

# Jesus Church

*What if the Church Looked Like Jesus*



Jesus-Church.org

## Plan Proposal 2020

*Charlotte, NC*

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## Who We are

Tracy and I met at Cedarville College and married 26 years ago. We have a 23 year old daughter, Kelsy, who just recently married.

After graduating from Dallas Theological Seminary, Tracy and I served in ministry together for over 20 years in Ohio churches in the lead pastor role. Gradually, the tensions caused by leading church missionally led us to reevaluate the American church and to reexamine what Jesus did and how he did it.

Simultaneously, the past three years I have undergone 5 different treatment plans for non-hodgkin's lymphoma. We are prayerful and optimistic that God has not only healed me, but has also changed us in the process. It has given us many opportunities to unlearn and relearn church from those who are modeling what Jesus always meant by church. Now we are ready to partner with people like you in changing church to look more like Jesus.

**WHAT IF THE CHURCH LOOKED LIKE JESUS?  
WHAT IF IT DID WHAT JESUS DID THE WAYS THAT HE DID IT?  
FOR THE PEOPLE HE DID IT FOR AND FOR THE REASONS HE DID IT?**

## The Big Problem

Many people in America no longer fit into the copy of Christianity that churches have downloaded and spread like a virus. When Jesus said in Luke chapter 5 that you cannot pour new wine into old wineskins, he was saying that the ever-expanding work of God through Jesus could not fit into the religious containers of His day. It was too restrictive. It did not adapt to different people, cultures, needs, or opportunities. It was a monument, not a movement. It had become an organization of rules and rituals instead of an organism of loving relationships. It had missed the heart and purposes of God. The religious leaders had built a system that created barriers instead of bridges to people's lives. Does any of that sound familiar?

God wants to do something new in people's lives today that does not fit into the current version of church in America. And you can be a part of it!

### Consider:

1. Between 80-85% of churches are on the downside of their life cycle. 3500 churches close every year. In 1900 there were 28 churches for every 10,000 Americans. Today there are 11 churches for every 10,000 Americans. The unchurched in the US has doubled from 1900-2004.
2. The trajectory is getting much worse with millennials and generation Z. Nearly 1 in 3 millennials in Charlotte are unaffiliated with a religion. The percent of generation Z that identifies as atheist is more than twice that of all other generations.
3. Between 53-70% of lost people in Charlotte will not attend a church even if asked.

### Also Consider:

4. Out of the 50 largest metropolitan areas in the United States, Charlotte ranked first in millennial growth from 2005-2015. Millennials now represent nearly a quarter of all Charlotteans, and millennial growth isn't expected to slow any time soon.

5. From 1990 to 2013, immigration accounted for nearly a quarter of Mecklenburg County's growth. Charlotte is home to a growing number of immigrants and refugees.

Through reading my Bible and listening to people, I have come to the shocking realization that most people do not fit into the American version of church. For a variety of reasons, most people would no more think about walking into a church than they would a Muslim temple.

I believe the primary reason for this problem is that the American church generally has modeled itself from something other than the life and ministry of Jesus. Churches generally have united around a Sunday morning program rather than the shared mission of Jesus.

## What We are about

Jesus Church is designed to do what Jesus did, the ways He did it, for the people He did it for, and for the reasons He did it.

## When churches are built around a Sunday morning program, bad things happen:

1. It becomes missionally selective.
2. It becomes monocultural rather than multicultural.
3. It focuses on low-lying fruit – only people willing to walk through the front door of a church.
4. It develops consumers and spectators rather than missionaries and martyrs.
5. It drains all the resources of time, money, and energy away from making disciples.
6. It is hard to reproduce and multiply missional communities quickly.
7. It makes it hard to adapt to different people, needs, and opportunities in the future.

## A Church Built Around the Life and Mission of Jesus...

- 1. Shares life and love with the people that the religious usually avoid.**
- 2. Trains disciples in small missional communities that model the life of Christ—not over-educates people in artificial environments.**

When you continually overeducate people beyond their level of obedience, it fosters apathy toward moral and missional obedience. Missional communities share their life and resources in ways that encourage other people and challenge their own growth.

- 3. Creates missional environments where difficulty, suffering, and perseverance are instruments for new growth—not something to be avoided.**

Leadership should place disciples in relationship with Jesus and the ever-increasing challenges of mission. Serving the mission is the means by which God changes His followers, then changes the world.

- 4. Sends away ordinary people to spread the gospel as their life calling—rather than gathering them to keep them.**

Jesus started a movement by multiplying disciples and missional groups that spread out as they grew up.



# “Every Christian is either a missionary or an imposter.” – Charles H. Spurgeon

## 5. The centralized gathering exists to serve the decentralized microchurch—not the other way around.

Although the centralized church reserves most of its resources to train leaders, resource groups, and expand mission through the microchurch expression, on the weekends it gathers all the missionaries together. Hundreds of missionaries that serve through their microchurch during the week will face the difficulties of hard ministry and the challenge to persevere. Therefore, our weekly gathering will provide a place of “REST.”

