

WHAT, WHY & HOW TO PARTNER

MARCH 2026 VERSION

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March 2026: This is a first version that may have been updated by the time you read this. The latest version will be found on www.A2churches.com (once that website is up).

To keep this document from being too long, any Appendices referred to can be found in a *separate* document: *Appendices For the "A2 Movement" Document.*

A Brief Introduction

If you're reading this, I'm going to assume you're curious about finding out what the A2 Movement is all about. In short, it's a brand new global family of diverse churches, united by relationship, shared mission, similar values, and a common desire to partner with one another and the A2 Translocal Team.

Its end goal? More and more healthy, Acts 2–inspired churches that together are going to the ends of the earth, for the glory of God and the advance of His Kingdom.

This E–book is a first attempt at articulating what the A2 Movement is all about: why it's needed, what it's about, how to be part of it, etc.

When I initially shared my intention to start A2 with a leader from another movement, he advised:

"Do as much strategic thinking as you can before anyone else arrives. If you don't take time for a first layer of thinking, you'll spend years trying to bring everyone onto the same page, and precious time will be lost. Co-creation and collaboration is important, but if you spend too much time there initially, you could easily get bogged down trying to make everyone happy."

He encouraged Julie and I to write it all down so that any churches interested in joining us at the start will have a 'first draft' of the vision and strategy we believe God has placed in our hearts for A2. What you're reading is precisely that. No doubt, over the coming years, as more churches are added to our family, and as legitimate questions, new challenges and better ideas come up, this document will be refined and upgraded.

In short then, what you hold is an imperfect, improvable document to undergird an imperfect, improvable movement in service of our Perfect Lord.

Terran Williams (terranwill@gmail.com)

A Précis of This Document

If you're trying to decide whether to read further, or simply want to grasp the heart of what's being proposed in this document, this précis will give you the summary of the document that follows...

At its core, A2 is a global family of diverse local churches who choose to go—together. The movement exists because I am convinced that God's mission has always been outward-moving, and that this "going" is never meant to be done alone. From Abraham to the prophets, from Jesus to the early church, God sends His people into new places, new seasons, and new obedience. Yet throughout Scripture, this sending is shared: leaders are sent in teams, churches are strengthened through partnership, and mission advances through relationship. The A2 Movement is built on this dual conviction: God calls His church to go, and He calls us to go together.

The theological and practical blueprint for A2 is found in the church described in the book of Acts, especially in Acts 2. The earliest church is presented not as a museum piece to admire, but as an inspired pattern to be re-expressed in every age and culture. Churches within A2 are not expected to look the same, but they share a common genetic vision: lives transformed by Jesus, communities shaped by devotion to Scripture, prayer, and worship, people empowered by the Holy Spirit, and churches living outwardly on mission. Health, not just growth, is the primary measure of faithfulness. The longing is not to build impressive churches, but healthy ones—churches that reflect the life of God in a weary world.

To give clarity to this shared vision, several key terms are defined. The A2 Movement refers to the global family of churches relationally and missionally connected around this Acts 2 inspiration. An A2 Church is any local church that has chosen to belong to this family and align around its values. The A2 Translocal Team consists of leaders recognised for their gifting in planting and strengthening churches beyond their own local context. These leaders do not replace local leadership; they exist to serve, support, equip, and help churches thrive and multiply. The A2 Lead Team provides overall discernment, direction, and stewardship of the movement. Together, these structures aim to loosely reflect a New Testament pattern in which local churches remain locally led, yet relationally connected to wider, translocal ministry.

A central distinctive of A2 is the conviction that Acts 2 provides a multi-dimensional vision of church life. Healthy churches are stretched in multiple directions at once: alive in the Spirit, devoted to prayer and worship, centred on Christ, committed to discipleship, marked by genuine community, generous in mercy, bold in evangelism, grounded in Scripture, and serious about multiplying leaders and churches. No church excels in all of these at once, which is precisely why partnership matters. Churches need one another's strengths to address one another's weaknesses. The movement exists to help churches grow healthier together, not to create uniformity.

Special attention is given to three dynamics that often fall out of balance in church life: the life of the Spirit, discipleship, and mission. Churches may emphasise spiritual experience without depth of formation, or discipleship without outward mission, or activism without dependence on the Spirit. The Acts 2 pattern holds all three in creative tension. A2 exists to encourage churches not to settle for two out of three, but to pursue Spirit-empowered discipleship that overflows in mission. This tension is not a problem to solve, but a rhythm to live within.

The vision then zooms out to ask how local churches relate to the wider body of Christ. Five common options are explored: remaining independent, joining a denomination, participating in a loose network, seeking individual "covering" from a senior leader, or belonging to a relational family of churches (a movement). Each option has strengths and weaknesses. The A2 Movement positions itself as a family of churches: relational rather than bureaucratic, mission-led rather than maintenance-driven, and shaped by translocal leaders who strengthen and mobilise churches without controlling them. This model seeks to echo the pattern seen in the New Testament, where churches were neither isolated nor micromanaged, but connected through trusted relationships and shared mission.

From this framework, the value of partnering with a healthy movement is unpacked in practical terms. Partnership clarifies who a church is truly walking with. It locates a local church within a bigger story of what God is doing in the world, protecting it from becoming inward-looking or purely survival-focused. It allows strengthening gifts to flow beyond one congregation, increases fruitfulness in church planting, and multiplies leaders through shared training, inspiration, and encouragement. It

provides wise external support in seasons of crisis or transition, brings discernment and confirmation in the appointment of leaders, and models healthy authority where local leaders themselves are led in relationship. Finally, movements often open space for the next generation, inviting younger leaders into something bigger than a single local context and giving them a shared mission worth giving their lives to.

The vision is not naïve about the dangers of movements. Common downsides are named honestly: elitism, unhealthy power dynamics, over-centralisation, loss of local distinctiveness, doctrinal imbalance, institutional drift, or making it costly or shameful to leave. In response, A2 names clear counter-commitments. Partnership is intended to be primary but never exclusive. Authority is to be accountable and relational, never coercive. Local mission is to be strengthened, not siphoned. Diversity of expression is to be celebrated, not flattened. Historic Christian orthodoxy is to be held firmly, while secondary matters are held with humility. The movement commits to remaining teachable, outward-looking, and open-handed with churches who may one day discern that their season with A2 has come to an end.

Partnership is framed as a two-way relationship. Churches are not merely recipients of translocal ministry; they are participants in a shared mission. Practical commitments are outlined for churches that choose to belong: becoming model churches that others can learn from, sending people to strengthen other communities, sharing what is working, building genuine friendships across churches, practising generosity, praying intentionally for one another, welcoming translocal leaders into local contexts, and being willing—when God leads—to pioneer new work in new places. Some churches will give more in certain seasons; others will receive more. No church outgrows its need for the wider body.

The section on doctrine clarifies what is essential for partnership. A2 is centred on historic Christian orthodoxy—the core truths of the gospel, the authority of Scripture, and the centrality of Jesus Christ—while holding secondary and tertiary differences with humility and generosity. Unity is not built on uniformity of every theological detail, but on shared allegiance to Jesus and his kingdom, a common commitment to healthy, Spirit-empowered church life, and a governance structure that involves a leadership team led by a leader. This creates space for deep partnership without forcing churches into narrow doctrinal tribes or culture wars.

Looking ahead, I sketch how the movement is expected to grow. The future is not imagined as a centralised organisation, but as the multiplication of healthy relationships, leaders, teams, and churches across regions and nations. As the family grows, more translocal leaders will emerge, more training hubs will form, and more churches will be planted and strengthened. Growth is framed as organic rather than corporate—responsive to what God is doing in different contexts, adaptable across cultures, and prioritising health over speed.

Finally, I outline how churches can join the A2 Movement in a simple, relational way. Partnership is not a contract but a discerned commitment. Churches are invited to explore relationship first, walk together over time, test alignment in values and vision, and only then formalise partnership if it is mutually life-giving. The emphasis is on honour, clarity, and trust—ensuring that churches enter freely, walk together intentionally, and, if needed, are free to transition out honourably. The posture is one of open hands rather than tight control: a family of churches choosing one another for the sake of the gospel, the strength and health of each church, and the advance of God's kingdom to the ends of the earth.

A2: Go Together

We are a global family of Acts 2-inspired churches, committed to going—together.

The strapline of this movement consists of two words… *go together.*

GO. Abraham is told, *"Go"* (Genesis 12:1). Moses hears, *"So now, go. I am sending you"* (Exodus 3:10). The prophets are sent again and again: *"Whom shall I send?" … "Here am I. Send me!"* followed immediately by, *"Go and tell"* (Isaiah 6:8–9); *"You must go to everyone I send you to"* (Jeremiah 1:7); *"I am sending you"* (Ezekiel 2:3); *"Go to the great city"* (Jonah 1:2).

Then Jesus arrives and carries forward this same sending impulse. To His first disciples He says, *"As you go, proclaim"* (Matthew 10:7). After His resurrection, the command becomes global: *"Therefore go and make disciples of all nations"* (Matthew 28:19). Mark records it even more starkly: *"Go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation"* (Mark 16:15). John shows us that Jesus understands Himself as the Sent One—and then, with the breath of the Spirit and the gift of peace, passes that sent-ness on: *"As the Father has sent me, I am sending you"* (John 20:21). In Acts, the risen Jesus continues to direct His church outward: *"You will be my witnesses… to the ends of the earth"* (Acts 1:8).

God Himself is never static, He is always on the move. When we walk with Him, and keep in step with His Spirit, we too, are always moved in some way — stretched beyond what is comfortable or familiar. To follow God is to join him in 'going'— into new seasons, new communities, and ever-deeper levels of obedience and intimacy with Him.

A planet-shaking, history-making movement is only possible when a critical number of churches choose to 'go' — to stretch beyond their geographical walls and internal needs and context — joining God in 'going' wherever He leads next. As we collectively step out in obedience like this—toward unreached people, new mission fields, and the advance of God's kingdom—our faith and sacrifices are fused with God's abundance and faithfulness. To go is thus not merely an outward action; it is to carry the very heartbeat of God Himself.

TOGETHER. We believe that God doesn't just want us to go. He wants us to Go, *Together.*

Church leaders—and whole churches for that matter—were never meant to stand alone. Throughout Scripture, the call to go has always been a collective calling, because God's blessing comes to us not only in *what* He calls us to do, but in *who* He calls us to do it with. David in Psalm 16, for example, delights in three things: God himself (v2, 5), the inheritance allocated to him (v6), and the people whom he serves God's purposes alongside:

"As for the holy people who are in the land, they are the noble ones in whom is all my delight" (v3).

God's purposes and God's people belong together. They go together.

Given enough time, our long obedience in the same direction will lead to weariness, opposition, and vulnerability. God's provision for this is not merely strength, but companionship. *"Two are better than one... If either of them falls down, one can help the other up... A cord of three strands is not quickly broken"* (Ecclesiastes 4:9–12).

