

**A MISSIONAL PROPOSAL
FOR KAIROS HOLLYWOOD**

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A REPORT FOR MC506 : LEADING A MISSIONAL CHURCH
FULLER THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY
FOR PROFESSOR MARK HOPKINS
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Introduction

The name of the church that I serve is Kairos Hollywood. We are a church plant located in Hollywood, California. For the first year, we met in someone's backyard, and then after renovating a sanctuary on a campus with two sanctuaries, we moved into our current place of worship. We call it the Fountain Room for two reasons. One, it is located on Fountain Avenue, where it crosses Edgemont Street. Two, we didn't want people to mistake the church building for the church. Kairos is the church, and our ministry primarily happens in our neighborhood and in the world. The Fountain Room is a place we gather for various reasons during the week. The Fountain Room is located just one block south of Sunset Boulevard and a couple blocks West of Vermont Avenue. Hollywood is located in the heart of the city of Los Angeles and is the film capital of the world.

Our first name was Kairos Los Angeles, but after we helped to birth another church in West L.A., in November of 2006, our movement of churches took on the name Kairos Los Angeles. At that time, our new name became Kairos Hollywood to reflect our neighborhood.

Our church was primarily planted from a church I founded at Virginia Tech – New Life Campus Fellowship [nlcf]¹. It was supposed to have been planted in conjunction with an Asian church in Columbus, but for various reasons, they didn't make it. Nonetheless, more than three dozen people (primarily from Virginia Tech) moved to Los Angeles in basically three areas of the city: Hollywood, West LA/UCLA, and Downtown/USC. Living in these three places was intentional because we didn't come to

¹ Recently changed to New Life Christian Fellowship, to reflect the community involvement.

start one mega-church. Rather we came out to start many missional neighborhood churches that would reproduce themselves. The first three church plants that we saw by faith were located in the three areas we chose to live.

The best way to describe the first five years of the life of this church is through a surfing analogy. As we paddled our way out in the Pacific Ocean, we would make some progress, but then a wave would hit us. We continued to paddle and make more progress, but then another huge wave smacked up against our body and pushed us back. We continued to paddle, and then an even bigger wave came. This one is so huge that it pulled us under into what surfers call a wash machine, but we somehow made it out and got up for air again, but not without casualties. Some became exhausted, others hurt, and some hopeless.

Some “get called” to another city after the first wave. A few more move to another city after the second wave. So now, out of the 64 percent of people who actually made it to Los Angeles, we now suffered the loss of 20 percent of the team moving to another city, and 10 percent finding a different church in the city.

While the waves were hitting hard from every side, the church continued to move out deeper into the ocean. She continued to make progress. The first set of baptisms represented people from four different continents. In fact, in the midst of the waves coming, we started our second church in West L.A. with the help of a sister church from Missouri. Those already living in West L.A. were happy to have a gathering in their own neighborhood.

So today, out of the team that made it to LA, 70 percent are left. Out of that 70 percent, half were sent with the West L.A. church, and half of them (35 percent of the original team) stayed at Kairos Hollywood.

Kairos has been an experimental church, experimenting with how to do life together and how to partner with God to see more of heaven come to earth through the multiplication of disciples.

Out of the 100 people that call Kairos Hollywood their home today, 79 percent are Angelinos (people in LA that we met in LA), 16 percent of the church are the founding team, and 5 percent of the people are others from sisters churches we know, who moved here to join us in our mission. Our congregation has also become less white. We are now about 69 percent white and 31 percent non-white. The full details of *who* we are can be found in the profile section, which follows.

Section 1: A Profile of Kairos Hollywood

To understand who Kairos Hollywood is, we need to dive back into the womb from which she was birthed. Kairos was birthed from [nlcf], a missional church at the campus of Virginia Tech in Blacksburg, Va. After five years of hell, [nlcf] experienced amazing growth year after year. Starting with two dozen people, we multiplied to more than 1,000. It was evident through the mission statement and size of [nlcf] that it was time for her to start a new church. Through prayer and discernment, the city of Los Angeles was eventually chosen because of its high-unchurched population, as well as its diversity in both class and ethnicity. As a microcosm of the world, LA would be a great place to launch new churches throughout the world.

The hopes were to plant this church with an ethnically diverse leadership community. So it was a huge disappointment when the Asian church from Columbus, Ohio never made it to Los Angeles. Because we were unsure (until years later) if they were going to come, we weren't even able to grieve this loss properly.

The first year in Los Angeles was called our pre-plant phase. We had three simple goals. First, we wanted to understand the city better so that we might incarnate the gospel in a way that honored our context. Second, we wanted to take the time to welcome the rest of the team properly, helping them adjust to a new lifestyle in the city as well as find places to live and work. Third, we wanted to take some time and unlearn some things and re-learn some other things. We wanted to unlearn being a church that was dependent on formal meetings and re-learn what it means to do life together while bringing a little more of heaven to earth.

One core element of our DNA is valuing the embodiment of the five equippers. Our understanding of the five equippers in the table below is something that developed during the first couple years of our church plant. Our sense was that as each of these equippers equip the body, the congregation will grow to the full stature of Christ, being his hands and feet in this world.

