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SUMMARY - As the moral decline of Western civilization advances and the state of Christianity in the United States and the United Kingdom continues to deteriorate, including the closing of thousands of Western-style attractional churches each year, greater reliance on a back-to-the-future way of being church and reaching unsaved people with the gospel is needed. Thus, the Restore Church Network of microchurches (aka house churches or missional communities as found in the Book of Acts) is mobilizing an expanded church planting and disciple-making outreach, with designs on starting US and UK churches who are united in Christ, in fellowship with each other and devoted to Jesus as loving, servant families of believers who are on mission to the lost. As a part of this new endeavor, RCN will be adding to our substance abuse and addiction focus four areas where the evil one is attacking Western civilization with high degrees of success and destroying people who often find themselves in the margins of society because they have been impacted by the destruction of families, lies about human sexuality and marriage, the stealing of children by explicit sexual messaging and sexual abuse, and the murder of unborn babies. We are seeking support (prayer, in-kind and financial) and Bible-believing church partners for the expansion.

RESTORE CHURCH NETWORK PRAYING TO EXPAND U.S., U.K. PLANTING OF NEW TESTAMENT-STYLE HOME CHURCHES

How can Jesus' real Bible-believing church put itself in position to be used by the Holy Spirit to shepherd and protect real Christians and reach lost people in the margins of society with the gospel in the times in which we live, where the Western world, including the United States and the United Kingdom, reflect the ungodly and unrighteous people who are under God's wrath as described in Romans 1? Before answering that question, consider:

What are the major avenues that lead to evil's victories in our culture?

- Alcohol and drug addictions - According to the 2022 United States National Survey on Drug Use and Health, 46.8 million Americans 12 or older had a substance use disorder and roughly 25 million had an alcohol use disorder.
- The pilfering of children via social media and public schools' (secondary, primary and higher) evolution-pushing and woke agendas - Example: According to the *Washington Stand's* August 18, 2023 article on the Defense of Freedom Institute's report, "Summer of Woke, the Sequel," which examined the National Education Association and the American Federation of Teachers policies, "Both the NEA and AFT (summer) conferences featured content designed to instruct teachers on how to indoctrinate students with radical progressive ideology."
- Murdering of unborn babies - 90 percent of Britons support abortion being allowed in the United Kingdom, according to a 2023 YouGov survey. In the United States, 61 percent say abortion should be legal in all or most cases, according to a 2022 Pew Research Center survey.
- Destruction of the family and rampant sexual immorality - A 2023 YouGov poll indicates 77 percent of Britons support same-sex marriage. A Gallup survey in 2023 found 71 percent of Americans do.

- Non-belief in God - A 2022 General Social Survey found only half of people in the United States are sure that God exists. The Policy Institute at King's College London showed 51 percent of Britons do not believe in God.
- Increased heretical teaching in churches - Lifeway Research found in 2018 that 38 percent of Protestant churchgoers in the United States were taught that if they give more money to their church and charities, in return God will bless them.
- Vastly impotent, non-Biblical, ashamed-of-the-gospel, world-compromising, self-focused instead of God-focused, Great Commission-disobedient churches - According to a Barna Group 2019 survey just 60 percent of self-identifying evangelicals in the United States have heard of the Great Commission and remember what it is.

So, how does Jesus' real church get in position for the Holy Spirit to rescue people from this perverse generation? Whatever model of Bible-based local church expression - from megachurch to microchurch - is preferred, we must lovingly engage lost people where they live, work and play by boldly preaching the gospel and Biblical truths, building relationships with the lost (not patronizing them) to demonstrate who Jesus is and to make disciples, and become families of believers like are in the Book of Acts.

Restore Church Network is seeking God's favor so we can do just that. After much prayer asking for God's direction and guidance, we believe we are being led to do the following - go to places in our cities where evil is prevalent, engage people there demonstrating Jesus' love to them and preaching the gospel and the truths of the Bible, build relationships with people struggling with life's circumstances so we can disciple to conversion, and then plant microchurches - families of believers who worship together, take care of each other, and use their spiritual gifts to be in fellowship with one another and be on mission to tell the next lost person about Jesus.

This needed approach for the times in which we live is not new. It's how the church began. We read about it in the Book of Acts.

