

June, 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)

Rev. Ray Klassen

Dr. Barb Haycraft

Deb Floyd

Alex Matheson

Dr. Doug Hamm

Jim Klaas

519-433-5558

International Office

303-111 Waterloo St.

London, Ontario,

CANADA

N6B 2M4

pathfindersfellowships.com



The Church Has Left The Building ...

"Elvis has left the building" is a phrase that was often used by public address announcers following Elvis Presley concerts to disperse audiences who lingered in hopes of seeing him again for an encore. It has since become a popular culture catchphrase and punchline.

I don't know who coined the phrase, "the church has left the building," but I want to share a few reasons why I think this phrase has profound merits for our day.

1. It biblically distinguishes the word 'church' from any reference to 'building.' Unfortunately, still today, most onlookers, and not a few Christ followers, think of 'the church' as a building.
2. It suggests that for a long time 'the church' has identified strongly with activity out of a certain style of building, where teaching and preaching in a lecture hall format are central to the 'services.'
3. It further suggests that the nature of the church can no longer be contained in those former building formats.
4. Something dynamic is at play moving the church beyond its traditional walls.
5. It reveals that the church has moved from something contained and visible into something with more 'open' parameters, not bound by buildings, less subject to the control of men, but perhaps more requiring the intimate leading of the Spirit.
6. It begs the question of what kind of (new) buildings might qualify to host God's people. A house? What about a chapel in an airport or hospital? A cafe? A pub? Or, renewal within existing structures?
7. It intimates that the church, as the people of God, are in motion, not static. A building is *static*. Church as the people of God are to *dynamically* live out the life of Christ everywhere the walk and work.

The church in the West is in a dynamic flux. There is a diaspora. Though many are leaving congregation life out of boredom and disobedience, still others are leaving in order to save their faith and engage a mission. ... 2

I believe we are in a transition phase where it may take 10 or 20 years or more for new expressions of simple/mobile/organic church to emerge out of the messiness of it all. House churches are one such expression, but we must see bands of believers making disciples of Christ in all streams of our cities, town and villages ... to touch our culture at large.

There will be experiments and setbacks but we must encourage a new generation of pioneers to carry the gospel *to* family networks, *to* the neighbourhood, *to* the workplace, *to* affinity groups of all kinds such as sports, the arts, the sciences and those who meet online. Many of our children will be on the front edges.

I believe that these trends which on the one hand suggest the dismantling of evangelicalism as we once knew it, provide the very conditions for a more humble, more Spirit-sensitive, more Word-centered, more love-in-action witness to the gospel, which is at the same time less triumphalistic, less clergy-centered and less isolated.

Ross



touch the city

... being the church without walls ...

October 17-18, 2015

Jim Petersen, a pioneer disciplemaker to Brazil and mentor to many planting indigenous movements of the gospel will be coming to Canada to engage us in fundamentals of contextual ministry.

Circle the dates. More info. to follow.

Preparation for the time: Read *Lifestyle Discipleship* by Jim.

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,' by affirming the headship of Jesus in community, focus on making disciples, active labouring from the moment a person comes to faith and the dynamic functioning of Ephesians 4:11-12 roles* at the local and trans-local level. Our dream is to find new trails so that more unreached can discover the Jesus life.

"The gospel is only good news if it gets there in time."
Carl F. H. Henry.