EQUIPPER	FOCAL CONCERN	DESTINATIONS
Apostle [Dream Awakener]	Living Out our Calling	Following Jesus and Expanding the Kingdom
Prophet [Heart Revealer]	Walking with God	Walking with God and Engaging in Justice and Mercy
Evangelist [Story Teller]	Incarnating the Good News	Being People of Welcome and Redemptive Agents
Pastor [Soul Healer]	Pursuing Wholeness in Community	Embodying the Ministry of Reconciliation and Experiencing Healing and Pursuing Wholeness
Teacher [Light Giver]	Shaped by the Sacred Text	Immersing Ourselves in the Sacred Text and Living Faithfully in the Story of God
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Table 1.1 The Equippers, Focal Concerns, and Destinations

While we were growing in our practice and understanding of the equippers, we were knocked down by many waves. Some of the waves were to be expected, like the high stress levels that are often associated with a move across the country - a new job, a new culture, and, for some newlyweds, a new spouse. According to the famous stress test², a score of 250 points means you are in the overstressed zone. Within the first year, three quarters of our team scored 300 or above, with a couple of people scoring more than 600. We have felt spiritually attacked often and intensely during the first four years of this church plant.

Some of the waves were unexpected, like when a couple was moving in. The wife was with her one-year-old daughter watching her husband bring the boxes into the new house they had rented. They heard some gunshots. One random bullet hit the doorpost of the house, missing her husband by one foot. This would be our first couple that moved back to Virginia Tech. It was unexpected that within the first year, our team had been in more than 50 car accidents, among 30 people. It was unexpected that housing costs would skyrocket so high that you couldn't find a small three-bedroom house (1,500 sq. feet) for less than \$700,000. This caused some people to move to a different city, especially those getting married and having kids. The urban life didn't seem as attractive at that point.

Out of the 64 percent of the people who actually made it to Los Angeles, 20 percent moved to other cities within the first three years of the church plant. Those were not the only people we lost during the first four years. Some of the waves that hit us (like the wash machine wave) were so hard, that 10 percent of our team in the first three years

² Holmes and Rahe Stress Scale. For more information see: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Holmes_and_Rahe_stress_scale

decided to find another church in the city. For some this was a healthy move, for others it wasn't. This, of course, was extremely difficult for the rest of the team, as these people were like family to us.

Other important shifts in our first few years of our church plant were theological in nature. As a team whose theological bent started out more traditionally conservative, we underwent some major theological shifts. Some of our theological guides in this shift were N.T. Wright, John Howard Yoder, Walter Wink, Lesslie Newbigin, Walter Brueggemann, Marva Dawn, and Eugene Peterson among others. For us, the gospel was becoming larger, and it didn't just focus on what the death of Christ accomplished for us but also what the life and resurrection of Christ meant. The poor became a huge passion for us, because they were a huge passion for Jesus. Being peacemakers in a violent world became important because Jesus modeled a life where he took evil upon himself and gave a blessing in return. Caring more for the environment became important, because the smog in L.A. was evidence that we were not being good caretakers but that our greed was short changing our future. The broadening of our theological understanding that focused on both the King and the Kingdom (personal and social issues) was a major developmental shift that most moved with, but some did not. For some, this shift of widening the good news of the gospel felt like we were becoming more "liberal," and has resulted in a couple of people wanting to find a new church.

There were many other waves that have hit this congregation during her first five years of life, from significant leaders coming and going, to people having unreal expectations for the first five years and a limited perspective of what God could do in 20 years. There was also the wave of the transient nature of living in Hollywood. People get

involved, become Christ followers, but then need to move because of their job. We are learning what it means to receive people and give people back to God's mission in the world.

The church planting team at conception was very white (98 percent), but the current make up of the church, which numbers around a hundred people is as follows: 69 percent white, 10 percent Asian, 15 percent Hispanic, 3 percent black and 3 percent mixed race.³ We are more diverse today.

Our church is influenced by both modernity and postmodernity, but much more by postmodernity. While we experienced much loss in 2006 and the first part of 2007, we have seen great growth from the second half of 2007 to today. Apparently God was doing some pruning so fresh growth could occur.

The highest percentage of our congregation is between the ages of 25-34 (48 percent). The next highest percentage is between the ages of 35-44 (17 percent) and 18-24 (16 percent). We have 12 percent of our population under 18, 4 percent between ages 45-60 and 3 percent over 60. The old are most likely young at heart.

Only two couples at Kairos Hollywood own property in Los Angeles and the rest are renters, yet a great majority of our congregation would be considered middle to upper-middle class. We are crossing some class barriers as we do have some people from the lower class involved, probably 10 percent.

We have a well-educated adult congregation, with about 40 percent who have completed or had some grad school and an additional 45 percent who at the least have a

³ These statistics reflect a combination of our weekly gathering and our canvas groups statistics. Weekly gathering data is collected by producers and the canvas group data by some of the canvas group equippers.

bachelor's degree, or are in the process to getting one. Most of the other 15 percent of adults probably have a high school education.

As far as people's religious journeys, 61 percent come from a Protestant background, 27 percent come from either another faith or non-religious background (Hinduism, Buddhism, New Age, Agnostic, Atheistic etc.), and 12 percent come from a Catholic background.

In regard to vocations, we have people involved in both left and right-brained professions. We have actors, actresses, musicians, song singers / songwriters. There are city workers, IT professionals, urban schoolteachers, and many engineers (thanks to Virginia Tech people). We have screen play writers, people working on documentaries, set designers, film assistants, and other related Hollywood industry jobs. We have college professors, radio producers, ministers, waitresses, and baristas. We even have someone on the paparazzi as well as a future Olympian in training. One of our strengths is a sense of community; in fact 85 percent of our congregation are involved in canvas groups (mid-sized missional groups). When it comes to our congregational make-up, we are looking a little more like our neighborhood every day. With that said, let's take a look at our current context.

