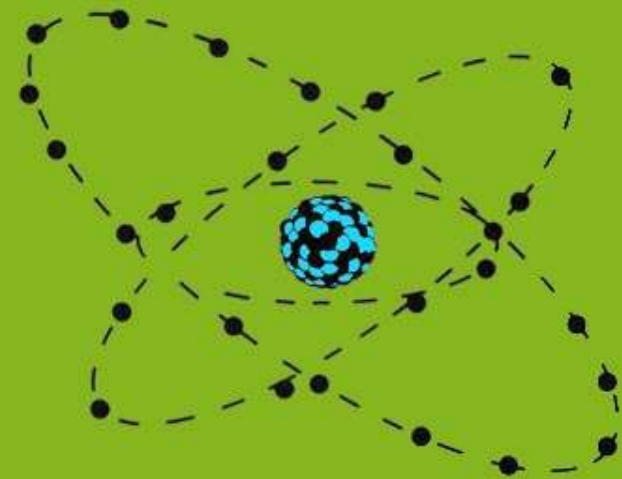


Theological
and practical
thoughts
on going
"Multi-site"



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steve huber and geoff bradford, pastors



Equipping the body to go multi-site..... Why?

- You don't have enough to do in a day
- You are attracted to creative ways to make life more complicated
- The church you serve has so much extra cash you are beside yourself
- People like your sermons so much it's spooky
- Your church isn't lame enough and you are looking for ways to make it worse



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Driving theological concerns

- The mission of God
- The commission of Christ
- Urgency and Responsibility that come from a deep biblical sense of “sentness”
- A deep sense of the “lostness” of people
- This “sentness” needs to be owned by your leadership and your people



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Why this emphasis on “sentness”?

- I say all this because lesser desires can push you towards multi-site or away from it....
- Desire to trendy/hip/in the know
- Desire to avoid being “in the know” (just a different version of being “in the know”)
- To be comfortable/have something controllable
- Fear of failure

There is a cost—we are 3 lamer versions of what we could be if we were one site.



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The need

- Church planting and Church renewal
- Do you have a handle on your own heart?
- Do you have a handle on your area?
- This is not how we started!!



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Biblical expectations of multiplication:

- What is the church you serve built for?
- Dwight Smith—“Most churches are built just to survive, a few are built to get big, very few are built to multiply!”
- Models that are more easily contextualized are attractive because of the growth, complexity, and diversity in the culture: diversify man!
- What multi-site brings to both urban, suburban, and rural contexts.....



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Dave Browning started Christ the King Community Church in 1999

- Small Groups, Cafes, Worship Centers
- “In the Skaget Valley the populations is distributed among several towns, so we determined that if our goal was to effectively reach out to thousands of unchurched people in this valley, we would have to do that in more than one place”
- “By decentralizing the church and using smaller venues, we are able to have different services at different times with different teachers in different locations.” (and not all in English language)



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The biblical expectations need to drive our ecclesiological expectations!! Not the other way around!!

- Dwight Smith: an argument to keep the parameters low:
 - The quality of the building, the slickness of the children's min, the quality of music----
 - When the bar goes up: the harder it is to multiply!!
- The advantage of congregations of about 200 and under
 - Sense of ownership is higher
 - Sense of involvement



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A historical example: the 1st great awakening:

- Guys converted without preaching
- Heralds of great, great news
- Deep commitment
- Deep brokenness for lost people
- Willingness to take risks: George Whitefield with the Kingswood colliers.....
- Willingness to explore new models

- We need more laborers AND more sites!!!