This wisdom runs straight through the ministry of Jesus. He never sends His disciples out alone but *"sent them out two by two"* (Mark 6:7). He ministers from within a team, forming a community not just a movement. Even the Great Commission is not given to an isolated individual but to a gathered company (Matthew 28:16–20). Then in Acts, mission advances through partnership—Peter and John, Paul and Barnabas, Paul and Silas—showing that fruitfulness, resilience, and faithfulness are sustained through shared life and shared mission. Loneliness in leadership ministry is not a sad inevitability. It is an unwise choice.

My friend Paul van Coller leads the Zambia Project, a church-planting network that has planted over 300 churches in rural villages. In a rural village, communication and travel limitations make it hard to stay in touch with churches far away. He tells me that when a church is planted in a new area, if it stands alone, it is very likely to implode, or drift into false teaching.

Their movement has discovered one clear solution: plant three or more churches in close proximity to one another. When this happens, those churches stand strong through every season and outlast the toughest challenges.

It is a living picture of an ancient proverb:
If you want to go fast, go alone; if you want to go far, go together.

To go the distance, churches and leaders must prioritise genuine relationships and cross-church partnerships. The New Testament knows nothing of lone-ranger leadership. Strength, discernment, perseverance, and faithfulness are only sustainable in community. God is always sending us outward, but wonderfully, He is also sending us *together*.

A2 is passionately committed to both of these core values: to **going—but doing so, together.**

Definitions: Introducing the A2 Movement

The quickest way to grasp the heart of the A2 Movement is to define the key phrases and terms that give it shape.

Phrases like:

- *The A2 Movement*
- *An A2 Church*
- *The A2 Translocal Team*
- *The A2 Lead Team*
- *Ephesians 4:11 Gifts*
- *Church Planter*
- *Church Strenghthener*
- *The Acts 2 Church*
- *An Acts 2 Church*

The *A2 Movement* is a global family of churches that, though diverse in expression, draw common inspiration from the church described in Acts 2. These churches partner relationally and missionally with one another, and with the *A2 Translocal Team*, to see healthy churches strengthened and multiplied.

An *A2 Church* is any local church that is part of the A2 Movement. This implies that the church sees Acts chapter 2 as a blueprint for a healthy, vibrant and growing church. Like that first church in Acts 2, it is a church that seeks to be increasingly marked by the Spirit poured out, praise and prayer, evangelistic potency, Christ's centrality, authentic community, transformed lives, compelling preaching, leaders multiplied, and everyone contributing. Each church is encouraged to find its own context-specific expression of these aspects.

The *A2 Translocal Team* consists of men and women from A2 churches who have recognised Ephesians 4:11 gifting and experience in strengthening and multiplying churches. They are identified, trained, and released by the A2 Lead Team to travel to and serve churches beyond their own. As our family of churches grows, this may naturally develop into multiple teams within the team.

The *A2 Lead Team* is a small group of leaders who give overall direction, vision, and discernment to the A2 Movement and its Translocal teams. Terran and Julie Williams provide leadership to this team, with others to be added over time.

Ephesians 4:11 Gifts refer to the variety of leaders and gifts evident in the New Testament. It assumes that all local churches require more than any singular resident leadership style or gifting to grow into full maturity. That's why God has gifted his Church with some men and women who have catalytic gifts that break open new ground for others to follow into. When used in service of one another, and for God's glory alone, these gifts equip the saints, strengthen churches, and draw us all deeper into the broader mission and family of churches.

Church Planter refers to someone who is preparing to, or has recently started a new church.

Church Strenghthener refers to anyone from one local church that is invited to minister, coach or equip another local church.

The Acts 2 church refers to the early stage of the Jerusalem church as it was unleashed in the world following Jesus' ascension described in Acts 2.

An Acts 2 church refers to any local church inside or outside of A2 that tries to recapture *the* Acts 2 church's genetic in their unique place and time in history.

God Equips The Called

Julie's and my stepping out to initiate this movement does not arise from a belief that we are uniquely competent, unusually gifted, or more experienced than others. On the contrary, we are keenly aware that there are many men and women—both within existing movements and beyond—who are more competent and more seasoned than we are. Our obedience, therefore, is not driven by self-confidence, but by conviction.

We believe that God has instructed us to take this step—see *Appendix: How God Directed Us to Initiate A Movement*—and that the same God who calls also equips those He calls. This movement is born not out of personal ambition

or presumed capacity, but out of a desire to respond faithfully to what we discern to be the leading of God, trusting Him to supply what we presently lack.

Leadership is a God-given gift to any community that is growing, yet we are not wanting to build a movement that is heavily leader-centred. While we recognise that there is a grace on our lives to launch this global family, we do not sense His leading to build it around our personalities or our gifting. Instead, we believe we've been called to create a relational and missional space in which churches and church leaders do not primarily gather around Julie and me, or even those who will join us on the Translocal team, but around one another—and around the global mandate of God in the particular moment of history He is presently shaping.

Our Distinctive: Acts 2 Is The Blueprint

"*The greatest tragedy is a sick church in a dying world*" (Leonard Ravenhill).

Our world is not merely confused; it is weary. It is overrun by fragmentation, anxiety, and a deep distrust of institutions that once promised meaning and stability. There is spiritual hunger everywhere, but little spiritual direction—longing without landmarks. Noise, outrage, clever strategies, and louder opinions have not healed the ache of the human soul. People are searching for meaning, belonging, truth, and hope, and yet are increasingly sceptical of the systems and structures that claim to offer them. Beneath the cynicism, however, a longing still lingers in every heart: *for a place where God is truly present, a community where love is genuinely practised, and a life that is truly being transformed.*

A sick church—divided, performative, prayerless, and powerless—not only fails to meet these divinely-inspired longings, it deepens the watching world's disillusionment. The church of Jesus was never meant to be a brand, a battleground, or a background feature of cultural Christianity. It was meant to be a living sign and wonder of God's kingdom on earth. In a sick and decaying world, the greatest gift the church can offer is not relevance, but real life—born not from religion or relevance, but from being resurrected by the Author of life Himself (John 17:3).

It is our conviction that a healthy church is a church guided by the pattern and power of the very first church, as outlined in Acts 2. This is not a romantic return to the past, but a Spirit-breathed expression of the church as God intends it to be in every age: a people shaped by the presence of God, devoted to the apostles' teaching and deep formation, bound together in real community, marked by prayer, generosity, joy, and holy awe—and sent into the world with compelling witness.

A healthy church then, is one in which Jesus is proclaimed with clarity, the Spirit is welcomed with expectancy, leaders serve with humility, and ordinary believers are empowered to live extraordinary lives for the sake of others.

This doesn't mean all A2 churches should be the same. Diversity of expression is a strength, not a weakness. Healthy churches come in all shapes and sizes. So, we embrace small communities and big ones, new churches and old ones. A church's personality and methodology may differ, but our common purpose and values hold us together as we go.

Inspired by the original Acts 2 church, A2 churches still seek to be marked by:

- **Spirit Poured Out.** Alive with God's presence, power and gifts.
- **Praise and Prayer.** Delighting in and drawing on the Father's goodness and greatness.
- **Evangelistic Potency.** Reaching the lost when the church gathers, as well as when it's scattered.
- **Christ's Centrality.** Forever focused on Jesus Christ and His kingdom.
- **Transformed Lives.** Increasingly following in Jesus' ways.
- **Authentic Community.** Learning to love each other as a diverse family of care and encouragement.
- **Compelling Preaching.** God's Word consistently declared with clarity and conviction.
- **Leaders Multiplied.** Shepherd leaders who lovingly and wisely lead.
- **Everyone Contributing.** Everyone playing their part in God's work.

When all of these values are cherished, the church is a sign and wonder, a *SPECTACLE*, to a watching, waiting world.

Our goal as a movement is to keep this Acts 2 genetic as the North Star and ultimate 'yardstick' by which we define and measure church health. No local church (at least that we know of) is strong in all 9 aspects, all of the time. That is why we need one another, and the gifts embedded in other churches and people, to help all churches get healthier, stay healthy and together, plant healthy churches of all shapes and sizes.

With every church that joins our movement stronger in some of these aspects, and weaker in others, together, as the wider body of Christ, we can begin to beautifully embody Acts 2:45—sharing and imparting with other churches who have need whatever your church or team has been richly blessed with. In this way, we all become stronger: as an inter-connected, inter-dependent family and wider church body.

To be clear, these nine aspects are not a full summary, and need to be teased out more fully. In my book, *I Will Build*, for example, I unpack other related aspects from Acts 2, including:

- **Scripture-Anchored:** The Bible is not just referenced—but delighted in, revered, taught, believed and obeyed.
- **Young-Biased:** Intentionally reaching and investing in the younger generation.
- **Diverse and Unified:** Reflecting the multi-ethnic, multi-lingual beauty of Acts 2—honouring different cultures, backgrounds, and stories, while finding our deepest unity in Christ.
- **Generous and Mercy-Orientated:** Where we live justly and give freely, because we've received freely.
- **Risk-Taking:** Faith-fuelled and courageous, launching out when Jesus speaks.
- **Exponentially-Minded:** Disciplers who make disciplers; training trainers, not just teaching followers.
- **Health-Oriented:** Cultivating life-giving cultures where leaders are healthy and communities flourish.
- **Team-Led:** Lead pastors are to lead boldly, but not solo.
- **Mutualist:** Where women and men partner together in marriage, ministry, and leadership.
- **Contextual and Innovative:** Custom-built with Spirit-led creativity, not copy-pasted.
- **Rooted:** Dynamic and future-focused—but grounded in ancient traditions and foundations.
- **Local and Global:** Where we shine our light locally—but never lose sight of the nations.
- **Resilient:** Prepared to thrive in both favour and opposition.

Stretched in Nine Directions

Committed to going—and going together—what is it we hope to gift to the world?

Back behind A2 is a driving passion: *to release the Acts 2 genetic into the world.*

If Acts 2 provides the DNA of biblical ecclesial fidelity, then that DNA stretches us in multiple directions at once. Far from being a flaw, we see

this as a feature. Like a tent with nine tent pegs each pulling in different directions to create a spacious, sturdy dwelling, it's precisely the tension of upholding all these values that creates the one-of-a-kind beauty of an Acts 2 church.

While the shape of each church (and how it accommodates these values in its unique context) could and should vary significantly, the end result of upholding these tensions (instead of ignoring, resisting or collapsing them in on one another) ultimately creates something beautiful, distinctive and strong.

The temptation for every church and leadership team is to build a church according to our preferences: picking one or two aspects, elevating them above the others, and claiming that these are the most critical. It's tidy, easier, but it's incomplete—and unhealthy. The Acts 2 church was never a one-note church; it pulsed with the tension of worship *and* witness, depth *and* breadth, intimacy *and* mission.

At the same time, I'm not suggesting we try to merely *balance* these nine aspects as though they were competing for limited attention, or simply tick boxes on a list. Imagine the Acts 2 church as a spider's web with nine fixed points, each thread connecting them into a uniquely strong structure.