- Real Worship
- Encouragement to Persevere
- Shared Story
- Training in Discipleship and Ministry

## 6. Represents God’s voice within the storyline of the Bible—not selectively taught.

There is one central simple story that runs through the Bible. It begins in the garden of Eden and concludes in a new paradise. In the middle of the story, we discover the fall of mankind, the entrance of sin, pain, and death into our world. God’s plan is to restore mankind to himself and to the life we had in the garden of Eden through the life, death, and resurrection of his Son, Jesus Christ. Someday, Jesus will return to earth to reign and to restore the creation back to its original design. Every person needs to find themselves within that biblical storyline so that they can find Jesus—the only way back to God and the life that He planned for us.

Similarly, the church needs to find itself in that storyline to realize that it is merely a temporary servant to the kingdom of God. Growing the size of a church is never the ultimate goal—growing the kingdom of God is!

*Although there are as many expressions of church as there are different needs, opportunities, and abilities, there is only one way to disciple people—It's Jesus' way.*

### **7. Measures success by moral and missional obedience—not numerical results.**

When we focus on numerical results, we overlook people that are slow to believe or who seemingly have nothing to offer us in return—like the poor, handicap, or sick. The strategy for missional success is the presence of God that he gives to his followers as they walk in obedience to him (Matthew 28:18-20).

To make disciples  
you have to do what He did,  
the ways He did it,  
for the people He did it for,  
and for the reasons He did it.

Imagine a diverse group of people  
uniting to give their lives for the mission  
of sharing the life and message of Jesus  
with people in a way that challenges new  
levels of obedience, love, and sacrifice  
in themselves.





## What We Will Look Like

1. **Small Missional Communities:** We will empower ordinary Christians to start small missional communities called Microchurches. Microchurches are missional communities that serve the gospel to lost people while training new levels of obedience in the followers of Christ. Their training will stretch them to serve people that are different than them ethnically, economically, morally, and generationally.
  
2. **Hubs:** We will launch Hubs throughout Charlotte. A hub is a centralized, “low-cost” space which serves up to 200 people in the microchurch network. The hubs will be located in areas of diversity and need to serve as an example and a base for ministry training, meeting community needs, and a Sunday gathering. When a hub grows beyond 200 people, it will multiply to serve microchurches in other needed areas of Charlotte. We are looking at the E. Sugar Creek Road & N. Tryon Street intersection near the Asian mall as a possible first location.

### Shifting the Focus

From **Reaching** to **Making Disciples**

From **Teaching** to **Modeling Christ**

From **Attending** to **Serving People**

From **Connecting** to **Transforming New Growth**

From **Attracting** to **Deploying Missionaries**

From **Professional Staff** to **Ordinary Servants**

From **Large Gatherings** to **Small Missional Communities**



*Below you will find ways to connect or to give financially to this movement. We are looking for people willing to go on this journey of becoming like Jesus in ways that challenge us and change other people. Whatever your level of involvement, I hope you will take this journey with us as we pour new wine into new wineskins.*

## **Potential Timeline:**

### **Stage 1—October–May 2021**

Recruit, train leaders, and launch 5 microchurches.

### **Stage 2—June–May 2022**

Once there are 5 leaders and at least 25 people in the core group, we will begin gathering for worship, vision casting, and group training.

Once there are 50 people in the core group, we will launch a Hub with a weekly worship gathering called “REST” (see above for description).

### **Stage 3—Beyond 2022**

Reproduce disciples, microchurches, and hubs throughout Charlotte which inspire, model, train, and resource similar movements in major cities throughout America and around the world.

## How Much Will it Cost—Launch Needs

Because we are not simply starting a church, but are multiplying disciples, microchurches, and hubs, we will always be recruiting and training leaders and will always be raising money. To multiply this church movement across Charlotte and to inspire and train other similar movements across America, we need your help. The initial launch of microchurches and a hub to serve them will cost us \$100,000 the first year.

The goal is always to minimize the centralized costs so that funds are preserved for the multiplication of disciples, microchurches, and hubs.

### Currently I am developing two separate approaches to fund-raising:

1. I need to raise \$1500/mo from private donors to stabilize our personal income.
2. I need to raise \$100,000 for the first year to train leaders, multiply 5 microchurches, and launch the first hub in rented space.

#### Most of the expenses the first year will go toward:

- Training
- Equipment
- Events/Gatherings
- Rental Space
- Microchurch support
- Marketing
- Supplementary Staff Income

# How to Partner with us?

1. Let's talk over coffee or a meal.
2. Join our prayer team to receive monthly updates.
3. To give a financial gift online, go to [PlantingChurches.com](http://PlantingChurches.com). This site is managed by Planting Churches Ministries. Scroll down to the "Give" section. Select my name in the drop down menu: "Michael Boyes" project. Then designate the amount of your tax deductible gift.
4. To give by mail: Make Checks payable to "Planting Churches Ministries" and designate the check for "Michael Boyes" project. Mail to

PCM  
c/o Ivan Shawvan  
3835 Light Pink Rd  
Louisville, TN 37777

## Who are our Partners and Important Relationships



Charlotte Awake



Planting Churches  
Ministries



Creo Collective



The Underground  
Network



The EFCA

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# What if...

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