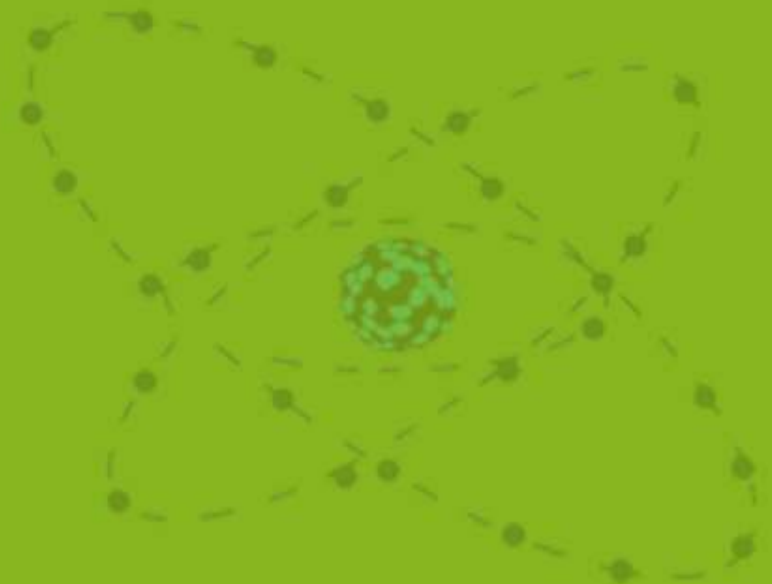


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The “history” of multi-site

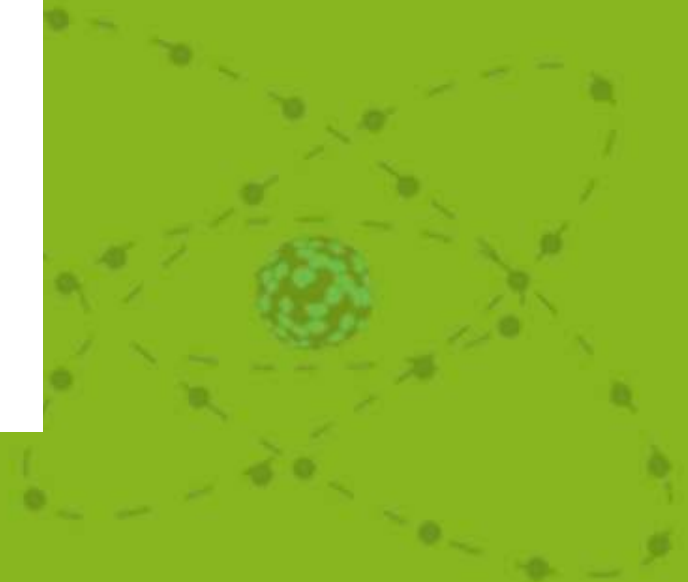
What do we do to reach an unreached nation?



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Hour 2



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liberti in a snapshot



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Fairmount



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Northern Liberties / Fishtown



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© Seth Shimkonis



Roxborough / Manayunk



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What is mandatory

- “fire in your bones”
- a sense of calling both personally and as a church
- a sense of your particular church’s mission
- understanding of your region
- Pastors who train leaders (biggest mistake mentioned in 2007 leadnet survey)



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What is really helpful but not mandatory:

- Small “a” apostles and evangelists as well as pastors and teachers
- Biblically shaped interdependent teams—some form of team ministry
- A team that is administratively gifted
- Remember: vision precedes resources!!

Could 2 smaller churches join, have greater outreach power and then be able to plant a third congregation?