Of course, we won't always get it right. But it is far better to be stretched in the right directions than to shrink into a one-dimensional version of the church that feels manageable or reflects personal inclinations but misses the beauty and power of God's design. As Isaiah says, *"Stretch your tent curtains wide... lengthen your cords, strengthen your stakes"* (54:2).

Spirit, Mission and Discipleship

In our experience, across multiple streams of church, we've observed that out of all the Acts 2 distinctives, three often come into greatest tension:

- The Spirit Poured Out
- Evangelistic Potency
- Transformed Lives (Discipleship)

Each one is essential to the life of the church. Yet most congregations, knowingly or not, are tempted to emphasize one or two at the expense of the third. Neglecting any one of these three dimensions though diminishes a church community's vibrancy.

(I have adapted the following from the vision of Church of the City in NYC which makes no mention of Acts 2, and uses different terms for these three points, namely: tangible presence, sacrificial mission, and counter formation (see *www.church.nyc/beliefs*).)

Spirit + Discipleship without Evangelism = Secluded spirituality lacking in impact.
A community may be vibrant in prayer, worship, and personal transformation, but if it does not seek to also engage the world around it, its fire risks burning only inwardly, with few outside the church ever getting close enough to feel its warmth.

Spirit + Evangelism without Discipleship = Shallow ministry lacking in depth.
Zeal without spiritual formation leads to activity without maturity. People are served, activity is ever-present, yet our characters run the risk of remaining stunted and our faith, infantile.

Discipleship + Evangelism without Spirit = Busy activism lacking in power.
Even the most disciplined programmes of obedience, teaching, and outreach are not sustainable without the Spirit's ongoing empowerment. Effort alone will never birth lasting transformation or bear supernatural fruit.

Acts 2 shows us a different pattern. The church we meet here does not settle for two out of three. Instead, it is a community that holds all three in tension:

Spirit + Discipleship + Evangelism → Power + Depth + Impact = An Acts 2 Church.

In practical terms, this tension is dynamic and life-giving. The Spirit empowers every initiative, breathing energy, wisdom and authority into both discipleship and outreach. Discipleship deepens the understanding of the Spirit's work and provides the grounding needed for sustainable mission. Evangelism ensures that both the Spirit and discipleship are expressed outwardly, touching more and more lives and glorifying God beyond the church walls.

To live in this tension is to embrace a kind of holy elasticity: stretched in every direction, never settling for partial fulfilment, always in need of God's fresh grace, power and wisdom. Instead of a problem to be solved, this tension is a rhythm to be lived.

In summary, the A2 Movement seeks to encourage and equip churches everywhere to follow the Acts 2 pattern of cherishing a multiplicity of values. This requires us to ongoingly reckon with the natural, life-giving tension created by valuing seemingly conflicting values: the lofty work of the Spirit, the deep work of discipleship, and the stretching breadth of the mission field. In the words of Church of the City: "Rather than holding an emphasis on one of these areas, we believe that it is the intersection of these three things that creates a compelling disciple of Jesus."

Together, let's build churches in which every person within them can experience:

- The life-changing joy of being immersed in the presence, power and gifts of the outpoured Spirit.
- The transforming depth of being rooted in Scripture and the spiritual practices Jesus practiced.
- The sheer thrill of living on mission with Jesus and regularly seeing people—including friends and family—come to faith and be baptised.

This does not imply that any local church in the movement will be an expert at combining these three aspects—that's why we need one another, and the ongoing help of God himself.

Relating to Other Churches: Five Options For A Local Church

Every local church must grapple with the question: What is our relationship to other churches? Although this is not an exhaustive answer, there are five common options:

Independence

Some churches thrive on their own, focusing locally without any formal external partnerships. Leaders in these churches can learn from books, visit other churches, or invite guest speakers. However, independence can also begin to feel isolating. These churches often struggle to answer the question: *who is the leadership of our church accountable to?* Leaders may also struggle to ordain new leaders, lack external help in times of crisis or transition, or not have all the catalytic gifts needed to grow or plant more churches. Alternatively, some independent churches may be thriving, and yet desire for some of the gifts, hard-won learnings or resources in their church to meaningfully serve beyond their local context.

Denominations

Joining a denomination offers stability, oversight, and relational opportunities. If aligned doctrinally, this can be very helpful. However, some denominations function more like loose associations and lack genuine relational support and accountability for leaders. Others may feel outdated, lack charismatic expression or not appear to have appetite or capacity for growth. Given enough time, many denominations have followed the same pathway: a *movement* becomes an *institution*, which becomes a *monument.* Ongoing renewal and growth give way to bureaucracy, declining numbers, and nostalgia for the good old days. Thankfully, some historic denominations have shown a wonderful kingdom magnanimity in offering their underused buildings and resources to newer church-planting movements.

Networks

Another option is to join a network. ARC (www.arcchurches.com) is a standout example, offering practical tools and inspiring events for church planting and growth—without requiring churches to leave their denominations or independent stance. Another example is 24-7 Prayer (www.24-7prayer.com). Their strength is inspiration and broad connection; the limitation is lack of personal investment or deep relationship.

Fatherly/Apostolic Covering

Some churches believe that all they need is a "covering," and this covering can be found by placing their church under an "apostle" or father-type leader. There's much variety here, but these churches will usually answer to the question *"who is your covering?"* by referring to a particular person. At its best, this model seeks to recover something biblical — Paul did refer to himself as a father to the Corinthians (*"For in Christ Jesus I became your father through the gospel"* – 1 Corinthians 4:15).

Two weaknesses of this model are that the designation of "apostle" may be questionable when compared to New Testament pioneering apostles, and secondly, it is difficult to find biblical support for the idea of being "covered" by a single person—other than Jesus Christ—unless that person originally planted the church and remains involved even if only at a distance. There is also the danger of any one apostle/father-figure carrying such a heavy weight. Should this figure fall from grace, or go on to be with Jesus unexpectedly, the church will suddenly be left without its covering.

Movement, or Family of Churches

Another option is to partner with other churches and with translocal church strengtheners in a family of churches. Also known as a "movement," these churches commit to relational belonging and support, and unite around a shared mission, vision and values. This is somewhat similar to what is found in Paul's group of churches, evident in the New Testament.

Recently formed movements mirror aspects of early church practice, with catalytically gifted leaders (Ephesians 4:11) released to plant and strengthen churches—much like Paul and his co-workers (see Acts and the Epistles). These movements typically:

- Plant churches (Acts 14:21–23; 18:18–27)

- Strengthen churches through leadership development, support in crisis, and foundational teaching (Acts 14:23; Titus 1:5; Ephesians 2:19–20)
- Seek to build organic, relational partnerships among churches (1 Thessalonians 1:7–8; 2 Corinthians 8:1–2)
- Multiply translocal workers (e.g. Timothy, Titus, Priscilla and Aquila)
- Call mature churches to wider mission and collaboration (Romans 15:20–24; Philippians 1:3–5)

These movements often experience rapid growth, deploying catalytic leaders beyond their local spheres of influence, and attracting a larger proportion of the younger generation.

Though being part of a family of churches is not an irreversible contract, it usually requires something from a local church to formally join, going beyond the low commitment of a network toward a more committed sense of belonging.

To explore in more detail an inspiring example of a local church partnering with a translocal church planter/strengthener see *Appendix: Paul And The Philippians: A Model Of Local And Translocal Partnership.*

Why Partner: Ten Things A Healthy Movement Can Offer A Church

In the New Testament, pastors and elders focussed on the care and leadership of their local church, while translocal leaders focussed on starting new churches, laying strong foundations in existing churches, appointing leadership, and cultivating healthy inter-church relationships. They often worked in teams (think Timothy and Titus) as they served multiple churches, while also connecting to each other and the wider mission. As a result, each local church felt part of a broader family and purpose.

So what value does belonging to a movement bring to a local church? **Here's a list—in no particular order—of 10 advantages of partnering with a movement:**

1. A movement clarifies key partnerships.

How should one church relate to other churches? A friend and former mentor, Rigby Wallace, suggests that every local church should:

- honour all other churches,
- learn from and engage with many churches,
- and partner closely with a few churches.

It is easy enough for a church to honour all churches, and to engage with many—but on what basis can a local church "partner with a few"? A movement helps answer the question: *What other churches are we intentionally walking closely with?*

In the New Testament, churches were neither isolated nor governed by heavy bureaucracy but were relationally connected through recognised translocal leaders who strengthened, guided, and mobilised them for mission (Acts 11:22–26; Acts 14:21–23; Titus 1:5) as well as raising new leaders for new works (Acts 15:36–41; Philippians 1:5). While no movement can exactly replicate the early church movements in the New Testament era, they can at least echo the pattern of: translocal leaders raising up and working with strong local leadership to connect, plant and support churches. Translocal teams exist not to replace local leadership, but to serve

it—helping churches remain healthy, connected to other churches, and aligned to God's mission in the world.

2. A movement locates a church within a bigger vision.

Healthy churches care deeply about their people, their surrounding community, their city, their nation, and the nations of the world. But without wider connections beyond themselves, even vibrant churches can slowly shrink their sense of purpose to only accommodate their immediate challenges and needs.

From the earliest days of the church, local congregations understood themselves as part of something much larger. Paul describes the gospel as advancing among *all nations* for the obedience that comes from faith (Romans 1:5). Churches that partner translocally are reminded that they are not the destination of God's work, but participants in it.

The best movements sweep local churches up into a much bigger mission of making disciples of all nations. They work intentionally into local churches to get them healthy and then bring those local churches into the greater mission of reaching not only their local neighbourhood, but also nations—a concern every church should have on the basis of the Great Commission (Matthew 28:19–20).

Paul's ministry reflects this same pattern. He didn't only plant churches but partnered with them to take the gospel beyond their immediate context. For example, he intended to use the church in Corinth as a base for further outreach (1 Corinthians 16:5–6), and he expressed similar intentions to the believers in Rome, hoping they would assist him in reaching Spain (Romans 15:24). These references show that partnerships are meant to strengthen local churches *and* mobilise them for the broader work of God's kingdom.

This larger horizon renews faith, stretches vision, and protects churches from becoming inward-looking or overly preoccupied with survival and maintenance. Even churches born with strong missional DNA can drift over time. Without relational pressure pulling them outward, churches naturally default toward what is familiar and manageable.

Translocal movements exist, in part, to resist this drift. By staying connected to people who are working beyond our borders and comfort

zones—strengthening new churches, serving in unfamiliar contexts, and engaging unreached or de-churched communities—local churches are reminded that the God we love and follow is always on the move.

A magnanimous movement also counteracts our tendency toward seeing other churches as 'competition'. Instead, it places us firmly side by side, shoulder to shoulder—called to champion and cheer one another on.

This outward pull is not detrimental; it is life-giving oxygen. It helps churches retain momentum, courage, humility and holy ambition.

