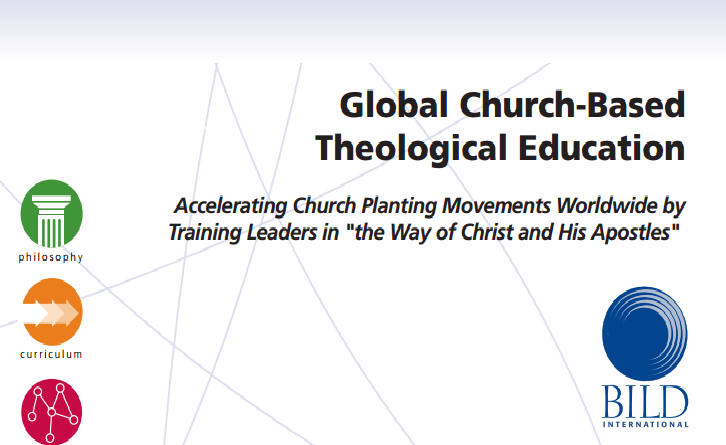


City.Au Networks

**2016**

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Church Partnership

1. One body (Basic Partnership)
2. Contributing to Community
3. Invest individually. (BILD Institute)
4. Invest collaboratively (BILD Institute / Antioch School)

City Network Partnership

1. One body (Basic Partnership)
2. Contributing to Community
3. Collaboratively develop type 1-5 BILD Institute
4. Collaboratively develop Type 1-5 BILD Institute or Antioch School
5. Antioch Resource centre City (Facilitating all levels of partnership in surrounding cities

*The Purpose: Respect, Unity, Professional Practice,*

The Body of Christ has often been talked about within an individual congregation as the gifts of various leaders and members all working together to make up the body. More recently, we’ve been advocating that each denomination and church within a city should view themselves in a similar manner. Each church and denomination has their own strength that if contributed to collaborative dialogue and progress within a city will significantly enhance and strengthen the body of Christ.

The purpose of this network is simply to bring us closer together without threatening the divine distinctiveness that we each possess, nor threatening the authorities that God has put in place. Rather, it highlights and encourages the uniqueness of each church and the outcomes developed through the network are completely in the hands of each local leader. There is no signup, no contract – only the participation that you wish to have at any point in time and the ability to withdraw your church at any point in time.

But as churches we often have these Christ-given strengths contained within our 4 walls. A disjointed city-wide body so to speak, but all the while with divine capacity to affect powerful change city-wide. The churches must be given opportunity to come together as they desire in order to harness our great potential for church planting, for city-welfare and the salvation of souls! Respect, collaboration and professionalism are essential core values which are protected at every level of partnership, even for those churches who enter at the most basic of levels.

This network is both patterned off the network of the Apostle Paul and will continue to reinvent itself as those in the higher levels of partnership re-examine Paul’s paradigm together. In the first century, Paul developed a network that carried the gospel of Christ all the way from Antioch to Rome and in subsequent generations covered the entire world. Those churches and leaders at this level of partnership are invited to entrepreneur all manner of ministry from their learning. This booklet is one such example of that entrepreneurialism that has been guided by my doctoral studies with BILD International and is intended to simply aid the beginning of such a network. The future of the network will be shaped by the churches and collaborative discussion between their leadership, rather than any one leader.

*The Environment: Steady decline, Leadership anxiety, Continued autonomy*

Significant difficulties exist within the Australian churches which we can no longer ignore. Many churches in Australia are isolated and weak, especially in the countryside, and many of the country leaders are so aware of the churches weakness that they are distressed. The smaller the town or city, the more intense this situation is. Nationally, there is a consistent migration of believers from the smaller churches in the smaller towns to the larger churches in the larger towns. Many smaller towns – those with a population of 3000 or under are clearly on a trajectory to be without churches within the coming decade or so. Interestingly, the leaders of the larger congregations who are benefitting from the small-town migration are also concerned about declining attendance. This is both disturbing and motivating.

Along with this, the believers no longer have a great deal of loyalty. They regularly move to other churches which ‘suit their needs better’. Unfortunately, this often creates opportunity for them to simply go to another church if they are being taught something they do not wish to hear, creating an increasingly tricky balance for leaders.

Considering the churches are sometimes within close walking distance from one another, this level of isolation among the churches is unnecessary. There are things that we could do and learn together that would lessen the divisions amongst us which as churches we must find the courage to consider. At the first level of partnership we give the most basic yet significant acknowledgement to *all* the churches that they also are part of Christ’s body. Those desiring the second level of partnership will enter 4 basic yet foundational discussions which orient towards enhanced *contribution* as disciples, families, churches, cities etc. and those engaged at levels 3-5 will undertake the task of creating a fresh 21st Century network with all the dynamics and strength of Paul’s 1’st network that will facilitate the gospel into and beyond the city and also into coming generations. All in all, we will collaborate together as we reorient our discipleship, leadership training and church planting towards seeking the welfare of our city and through this, the salvation of lost souls.

**1. One Body – Basic Partnership**

This is intended to be the simplest of steps for a church to participate in the citywide network; no restructuring, not adjustment of their weekly routines at any level. It simply involves a common city-wide communion 4 times a year.

A local bakery is selected to bake a single batch of flat bread / wafers and portions of this common batch are distributed to all of the churches in the city for their communion service. The presentation in each church prior to Communion is simply to recognise that all the churches / denominations within the city are sharing the same loaf of Bread on that particular day. Explanations for leadership and suggested communion notes will be given to each church.

