

Can Mega Be Missional, Part 3

Yes, there are problems to the megachurch (and problems to the small, medium, etc.). Any institution or organization that grows large will battle mission and values drift. But today as I continue my series I want to give you some opportunities that megachurches provide for missional ministry. I introduced the first missional realm ([community involvement and transformation](#)) where mega churches can engage in last week's post. Today we will look at two more of those realms.

Now, I should add that this is in addition to how Christians, in small groups or individually, live out God's mission. That "missional life" must trump all designs of missional church (mega or mini). However, my question here is, "Can Mega be Missional?"

Here are two more ways that I think churches can engage in missional ministry. They are drawn from some past research and writing combined with some new information.

Global Ministry

True missional engagement isn't about being trendy (i.e. the pastor with the goatee and cool glasses). It involves **joining God in His mission both locally and globally**. Going forward, many megachurches seem to be taking Jesus' words from Acts 1:8 to heart-- that we are to witness of His glory in both local (Jerusalem) and global (uttermost parts of the earth) settings-- and utilizing their strength and influence toward that end.

That's what can happen when a megachurch focuses on not only increasing its own size and numbers but on investing its God-given resources for the purpose of extending His Kingdom around the world. I pray this kind of global leadership initiative will largely characterize the megachurches of the future.

But significant global awareness and influence is also happening at the local level. As the U.S. population becomes increasingly diversified, I see many megachurches claiming their role as Gospel ambassadors and cultural anthropologists.

In Pensacola, Florida, the 10,000-member [Olive Baptist Church](#) is focused on reaching diverse ethnicities within its community. As Pastor Ted Traylor encourages the church to be missional, he models that concept with a multicultural staff of Hispanic, Russian, and Chinese pastors. The church identified key people groups to intentionally reach, and then they hired staff that spoke each language and understood each culture to show the church's commitment to taking the Gospel to all ethnicities. Whether through beginning a global initiative or diversifying ethnic presence within the congregation, megachurches are on the forefront of pushing churches to heed Christ's call to go therefore into the world and make disciples of all nations.

I just finished an article, out soon in *Outreach* magazine, that talks about how megachurches are adopting unreached people groups-- not just to send a one-time mission team, but to create a **long term partnership plan** where the church adopts and then acts as a missionary to reach

that unreached people.

Apostolic Networking

More and more megachurches understand they are not called to be kings of the mountain. Rather, the Lord has blessed them so that they can bless their communities and incrementally reproduce their talents through other churches. Many megas are doing this by networking outside their church--a methodology called "apostolic networking"--or acting as a key leader of a network that partners in new missional endeavors.

This kind of megachurch collaboration is an increasingly prevalent theme that will carry into the future. Convening best practices and a wealth of diverse experience around a common table produces **rich and strategic alignments**, in turn providing new leadership and new means of collaboration.

As I've studied this changing paradigm, I've noticed many megachurches partnering with other smaller churches by freely sharing their vast supply of resources and experience--developing training venues, church-planting networks, outwardly focused seminars and conferences, and online training for other churches. They're making their staff members and resources available to other leaders and churches all over the world. I predict these strategic partnerships will only increase, replacing the competitive mindsets of the past.

[Community Christian Church](#) in Naperville, Illinois, is a prime example of leveraging influence not for its own means or renown but to extend the Kingdom of God. As an outflow of this megachurch's exponential growth and the increasing number of pastors nationwide who wanted to learn from its success, the Naperville-based [NewThing network](#) emerged to coach other pastors in church planting and multi-site strategies. Founding pastors Dave and Jon Ferguson lead their venture with this mission: "To be a catalyst for a movement of reproducing churches relentlessly dedicated to helping people find their way back to God."

Next week I will unpack the two final missional realms. But for now, which realm relates the most to you church? What further steps can you take into that realm?

See Part 2 of this series [here](#).

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