

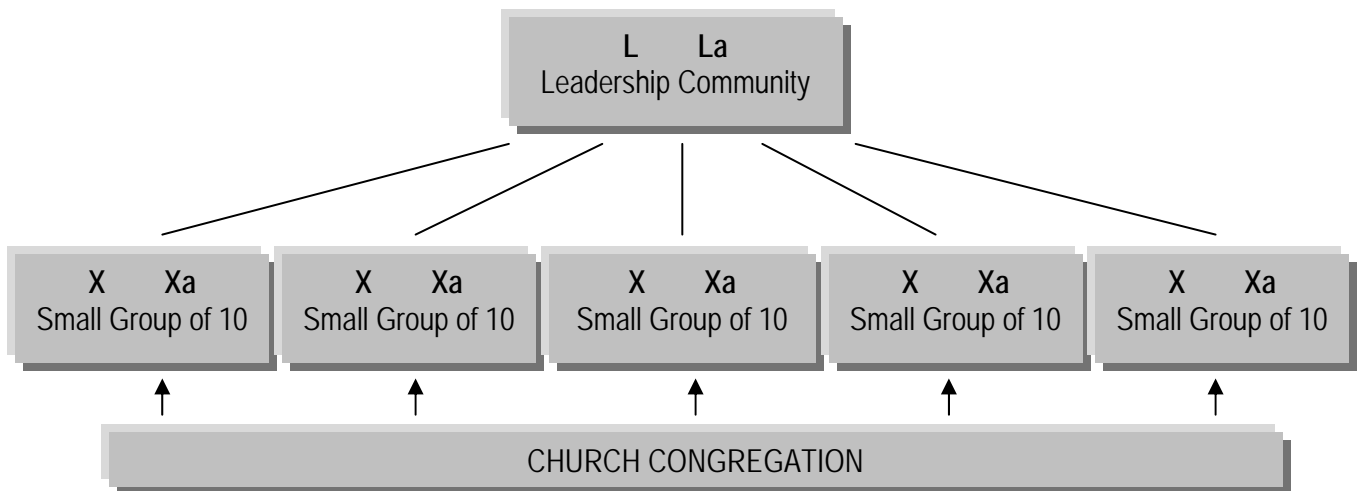
How To Home-Grow Cross-Cultural Disciplemakers

Limerick Chapel's Missionary Strategy

Limerick Chapel is a BMW companion church located in southeastern Pennsylvania. In the last decade, the Chapel has implemented a small group care system to better reach lost people in the community, and to equip believers in the congregation for ministry and leadership.

THE JETHRO PRINCIPLE

To give you an understanding of the terms used in the strategy, a brief explanation is in order. Limerick uses "The Jethro Principle" in which a small group of 10 is led by a leader of ten, designated as an "X." That leader is to apprentice another man in his group as an assistant (an Xa). Later, when the small group grows to more than 15 people, it will "give birth" to a new group, and the Xa will become the "X" of the new group, and in turn, begin training his own Xa. The leaders of ten are coordinated and trained by a leader of fifty, designated as an "L," and an L has an "La" who he is apprenticing.



ENHANCING LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

The beauty of training leaders in this way is that the small groups system:

1. Gathers believers from the broader church where they get little individualized attention and have virtually no accountability in their spiritual walk and helps them make real commitments to follow Christ.
2. Is a useful tool to develop a large number of leaders within the church (roughly 2 out of every 10 people).
3. Replicates what often happens in real-life church planting situations on the field. A missionary begins with a small group of newer believers whom he is helping develop the spiritual disciplines and basic ministry skills. His discipleship and leadership development responsibilities grow more rigorous as time goes on, and eventually he assists the leaders he has trained in forming a new church.

THE STRATEGY

These are the basic stages of Limerick Chapel's approach to developing cross-cultural missionaries.

Participate in a Small Group

1. Begin by joining a small group. Over time, you should become a person who is:
 - A growing Christian;
 - Experiencing community and loving accountability in a small group;
 - Sharing Christ with others;
 - Walking with God in the spiritual disciplines;
 - Qualified to be an apprentice.

Serve as an Xa

2. Be selected as an apprentice because of your "FAT" qualifications – someone who is faithful, available and teachable.
3. Begin attending Leadership Community and the L-Cluster (X's and Xa's are being mentored by the L's or trained by the pastors in leadership and ministry skills, etc.)
4. Pray and invite newcomers to fill the open chair in your small group.
5. Assume the responsibility to evangelize, disciple and shepherd each new member of the cell group. These new members become his span of care.
6. Build relationships with each new person outside the group (between meetings).
7. Grow your new sub-group in the cell to 6-8 people, and then "birth" a new group from the original group.

Serve as an X

8. Learn the basic skill sets necessary to be competent in discipling people in a small group.
9. Develop the attitudes and character (*Commands of Christ Series*) needed for ministry.
10. Surface three apprentices out of your own group and mentor them as Xa's.
11. Over time, birth three to five new groups through apprenticing others.
12. Maintain an ongoing relationship with each new group leader.
13. Interview with the network consultant and director of small groups to determine whether your passion, gifts and personal style lend themselves for you to become a coach and future missionary.

Serve as an La

14. Apprentice as a coach (La) of small groups that you've birthed.
15. Work toward a degree in Bible at a college or seminary.
16. Transition into a coach's role over the groups you birthed.

Serve as an L

17. Lead L-Cluster meetings.
18. Interview as a prospective Elder (character and skill qualifications).

Serve as Planter of a Small Church

19. Develop a cell-based, mid-size congregational group.
20. Begin the interview process to become a missionary candidate.
21. Visit mission teams of people groups we have targeted in our missions policy.
22. Attend Board meetings as an elder or intern.
23. Work on staff in a part time or full time position.
24. Board approval (through prayer and fasting – Acts 13:1-3) to be sent as a missionary.

Set Apart for Missionary Service

25. Attend the Candidate Orientation Program of a mission board.
26. Raise prayer and financial support.
27. Commissioning service.

Endnotes:

- Partner with Biblical Ministries Worldwide (not exclusively) to train and send missionaries through this process.
- This same procedure can develop church planters state-side if the cells that make up the mid-sized congregational group (#19) are from the same geographical area – they can become the critical mass needed to plant a daughter church.
- Teens with aspiration to do disciplemaking cross-culturally (world missions) can accelerate their progress in this direction by doing peer-to-peer ministry through youth small groups.

We thank Limerick Chapel for providing this information. What is your church doing to develop leaders? If you have tried something that is working, let us know so that we can "share the wealth" of good ideas with other churches.

For more information about small groups, the Commands of Christ Series and other materials from Limerick Chapel, contact:

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