

# MOVING FROM “COME TO US” TO “GO TO OTHERS”:

## DIFFERENT FORMS OF MISSION-SHAPED CHURCH



### What shapes a church?

Much like the life of discipleship, church happens wherever people are OF something bigger than themselves, look UP to God in worship and look IN by being in relationship.

Crucially as well, church happens when we are sent on the journey OUT – the meaning of being an apostolic (sent) church.

New Christian communities start with a desire to be a blessing, asking questions such as, “Where is God at work and how can we join in?” and “How might our life be shaped around the needs of others?”

The way new Christian communities can be shaped can be very different, according to context and situation.

### Church Plants

are congregations in new areas, largely based on an existing church’s way of operating, and still in relationship to that church.

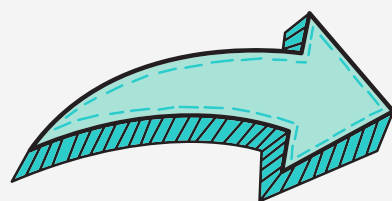


### Fresh Expressions

are new forms of church that emerges from activities or ways of life in our culture and engage primarily with those who do not go to church – for example, church based on crafts, sports, the outdoors, café environments.

### Missional Communities

are groups within churches who gather with a balance between up, in and out. They start by identifying an area or network they want to bless, and then organize activities and time together, which includes worship and fellowship. They might be part of a larger congregation.



### Micro-plants

are along the same lines as missional communities. Small numbers (from 2-10) are resourced to be a blessing to a group of people or area. They will gradually build Christian community around that activity or group. They are small, flexible, informal in style, and have the intention to expand by establishing new groups around an area of blessing others when possible.

**Resource churches** are churches that plant other churches.

**Revitalisations** are small congregations who welcome people (and leadership) from another church to help build up their life again.

**New congregations** are new worshipping services over and above any existing worshipping service within a church – this could be on the same premises or within the parish.



While some of these new Christian community definitions overlap, what is clear is that whereas the days when people “come to us” might be largely gone, where church communities start to look outwards and think of how to go to others, there is often significant growth.