Section 2: Profile of the Local Context of Kairos Hollywood

Our Context: East Hollywood

The Los Angeles Metro Area is home to 17.5 million residents; the county of Los Angeles has just more than 10 million people living in it, while the city proper has just

over 4 million residents.⁴ The city of Los Angeles is divided into seven areas, and Hollywood is located in what is known as the Central Area.⁵ Hollywood is divided into roughly three primary sections. There is West Hollywood (its own city), Hollywood, and East Hollywood. Our congregation is located in East Hollywood, which was just certified as a neighborhood within the city of Los Angeles in 2007, although its history goes back much further.⁶

With a population of 51,000, East Hollywood is a 1.8 square-mile area, which is bordered by the famous Hollywood and Sunset Boulevards to the north, Hoover Street to the East, the 101 Freeway to the south, and Western Avenue to the West.⁷ Our neighborhood is diverse in ethnicity, culture, and worldviews. East Hollywood is home to Little Armenia and Thai Town as well as a diverse group of immigrants, including El Salvadorians, Mexicans, Filipinos, Koreans, Chinese, Japanese, Russians, Indonesians, Eastern Europeans, as well as Middle Easterners.⁸

Each of the various people groups bring a little of their culture and faith to our neighborhood. For example, if you are Armenian, Thai, Korean, El Salvadorian, or any other major people group in the area, you are likely to find businesses that cater to your particular needs. One can enjoy cuisine from around the world, delivered by people from that particular country.

Not only do people bring their food and businesses from across the ocean, but they bring their spirituality with them as well. For instance, in our little neighborhood of

⁴ LA Almanac at www.laalmanac.com

⁵ The Department of Neighborhood Empowerment: <http://www.lacityneighborhoods.com/maps.htm>

⁶ I am familiar with these statistics because I serve on the East Hollywood Neighborhood Council. For more info on East Hollywood see: <http://www.easthollywood.net/>

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Ibid.

East Hollywood, you will find a Thai Buddhist monastery, a Self Realization Fellowship (a mixture of Judaism, Christianity, Islam, Buddhism, and Hinduism.), a Jewish Temple, a Japanese Tenrikyo church (a panentheist world view, some say it is a sect of Shinto), as well as a huge Scientology training center that happens to be across the street from the Fountain Room where we meet. You can find Mormon services in English and Spanish, a Spanish Jehovah Witness center, and at our border there is the Islamic Center for Southern California.

While various faith traditions are represented in our neighborhood, you can also find churches from each of the three major branches of Christianity – Orthodox, Catholic, and Protestant. We have a Russian Orthodox and Ukrainian Orthodox church in our neighborhood. There are many flavors of Catholics including a Polish Catholic congregation, a Ukrainian Catholic congregation as well as Catholic Evangelical Pentecostal congregations. The traditional Roman Catholic Church in our neighborhood has services in Spanish, English, and Tagalog.

The Protestants are represented in a variety of ways, too. From the Trinity Episcopalian Church to Christ Presbyterian to Korean Full Gospel. There are Armenian churches as well as a Japanese church. We have non-denominational and inter-denominational groups. We have large churches, neighborhood churches, house churches, and simple churches. East Hollywood is a very spiritual place, though according to percept, 49 percent have no faith involvement, as opposed to the 35 percent national average.⁹

⁹ Percept: <http://www.perceptgroup.com/Home/interactive/ZeroFaith.aspx?ZipCode=90027>

It is also a very artistic place. Being in Hollywood, there are many people who are involved in the entertainment industry in one way or another. There are writers, actors, singers, and set designers. There are radio producers, musicians, costume designers, and producers. It is home to Barnsdall Park, which has rotating art exhibitions as well as the Hollyhock house - the first Los Angeles project designed by Frank Lloyd Wright.

East Hollywood is an educational place, for it is home to Los Angeles City College and close by is the University of Southern California. It is also a place to get physically well, for we are home to Kaiser Permanente Medical Center, Children's Hospital Los Angeles, and Queen of Angels – Hollywood Presbyterian Medical Center.

Our neighborhood is a transitional place. The cost of living is high, but the median family income is low - \$24,206, while the estimated median house value is \$720,000 for the Hollywood area.¹⁰ The vast majority of people are renters – 88 percent, with only 8 percent of the population living in homes they own.¹¹ It is not uncommon to find a couple of families living together in one house or finding more people living in a one bedroom apartment than is legal. We also have a number of illegal immigrants who live in the area as well as some people who are homeless.

East Hollywood is a young neighborhood: 46 percent of the population is 29 or younger, and only 10 percent of the population is 65 or older. The next-largest segments are as follows: there are 18 percent between the ages of 30-39, 14 percent between the ages of 40-49, and finally 12 percent who are between 50-64 years old. The male/female

¹⁰ LA Almanac Stats for East Hollywood: <http://www.laalmanac.com/LA/la00c14b.htm>

¹¹ East Hollywood Website: <http://www.easthollywood.net/about.html>

ratio is even at 50 percent, and the major ethnic groups in order of presence are 55 percent Latino, 22 percent White, 15 percent Asian, 5 percent mixed, 3 percent Black.¹²

So this little neighborhood of 51,000, tucked into the huge metropolis of Los Angeles, is diverse, spiritual, artistic, blue collar, and transient. It is a place of legal and illegal immigrants, a place well known yet unknown. It is a church planter's paradise.

Our Attitudes Toward Other Cultures and Faiths

When someone from another faith and culture walks into our congregation, they often feel very welcomed. A scientologist came up to me letting me know how welcome he felt. There was a mixed-race Muslim lady who came up to me and said, "I have gone to a number of Christian churches and when I tell them I am Muslim, I get the cold shoulder. But when I came into your congregation and told your people I was a Muslim, they welcomed me. I just wanted to thank you for that." She felt welcomed enough to come back week after week. She mingled with people and was listening intently our series on Jesus entitled "Bringing More Heaven to Earth." At the end of the series, she stood up with tears in her eyes and started shouting, "Jesus is Lord, Jesus is Lord, Jesus is Lord!" and then she fell down on her knees and put her face to the ground.