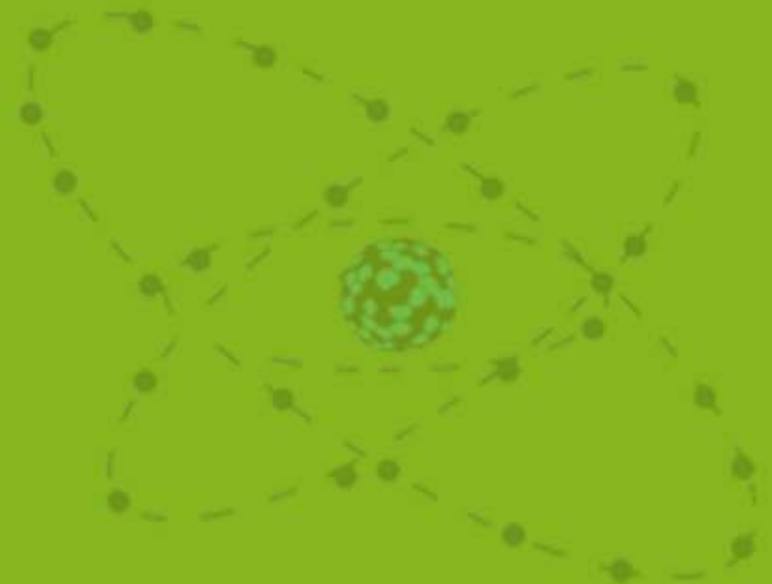


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Preparing and training a launch team:

- Prayer
- Mercy and Justice
- Evangelism
- Calling



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Biblical sentness that is expressed in evangelism and mercy in their geography/webs of relationships

- “we are reaching this neighborhood” versus “you are starting a new site here”
- “The church is a body not a bus”-- John Yenchko



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Costs and effects:

- Missional lifestyle--what it does to people
- “I have to step up”
- People don’t see their friends every Sunday
- Not always having their best worship team up
- Children’s ministry and other ministries are lamer for a long season



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Defeaters of multi site:

- Too small
- Not enough money
- We don't have enough leaders
- This will strain our team



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Issues to think through:

- liberti: “Congregations” versus “Sites”
- Whatever the term: contextualization is needed
- Starbucks versus Larry’s coffee shop
- Location versus target group



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Polity

- Interdependence versus independence
- Long term models: different ways this can go
- The connection with church planting



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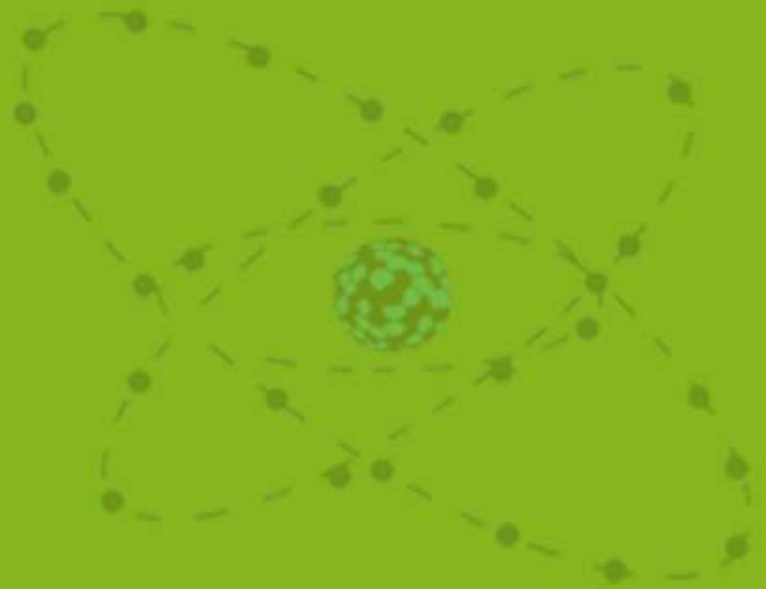




Thanks

Questions?
theoretical
pragmatic
relative to your
area

Comments?

