to be the main source of funding but to help with any gaps and shortcomings.