



Mission 120

In 2012, the Church of God state ministries of Ohio, Michigan, and Indiana and Healthy Growing Churches (HGC), an organization with the mission and vision to see healthy leaders grow and multiply churches, began a conversation. This conversation, based on how to accelerate church multiplication, led to a partnership between the four ministries. They aimed to spark a church multiplication movement within each region. Leadership in each of the state ministries and that of HGC believed that forming a *partnership* together was critical in planting churches most effectively. The thought still rings true today that we work much better together than we do apart.

By 2013, the partnership forged between each of the three state ministries and HGC would start to cultivate into more in-depth conversation aimed at shifting culture regarding church multiplication. Tom Planck, the Chief Catalyst of HGC and friend to the Ohio, Michigan, and Indiana state ministries, set out to create synergy within the partnership. He helped to facilitate pastors and leaders in entering the same circles where they would begin having the right conversation. That conversation hinged upon the transition from trying to answer the question, “Should I multiply?” to “How will our church multiply?”. This is where the Mission 120 Initiative was born.

The Mission 120 Initiative is a venture to raise up and resource 120 disciple-making churches in Ohio, Michigan, and Indiana. The goal is to see 60 of those churches in Ohio, 20 in Michigan, and 40 in Indiana. The ultimate driver of this initiative is creating a grassroots multiplication movement. In order to develop and maintain momentum in this movement, disciple-making must become the engine that continues to rapidly increase the number of disciple-making churches. It is important to note here that this is not a program or a silver bullet but rather a shift in the culture of how we “do church.”

We believe the Mission 120 Initiative will accelerate the growth in the number of churches in Ohio, Indiana, and Michigan. To accomplish this, we need to have some clear pathways for disciple-making to multiple generations of growth. It is intentional disciple-making that leads churches to start other churches.

It is important to define two important phrases here as we embark on the journey of raising up 120 disciple-making churches. Those include Biblical Disciples and Disciple-Making Churches. We define those like this:

Biblical Disciples are individuals:

1. Intentionally following Jesus;
2. Being changed by Jesus;
3. Engaging the mission of Jesus.

Disciple-Making Churches:

1. Are led by disciple-making pastors and leaders;
2. Have a relational pathway for disciple-making;
3. Raise up disciples who make disciples to 2nd and 3rd generations of reproduction;
4. Send disciples out into the mission of Jesus.

What we understand to be true is that we have what we call Micro- and Macro-multiplication. Micro-multiplication is that one-to-one discipleship journey. Micro-multiplication is the key that takes us to Macro-multiplication, where disciple-making church culture leads to a multiplying of churches. This is the goal. Remember, discipleship is God's Plan A for Kingdom growth, and there is no Plan B.

The main thrust of the Mission 120 Initiative is the creation of learning communities of pastors we call Mission 120 Cohorts. These cohorts meet monthly for ninety minutes via Zoom over six sessions. The six sessions are each intentionally designed to help pastors create a pathway and vehicle for disciple-making to multiple generations of reproduction.

In January of 2020, we launched Wave 1 of the Mission 120 Cohorts with the partnership and leadership of Jon Wiest from Groundswell. Forty-four pastors from our mid-west region have formed six Mission 120 Cohorts. Ohio has three cohorts currently meeting, Indiana has two, and Michigan has one.

When these forty-four pastors have finished Wave 1 of their Mission 120 Cohort journey, we will leverage their leadership to launch Wave 2. These Cohorts launch in September of 2020. When Wave 2 launches, we will have 120 churches well on their way to becoming disciple-making churches! This means that by the Spring of 2021, these 120 churches will have the tools and pathways in place to multiply disciples who will multiply churches!

It is genuinely thrilling to see how God is working in and through our Mission 120 Cohorts. One of the great things about the Mission 120 Initiative is its ability to be duplicated anywhere here in the United States and abroad. We are not trying to reinvent the wheel. We are simply creating space for pastors and church leaders to reengage in Christ's mission for His Church.

If you would like more information about joining a Mission 120 Cohort in our state of Ohio, please contact Esther Cottrell, esther@cogo.church. We are happy to get the conversation started with you!