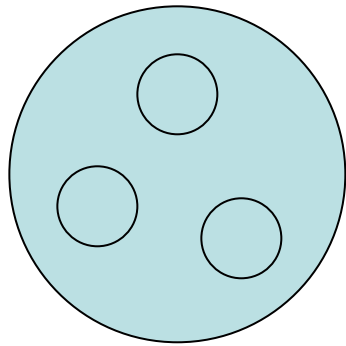


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Multi-site to Multi-congregational ministry models

Assumptions:

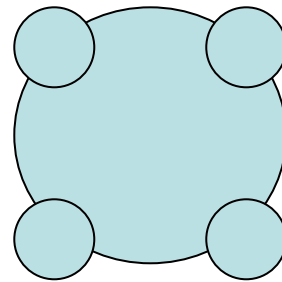
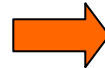
1. God loves church planting.
2. Higher, faster, cheaper
3. Jesus sent out his leaders 2 x 2. No Spiritual ninjas!
4. A certain amount of mess/chaos is healthy--producing an environment for creativity and innovation, inviting new leadership....
5. Risk or rust. The kingdom of God is at stake.



Multi-site



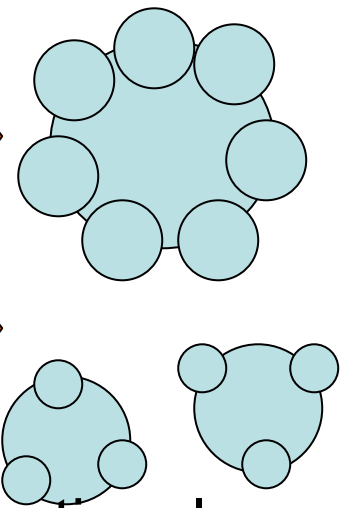
Multi-Church



Multi-congregational



or



Decentralization to multiply means

- **Priorities for each liberti Congregation:**
- Self-supporting \$\$
- Self-governing with own elders...
- Self-propogating (commitment to multiply)

Decentralization to multiply means

- **What is Decentralized?**
- 1) Preaching
- 2) Worship
- 3) Children's Ministries
- 4) Elders
- 5) Home Meetings
- 6) Budgets

Decentralization to multiply means

- **What is Centralized?**
- 1) Administration: Website, bulletins, information distribution
- 2) Finance: Payroll, Benefits, Offering, Insurance
- 3) Counseling
- 4) Centralized ministries:
 - Equipping team,
 - International Ministry (mission) team
 - Finance team
 - Family Ministry team
- 5) Equipping Home Meeting Leaders, elders, etc

Decentralization to multiply means

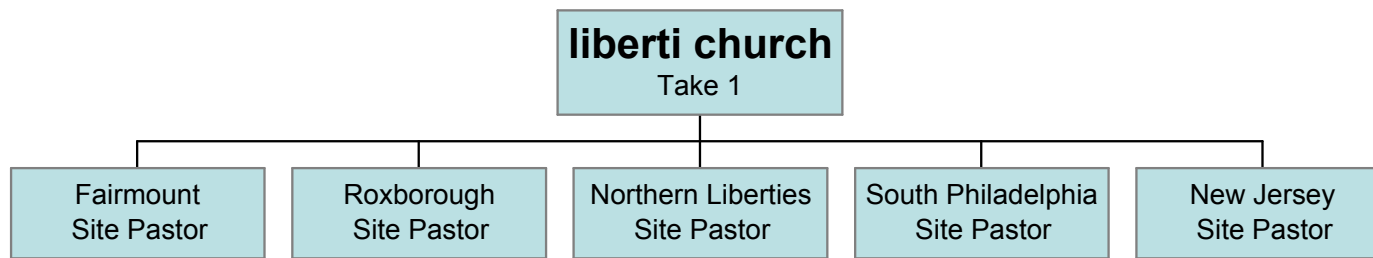
- **What is Shared?**
- 1) Values & Vision
- 2) Relationships
- 3) Resources for and Commitment to Church Planting
- 4) Pastors still have Movement “hat”
(responsibilities in the wider movement)

Decentralization to multiply means

- **Per Congregation Money Breakdown:**
- **10%** to Administration (less % as we add more congregations)
- **7%** to Church Planting Fund (greater % as we add more congregations)
- **4%** for Centralized ministries
- **4%** for Counseling
- **75%** stays with the congregation for their own rent, salaries, ministries, programs, etc.