That being said, it is one thing to welcome people who come into your context, and quite another to initiate with them in their context. My sense is that, as a whole, our people are more comfortable being welcomers than initiators.

When it comes to being welcomers, you will find people at different places on a continuum - on the one end, some people are genuinely welcoming, and at the other end,

¹² Ibid.

people stay to themselves. Most people fall somewhere in between. Those who are genuinely welcoming are able to move past the meet-and-greet stage and become friends with those who are different than they, often times bringing them into their *oikos*. There are some who are uncomfortable with people who come from faith traditions that they consider suspect. But for the most part, our congregation has been shaped by the postmodern ethos, which lends itself to being accepting and non-judgmental, sometimes to the point that some would have difficulty with the concept of conversion.

It seems that people who do not understand English well have a more difficult time fitting into our congregation, although at times our congregation has hosted free English classes. In general, the congregation is welcoming.

There is a continuum for the initiators as well. On one end, there are people in our congregation who have a strong desire to connect with people who are different than they are and find ways to intentionally develop these kinds of friendships, both inside and outside of the church context. On the other end, you have some who have no interest at all in connecting with people who are different. In fact, some have strong prejudices with certain groups. Most are somewhere in-between.

Having a few strong friendships with people in our congregation who come from different countries as well as people of different ethnicities who were born in the U.S., I am able to get a sense of their evaluation as well. In very informal settings, some tell me the difficulties they feel in being themselves and feeling like a genuine part of the community. Some feel that our atmosphere leans toward a particular culture and that it could be more neutral. Some are quite prejudiced themselves against certain groups of people, though not generally against white Americans. As a whole, our congregation

could be much better initiators of friendships with people who are different than they, be it a different worldview, ethnicity, or culture. This will be addressed as we talk about our local missional posture.

Section 3: Profile of the Local Mission for Kairos Hollywood

Local Mission: Social Mosaics

Our faith community has built “natural bridges” with people through four primary ways. First, our congregation connects with people in their vocation. Second, we connect with people in the neighborhood in which we live. Third, we connect with people through third places.¹³ Lastly, as a faith community, we connect with people through gatherings, events, and service programs that we sponsor or co-sponsor in our neighborhood.

When it comes to people connecting to others at their place of work, I would say that at least half of our congregation is missionally engaged especially those who see themselves as sent people and have a good understanding of the gospel. The difficulty lies in the fact that quite a few people work at places that are a distance from our neighborhood. As much as people try to find places of work that are close by, it is sometimes easier said than done. As a large city, Los Angeles ranks sixth when it comes to the longest commuting time, with 29 minutes,¹⁴ and we rank fifth when it comes to extreme commute rankings (percentage of people traveling 90 minutes or more).¹⁵ My

¹³ Third Places or Third Spaces is a term developed by Ray Oldenburg in his book *The Great Good Place*. The “first place” is the home and those one lives with, “second places” is the workplace, “third places” are informal meeting places that give a sense of place, places where old and new friends can be found.

¹⁴ U.S. Census Bureau News found at http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/www/releases/archives/american_community_survey_acs/004489.html

¹⁵ Ibid. See extreme commutes rankings pdf.

best guess is that about 25 percent of our congregation has a commute time of about 45 minutes, in between the average and extreme. The difficulty that this poses is that some of the great connections made at work are hard to develop outside of work for those whose commuting time is long. The natural bridges at work are fruitful for those who are able to find work close to where we live.

Living in the city, practically all of us live in apartments or condos. For those who understand they are sent, they take full advantage of this living environment. One of our canvas groups that has a few members living in one apartment complex has found many meaningful ways of connecting with people living there. From cleaning public areas that are dirty to cleaning people's apartments to hosting progressive dinners. A number of the neighbors we have met have become have become a part of our faith community. While some groups are strong in this area, others could grow.

As far as third places, some have gotten involved with different community groups, from the East Hollywood Neighborhood Council to connecting with people at Starbucks and various artist communities. Other people frequent favorite restaurants with the desire to build meaningful relationships. While there is some movement in this area of third places, I sense that as a whole we could do much more connecting in third places.

Through the short time we have been in our neighborhood, we have been active in serving our neighborhood, through Confident Kids (a ministry to kids and families at risk), Hope Again (an abused women's center), Say Yes (a ministry to kids on skid row), English clubs, Vacation Bible School, Feeding the Homeless, Tree Planting, Students Run L.A. (a long-distance after school running program for kids at risk), Artist at the Fountain (appreciating local art and artist and raising money for social justice), and an

annual toy giveaway for needy kids in the neighborhood. Last year, about 1,000 kids were able to have a merrier Christmas as a result.

Many of these programs are done in partnership. At times we come along side existing ministries while other ministries we have started from scratch. Some of these ministries are discontinuous. We also have a weekly gathering and mid-sized groups that meet spiritual and social needs. For the size of our group and how young our church is, I believe that this is a strong area for our congregation. What I think we could do better in this area is assess what we are doing and focus on those things that reflect our gifts and bless the neighborhood the best. God has blessed us with many natural bridges, and we are growing as a community in how to have a more missional orientation.

Local Mission: Missional Orientation

When it comes to our missional orientation, our community is a hybrid in regard to being extroverted or introverted. Those who understand they are sent and realize the beauty of the good news actively incarnate the good news and use their natural bridges to see Jesus walk from our hearts to theirs. The evidence of this is that people are able to bring others into our community, and each year we tend to have about a half dozen baptisms where people indicate that they have become citizens of the kingdom of God. While some share the good news, others embody it, but have a greater difficulty sharing it with their words. Some have pluralistic leanings, and others are growing in their understanding of who they are in Christ and the largeness of the gospel.

