

HOW CAN THE CHURCH LOOK FORWARD TO BEING BIBLICALLY CENTRED, LITURGICALLY ORDERED, SACRAMENTALLY FOCUSED, AND MISSIONARY-ORIENTED IN THE QUEST FOR CHURCH PLANTING?

INTRODUCTION

The Diocese of West Malaysia launched a church-planting program in response to the Anglican Communion's call to establish new churches. The program aims to focus on areas such as church growth, nurturing new members, and developing worship services that express gratitude to God through various liturgies. The goal is to establish 10,000 churches within the next five years. As the congregation expands and welcomes new Christians, there is growing concern about the type of worship and liturgy that the Anglican Church will advocate for.

The missional statement states, "We are a Church moving towards making Christ known through Church planting mission, social concerns, environmental care, intentional discipleship, and building up family units with love, grace, and fellowship of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit."

All this will be carried out within the Anglican Church, which is biblically centred, liturgically ordered, sacramentally focused, and missionary-oriented. In short, it is historical, sacramental, liturgical, and hierarchical. However, from past records within the Churches in Southeast Asia, the church is equipped to serve the broader church by connecting with its origins and engaging with modern culture to increase its influence on the lives of many.

Will these two concepts be able to work together to promote more churches, or will they be considered to be two different approaches or diabolically opposed or even

seen as a growing tension to understand the identity of the Anglican Church? The first concept focuses on understanding what the Church aims to achieve in today's context, while the other pertains to the historical identity of the Body of Christ, within which new members will be integrated."

Is there an Anglican model of Church planting from which we can learn to bring this synergy of ideas together, where it can be propagated to bring out the richness of the Anglican Church? There are many models for Church planting that focus on increasing buildings and membership. Most available literature on and training for church planting does not deal with the methodology of planting churches with this type of ecclesiology and practice. But what's next? How do we nurture, teach, and grow in Anglican spirituality and offer to the world a vibrant worshipping community that draws its strength, inspiration, and grace from God to meet the needs of the world?

Who is then our target group in church planting? Keller states that church planting is needed because it is the church's most effective method of reaching "new generations, new residents and new people groups." Keller's claim is that new generations find a home quickly in the culture of a church plant that is more intentionally aimed at their generation.

New people groups, Keller states, are most effectively reached by a church that ministers specifically to their culture. It takes many years, if it happens at all, for a people group to assimilate so fully into a community that the cultural expressions of

the existing churches communicate effectively to them. New church plants can organize and facilitate worship and discipleship in the language and customs of the immigrant culture, thus quickly and effectively reaching the people.

With this comes the question of what type of worship will be most appropriate for the generation? Are we preparing a new generation of leaders who will value the rich reaching and liturgy of the church? Are we ready now to do away with the “traditions of worship and liturgy and cooperate with more contemporary worship of is there a middle way?

SOME WAY FORWARD

Employ a faithfully Anglican biblical, sacramental mission and church planting approach. This will help the new members feel comfortable with the church rather than undergo a catharsis of Anglican beliefs and practices. Raising healthy Planters who understand the Anglican

sacramental and liturgical richness and producing healthy churches.

The work of Anglican church planting does not fit cleanly into any of these models. The distinctiveness of Anglicanism, with an episcopal polity system, a liturgical and sacramental focus, and an ancient-future approach to worship, makes categorising the planting of Anglican churches into a specific model difficult. The core aspects of the Anglican identity rule out some of the Alger 42 models, such as most organic approaches, and make some of the others much more difficult, such as the consumer-driven Launch Large model. Currently, the most common approach is the

Founding Pastor model, but learning and adapting aspects of some of the other models would benefit the long-term effectiveness of the church-planting efforts of the Anglican Church.

WHAT ARE THE NEW WAYS THAT THE ANGLICAN CHURCH IS OFFERING TO THE PEOPLE TODAY?

Three Streams Anglicanism

Although some have balked at the term “three streams” as a way of codifying three distinct traditions within historic Anglicanism, what is clear is that there is an emphasis on the Word, the Sacrament, and the Spirit within the Anglican tradition. In his book *Household of God*, Leslie Newbigin, who was originally ordained in the Anglican tradition, describes the proper makeup of the church as being simultaneously Protestant, Catholic, and Pentecostal, another way of presenting the idea of Word, Sacrament, and Spirit.

Gordon Smith summarizes Newbigin’s teaching on these three elements of the church by saying:

In the first (Protestant), Newbigin says the church is the gathering of those who hear and believe the Gospel; in the second (Catholic) the church is found in the sacramental participation in the community that is in historical continuity with the apostles, and in the third (Pentecostal) the church is the fellowship of those who receive and abide in the Alger 72 Spirit. (3).

Both Newbigin and Smith propose that the church is most pure, most effective, and truest to its identity when it displays an emphasis on all three of these expressions as opposed to holding an “either/or” mentality. One of the strengths of Anglicanism is the profound influence of

all of three of these “streams” within the church. Although in many denominations one of the three of these traditions is held over the others, at its best, Anglicanism operates with a Spirit-empowered focus on Word and Sacrament with each supporting and balancing the others.

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