When a church first considers partnering with a movement, the instinctive question is often, *What can this movement do for us? How might it strengthen our church, sharpen our leaders, or improve our effectiveness?* Those are all valid questions—but they may not be the most important ones. The first gift a movement offers a local church is not a service, a structure, or benefit; it is the opportunity to be part of a bigger story. Like a tidal pool that has long held still water, suddenly reconnected to the ocean by a spring tide, any local church can be drawn into something vast and powerful. A movement invites a church into a global horizon, a shared mission, and a sense of possibility beyond its own shoreline. In this light, the better first question is not, *What can translocal leaders do for us?* But rather: *How can we team with others for the sake of the Great Commission?* The church is rediscovered not as the end point of God's work, but as a vital participant in His worldwide mission.

3. A movement shares strengthening gifts beyond one local church.

The world does not merely need more churches; it needs healthy churches. A reading of Acts shows that the strengthening of local churches was a consistent priority of translocal leaders. Peter and John were sent to support and establish new believers in Samaria (Acts 8:14–25). Peter later travelled through different regions, strengthening the churches (Acts 9:31–32). Barnabas relocated to Antioch to encourage and strengthen the growing work there (Acts 11:19–23), and soon enlisted Paul to help build up the church (Acts 11:25–26). Prophets from Jerusalem also came to Antioch, strengthening the church (Acts 11:27).

The relationship between churches was marked by mutual support. The Antioch church sent financial relief to Jerusalem during a famine (Acts 11:28–30), and Jerusalem in turn released John Mark to assist Barnabas and Paul in their mission (Acts 12:25). Later, the church in Lystra released Timothy to join Paul's translocal team (Acts 16:1–3). Paul and Barnabas consistently returned to earlier mission fields, *"strengthening the disciples and encouraging them to remain true to the faith"* (Acts 14:21–23), and they continued to strengthen the churches in Syria and Cilicia (Acts 15:36–41). As Luke summarises, *"the churches were strengthened in the faith and grew daily in numbers"* (Acts 16:5). Paul likewise travelled widely, *"encouraging the people with many words"* (Acts 20:1–2).

Beyond his personal visits, Paul sent trusted delegates to strengthen churches on his behalf (Acts 19:21–22). He describes this same pattern in his letters, sending spiritual sons and co-workers such as Timothy and Epaphroditus to establish, encourage, and represent his care (1 Corinthians 4:15–17; Philippians 2:19–29; 2 Timothy 1:18; Titus 1:5).
Similarly today, in a vibrant, independent church there may be many gifted people whose lives, experience and ministries could be of great service to others far and wide. Movements provide the structure and opportunities for these gifts to bless many churches, beyond just one.

Beyond gifted individuals, a movement allows for greater cross-pollination between partnering churches in comparable contexts—opening the door to practical help, fresh perspective, and proven strategies from those excelling in specific areas. Indeed, as every local church seeks the health and vitality of every other local church, we grow in strength and maturity, and in this way, ready the bride for her groom.

4. A movement allows for greater success in church planting.

From the beginning, God's mission has not merely been to make individual converts but to form a redeemed people who live under the reign of Christ. Jesus announced that he would build his church (Matthew 16:18) and commissioned his followers to make disciples of all nations by baptising them into a new community and teaching them to obey everything he commanded (Matthew 28:19–20). Wherever the gospel takes root, the Spirit brings believers together into local expressions of the body of Christ, where worship, discipleship, mutual care, and witness can flourish (Acts 2:42–47).

Paul and his co-workers preached the gospel in new regions, gathered believers into churches, appointed elders, and entrusted those churches to God's ongoing care (Acts 14:21–23). For this reason, planting healthy churches is not one ministry among many; it is *the* most effective way to reach the lost, disciple believers, raise leaders, and extend the presence of God's kingdom across cities and regions.

If church planting is such a primary means by which the gospel advances and the kingdom of God takes ground in the world, then a collective of churches is surely best at planting new churches than a solo church. Instead of working alone, a movement can identify and train planters, send teams, and support new works with people and resources, and pray for the success of each plant.

As churches within dynamic movements (ones that are relational, flexible, and missionally aligned) work in tandem with translocal teams, far more new churches can be planted across multiple regions.

5. A movement supports, inspires and multiplies leaders.

Every church has the challenge of keeping its leaders inspired, and also attracting potential leaders to give their all for the sake of the local church. It is my experience that together moments of movements—such as an annual gathering or conference—provide unparalleled opportunity to do so.

Throughout Scripture, God tends to raise up new leaders through exposure to mature, active leadership. Paul's instruction in 2 Timothy 2:2 models a multiplying pattern of leadership development, where what is entrusted to faithful leaders is passed on to others. In this way, movement gatherings—such as conferences and shared moments together—become fertile ground both for renewing weary leaders and awakening new ones to the plans and purposes over their lives and churches.

Scripture also consistently assumes that leaders are strengthened through trusted relationships beyond their own congregation. Translocal partnership provides a context where local leaders are known, prayed for, challenged, and encouraged by people who are not caught in the immediate pressures of the local setting. Over time, these relationships become a source of stability, support, clarity, and resilience. See *Appendix: A Tool to Help leaders Recognise What They Need.*

6. A movement improves a church's health, maturity, and effectiveness.

Not everything that grows is healthy, yet everything healthy grows. Local churches who lack any meaningful partnerships outside of themselves can fall into the trap of pursuing church growth alone—and forget the equal importance of church health.

Scripture reminds us that *"the quality of each person's work will be shown"* and tested by fire (1 Corinthians 3:13). Churches may chase short-term success without giving sufficient thought to long-term formation. Conversely, some churches have little evangelistic potency and have quietly accepted this as normal, even healthy. Yet if a church is not reaching people for Jesus, by what meaningful definition can it still be described as healthy?

By welcoming godly, gifted, and experienced voices from beyond itself, a local church is more likely to have its blind spots addressed and to grow in health, maturity, and fruitfulness. Ideally, these outside voices should speak the truth in love (Ephesians 4:15–16) and carefully guard both the people and the gospel entrusted to each church (2 Corinthians 11:2).

Paul's example in this regard is our template. His relationship with the church in Rome shows how outside, translocal gifts can uniquely strengthen a community, even a spiritually vibrant one. Although the Roman believers were already exercising a wide range of spiritual gifts (see Romans 12), Paul still anticipated that his coming to them would bring fresh strengthening from outside their local context. He writes, *"I long to see you so that I may impart to you some spiritual gift to make you strong"* (Romans 1:11). Still today, God uses translocal leaders and ministries to bring complementary grace and fresh perspective to local churches, not because these churches are especially lacking or falling into sin, but simply because the Body of Christ has been divinely designed this way: to be interconnected and in need of strengthening by others outside of itself.

A church connected to a translocal team and a wider family of churches has a greater chance of strengthening its strengths, shoring up its weaknesses, and being protected in challenging seasons. This should result in improved service to Jesus and others, increased faith and faithfulness, growing

Christlikeness, doctrinal soundness, deeper unity, and a church actively embodying the love and mission of Jesus in the world.

Indeed, the gifts of Ephesians 4:11 are not given merely to perform ministry, but to multiply it—*"to equip the saints for works of service"* (Ephesians 4:12). When a church is limited only to its local leaders, many believers remain under-equipped and under-activated. As each part does its work, the body grows in maturity and fruitfulness (Ephesians 4:16), becoming all that Christ intends it to be.

7. A movement helps churches in crisis and transition.

Every church, at some stage, will face seasons of crisis, conflict, doctrinal confusion, or significant transition. In the New Testament, God repeatedly uses translocal leaders to strengthen churches when its internal resources are insufficient.

Paul regularly intervened in churches facing moral failure, relational breakdown, or theological confusion. His letters to Corinth, for example, address division, sexual immorality, misuse of spiritual gifts, and leadership disputes (1 Corinthians 1:10–13; 5:1–5; 12–14). Rather than abandoning these churches or merely rebuking them from a distance, Paul remained relationally engaged—correcting, restoring, and strengthening them for their long-term health (2 Corinthians 7:8–13).

At key moments of uncertainty, Paul also sent trusted delegates to act on his behalf. Timothy was sent to Corinth *"to remind you of my way of life in Christ Jesus"* (1 Corinthians 4:17) and to Thessalonica *"to strengthen and encourage you in your faith"* (1 Thessalonians 3:2). Titus was left in Crete to *"put in order what was left unfinished"* (Titus 1:5), illustrating how external leadership can help stabilise and structure young or struggling churches.

Peter and John travelled to Samaria to ensure new believers were fully established in the Spirit-filled life (Acts 8:14–17). And John, writing later, addressed churches facing doctrinal deviation, moral compromise, and leadership failures, offering correction, encouragement, and clarity (1–3 John; Revelation 2–3).

In Acts 15, when a dispute arose that threatened the unity and mission of the early church, the matter was not resolved locally but brought to a wider council of apostles and elders. The resulting discernment preserved both gospel truth and relational unity across the churches (Acts 15:1–29).

In the same way today, a healthy movement provides relationally trusted, spiritually mature, and theologically grounded support during seasons of crisis and transition. This support is not limited to emergency intervention, but includes regular engagement, wise counsel, doctrinal safeguarding, mediation in relational conflict, and stabilising encouragement through times of change. Such partnerships help churches emerge from difficult seasons not merely intact, but stronger and better aligned with Christ's purposes.

8. A movement appoints and commissions new leaders.

The health and direction of any local church is largely dependent on who is appointed to lead it (Titus 1:5–9). When local leaders choose, appoint, and ordain leaders without the input, endorsement and perspective of translocal gifts outside of their local context, it can lead to unwise or ill-timed decisions—resulting in unfit leaders, people getting hurt, and the church left scattered and disillusioned.

In the New Testament, we see translocal gifts—apostles and their co-workers—partnering with local churches to raise up and appoint elders. Paul and Barnabas, after planting churches, returned to appoint elders in each one (Acts 14:23). Paul instructed Titus, his delegate in Crete, to "appoint elders in every town" (Titus 1:5). Timothy, likewise, was tasked with ensuring qualified leadership in the churches around Ephesus (1 Timothy 3:1–13; 5:22).

This partnership between local churches and translocal gifts in appointing leaders is not intended to be bureaucratic or controlling, but relational and discerning. Translocal leaders cannot know candidates with the same intimacy as those within the local church, and their role is not to replace local discernment but to complement it with outside perspective, spiritual oversight, and seasoned wisdom. This kind of external input is most appropriate for the appointment of elders and senior leadership who shape the doctrine, culture, and direction of a church, rather than for roles such

as deacons or home group leaders, which are more rightly discerned and affirmed within the local context.

Beyond safeguarding against unwise or premature appointments, this shared process exists to provide genuine support and covering for those who are commissioned. Leaders are not self-appointed, but recognised and entrusted through a relational partnership in which translocal gifts stand with them, vouch for their calling and character, and commit to walk with them in both responsibility and care. This shared commissioning strengthens the leaders themselves, reassures the church they serve, and helps ensure that leadership is exercised within a wider family of accountability, encouragement, and pastoral support.