In Acts 2:42-47 we are told the first believers were *devoted* followers of Jesus, not occasional Sunday church attenders who take seats in so many Western churches today. "And they were continually devoting themselves to the apostles' teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to the prayers. ... And all those who had believed were together and had all things in common; and they began selling their property and possessions and were dividing them up with all, as anyone might have need. And daily devoting themselves with one accord in the temple and breaking bread from house to house, they were taking their meals together with gladness and sincerity of heart, praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord was adding to their number daily those who were being saved."

The early church met in homes, were united in Jesus, loved each other, took care of themselves spiritually and physically, built each other up in the body of Christ, and made new disciples. That's the church we're praying to be. Specifically, here's how we'll get in position for the Holy Spirit to use us.

RESTORE CHURCH NETWORK

Based in Indianapolis, RCN is a US 501c3 non-profit church. RCN resources and manages a network of microchurches and partnerships by providing administrative, communication, training and fundraising support for the microchurches. In addition, RCN identifies new cities for church planting in the US and

UK as we pray to be Jesus' witnesses in "Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the end of the earth (Acts 1:8)."

In preparation for the expansion, RCN has organized itself as follows:

- RESTORE CHURCH INDIANAPOLIS - With five current discovery groups (pre-microchurches) and microchurches, and two planned microchurches set to be planted this summer, RC Indianapolis will be reaching the lost on the city's southeast (Beech Grove) and west sides, and addiction communities.
- RESTORE CHURCH RECOVERY INDIANAPOLIS - This ministry is for men who are last-mile alcohol or drug addicts or first-mile recovered addicts. The men apply for a Christian Living Residency to learn how to live a Christian life and be a part of Jesus' church. They live at our Beech Grove Hub where they study a Bible-based curriculum, are required to be employed, and participate in The Hub Microchurch. We are praying to plant another hub in Indianapolis within the next 15 months.
- RESTORE CHURCH BIRMINGHAM, UK - Currently we have one discovery group in Birmingham and we recently hired a lead city missionary who will identify (Holy Spirit led, we pray) the first microchurch planters for this city, the second largest in the United Kingdom. We have partnered with World Renewal, an international church planting and missionary sending agency, for the microchurch planting work, utilizing their international experience to help jump start our initiatives.
- RESTORE CHURCH LONDON - We have started building contacts in London and would like to hire a lead city missionary by the end of summer. We have partnered with World Renewal for planting here, too.
- RESTORE CHURCH BROADCASTING - A near-future endeavor, RC Broadcasting will be an online platform to present the gospel with a focus on reaching people who are struggling with life's issues via streaming, podcasts and published books and articles.

KEY REASONS FOR MICROCHURCH EXPANSION - According to a Barna Group 2020 US study, *State of the Church*, as reported by ChurchLeaders.com:

- 57 percent of adults who attend traditional, attractional-model churches regularly said people they know are tired of the typical church experience.
- 73 percent of non-Christians perceive the church as either not having any impact or as having a harmful impact where they live.
- The study concluded, "While it's true that many churchgoers enjoy gathering with others to worship and are even open to official congregational membership, the reputation of the Church (locally and universally) is in question. This fact is crystallizing as Barna listens to more people from the younger generation entering adulthood, perhaps most represented among those who are 'tired' of church as they know it."
- The poor in America are leaving the church "en masse," Ryan Burge, who teaches at Eastern Illinois University and whose research appears on the Religion in Public website, wrote in *Christianity Today*. "Forty percent of individuals who are in the bottom quartile of the income spectrum and engage in few social activities never attend church. That's twice the rate of someone in the top income bracket who has an active social life."

- According to Barna, 94 percent of adult Christians made their decision to follow Christ before they were 18 years old.
- According to Current Population Survey, in 2023 there were 9.8 million one-parent households in the United States, including 7.3 million mother-only households.
- According to the 2022 United States National Survey on Drug Use and Health, 46.8 million Americans 12 or older had a substance use disorder and roughly 25 million had an alcohol use disorder.
- In 1900 there were 28 churches for every 10,000 Americans. Today there are 11 churches for every 10,000. ... 80-85 percent of churches are on the downside of their life cycle. ... 3,500 churches close each year. - from *Planting Missional Churches*

WHY MICROCHURCHES - Our microchurches begin as discovery groups, a small number of believers who are called to reach a specific people group or geographic area with the gospel. This incorporates Great Commission DNA into the group. After prayer and study of Scripture, when the believers begin engaging those communities, building relationships with lost people and discipling them to conversion (we pray), the discovery group becomes a microchurch. Here are some reasons why the Restore Church Network believes microchurches are needed in the United States and the United Kingdom.