While the introverted/extroverted factor helps us understand our missional orientation, there are a number of factors that we consider as it relates to our approach as a congregation. Each of these factors could be put on a continuum. They include areas

like structure, leadership, communication, how we interact with culture, approach evangelism, build community, and think about membership. What I've done is develop a chart and then put a star by where I sense that we are at on the continuum. For example, when it comes to solid or liquid structure, if the star is closer to the solid, that indicates we have a more solid structure. If it is in-between both, then we have a hybrid. If it is closer to liquid, we are more liquid. After this chart, I specifically try to cite the strengths and weakness of our missional orientation.

FACTORS TO CONSIDER IN MISSIONAL ORIENTATION			
CATEGORY	First Pole	Continuum	Second Pole
Structure	Solid [institutional, organized, coherent, mapped out, clear paths]	*	Liquid [informal, fluid, de-centered, spontaneous, patterns]
Leadership	Hierarchy [charts, leading by roles and position]	*	Charisms [flow, leading by gifts, need based, spontaneous]
Leadership	Programmer [master plan, event-oriented, specific goals]	*	Environmentalism [organic, relational connecting points, horizon in view]
Leadership	Center [lead from the front, certainty, power, managerial]	*	Margins [lead from among, exploring, cooperation, poets and mystics]
Communication	Vertical [one main mouthpiece, little communication from the ground]	*	Networked [multiple communicators, meaningful ground communication]
Culture	Compliant [community blends into community, pastoral voice]	*	Defiant [community lives as contrast society, prophetic voice]
Culture	Detachment [community detaches from elements of pop culture]	*	Engaging [community engages pop culture]
Evangelism	Attractional [come and see, encountering God in sacred spaces]	*	Incarnational [embodied witness, making the secular sacred]
Community	Formal [connecting at regular gatherings, purpose oriented]	*	Informal [connecting during every day life, play oriented]
Community	Monocultural [a strong ethnic and class focus]	*	Multicultural [multi ethnic, multi class]
Membership	Bounded Set [clear boundaries of in and out, it's about a faithful community]	*	Centered Set [fuzzy boundaries, clear center, it's about the direction you are going]
Orientation	Ancient [rooted in the past, rich traditions passed down through the ages]	*	Future [contextualizes for the present and future, cutting edge thinking]

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Table 2.1 Factors in Missional Orientation

In each of the factors that I am considering, the two poles are both positive (though in general the second pole has a more missional posture), and the missional orientation is better defined by the gifts of the team and the context. For example, though we are more fluid than solid, I have found that in our context that is extremely transitional, being more solid (against the current wave of thought) may actually be more missional. As far as leadership, at times it seems that a hierarchical, programmed, and centered approach is helpful and needed; yet for the most part, in our context, the emphasizing the *charisms*, being an environmentalist and leading from the margins is more missional. The chart shows how I assess our congregation in each of these areas. In regard to communication, networked communication in our context is much more missional, as well as engaging culture while being defiant (creating a contrast society). In our context, it seems to me that both an attractional and incarnational approach is helpful because of the need for people to encounter God and be reminded of the story together. Being missional in our context means having strong informal relationships, a bounded set when it comes to leadership, and a centered set when it comes to membership. And in regard to ancient and future orientation, it is important to have roots in the past but contextualized for the present and future. So being in the middle is missional.

Local Mission: Recommendations in Light of Strengths and Weaknesses

When it comes to local missions, I think we have much to celebrate. Many live as missionaries in their vocation and God has granted us many great connections in our neighborhood, through those who live by us, third places, as well as some of the service projects we have been involved with. Typically, at least a half dozen new people get

baptized each year, and just over a year ago, before our fourth birthday, we were able to birth another community of faith on the West side of Los Angeles.

Some of my recommendations would be as follows. We should assess those who live far from work and those who live close and help those who live close grow in their understanding as a sent people and how to embody and share the good news. In regard to places where we live, I think those who do well in connecting with their neighbors could be encouraged to mentor those who tend to be more introverted or less equipped. My sense is that it would be helpful to identify some more of the third places around us and equip and encourage people to live missionally in those areas according to their vocation and interests.

We are currently encouraging people to connect more with the East Hollywood Neighborhood Council as well. An assessment of third places that people are involved in should be done. As far as service to the community, as I mentioned earlier, it would be good to assess each service-oriented project we are involved and in light of those assessments make the needed adjustments and then strengthen those areas that are going well. I would also encourage each canvas group (mid-sized group) to make sure that they are committed to serving the community in at least one way, even if it is in combination with another canvas group.

In light of our desire to reflect the diversity of our neighborhood more, we are currently looking for people who naturally connect with Hispanics and Asians and encouraging them to consider start a canvas group that intentionally connects with these people groups. Overall, we can continue to help people understand *missio Dei* and

prepare and equip them to live out their calling in more robust ways. While we are active locally, we also find our networks and global mission important to our mission.

Section 4: Profile of the Global Mission for Kairos Hollywood

Inter-Church, Interdenominational, Cooperative Endeavors

As an interdenominational faith community, Kairos Hollywood seeks to collaborate with other local churches, denominations, and movements to bring a little more of heaven to earth. We seek partnerships locally, regionally, nationally, and globally.