9. A movement allows local churches to be led by leaders, who themselves model following others.

In some denominations, authority is often centralised in a governing body, which can override the spiritual authority of local elders. This reduces elders to effectively being little more than managers, bound by decisions made elsewhere by people disconnected from the real needs of the local church community. On the opposite extreme, some churches downplay translocal authority so much that they see them merely as inspirational speakers, invited occasionally to preach but carrying no real weight in the life or health of the church. In such environments, local pastors can become isolated and largely unaccountable, with no external voices speaking into their leadership or addressing issues when they arise.

By contrast, true partnership with translocal church strengtheners should reflect a New Testament model in which local churches are led by a team of elders (who themselves are led by a lead elder), while remaining open to the direction and input of translocal leaders.

These translocal leaders do not impose authority from above; rather, their role is invited, relational, and recognised voluntarily by the local church. Their influence is rooted in spiritual maturity, fruitfulness, and the grace of God evident on their lives. Elders, who invite them in, in turn, choose to defer to their insight and, in some cases, be accountable to them—not out of obligation, but out of wisdom and genuine, mutually-honouring relationship.

This model preserves the God-given authority of local elders while also ensuring that no church becomes dangerously isolated or insular. Authority in the kingdom is always given, never demanded or taken, but by effectively working together, the balance of freedom and accountability can be properly lived out. This avoids both extremes of control or absolute autonomy. Instead, it nurtures a healthy environment where authority is shared, accountability is embraced, and leadership reflects the collaborative, Spirit-led dynamic seen in the early church.

10. A movement opens the door for the next generation.

If history is anything to go by, young people especially are drawn to young movements that have come alive to their purpose and mandate to change the world. Less motivated by the preservation of institution, the younger generation want to be inspired by a compelling vision that invites them into something bigger. Church-planting and church-strengthening movements can offer this: an open canvas, a sense of momentum, and the chance to break new ground and build something great together, rather than merely maintain. Of course, the church is meant to be a multi-generational family, where people of all ages are brought together in meaningful relationship and service. So why should the younger generation even need to be mentioned here? Well, Scripture consistently shows God entrusting His forward-moving work to the young. Jesus called young men to leave nets, careers, and security to join a mission that would renew the world (Matthew 4:18–22).

Paul identified, trained, and entrusted young leaders like Timothy with real responsibility in the advance of the gospel (Acts 16:1–5; 2 Timothy 2:2). In the New Testament, renewal and expansion are repeatedly carried forward by the energy, courage, and faith of the next generation. Movements that are visibly moving forward and taking ground—planting churches, strengthening leaders, crossing cultures—tend to resonate deeply with, and require the zeal of, young people who are ready and willing to give their lives to something that truly matters.

Also, as the children in our churches grow up, many may move cities, nations, or pursue ministry opportunities. A growing movement creates a wider spiritual family for all of them. For example, larger and more

established churches in many movements create year-of-your life teams that help to ground 18-25 year olds in their faith and global mission.

In Summary

Being part of a movement can locate a local church inside a much bigger story of what God is doing in the world. In the pattern we see throughout the New Testament—especially in Acts—churches were never meant to be isolated or purely self-directed. They were also never cringing beneath the heavy hand of external authority. Instead, they were relationally connected through a team of trusted, translocal leaders who helped to strengthen multiple churches, raise up new leaders, resolve crises, and mobilise everyone toward the Great Commission. A movement gives churches clarity about who they are truly walking with, pulling them out of inward drift or being overly swayed by the latest trend or superstar Christian teacher.

Practically, movements strengthen churches in ways no single church can do alone. They allow Ephesians 4:11 gifts to serve beyond their local church, create shared wisdom and collaboration (especially for church planting), provide outside help in seasons of crisis or transition, and offer wise confirmation and commissioning of new leaders. They refresh weary pastors through peer relationships, protect churches from blind spots, and help cultivate both health and fruitfulness. And because movements are relational rather than bureaucratic, churches retain their unique culture while aligning around shared direction and mission. The result is not uniformity, but family: churches planted with support, leaders formed in community, and younger generations drawn into the adventure as we together, join Jesus in advancing the Kingdom and pushing back the gates of hell.

Common Downsides and Countermeasures

Of course, there are potential downsides to joining a movement. Any local church should be weary of joining a movement that is counterproductive in any of these crucial ways.

- Perhaps a movement makes an *exclusive* claim on a church, effectively cutting it off from learning from, relating to or blessing churches outside of the movement.
- If the movement's genuine errors have incurred a bad reputation, a church must ask whether partnering with it will give or undermine credibility to their mission.
- Churches may abandon unhealthy independence, only to replace it with unhealthy over-dependence in a movement or translocal leader. Both options are less than ideal.
- Sometimes, too much of a local church's energy and resources are invested in partnering with a global movement, leaving its leaders with not enough bandwidth and energy for their most important work: the flock under their care, and their local mission.
- Some movement leaders may amass too much power, or are theologically imbalanced, arrogant, or authoritarian. Highly charismatic leaders of such movements may become unaccountable themselves—operating by manipulation or intimidation, and demanding unquestioning ideological loyalty.
- Other movements may not celebrate a diverse expression across various churches—with churches within it feeling pressured to relinquish their own local genius or flavour for the sake of spoken or unspoken tribal uniformity.
- Some movements may lay too little or too much emphasis on biblical and theological proficiency.
- Perhaps the movement carries a sense of elitism and sectarianism—*Look how God is blessing us! We have the biblical model!*—that makes its churches look down upon the wider church and feel that they have nothing to learn from others.
- In other movements, there can be a too-strident focus on "apostles"—raising valid questions about whether the term is being properly applied to various leaders.

- Perhaps the movement is too insular—only hearing "about ourselves from ourselves"—instead of encouraging churches to keep learning also from the wider body of Christ.
- Perhaps the movement was once a healthy, growing one, but tends to now predominantly long for the good, old days. In place of fresh growth and voices, a slow creep toward rigid denomination and institutionalising the words and practices of the founders may have begun.
- It may be impossible for a church to leave a movement—either because departure is forbidden, or implied threats make leaving very costly.

As a new movement, we acknowledge that partnerships carry both promise and peril. The following commitments are not theoretical ideals, but deliberate countermeasures to the above dangers inherent in every church movement. They are intended to protect local churches, leaders, and the wider body of Christ.

1. A2 churches will have a partnership that is primary, but not exclusive. We choose to continually honour, learn from, and work alongside the wider body of Christ beyond our own movement. In this way, partnering churches will not be cut off from the wider church and from supporting and working together with other local churches in their area. Perhaps some churches within A2 will also maintain association with their denominations. Many will be part of networks and benefit from other ministries outside of A2. We see this as a strength rather than a weakness, so long as the churches who choose to primarily relate to A2 still have capacity and bandwidth to do so meaningfully.

2. A2 will earn credibility through service, not borrow it by association or fast track it through branding. Trust must be earned over time through faithful service that strengthens the witness and credibility of local churches and the wider Church. Where errors are made, we will not try to save face, but rather sincerely apologize and wisely make amends.

2. A2 will pursue interdependence, not unhealthy dependence or rugged independence. We believe neither isolation nor dependency serves the Church well. Our aim is to strengthen churches so that they can stand tall and strong—resilient, mature, and missionally effective—while also having the capacity to receive help and offer it to others.

3. A2 will strengthen, not siphon, local mission. We reject any model in which partnership with the movement drains energy, attention, or resources away from a church's primary local calling. Our involvement, though lending strength to the wider mission, must also result in greater clarity, capacity, and confidence for each church's own God-given mission. Besides, it is a church that is firing on all pistons locally that usually has the most to give globally.

4. A2 will guard against power-hoarding, personality cults, and unaccountable leadership. We reject authoritarianism, manipulation, intimidation, and leadership built on fear, shame, or any form of undue pressure. Though we believe in point leadership, leadership within A2 will be accountable, transparent, increasingly shared, and submitted to Scripture, to peer leadership, and to appropriate external counsel.

5. A2 will resist ideological loyalty tests and coercive unity. We will never demand allegiance to personalities or non-essential doctrinal positions. Our unity will be rooted in our shared gospel convictions and mutual love, not enforced conformity or social pressure.

6. A2 will celebrate local distinctiveness and seek to protect local genius. We believe that God expresses His grace differently across cultures, cities, and congregations, so we actively resist spoken or unspoken pressure toward uniformity. Instead, we will honour and celebrate the Spirit's creative work in diverse expressions of church life.

7. A2 will focus on historic gospel orthodoxy while holding secondary matters lightly. We commit to theological clarity without narrowness. We will hold firmly to historic Christian orthodoxy while refusing to absolutize secondary doctrines or practices. (See Appendix: *What a Church Must Believe in A2*.)

8. A2 will walk in humility, not elitism or sectarianism. We reject the narrative that we represent *the* model, *the* movement, or *the* special work of God. We see ourselves as one small part of Christ's global Church and so, commit to honouring, learning from, and partnering with believers beyond our own family of relating churched.

9. A2 will use the language of "apostolic" carefully, biblically, and modestly. Whilst we support a New Testament model of church

strengthening, one that puts to work all the Ephesians 4 gifts, we also recognise the weight and complexity of the terms *apostle* and *apostolic*. With this in mind, we have opted to generally avoid these terms and prioritise function, fruit, and service over labels. (More on this in the Appendix section: *Why We Shy Away From The Terms "Apostle" And "Apostolic."*)

10. A2 will remain teachable, not insular. We refuse to become an echo chamber that only listens to itself. We will actively seek insight, critique, and wisdom from the wider body of Christ—across traditions, cultures, geographies, and generations. At gatherings, for example, we will regularly invite people from outside of our movement to minister to or equip us in whatever their area of competence is.

11. A2 will actively resist institutional drift and premature denominationalism. We recognise that movements can harden into rigid bureaucracies over time. We therefore commit to remaining relational before structural, mission-led before maintenance-driven, and Spirit-responsive rather than policy-bound. At the same time, we hold nothing against churches that seek to remain in denominations and believe we have much to learn from one another. Over time, as A2 grows, our own movement might naturally birth newer movements and we would hope to celebrate this, not stifle it.

12. A2 allows for churches to depart—only asking that it is done honourably. In the same way some churches that will come into it were once in previous movements, so some of its churches may eventually transition to other movements. Though partnership in A2 requires commitment, it should always be voluntary, relational, and rooted in trust—not obligation. Churches are free to leave the movement if, over time, they discern that our direction, theology, or culture is no longer the best fit for them. When that moment comes, we ask that it be done honourably: with openness rather than quiet withdrawal, with conversation rather than sudden decisions, and with enough time and honesty for prayerful dialogue. We believe that many tensions can be clarified, and sometimes resolved, when they are brought into the light with humility and goodwill. This also applies to churches planted within A2. While they will be born into the movement and shaped by its values and vision, they are not owned by it. As a planted church matures and establishes its own leadership, culture, and sense of calling, it is free to discern whether ongoing partnership with A2 remains life-giving and faithful to its mission.

Going Together: Ten Things A2 Asks Of Partnering Churches

As with every ever fruitful relationship, partnerships flourish when both sides contribute. While translocal ministry in the New Testament is seen as a gift to the wider body, local churches are not passive recipients but active participants: supporting the mission of God, and being strengthened by it in return.