- A few cultural shifts helping to propel a microchurch movement in the West are: 1) Increased desire for meaningful connection and belonging among people who are close sisters and brothers in Christ. 2) Social movement away from centralized institutions to platforms that transfer control to local participants. 3) Lost trust in institutionalized and highly organizational entities. 4) A desire to have positive impact on communities in line with personal values. 5) A negative opinion of traditional, attractional Western church.
- Microchurches start out small and multiply quickly. They can meet virtually anywhere, and they typically have unpaid leaders. It costs little to start a microchurch compared to needing up to a quarter to a half million US dollars to start a traditional church in the United States where paid staff and rented facilities are needed.
- Traditional Western churches are currently reaching less than 20 percent of the American population. - Marion Baptist Association
- A new church species is emerging throughout the Western world. In major cities as well as rural areas, unique church life is peeking through like the fresh growth of new crops pressing through the surface of the soil. Called microchurches, each one functions as a church. These small churches often relate together in networks to foster accountability and encouragement. Although the term we are using – microchurch – is a contemporary name, the concept is as old as the New Testament church we read about in the Scriptures. Some of these microchurches, often called house churches, are mentioned in the book of Acts (Acts 20:20). In Corinth, believers met in the home of Aquila and Priscilla (1 Corinthians 16:19). In Colossae, we are told that the church was meeting in the home of Nympha (Colossians 4:15). A church also met in the home of Philemon (Philemon 2). - Dove International
- Our goal is to develop disciples who are winning souls, making disciples. ... If we are successful at this, then our microchurches will grow and not remain small for long! Remaining small, however, is crucial for maintaining intimacy, accountability, and vulnerability in your microchurch. The larger you get, the less likely everyone is to participate, share and be vulnerable. If your microchurch has more than 20-30 people coming on a consistent basis, then it is time to multiply. Unless microchurches remain

small, they lose their effectiveness and their ability to care for the needs of each member. Microchurches must multiply to maintain intimacy among members while continuing to reach out to non-Christians. – microchurchleaders.com

- Perhaps the largest revival in the history of the world started and is still happening in communist China. Today there may be more than 100 million Christians there. What is their primary means of being multiplying families of believers with the threat of persecution always present? It's microchurches.

APPEAL – For five years Restore Church Network has had a primary people group focus in the Indianapolis, USA area – reaching the alcohol and drug addiction community with the gospel. Outside support has helped enable us to convert an old church into what we call The Hub, a home for 17 men who have exchanged life on the streets for a Christian Living Residency. These men go through a year-long curriculum on how to live a Christian life, obtain jobs, and fill in the gaps of their lives in five areas – spiritual, physical, emotional, academic and financial. During the past five years more than 100 men have lived at The Hub learning that Jesus is their only real hope for recovery and more importantly, eternal life.

We would not exchange this focus for any other. We truly believe God has called us to it. However, we believe God is also calling us to expand our church through a concentrated effort to plant non-traditional Western-style churches with a focus on reaching more people in the margins with the gospel, including those in poverty, single parents and their kids, and those with hurts and hangups of any kind. In preparation for the expansion, we have reformulated Restore Church Network, a grouping of microchurches (small expressions of churches who meet in non-traditional church meeting spaces to worship, fellowship and be on mission to the lost), discovery groups (the beginning stages of a microchurch) and Bible study groups, to have an expanded people groups and cities focus.

Currently we have nine of these groups in Indianapolis and Birmingham, UK. (At the beginning of this year we spun off a microchurch in San Diego and a discovery group in Montreal, Canada because they were God-led to focus on different people groups.)

One of our current microchurches is comprised of the men living at The Hub. It's an example of the type of microchurch reflecting the early church in the book of Acts that we are praying to be able to plant. The Hub microchurch has become a 24/7 community of believers and people interested in learning more about Jesus who support each other spiritually and physically, build each other up in the body of Christ and tell non-believers about how awesome Jesus is.

More than 60 percent of people in the United States say they will never enter a traditional Western church building for any reason. Many of them are people in the margins. With that being the case, our microchurches, current and future, will go to where those people live, work and play with the gospel.

To do all of this we are seeking partners who will pray for us, join the outreach, and, yes, help financially.

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