



Idea Paper
Seeding “A Spirit Led Movement”
Or:
Positioning for “A Spirit Led Movement”

What if we became a movement the way our Anabaptist spiritual ancestors did almost 500 years ago?

We are committed to one another as a family of churches called LMC. Over the past number of years we have become increasingly conscious of our need for the presence of God to be manifest among us and lead us in life transforming ways. We have prayed and fasted, discussed and discerned who God is calling us to become. From one season to another, one step to the next, there is a consistency in how God is speaking and leading us.

A significant step of this journey is when we adopted a mission statement. Rather than merely placing the statement on a website, write an article on it for our magazine, talk about it for a few weeks and then return to business as normal we have kept pressing in to discover and live into this mission call at ever deeper levels.

The statement is: *We are a Spirit led movement to: **Make** disciples of Jesus, **Mobilize** everyone as a missionary and **Multiply** faith communities locally and beyond*

The past year the Lord has kept our focus on the first line: What does it mean to be a movement led by the Spirit of God? What does that look like?

Leaders of LMC & EMM have participated in cohorts where we are seeking to learn how to recognize and cooperate with movement of Holy Spirit moving us!

We have identified 3 deep rooted values that hold us on course and move us into mission:

- Jesus is Lord
- Disciple making disciples
- APEST Culture

These are the masts that hold our sails to catch Spirit Wind!

Jesus is Lord: It is more than a slogan, more than a truism. It is an invasive, counter cultural way of life. If Jesus is Lord my nationality, my country, my political party or issues, my wealth in property, investments or money in the bank cannot be Lord. Not even my family nuclear or extended. Jesus says seek His Kingdom first and then the other things will be added.

Jesus is Lord means we read and interpret Scripture from this point. The Old Testament develops in increasing focus to reveal God and does so as a divine man, Jesus. The New Testament develops from this divine man imparting himself into others and disciple making chains form and church, i.e. the Body of Christ, begins to occur whenever and wherever the disciples gather and emulate Jesus Christ whom they worship.

Disciple making disciples: When Jesus is exercising His Lordship disciples are formed. Jesus’ last command was for disciples to make disciples. Jesus cannot be fully Lord unless disciples are being made who in turn make other disciples in a lengthening and widening chain that reaches to eternity.

APEST Culture: When disciples are being made they grow into leaders; into impartations of Christ Himself. Christ gives specific functions of Himself to each person but the full functioning in Christlike vigor and fruitfulness is not present unless these functions come together in harmony. These functions are: Apostle, Prophet, Evangelist, Shepherd, Teacher. When those in whom these impartations are functioning in harmony with the others the face of Christ can be seen in them collectively; they in turn minister and equip others in these same functions so a mature Body of Christ develops, and a culture is formed where the Body of Christ is able to minister as Christ did in His body when on earth. This APEST culture is governed by this center guiding star: Jesus is Lord.

This is not the first time that we are a people who were stirred by the Spirit of God and movement began. In fact, our Anabaptist story started as a movement almost 500 years ago. Movement is our story! Letting go of who we are to take hold of what Jesus is inviting us to become!

A journey of walking is made up of many steps. No one can describe them all. Mostly it is simple; take the next step, the one in front of you. As we continue to open ourselves to Holy Spirit to become a movement once again. Where do we start to actually do and not simply study and describe?

Let's start where our movement started almost 500 years ago. Let's start with the step they started. The Anabaptist movement began at a kitchen table, with a group of people studying the Bible together. Some were scholars but not all. But the focus was not Scriptural knowledge. Rather the core question was: Where do we see Jesus? How can we cooperate with what the Resurrected Spirit of Jesus is inviting us to do?

There was no ordained leader always present in the gatherings, just people with a passion for Jesus and for His Church to walk in His likeness. And when they opened the Word of God expecting to encounter the living Jesus their lives began to change. Their passion for Jesus and compassion for the world around them began to grow. They went to their pastor and insisted that these truths they were discovering be used to reform the church!

But instead they were cast out of the church. And as a result they became a movement.

Might it be that if we sat together in clusters and read the Scripture with our ears open to the voice of Holy Spirit, and encouraging one another to put into practice what we heard from Holy Spirit that we would catch His breath blowing upon us, empowering us into a movement once again?

Movement with the active guiding voice of the Holy Spirit of Jesus is happening all around the globe in our day. It often goes by the name Discovery Bible Study or DBS. Small groups of people meet together on a regular basis. They read the Scripture, discern what Holy Spirit of Jesus is asking of them and share that with each other. Next time they meet they report back what happened as they put that word into practice. With this keen listening and responding to the voice of God lives are changed, allegiances altered, and the Kingdom of God comes in greater presence upon the earth as it is in heaven. The Spirit voice of Jesus will woo us to his side, empower our journey, call us to obedience, and open our hearts for new adventure on mission with him!

If we did this how might we be transformed? What if this was a next step focus until we reach our 500th Anniversary in January 2025, how might we be able to bring Jesus glory and testify of His Spirit blowing His wind upon us, in us, and through us -- so disciples are made, leaders are raised up in all the APEST functions of Jesus who equip us all into a Jesus shaped Body that is ministering the full heart of Jesus and seeing the curse on the world rolled back, lives healed and restored in relationships, Jesus becomes a center of individual and family life; in short May the Kingdom of God come and Jesus will be carried out here on earth wherever we go as it exists in heaven!

It has happened before.