The church in Philippi stands as a compelling example of such a partnership. Their relationship with Paul was marked by mutual care, generosity, and collaboration—an inspiring model for churches today. See Appendix: *Paul And The Philippians: A Model Of Local And Translocal Partnership.*

In this same way, every local church is called to both give and receive in its relationship with the Translocal team and with other churches. For some churches, particularly in certain seasons, the need to receive will outweigh their capacity to give. For example: new churches, churches without a lead pastor or without elders, and churches in crisis or transition all naturally require greater input, support, and strengthening. Other churches, with greater maturity and stability will be able to give far more than they receive. Still, no church ever outgrows its need for the wider body. Even the most mature churches can benefit from the provocation, encouragement, and perspective that comes through shared life and partnership with others.

Here are 10 practical ways a local church can partner with the A2 Movement:

1. Become a Model Church

One of the most strategic ways a church can partner with A2 is by becoming a model church. The New Testament shows us repeatedly that some churches are more than local communities—they are living examples that inspire, equip, and multiply other churches. These churches are not just strong internally; they become a pattern for others, showing what Spirit-led, faithful, reproducing church life looks like.

Take the Thessalonian church, for example. Paul writes to them as a model church, commending their faith, love, and endurance (1 Thessalonians 1:7–8). Their life was visible and inspiring to surrounding churches, so much so that it encouraged the spread of the gospel across Macedonia and Achaia.

Or consider the church of Antioch in Acts 13: this was a church full of Spirit-empowered vibrancy, a community that combined empowering leadership, evangelistic courage, diverse participation, and relational health. Out of Antioch, Paul and Barnabas were sent on mission, and the qualities of that church—the diversity, the Spirit-empowered life, the missional boldness—were replicated in the churches they planted across the Mediterranean.

In another example, Paul writes to the Roman church with the hope that it could become a launchpad for mission to Spain (Romans 15:24–28). These are not isolated examples; they demonstrate a pattern. God works through churches that others can see, learn from, and reproduce.

Being a model church is not about perfection—and no two churches should be exactly alike, especially those in different contexts. It is about embodying principles and practices that can inspire others: a church alive in the Spirit, evangelistically bold, culturally aware, and relationally healthy. It is a church that fires on all pistons, where the gifts of God's Spirit are flowing, where love for God and people shapes every decision, and where the community itself inspires others to faithfulness and fruitfulness. The highest gift a church can offer to a movement is not simply its resources or attendance—it is its example. A model church becomes a source of inspiration, a launchpad for multiplication, and a tangible demonstration of what healthy, Spirit-led, reproducing church life looks like in a particular context.

In practical terms, this means a church should seek not just to be faithful to its own congregation, but to think outward: How can our life together serve as a pattern for other churches? How can our commitment to mission, discipleship, and the Spirit become a framework that others can learn from? Terran's book *I Will Build* offers a detailed description of a healthy Acts 2 church, but words on a page can only go so far. What the movement needs are churches that take these principles and bring them to life—fresh, living expressions of Spirit-filled, multiplying church life that others can follow.

2. Send People as Encouragers and Strengtheners.

One of the quiet dangers of church life is the instinct to hold tightly to people, resources, and influence. Translocal partnerships help churches practise an altogether different reflex: joyful release.

In the New Testament, churches seemed to regularly do this—sending some of their best people to strengthen other communities, to serve in difficult places, or to pioneer new work. For example: the Philippian church sent Epaphroditus to assist Paul in his ministry (Philippians 2:25–30), not merely as a courier but as a *"fellow worker and fellow soldier."* Paul himself also regularly travelled with teams (Acts 20:4), often made up of men and women sent by local churches (Acts 13:1–3; Romans 16:1–3).

In our churches today, partnering with a wider group of churches keeps this impulse alive, reminding us all that kingdom fruitfulness is often measured by what we are willing to give away, not keep for ourselves. In practice, local churches can send people in **at least three distinct ways**.

- A local church may have **someone who serves on the Translocal Team**. In such cases, the church intentionally and sacrificially releases that person to minister into other churches and contexts. This involves a significant measure of trust, authority, and relational commitment.
- A local church may have **gifted men and women who strengthen other churches**. Though not formally part of the Translocal team, these individuals nevertheless are invited to teach, encourage, advise, and upskill across churches. Partnering local churches are encouraged to recognise such grace gifts and to release these people generously for the greater good of the wider body.
- A church may **send a team to bless another church or context**. Not everyone sent needs to be specially gifted in teaching or impartation. Simply sending believers who are full of faith, the Holy Spirit, and the gift of encouragement can bring remarkable strength to another church (see Acts 11:22–24). Presence itself can be a powerful ministry.

Local churches should recognise that sending people will often come at a real cost, as it involves releasing valued and effective members. For this reason, local leadership teams must prayerfully guide the sending process, discerning seasons of greater capacity to release people and seasons where

such sending may need to be more limited. Collective wisdom, not pressure, should govern this rhythm.

Keep in mind though that the greatest beneficiaries of sending churches are often not only the recipients, but the sent ones themselves. Those who are released to serve others frequently return to their local church filled with renewed faith, enlarged vision, and fresh spiritual vitality—bringing a tangible strengthening back to the community that sent them.

A further, often overlooked, blessing of releasing leaders for translocal ministry is that it necessitates the raising up of others to carry responsibility in their absence. When leaders step away, even temporarily, space is created for others to emerge and grow. In this way, sending does not have to weaken leadership capacity, but can often multiply it.

Practically, churches that send leaders should, where possible, cover their travel and ministry costs (see 2 Corinthians 11:7–9), unless the receiving church is established enough to assume that responsibility (Galatians 6:6). That said, there may be situations in which this is not possible and leaders cover their own costs or are sponsored by other churches or the movement itself.

3. Share What's Proving Effective.

Scripture consistently presents growth as something that happens through mutual exchange. *"As iron sharpens iron, so one person sharpens another"* (Proverbs 27:17). What is true of individuals is also true of churches: when communities learn from one another, test ideas together, and humbly share what has worked, the whole body is strengthened. In the earliest church, this instinct was already present. The believers in Jerusalem *"shared everything they had"* and *"gave to anyone who had need"* (Acts 2:44–45).

Applied at the level of a movement or family of churches, this same Spirit-shaped generosity includes the sharing of resources, insights, systems, and hard-won wisdom. No single church has everything, but together the churches of God carry a remarkable fullness.

In addition to sending people, A2 actively encourages the sharing of strength, wisdom, and innovation between churches. To help make this a practical reality, we hope to soon host a shared online platform where

churches can contribute their best ideas, resources, tools, and expertise on a range of categories. Though not all methods and approaches will work in other contexts, we aim to all steward and share what we can. In this way, every church is both a receiver and a contributor, and the movement grows not through uniformity, but through the joyful cross-pollination of what God is doing across our diverse local contexts.

4. Build Friendships and Stay in Touch.

The relationship between Paul and the Philippians was warm and personal. They didn't just receive his ministry—they loved him and stayed connected. Paul expresses deep affection: *"I have you in my heart... God can testify how I long for all of you with the affection of Christ Jesus"* (Philippians 1:7–8).

In the same way, people and leaders in relating churches are encouraged to form friendships with people and leaders in other churches, and with those on the Translocal team who they invite to minister in their church.

Churches can:

- Choose to intentionally partner with certain translocal leaders or teams.
- Maintain regular connection via phone calls, online meetings and messaging.
- Invite input from trusted translocal voices when making key leadership decisions.
- Share testimonies and challenges, not just in crisis but as part of normal relationship.

These connections should not be one-sided. As in all friendships, curiosity and investment must flow both ways. Building relational depth takes time, but it creates a culture of trust and shared vision.

5. Prayerfully Partner.

Paul consistently asked churches to pray for him—not as a polite request, but because he truly believed their prayers made a difference (Romans 15:30–32; Ephesians 6:19–20; Philippians 1:19).

Local churches can:

- Regularly pray for specific Translocal team members by name.

- Include translocal partnerships in their intercessory rhythms and Sunday gatherings.
- Encourage children, youth, and small groups to adopt a church planter, new ministry venture, or partnering church to pray for.
- Remember other local churches in their prayers, especially those starting new works, facing challenges, or in a season of transition (1 Thessalonians 5:25; Colossians 4:2–4; James 5:16).

Paul was confident: *"through your prayers and God's provision... what has happened to me will turn out for my deliverance"* (Philippians 1:19). Prayer is not passive—it's partnership. By praying for other churches and new initiatives, local congregations participate in God's wider work, supporting the spread of the gospel and the strengthening of His body across regions.

6. Practise Generosity.

The Philippians gave regularly and sacrificially to Paul's ministry, even when other churches did not (Philippians 4:15–18). They gave to his personal needs and to broader kingdom causes, including a relief fund for struggling churches (2 Corinthians 8:1–4; Romans 15:26).

Paul saw this generosity as a spiritual act of worship: *"They are a fragrant offering, an acceptable sacrifice, pleasing to God"* (Philippians 4:18). And he offered this promise in return: *"My God will meet all your needs according to the riches of his glory in Christ Jesus"* (Philippians 4:19).

A2 encourages each local church—and it may take time to reach this goal—to give about 10% of its total income away, sowing generously beyond its own immediate needs toward the broader mission of gospel advance. In this way, the entire church models generosity, not just its individual members who give. Of this 10%, and as A2's initiatives take shape, we suggest sowing up to half of this into the work of A2. We envisage this fund going toward: church planting, leadership training, and relief efforts for church communities facing crisis.

To ensure strong financial accountability, all funds will be overseen by a multi-church financial team, and supported by transparent annual reports.

7. Send Leaders to Various A2 Gatherings and Trainings.

In both the Old and New Testaments, God consistently addresses leaders as a **distinct group**, recognising that their faithfulness directly shapes the health of the people they lead. In Joshua 23, near the end of his life, Joshua gathers *"all Israel—their elders, leaders, judges and officials"* (Joshua 23:2) and speaks to them with particular weight. While the whole nation is affected by obedience or compromise, Joshua deliberately charges the leaders first. They are warned to cling to the Lord, resist syncretism, and model faithfulness, because they set the spiritual direction of the people. The assumption is clear: if leaders drift, the nation will follow.

The same pattern appears in Acts 20, where Paul summons only the *elders* of the Ephesian church to meet him at Miletus (Acts 20:17). He reminds them of his example, warns them of coming danger, and charges them to *"keep watch over yourselves and all the flock"* (Acts 20:28). Paul recognises that the church's future depends significantly on the spiritual health, doctrine, and vigilance of its leaders. Wolves do not usually destroy churches from the outside, but from within, when leadership is untrained, compromised, or weary. Scripture therefore treats leaders as a group requiring special attention, training, and exhortation, because as the leaders go, so does the church.

Since the health and spiritual vibrancy of its leaders may be the most crucial investment a church can make, churches are encouraged to clear the calendar and budget intentionally for its lead couple and other leaders to attend various A2 leadership gatherings, trainings and initiatives.