LOCALLY - When it comes to local relationships, we have a few key partnerships. Primarily, we have partnered with Hope International and the Seventh Day Adventist Church of Hollywood. With Hope, we hold our annual East Hollywood Toy Giveaway, and periodically work together to help feed the homeless. We engage in other impromptu missional projects as well. With the Seventh Day Adventist Church of Hollywood, we have been helping educate our community about identifying and helping victims of human trafficking. Human trafficking is becoming more common in the United States; Thai Town, part of our neighborhood, is unfortunately one of the hotbeds. We continue to seek new ways to collaborate on other common projects. We have also started connecting with a simple house church movement in the area. My near-term goal is to host a training session with a guest speaker that would pull together local and regional pastors and staff. In this way we hope to facilitate more partnerships for the kingdom. In the past, we have also worked with Central City Church, the only church located in Skid Row.

REGIONALLY - We have a number of regional connections as well. We have Kairos West Los Angeles, which is a daughter/sister church of ours. We connect with them at multiple levels - from pastors to staff to leadership teams. We occasionally engage in common projects. We also have a connection with other churches in the region, including Origins of Long Beach. Recently we have been connecting with the Reformed Church of America (RCA) in Southern California. I have become friends with their director, Rick Mysse. He recently spoke with our Leadership Community, and he has commissioned me to write six small books for the pastors and staff that he oversees in Southern California. There are more than 60 RCA churches in Southern California. We are constantly discussing how we can help each other reach Southern California more effectively and Los Angeles in particular. He has asked me to address the churches in Southern California next month on the topic of the five equippers. Regionally, we are building relationships with the Spiritual Formation Alliance, which is headed up by my spiritual director – Wil Hernandez - as well as with the Leadership Institute. Paul Jensen, the executive director for the Leadership Institute, has asked me to meet with him quarterly. I trust God will use our relationship to further the mission. I also regularly meet with Kurt Fredrickson. He is the director of the Doctor of Ministry Program at Fuller. We are building relationships with him and other professors and people from Azusa Pacific, William Carey University, and Fuller, to see how God might use these relationships for the furtherance of His Kingdom. We hope to continue to connect with other denominations and churches regionally.

NATIONALLY AND GLOBALLY - We are building relationships with a few different organizations. Just last week, I met with Alan Hirsh and other Christian leaders

to discuss a potential national network that is in formation for common missional training. We have been seeking new ways to partner with Christian Associates a movement that is primarily at work in Europe, but also in North America. I just met their president and founder, Linus Morris, as well as their executive team. As a congregation, we have adopted some sister churches in the Turkana Region of Kenya, and this summer we are flying over two of their pastors to help them raise money for a new orphanage. They are part of Pentecostal Holiness movement in Kenya, which we are partnered with and which has more than 100 churches in its association. We have a connection with a number of churches in Latin America, from South America to Central America through the Great Commission of Latin America. I am a personal friend of their director, Nelson Guerra, who has founded a number of these churches. We have a relationship with Initiatives International, which helps to host short-term mission trips along with Telios, an equipping ministry that we have been in partnership with since its conception. Last year, I met an influential Japanese pastor who wants me to speak in churches across Japan. This could lead to a meaningful relationship. And finally, within the last month, God has allowed me to form a relationship with one of the leaders of a network of 6,000 churches in Northern India, Nepal, and Pakistan. I have been asked to come and share at a number of pastor conferences at the end of the year. I am looking at my schedule to see if this is a possibility. This may lead to a meaningful relationship, for the sake of the kingdom.

Network Missional Efforts

We have two primary networks that we are affiliated with to engage with God's mission. We are connected with Great Commission Ministries (GCM), a staff program

that enables people to raise support and become missionaries nationally and internationally. I currently sit on the GCM board. There are around 300 staff who are a part of GCM. GCM also has about 25 campus church affiliates.

The second primary organization with which we have a tight affiliation is The Ecclesia Network. This is a network that Chris Backert and I co-founded and where I also serve as a board member. It is only 2 years old. We have about 10 churches that are a part of this network in the United States. We had our first national pastors/staff conference last February and 120 attended.

Last month, I spent a week in Richmond, Va., for our first week-long intense training for future church planters. This training is called *Allelos* – a theological and practical trajectory for missional church planting. We had more than 30 people who attended this time, so we will have a number of new churches that will start in the coming year, from Philadelphia to Richmond to Austin. I am super excited about how God seems to be using this new network of young church leaders. I help to coach and assess some of these church planters, which gives us a meaningful connection with these churches.

As a congregation, we just sent our first missionary couple to Shanghai, China. Eugene Kim will help start an international school as a dean with Concordia University to train teachers. We are partners with the Kim's and the many other projects they will be involved with over the next several years. We plan to send a short-term missions team there next year.

As you can see, although we are just coming up on our fifth anniversary as a church, we believe it is absolutely necessary to build partners to see the reality of God's

reign actualized across the globe. It will take prayerful discernment and nurturing of these relationships and awareness of other ones to see how God might use us to be a part of His mission on earth.

One of the reasons that God led us to Los Angeles is because this is the city of angels or the city of messengers that has been sending messages and messengers all around the world. A number of fresh movements of God have had their start in Los Angeles. The Pentecostal movement was birthed at Azusa Street and spread to the four corners of the earth. The Jesus Movement birthed the Calvary Chapel and Vineyard movements. Henrietta Mears, through her amazing Sunday school classes, saw many amazing people start international movements, like Bill Bright of Campus Crusade. CRU was birthed at UCLA. We believe God led us to Los Angeles to participate with his mission. We trust that God might take our young and weak congregation to show His glory. For we trust that God still works through weakness to confound the strong and the foolish to confound the wise. We trust that God still uses the inadequate, because he wants to be our adequacy.

Now that we have examined our congregation, our context, and what we are doing locally and globally, we can assess how to move forward. We will first examine our missional ecclesiology, and then make some practical suggestions for the future.