PURPOSE:

* An acknowledgement by all the churches that all the other churches exist
* A further acknowledgement by all the churches that we are all in fellowship with Christ, and that His body and blood were sacrificed for all of us
* It is also an acknowledgement in each church that the higher levels of partnership exist that they could enter into if / when desired

**2. Contributing to Community**

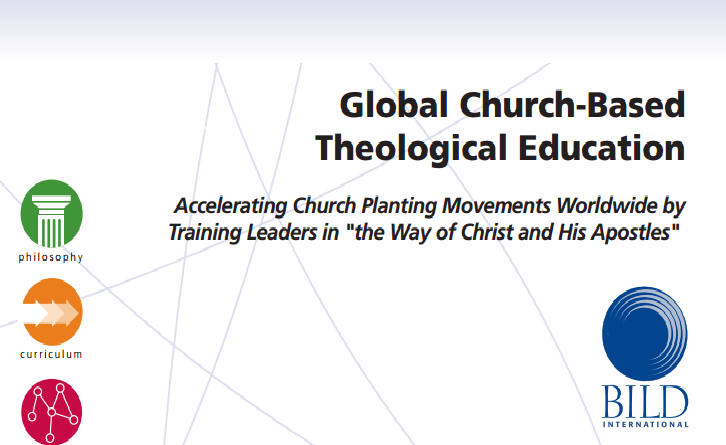
This level of partnership requires only that a church have a team of people who are focussed on an external ministry project that is seeking the welfare of the city in any manner that it chooses. Leaders commended by the network will facilitate 4 team discussions order to strengthen and grow their contribution to the city. The discussions revolve around the basic taxonomy:

* Disciples contributing to Family
* Family contributing to Churches
* Churches contributing to the city!
* *City-wide networks contributing to the Nation*
* *National networks contributing to the world*

Individual churches wishing to partner with us at this level simply need to connect with a network facilitator for discussion arrangements to be made.

PURPOSE:

* To begin the philosophy that we are all connected to something bigger than ourselves, our family, our church and our city. That ‘In Christ’ we are all one body.
* To give those who have learned the First Principles a platform to begin utilising what they have learned
* To begin the process of ordering each church – to prepare them for the First Principles

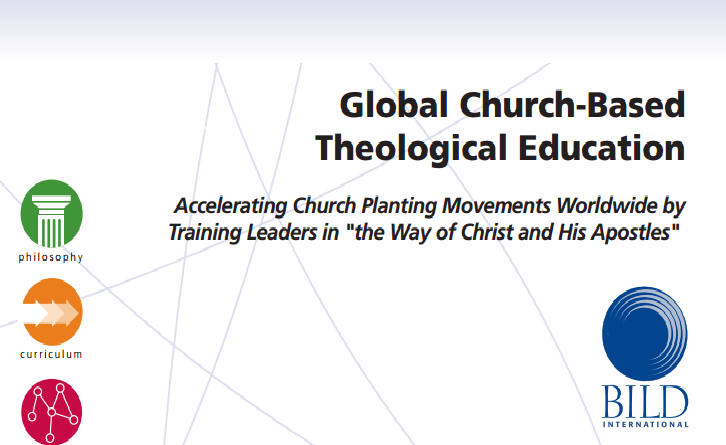


**3. Invest individually (BILD Institute)**

Churches wanting a stronger partnership can have leaders trained to use BILD’s multi-level integrated discipleship series, all within the context of their local church. In the upper levels, pastoral and ministry leaders begin BILD Leadership 1 courses and these leaders then also take on the task of leading disciples through The First Principles series. Leaders in training can be issued with a BILD Institute online portfolio and will receive relevant certificates for their work.

PURPOSE:

* To emphasise the discipleship *process* within the church - Leaders training leaders.
* To familiarise upper level leaders with the new set of dialogue based skills required in BILD training.
* To begin the process of re-examining 1st century traditions, in order to assess and entrepreneur healthy 21st century traditions.
* To put Church-Planting on the agenda of every church



**4. Invest 2 (BILD Institute or Antioch School)**

Only larger churches can engage in this level of partnership. These churches facilitate 5 levels of leadership training within a church or small distinct network.

Additionally, these churches must plan to plant a church within 2 years which is to be led by those in training (co-ordinated by the lead pastor) who are to simply implement the strategies that they have crafted through their studies.

At this level of partnership a church takes responsibility to assist other churches within the network – facilitating the discussions and enabling leaders from smaller churches to join their cohorts.

PURPOSE:

* To bring all the believers together into maturity in Christ – a holistic discipleship system available for all the churches within that city.
* To build the organisational capacity of the network around the churches with the most leadership
* To bring all the churches together on the core tasks of Leadership training and Church planting

**5. Invest 3. Antioch Resource Centre**

This level of partnership is for those larger cities (normally the Capital city) in a region that are able to assist with and facilitate all other levels of partnership in the cities around them. As a minimum it involves having at least 5000 leaders in training across the city and associated region and at least 1 doctoral cohort. Once a city has built the partnerships to this scale, we will seek out an appropriate host church as an Antioch Resource Centre for the overall network in their region.

PURPOSE:

* Organisational Capacity, administration and assistance with travelling leaders
* Financing, Printing and Shipping of necessary materials
* Setting network vision, goals and planning

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