A2 will carefully discern the balance of gatherings and initiatives to which leaders are invited. Too many gatherings can overburden leaders and stretch the resources of the local church, while too few may limit their growth, equipping, and connection to the wider movement. Each invitation will be intentional, ensuring that leaders receive the right combination of training, encouragement, and relational support to thrive in both their personal spiritual health and their local ministry effectiveness. In this way, A2 seeks to strengthen leaders without overwhelming them, fostering sustainable development that benefits not just the leaders themselves but the churches and communities they serve.

We also envision establishing two other specialised training blocks, with the possibility of more in the future:

The first is **A2 Ministry Training**, a 10-week, in-person programme designed especially for 18–25-year-olds. This training will develop leaders in three dimensions:

- **Head**: Scripture and theological training;
- **Heart**: Growth in wholeness, godliness, spiritual practices and the awareness of the Spirit's presence, power, and gifts; and
- **Hands**: Practical ministry skills for evangelism, discipleship, and church-building.

We hope to cultivate a culture in which churches encourage young people within their community to dedicate a year of their life to serving their local church—or another local church—and this 10-week training will form a central part of that experience.

The second training is **Church Planters Training**, also a 10-week, in-person programme for those currently planting a church or preparing to do so.

Initially, these will be hosted at Nova Church, but as the movement multiplies, we anticipate that multiple training centres will emerge, with larger, resourced churches hosting these programmes.

8. Invite A Variety of Church Strengtheners To Your Church.

Effective partnership within the A2 Movement should be relationally broad rather than narrowly dependent on a single individual. So while it is natural—and often fruitful—for churches to connect most closely with one or two translocal leaders, long-term health is best served when churches intentionally cultivate relationships with multiple people across the movement, each contributing distinct gifts, perspectives, and strengths.

For instance, different churches require different kinds of translocal input depending on the season of life they are in:

1. A newly planted church typically requires close, hands-on involvement, with sustained investment in foundations, formation, and early leadership development.
2. A growing church often needs support in identifying, appointing, and training elders who can carry appropriate spiritual and organisational responsibility.
3. A church in transition usually benefits from increased support, the development of new leaders, and renewed attention to foundational matters.
4. A church experiencing difficulty requires wise, patient, and practical help to navigate its challenges and find a healthy way forward.
5. A more established church needs continued provocation to lift its gaze beyond itself—to think expansively and to release people and resources for the sake of others.

For this reason, churches should prayerfully consider their current season as they discern which translocal leaders to invite to minister—or which church strengtheners from other churches may be of greatest help at a particular time.

This reflects the New Testament pattern, where churches were strengthened not by a single voice but by teams—Paul, Barnabas, Silas, Timothy, Apollos, and others—each contributing in distinct ways. A diverse relational network guards against over-dependence, burnout, and misplaced expectations, and it allows churches to receive a fuller expression of Christ's gifts to the body.

Practically, churches are encouraged to:

- Over time, welcome input from more than one translocal leader.
- Develop friendships and working relationships across the movement.
- View the A2 team not as a single pipeline of help, but as a family of complementary gifts.

This also protects translocal leaders, who are not meant to carry disproportionate relational or leadership weight for any one church—or for too many churches.

For the sake of both the local church and the translocal leader, it is vital to be clear about what kind of relationship is being formed and what kind of strengthening is being offered. Not every visit or connection carries the

same expectations, and confusion here can lead to disappointment, frustration, or unintentional overreach.

In terms of their contribution, a translocal church strengthener may function as (with credit given to the Advance movement, from which I adapted the following ideas):

- A Gift—a one-off or occasional contribution, often through preaching, teaching, or special meetings.
- A Coach—extended input in a specific area of church life, such as leadership development, finances, small groups, worship, or children and youth ministry.
- An Oversight Voice—a long-running, recognised, trusted contributor to long-term discernment and major decisions.

Relationally, the connection may feel like:

- A Friend—welcomed input without expectation of regular involvement or return visits.
- A Sibling—a trusted peer relationship, marked by mutuality and the expectation that they will be there at moments of significance in the church.
- A Parent—a more authoritative, enduring voice, as seen in Paul's relationship with certain churches (1 Corinthians 4:15).

None of these categories is "better" than another—but each carries different expectations, weight, and responsibility. Problems arise when a church is seeking parental oversight but receives only a guest contribution, or when a strengthener assumes a long-term role where only a short-term coaching or friendly one was intended. For partnership to remain life-giving, clarity must be mutual. Churches should articulate what kind of relationship and input they are inviting, and translocal leaders must be equally clear about what they can offer. When expectations are named early and revisited honestly, trust deepens and the church is strengthened in the way it most needs.

9. Value Translocal Ministry.

Many churches have long had the practice of inviting "a guest preacher." But this may not be the best way to value translocal leaders.

Whenever Paul or his team visited churches, those moments were prioritised. The church in Troas, for example, gathered late into the night to hear him teach—even after a young man fell asleep and died (Acts 20:7–12)! Likewise, the Ephesian elders travelled miles to meet with Paul and wept when they said goodbye (Acts 20:13–38).

Churches today can:

- Clear the calendar for special input when someone from the Translocal team has been invited there.
- Involve the full leadership team in moments with these invited men and women, not just the lead pastor.
- Arrange Q&A times, training sessions, and shared meals to maximise relational and spiritual impact.

These visits should not be seen as run of the mill or just one more optional meeting for people—they're crucial and catalytic. They may create defining moments of encouragement, correction, impartation, and alignment. They are moments when *everyone* in the church can receive "some spiritual gift to make you strong" (Romans 1:11) and be "equipped for the work of the ministry" (Ephesian 4:12).

A2 does not set a policy on honoraria; this is left to the discernment of each local leadership team. However, the practice of giving honoraria is commended not as payment but as a voluntary expression of gratitude and appreciation to visiting speakers and translocal leaders, reflecting God's generosity and recognizing their time, sacrifice, and contribution, in line with biblical principles (Galatians 6:6; 3 John 5–8; Romans 13:7).

Another way to truly value translocal ministry is to receive feedback and input with humility and discernment. When A2 churches invite church strengtheners into their story, much of the ministry they will receive will simply be encouragement—recognising God's grace, affirming what is healthy, and strengthening what is already bearing fruit. Paul was often quick to thank God for what he saw in churches before addressing anything else (Romans 1:8; 1 Corinthians 1:4–7; Philippians 1:3–6). Any healthy translocal team delights in blessing what God is doing locally.

That said, any translocal ministry worth its salt will also see what those closest to the work can easily miss. Distance often brings perspective. Experience brings pattern-recognition. For this reason, translocal leaders will sometimes identify blind spots, imbalances, or areas of weakness in a local church's doctrine, culture, leadership structures, or mission. This is not a failure of local leadership—it is the gift of the wider body of Christ.

How that input is received matters enormously. The leaders need to model to the church a healthy reception. *"Plans fail for lack of counsel, but with many advisers they succeed"* (Proverbs 20:18). Churches grow strongest when their leaders are secure enough to listen, humble enough to weigh input carefully, and faith-filled enough to act on what the Spirit is saying.

Practically, this means:

- Receiving feedback without defensiveness, even when it is uncomfortable or challenges long-held assumptions.
- Distinguishing between preference and principle—testing everything, but holding fast to what is good (1 Thessalonians 5:21).
- Giving space for reflection and prayer rather than reacting quickly or emotionally.
- Modelling teachability publicly, so that humility becomes part of the church's culture, not just its rhetoric.

While every local church is free to create their own rhythms, this is also why we suggest not receiving too many translocal visits too regularly, for it takes time to process and apply input received.

Paul praised churches that received correction well and warned those who resisted it. Translocal ministry is not about control, nor about fault-finding—it is about love for Christ and his bride. When local leaders receive this ministry with grace and trust, churches don't just avoid stagnation; they step into greater fruitfulness, health, and long-term strength.

In this way, translocal partnership becomes what God intended it to be: not inspection from the outside, but strengthening from within—*"so that the body of Christ may be built up"* (Ephesians 4:12).

10. Be Willing To Be The First Church In Your City or Nation.

Can partnership really be meaningful when there are no other A2 churches nearby? We believe it can. In many cases, the absence of local churches is not a permanent reality; our hope is that, in time, your church will plant into your own area, and we would love to help you do that. In addition, other existing churches in your area may want to one day partner with A2.

At the same time, Jesus' commission calls every local church to live on mission not only in its immediate neighbourhoods, but also among the nations. While you are already faithfully serving your local context, partnership with A2 can extend your missional reach far beyond it.

In terms of relationship and fellowship, it may require a season of greater travel in both directions, but this is neither unusual nor insurmountable. Added to this, modern technology gives us many practical ways to stay closely connected, even across distance.

Common Doctrine: What Must A Church Believe to Partner with A2?

Please read the separate document which gives much more shape to what is briefly written here: *Common Doctrine: What Must A Church Believe to Partner with A2?*

A2 is committed to biblical faithfulness with a posture of generous orthodoxy. Every movement draws doctrinal boundaries; ours aim to be clear on what's essential without becoming thin, tribal, or needlessly narrow on secondary matters.

Because doctrine involves selection, interpretation, and synthesis of Scripture, faithful, Scripture-loving Christians will sometimes disagree. That complexity calls for humility and generosity, not slogans like "the Bible clearly says" on issues sincere believers dispute. Unity grows when we name our interpretive choices honestly.

We distinguish between what carries different weight:

Pencil—changeable applications. Contextual practices and preferences (styles of worship, preaching approaches, cultural expressions, conscience issues, political opinions). These matter pastorally, but they are not the gospel—and must never be weaponised.

Ink—serious convictions. Important doctrines that shape church life and practice. Christians may disagree here without questioning one another's faith. Elevating ink to blood fractures unity; treating ink lightly hollows formation.

Blood—non-negotiable gospel truths. The shared confession of historic Christianity: the Triune God; the full deity and humanity of Jesus; his incarnation, sinless life, atoning death, bodily resurrection, ascension and reign; the Spirit's present work; salvation by grace through faith; the one holy, universal church; Christ's return, judgment, resurrection of the body, and new creation. These are the truths the church has lived and died for, summarised in the Apostles' and Nicene Creeds. Denying these steps outside Christian faith.

Our posture: clear on the gospel, generous wherever possible, humble always. We hold the blood truths with joy, and we keep secondary matters minimal and modest.

A2's Three Shared Ink Convictions

1. **Jesus and his Kingdom at the centre**

We're a Jesus movement. The kingdom is already breaking in through Jesus' life, death, resurrection, exaltation, and the Spirit's ongoing work—*already, not yet*. The church exists to live now in light of what has begun. When anything else becomes the functional centre—right doctrine, the institution, individual salvation, morality, experiences, activism, or tribal identity—Jesus gets displaced. When Jesus and the kingdom are central, everything else finds its place.

2. **An Acts 2 theological vision of church**

Healthy churches are marked by the Spirit poured out, evangelistic potency, and transforming discipleship. Expressions vary (pencil); the conviction that these marks matter is ink.