Section 5: Developing a Way Forward

A Missional Ecclesiology

When thinking of the best way to describe the missional ecclesiology of Kairos Hollywood, I am reminded of one of the most influential theologians of the last century, Karl Barth. He reintroduced the classic doctrine of *missio Dei* which is Latin for

“Mission of God.” This is the idea we find in scripture where you have God the Father sending the Son, and God the Father and the Son sending the Spirit, and then the Father, Son and Spirit sending the church into the world.

In other words, mission is not primarily an activity in the church. It is derived from the very nature of God. Jürgen Moltmann puts it this way: “It is not the church that has a mission of salvation to fulfill in the world: it is the mission of the Son and the Spirit through the Father that includes the church.”¹⁶

At Kairos, we find it helpful to remember that mission is rooted in God’s love, focused on Jesus, and empowered by the Holy Spirit. In other words, the mission is God’s. We are involved in mission because we have received God’s grace and have been invited by God to share the same love for the world that God demonstrated in sending Jesus. At Kairos Hollywood, we fundamentally believe that God created the church as a sign and foretaste of his coming kingdom and an instrument by which more of the reality of the kingdom would be realized here on the earth.¹⁷

Sign – We believe the church is a sign of his coming kingdom pointing people to a reality that is right around the corner. Jesus said, “You are the light of the world.”¹⁸ We are called to be lights that point others toward God, His Son, and His future.

Foretaste – We believe the church should be a foretaste, a place where people can get a taste of the future here in the present. When the church is a foretaste, she demonstrates what life is like when men and women live under the rule and reign of God. So our aim is to be a community where we love one another, exhort one another,

¹⁶ Jürgen Moltmann, *The Church in the Power of the Spirit: A Contribution to Messianic Ecclesiology* (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1977) p. 64

¹⁷ Idea found in: *Lesslie Newbigin Missionary Theologian: A Reader*, ed. Paul Weston (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans 2006) pp. 130-142

¹⁸ Matthew 5:14 NIV

encourage one another, forgive one another, and live in harmony with one another. In this way, we can become a concrete, tangible foretaste of the kingdom that is to come, though not in perfect form.

Instrument – Not only do we believe that the church should be a sign and foretaste, but also an instrument. We aim to be an instrument through which God’s will for justice and peace and freedom is done in the world.

One of the ways in which we, at Kairos, look to be a faithful sign, a rich foretaste, and powerful instrument in God’s hands is by taking Paul’s letter to the Ephesians seriously – by appreciating, nurturing, and developing the five equippers he mentions in Ephesians 4:7-16. As we recognize and develop the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors, and the teachers and release them to equip the entire body, we believe that the church will become mature and be like Christ in character and ministry.

We believe that as we follow the pattern of Paul and other New Testament writers and remind the people of God *who* they are in Christ, that *doing* will follow. We do not look at mission as one of the functions of the church, but recognize that the church by her very nature is missionary. And when the ministry of the church flows from the nature of the church, we will realize that the organization of the church is simply designed to support the ministry of the church. By understanding this proper sequence, we are free to think of the best way to accomplish the ministry of the church. For when the *who* precedes the *what*, we can always reorganize to best fulfill what God has called us to do.

So *who* is the church? What metaphors do Paul and Peter use to describe *who* the church is, and how might these metaphors connect with the inherent nature of the five equippers? Paul Minear studied the scripture to see how many of these images and

metaphors were used in the New Testament to refer to the church. He found 96.¹⁹ When Paul describes the church, he uses metaphors: God’s field, a temple, a body, and much more. When he describes the church, he uses many of the images that fit right into his native culture and time. Farm analogies and fishing analogies were quite common, because, in those agrarian times, many people were either farmers or fishermen.

But what if Paul were living today? What if he was an urbanite living in Los Angeles. What images would he use to describe the nature of the church? Since our missional ecclesiology at Kairos Hollywood is developed through the lens of the five equippers - because they provide a healthy framework for missional sustainability - I started to think through a couple of metaphors for each of the equippers listed in Ephesians. These metaphors are a combination of biblical metaphors as well as metaphors from our context that act as a guide by which we live out *who* we are in Christ.

Equipper	Metaphors	Why these Metaphors?
Dream Awakener [Apostle]	Apprentices Another City	Students of Jesus in the world Partnering with God to bring His city here
Heart Revealer [Prophet]	Bride of Christ Scales of Justice	A divine romance Good News for the poor and oppressed
Story Teller [Evangelist]	The Table Body of Christ	Extending the table of fellowship Being His hands and feet in the world
Soul Healer [Pastor]	Family Hospital	Living as brothers and sisters Finding healing and wholeness
Light Giver [Teacher]	Feast Theater	Feeding on the Word Living life honestly on God’s stage

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Table 3.1 Metaphors

When it comes to metaphors, Walter Brueggemann helps us understand their power. “A metaphor proceeds by having only an odd, playful, and ill fitting match to its

¹⁹ Paul Sevier Minear, *Images of the Church in the New Testament* (Louisville: Westminster Press, 1960)

reality, the purpose of which; to illuminate and evoke dimensions of reality which will otherwise go unnoticed and therefore unexperienced.”²⁰ Of course there are so many more metaphors that could describe each of the equippers. But these metaphors are rich in helping us to awaken to God’s reality, so that we might remember *who* we are and that we might better live out our calling in the church and in the world.

Participating in missio Dei

What encourages me is thinking about the many ways in which Kairos Hollywood is already participating in the mission of God. We are multiplying *apprentices* of Jesus and we are fully aware that we are God’s partners in bringing *another city*²¹ to this world. Most of the time, we remember that we are the *bride of Christ*, deeply loved by our groom and we are engaged in a number of projects that help bring a greater sense of *justice* locally and globally. We are a welcoming people who have extended *the table* of fellowship to many and have recognized we are *his body* – his hands and feet in the workplace. Many of us live like *family*, but too often we live like a dysfunctional family. We are like a *hospital* where people can move toward wholeness, yet we could take more time to bring a sense of healing to people. We regularly take time to *feast* on the word of God, and learn to live our lives for an audience of One – in the *theater* of everyday living.

