

GROUP PRACTICES

For Cultivating Missional Intelligence

risky proposition — dangerous mission — precarious adventure

THE **daring**
endeavor OF

bold responsibility

Being Church

Rev. Justin Berkobien
justinberkobien.com



- **WHY:** Serve as Christ's witnesses to the ends of the earth
- **HOW:** by discerning how God is at work in the world around us & how we're being called to participate in that work
- **WHAT:** with fruit-bearing, reproducing missional endeavors.

Developmental Intentionality



INSIDE



BRIDGE



OUTSIDE

HT: David Fitch (Faithful Presence)

INSIDE: *By Us, For Us*—covenantal community engaged in spiritual practices and discernment (e.g. prayer, confession, burden sharing, truth-telling)

BRIDGE: *By Us, For Them*—safe spaces hosted by the believing community designed to make faith exploration accessible for newcomers (e.g. Alpha course, introductory Bible study, potluck, service project, game night, etc.)

Note: the goal is to bridge faith explorers to the believing community, not necessarily the Sunday morning worship service

OUTSIDE: *By Them, For Them*—seeking the Shalom of community gatherings and activities out in society that are not religious in nature (e.g. music festival, farmers' market, grassroots advocacy campaigns, rotary club, etc.)

A balance of all three categories is desired. Too much inside-emphasis leads to atrophy of missional muscles (stuck-ness). Too much outside-emphasis leads to burnout. Too much bridge-emphasis leads to arrested development and discontent.

Ministry Development Overview

GATHER

Prayer, discernment, empathy-driven ideation—*your ministry begins where your heart breaks*. Gather at least as often as you go out for spiritual refreshment & strengthened fellowship.

GO OUT

Incarnational ministry: observation, relationship building, presence & participation, listening and learning.

ASSESS & ADAPT

Regroup as a rhythm: share observations & lessons learned, more prayer & discernment, adjust strategy as needed—in these rapidly changing times, a healthy organization will be prepared to make major programmatic adjustments with little notice. One way to achieve such flexibility is by breaking up unnecessary patterns early and often.

BUILD BRIDGES

Test out safe spaces: emphasize dialogue, avoid overly-programming, value any/all participation—*little engagements are big wins!*

REVIEW, REFORM, REPRODUCE

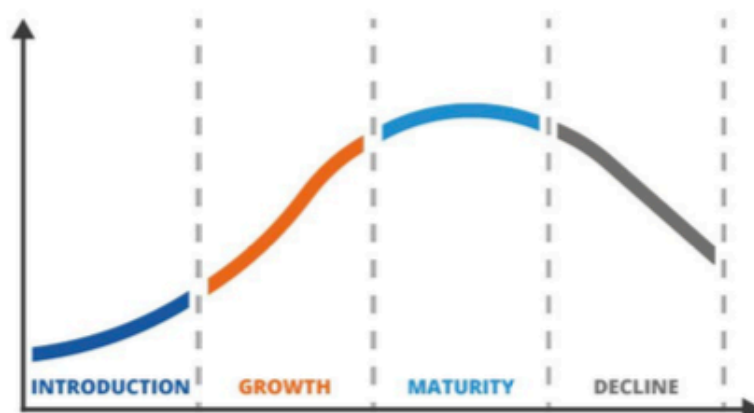
Formal evaluation (at least annually) answering the following:

- What is/isn't working about the ministry?
- What adjustments would make it work better?
- Is the ministry sustainable?
- Is the ministry reproducible?

SLOW DOWN FOR THE SPIRIT

Ministry development can be a fast-paced, high-energy endeavor. Be sure to slow down routinely and listen to the leading of the Holy Spirit. And don't forget to be mindful of the ways people are being formed along the way—be constantly seeking ways to feature the spiritual giftedness of the team.

Stages of Organic Ministry Life



Ready to Reproduce?

HT: Nicholas Warnes (Deconstructing Church Planting)

MATURITY & STABILITY

Often, a stable and healthy church reaches a point in which it has lost a realistic vision for growth. It can be tempting to make radical changes that might theoretically appeal to the unchurched (especially young families), but usually such changes just alienate the existing membership. Instead, a church that is neither growing nor declining considerably ought to consider reproducing—starting an off-shoot ministry with the goal that it will eventually become autonomous.

REBIRTH

A common misconception is that a healthy church will go on living forever. On the contrary, a truly healthy church will discern when it has faithfully completed its life cycle. Sometimes people and/or resources from a sunseting church can be used to help rise up something new!

GO FORWARD WITH GUIDANCE

Justin is passionate about developing new ministries—feel free to reach out for guidance any time at justinberkobien.com