3. **A leadership team led by a leader**

We encourage team leadership with a recognised point leader—collaborative authority with clear initiative. Teams keep leaders grounded; leaders give teams direction. Different structures can work, but isolation and solo heroics don't.

Ink Convictions with Room for Diversity

We make space for disagreement (with shared commitment to Scripture and Christ) on matters like: soteriology (Calvinist/Arminian/Molinist varieties), eschatology, the conscious duration of hell, models of atonement, creation views, sanctification pathways, spiritual warfare emphases, marriage texts, cultural and political engagement, and views on Israel.

In short: united on the gospel, generous on secondary doctrine.

Convictions That Won't Fit Our Family

Some postures *won't* align with A2's direction—not as judgments on salvation, but on shared mission and culture:

- Functional cessationism that sidelines the gifts.
- Hard complementarianism that silences women's Spirit-given leadership and teaching.
- Theological universalism that undermines the call to repentance and faith in Christ.
- Affirming same-sex sexual practice or marriage as biblically endorsed.
- The rejection of the doctrine of God's holy opposition to sin and Christ's atonement as—in part—a propitiation for humanity's sin.

Relational Posture

Conviction without combativeness. Theological hospitality. Robust dialogue with Scripture open, unity in Christ as both starting point and goal.

The Future: Envisioning The Process by Which A2 Will Grow

Do not despise these small beginnings, for the Lord rejoices to see the work begin (Zechariah 4:10, NLT).

At the time of writing this first draft (Feb 2026), there is just one church that's part of A2: Nova Church, currently being planted by Terran and Julie. Alongside this, there are a handful of churches who have expressed genuine interest in exploring a partnership.

Terran's book, *I Will Build*, has proven to be a helpful fast-track in this discernment process, as it gives churches a clear window into A2's undergirding theology and vision for the local church at its best.

Looking ahead, our hope is that A2 will grow to encompass a life-giving structure with three relational layers of leadership.

First, there will be an A2 Lead Team, responsible for leading the movement and the wider A2 Translocal Team.

Second, there will be the A2 Translocal Team—comprising of church strengtheners who have been publicly trained, recognised, and commissioned into their translocal role. They carry a recognised level of trust, responsibility, and authority to strengthen churches beyond their own local context.

Importantly, not all strengthening ministry is limited to those who are formally commissioned onto the A2 Translocal Team. Partner churches are encouraged to recognise grace gifts in one another and to commend those gifts for the good of the wider church. This leads to the third level of support within A2: church strengtheners who are not officially on the Translocal Team. Due to either limited capacity or experience, these are men and women rooted in local churches who are invited by other churches to minister, encourage, teach, or help build relational and missional strength.

In terms of *how* we get there, we envisage the journey ahead unfolding in phases.

Phase one begins simply. As more churches organically link up with A2, we encourage partner churches to recognise grace gifts in one another and to invite men and women from across the movement to minister, serve, and build relationships. In this phase, we all will be functioning as unofficial church strengtheners.

Over time, as the fruitfulness, character, and effectiveness of these church strengtheners becomes evident—and as their ministry is affirmed and commended by multiple churches—Terran and Julie (initially functioning as the first expression of the A2 Lead Team) will begin to intentionally approach, train, and formally commission some onto the A2 Translocal team.

As the Translocal team grows and matures, it may then become clear that certain men and women carry not only translocal gifting, but also the wisdom, experience, and leadership capacity to help shape the growing movement itself. In such cases, they may be invited to join the A2 Lead Team, ensuring that leadership remains shared, relational, and rooted in our shared commitment to the global church's wellbeing.

As the movement grows and the number of churches increases, it is natural that a range of groupings will emerge. We envisage local groupings (such as churches within a city or province), regional groupings (such as churches within a nation or a cluster of neighbouring nations), and, ultimately, a global expression of the movement.

While these layers may develop organically, the overriding priority will always be connection. Churches should experience meaningful relational connection not only at a local level, but also regionally and globally. This makes the prioritising of our gatherings essential. At the same time, we are committed to avoiding an overload of gatherings. Our first responsibility will always remain the local mission of the local church. Movement activities must thus never detract from or compete with that calling. Our gatherings exist to serve churches, not the other way around.

Finally, no church will be restricted to the church strengtheners available within its immediate locality or region. In an age of accessible travel and

instant communication, relationships and ministry partnerships can be formed across cities, nations, and continents. We welcome this freedom, trusting that it will enrich churches and strengthen the global coherence of not only A2, but the collective mission of the worldwide church.

Partnering: How A Church Joins A2

This section is written with gratitude for the wisdom of the Salt & Light family of churches and the Advance Movement, both of which have helped shape our thinking and practice.

A Family, Not a Funnel. Our long-term vision is that A2 will grow primarily through the churches we plant together. These churches are essentially 'born' into the A2 family. At the same time, we recognise that there are many existing churches who are similarly mission-hearted and yet presently disconnected from a wider church movement. These are leaders who are not looking for an event stream, a badge, or a loose affiliation, but for family: shared life, shared mission, shared values, and meaningful spiritual partnership.

Because A2 understands itself as a family of churches, we use the language of *adoption* to describe the process by which an existing church comes into the movement. This is not an administrative pathway or a branding exercise. It is relational, spiritual, and deeply personal. Adoption speaks of belonging without control, of shared life rather than organisational oversight. It also carries mutuality: churches who are adopted into the family are not merely receivers of input, but are expected, over time, to grow into maturity and become contributors to the strength, health, and multiplication of the wider family.

What follows is therefore not a formula, but a pathway. It is intended especially to guide the A2 Translocal team as they walk with churches who are discerning whether God may be calling them into this family.

A Centred Not Bounded Set. *"Do two walk together unless they have agreed to do so?"* (Amos 3:3). Nothing makes it more plausible for two to walk together than that they are both heading in the same direction.

When it comes to which churches can join us, there's an important distinction between a bounded set and a centred set. A bounded set is a static snapshot of a church as it is right now—a tick-box approach where you have to meet a list of predefined criteria. A centred set, by contrast, is about

direction. It's not primarily about where your church currently is, but where you believe God is leading you and what you're moving towards.

In my initial conversations with churches interested in joining A2, I'm continually struck by how different these churches can be to one another. Some are strong in the Spirit but weak in discipleship or evangelism. Some are strong in discipleship but weaker in the Spirit or evangelism. Others are strong in evangelism but need growth in the other areas.

What unites them all is this: their *desire* to be strong in all three.

So although churches may be starting from very different places, if they're heading in the same direction—we're on the right track.

Convictions That Shape the Journey

The journey toward A2 partnership is one marked by conversation, friendship and honest dialogue. We are not building an organisation; we are growing a family. This means the pace is unhurried, the posture is pastoral, and the emphasis is on travelling together rather than ticking boxes.

We are also deeply committed to honouring local leadership. Churches do not come under A2 control, rather, local elders and/or leadership teams remain fully responsible for leading their congregations. We will not assume the role of super-pastors or replace local authority. Instead, we are siblings who come alongside—to support, strengthen, encourage, equip, and at times, challenge.

Finally, A2 is fundamentally team-based. Churches are not joining a one-person ministry, but a translocal team of leaders with different gifts and perspectives. While one A2 leader will usually serve as the primary relational contact, that relationship is always held within a wider team, which brings wisdom, protection, and shared discernment.

The Adoption Journey

While every church's journey will look slightly different, the following phases are commonly part of the process. They may overlap, unfold at different speeds, or be adapted to suit a particular context or culture.

The Introduction Phase. A church usually becomes aware of A2 through relationship—perhaps a personal connection, a shared event, or a mutual friend. Early conversations begin without expectations or obligations, and the wider A2 team is made aware of the emerging connection. At this stage, the goal is simply to get to know one another.

Attending A2 gatherings is often a helpful first step. Leaders who are exploring A2 are very welcome to attend gatherings without any assumption of commitment. These moments allow leaders to experience the culture of the movement, meet some of the team, and ask initial questions. At larger gatherings, there may be informal sessions designed specifically for those who are curious about partnership.

The Friendship Phase. If there is a growing sense of resonance within a local church's leadership team with A2, that leadership team is encouraged to engage thoughtfully with A2's foundational documents and teaching, and to intentionally move toward A2 leaders that they either have an existing connection with, or are regionally close to. Within the context and rhythm that feels right, robust conversations should follow. We invite leaders to share what excites them, what concerns them, where they feel aligned, and where they feel tension. These conversations help surface both resonance and resistance in healthy ways.

If a church's leadership team is divided about partnering with A2, we proceed carefully. After all, A2 does not want to draw individuals away from their churches or create internal division. Discernment must be shared, not isolated.

The Pre-Adoption Phase. In most instances, as relationships and resonance deepens, members of the A2 Translocal team will visit the church (if they have not done so already). These visits allow for face-to-face conversation, shared meals, prayer, and space to experience both the culture of the church as well as the movement firsthand. They are also opportunities for questions to be asked openly and for trust to deepen on both sides.

At least one substantial conversation should take place between the full eldership/leadership team and members of the A2 team. This conversation is essential. It allows both parties to carefully and honestly explore alignment around beliefs, core values, leadership culture, accountability, and mission. Throughout this phase, we are not looking for perfect

alignment, but for humility, faith, and a genuine excitement about growing together.

From church leaders, we hope to see a growing conviction that God is calling their church into the A2 family, a teachable posture, openness to receiving and responding to input, and a willingness to invest relationally by attending gatherings and shared spaces.

From the church as a whole, we look for a clear commitment to Jesus and his mission, warmth toward the A2 team, a desire to grow, and theology aligned with A2 values, along with an openness to adjusting structures or practices where necessary. A generous posture—both relationally and financially—and engagement in the life of the movement are also important indicators of readiness.

From the A2 team, this phase requires careful discernment and honesty. Potential barriers are named lovingly and clearly, including resistance to Spirit-led ministry or biblical leadership, governance models that hinder healthy change, unresolved leadership conflict, or a lack of trust in existing leadership teams. These issues are not automatic disqualifiers, but they must be addressed with faith and integrity.

The Commitment Phase. When both the church and the A2 team share a settled conviction that this is the right step, the church formally communicates its desire to join the A2 Movement. This moment is then marked relationally and publicly. A gathering is arranged to pray, celebrate, and commission the church into the A2 family, recognising God's leading and affirming shared mission.

From this point, the church is fully included in A2 communication, relational life, and shared initiatives. The wider movement is informed at an appropriate regional or global gathering, and the A2 team discerns the most suitable long-term relational oversight for the church (in conversation with the local church itself).

Local leaders are encouraged to clearly communicate with their congregation what it means to be part of A2—helping the church understand the vision, relationships, and opportunities that exist in a wider family.

A Growing, Multiplying Family

Adoption into A2 is not an endpoint; it is the beginning of shared life. As churches grow in health and maturity within the family, we expect them not only to be strengthened, but to strengthen others—helping to plant, adopt, and bless churches yet to come.

We grow best, and we go furthest, when we go together.