²⁰ Walter Brueggemann, *Cadences of Home: Preaching Among Exiles* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1997) p. 1

²¹ Concept mentioned by Kärkkäinen in *An Introduction to Ecclesiology* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press.) p. 221.

The Way Forward

Yet while we at Kairos Hollywood are moving forward in many good ways, there are a number of areas that we could focus on to live out our missional calling in deeper way. In this last section, I would like to make a concrete proposal for a way forward.

First, I plan to share this study with our staff and our canvas group equippers, as well as some people in our leadership community. After sharing with each of these groups in different settings, I plan to lead a process by which we examine who God has made us – all through the lens of what each equipper brings to the table, as described in the chart above. Along with evaluating the chart of the equippers, we will assess our local and global missional posture, using the information in this study as a starting point for conversation. As far as our local posture, we will look at our attitude toward different ethnic groups and faiths as well as discuss the missional factors mentioned in Table 2.1. Finally we will assess our four natural bridges – work, home, third places, and community services. When it comes to our global posture, we will examine our local, regional, national, and global partnerships.

As we approach a kind of consensus on our strengths and weaknesses in each of these areas, we will take time to engage the Spirit and the Word, pray, and discern God's call for us together. We will use the different assessments mentioned above and possibly other means to discern our strengths and weaknesses, and then consider practical ways in which we can strengthen where we are weak. We will also converse about how we can stay strong in the areas where, by God's grace, we have strength. There is a suggested timeline below that will help us to discern our way forward. It should be kept in mind

that while a core group will be working intentionally through this process, the process will involve the whole community in various ways.

Phases	Dates	Description
Phase I	August	Share results of this study with staff and get input about their reflection on the study and the strengths and weaknesses of our congregation.
Phase II	September	Share results with Equippers and Leadership Community and get input about strengths and weaknesses of congregation.
Phase III	October - December	Gather a core team from each of these groups, a team willing to engage a process by which we would come with suggestions for our entire body. This core team will involve the rest of the body and our staff will determine a selection process to help determine who will be on this core team. The core team would represent each dimension of our body.
Phase IV	January	Take some time to share our way forward based on all the input.

Table 4.1 Probable Timeline for a Way Forward

Conclusion

The goal of this study was to develop a better understanding of Kairos Hollywood through a missional perspective. In this study, we have taken time to assess who we are and examine the context in which we are doing ministry. We have looked at what we are doing locally and globally as well as taken a peek at our missional ecclesiology. And finally, I have submitted a way in which we could move forward. So now that the study is complete, it is time to be who God has made us to be – to pray, to work, and to discern God’s plan for our congregation that is located in East Hollywood, Calif. We do this for the sake of our neighborhood, for the sake of our world, and for the glory of God. “God can do anything, you know—far more than you could ever imagine or guess or request in your wildest dreams! He does it not by pushing us around but by working within us, his Spirit deeply and gently within us. Glory to God in the church! Glory to God in the

Messiah, in Jesus! Glory down all the generations! Glory through all millennia! Oh,
yes!”²²

²² Ephesians 3:20 The Message

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Appendix A
A Missional Reading List

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Appendix B *A Missional Website List*

Allelon: <http://www.allelon.org/main.cfm>

Anglican Missional Networking: <http://anglimergent.ning.com/>

Building Church Leaders: <http://www.buildingchurchleaders.com/>

Church Innovations: <http://www.churchinnovations.org/>

Cooperative Baptist Fellowship: <http://www.thefellowship.info/Resources/Missional-Church>

Christian and Missionary Alliance: <http://www.cmalliance.org/ncm/multiply/articles.jsp>

Ecclesia Network: <http://www.ecclesianet.com/>

Ekklesia Project: <http://www.ekklesiaproject.org/>

Emergent Village: <http://www.emergentvillage.com/>

European Leadership Forum: <http://www.euroleadershipresources.org/index.php>

Forge Mission Training Network: <http://www.forge.org.au/>

Fresh Expressions: <http://www.freshexpressions.org.uk/index.asp?id=1>

Friend of Missional: <http://www.friendofmissional.org/>

Gospel and Our Culture Network: <http://www.gocn.org/main.cfm>

Global Ministries: <http://new.gbmg-umc.org/work/>

Journal of Religious Leadership: <http://www.christianleaders.org/JRL/index.htm>

Leadership Journal: <http://www.christianitytoday.com/leaders/>

Leadership Network: <http://www.leadnet.org/>

Life and Leadership: <http://www.lifeandleadership.com/>

Mennonite Mission Network: <http://www.mennonitemission.net/>

MetroSoul: <http://metrosoul.org/index.php>

Mission Alive: <http://www.missionalive.org/default.asp>

Missional Challenge: <http://missionalchallenge.blogspot.com/>

Percept Group: <http://www.perceptgroup.com/Percept-Home.aspx>

Redeemer Church Planting: http://www.redeemer.com/about_us/church_planting/

Shapevine: <http://shapevine.com/>

The Center for Parish Development: <http://www.missionalchurch.org/>

The Externally Focused Network: <http://www.externallyfocusednetwork.com/>

The Missional Church Network: <http://missionalchurchnetwork.com/>

Together in Mission: <http://togetherinmission.co.uk/>

TheOOZE: <http://www.theooze.com/main.cfm>

Urbana: http://www.urbana.org/_today.cfm