

December, 2015

home base

An 'organic church' newsletter update among friends of Pathfinders

Our Mission:

To experience Christ through simple churching and to pass it on.

Our Vision:

To advance the gospel through households of faith who live among the lost and make disciples.

APEST Team* (aka Board)

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raising the bar on discipleship ...

"We need to raise the bar on discipleship and lower the bar on what it means to do church," writes Neil Cole.

The quest for organic churching has never been greater. It shows itself in four ways: 1. The disaffected who have left the congregation scene in search of something more/different. 2. Those who find themselves in simple church contexts such as house churches. 3. Those who operate relationally in a network fashion drawing on the best of mature, local believers, online ministries and other resources. 4. Our adult children who in large part cannot thrive spiritually in existing structures as they are presently.

The question of 'where do you go to church?' might better be phrased, "how do you do church?" The latter is better grammatically and more pointed functionally. The former is weak ... you see, we can't go to something we *are!* *In Christ we are the church.* It is a relational coordinate, not a geographic location.

The challenge of many congregations today is to (re)discover how to cultivate *organic churching within the relationships*, a difficult task when the DNA of much fellowship is fused around professional clergy, preaching, policies and programs as the primary functions.

A disciple of Jesus operating outside of a congregational format tends to be either drifting away or fighting for *spiritual oxygen*. Seldom has the latter been taken as a serious wake up call to the Body.

Oxygen to a true disciple involves keeping in step with God's Spirit, feeding regularly on the Scriptures and living as a servant, practicing the "one anothers" of Scripture ... love one another, forgive one another, encourage one another, bear with one another, show humility to one another, instruct one another, etc. This is a call to a rugged and intentional discipleship which is both personal and communal, taking very seriously all relationships with fellow Christ followers. It connects us to all Christ followers in our local scene.

May 2016 be your most encouraging year yet as you journey to *do church* in fresh, relational ways that honour Christ and build His Body on earth! May we each be catalysts in shaping a new vision for 'church' in our generation.

Warmly,

Ross

stories



Dr. Paul and Dr. Lilian Wong are internationally accomplished psychologists and authors as well as 'apostles to academia.' We worked together many years ago reaching students for Christ and continue to 'spur one another on.'



I had the joy of pointing Kit to Jesus over 30 years ago. Kit is an Anglican minister in Bowmanville, Ontario. He has a passion to disciple others within that communion.



Jim Petersen shares the Scriptures on what it means to *be and do* church 'outside the walls' to practitioners from four provinces in October.



Jim meeting with some of the APEST Team, (*Eph. 4:11-12) to review critical factors for a disciplemaking ministry.



What are Pathfinders about? We are an association of people who are finding our paths forward toward a more organic/missional approach to how we 'do church.' Our dream is to find new trails so that more unreached can discover the new life Jesus offers ... in the neighbourhood, the marketplace and around the world; and, so that new expressions of church will emerge for a new generation.