Decentralization to multiply Polity/Governance issues

- Each congregation has a pastor, elders, and home meeting leaders who provide shepherding, church discipline
- Each congregation is represented on a Core Leadership Team (1 pastor, 1 elder per cong.) at quarterly meetings for major movement-wide decision-making.
- Each congregation has a right to withdraw from the movement with reasonable notice, as long as there are no discipline issues of leaders of that congregation.



- **“Take 1”**

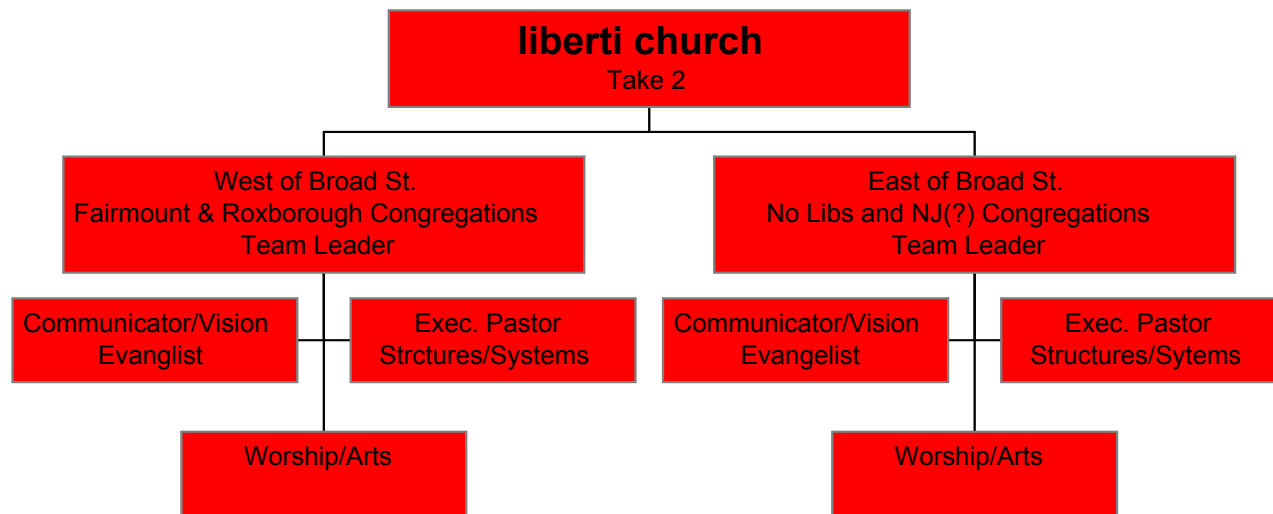
- **Pure Multi-congregational Model:**

- PROS:

- Simplest in terms of structure--each congregation has to do whatever it takes to make it.
- Easy to add other congregations from other denominations--functionally becomes a Presbytery
- No people management to speak of--accountability circles are smaller
- Easiest to track financially--each congregation just pays for what it can afford.

- CONS:

- Loses the strengths of team-work, except with regard to admin.
- Less collaboration
- Pastors become more generalists, having to do every aspect of ministry
- People could go with their favorite Pastor (“I follow Paul, I follow Apollos”)
- Comes with sacrifices--each individual pastor will not be able to deliver on “Doubt nights” for example...
- Congregations are as strong or weak as their leadership
- Expects “Jack of all trades” leaders for the future...



Take 2 “Peas in a Pod” model

PROS:

- Keeps the emphasis on team relationships, complementing gifts
- Creates easier “ramps” for new and younger leaders to enter teams rather than putting them out there on their own
- Allow congregations to share some resources which are “big church”
- Adaptable and flexible
- Allows for a diversity of gifts to be used and celebrated. No “ninjas”

• CONS:

- Not as simple, easy to budget for...
- Some stress involved in multiplying our team