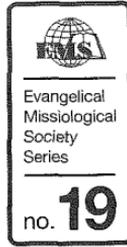


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REFLECTING GOD'S GLORY TOGETHER

DIVERSITY IN EVANGELICAL MISSION

A. SCOTT MOREAU / BETH SNODDERLY
EDITORS



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Reflecting God's Glory Together: Diversity in Evangelical Mission

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DIASPORA CHURCH PLANTING IN A MULTICULTURAL CITY: A CASE STUDY OF GREENHILLS CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP

SADIRI JOY TIRA AND NARRY F. SANTOS

INTRODUCTION

Unprecedented movements of people, hereafter referred to as “diaspora,” in larger scale and higher frequency, have clearly set a global trend that has marked the twenty-first century. This global trend caused by multiple factors, both voluntary (e.g., educational, financial advancement, etc.) and involuntary (e.g., natural disasters, war, human trafficking, etc.) is a complex issue that is increasingly changing societies, cultures, economies, and world demography. According to the United Nations Development Program, there are now 214 million international migrants (Human Development Report 2009). Undoubtedly, all nations have been affected by international mass migration.

Experts across disciplines are paying close attention to international migration patterns and its implications on politics, economics, law, religion, and other fields. In particular, missiologists and church planters are monitoring and analyzing the recent mass movements of people. Winter and Koch note, “As history unfolds and global migration increases, more and more people groups are being dispersed throughout the entire globe . . . Not many agencies take note of the strategic value of reaching the more accessible fragments of these ‘global peoples’” (Winter and Koch 2009, 537).

While it is true that many agencies are responding slowly to the realities of diaspora and their strategic value for reaching the global peoples, we are thankful for congregations who are “reading the times” and are “riding on the wave” of God’s movement. Our purpose here is to showcase such a group—the Greenhills Christian Fellowship (hereafter referred to as GCF) in Toronto, Canada. Specifically, we present a model demonstrating the effectiveness of diaspora church planting in arguably the most diverse and multicultural city in the world (<http://www.toronto.ca>). GCF-Toronto is a local church that has developed its evangelism, discipleship, and missions programs.

The significance of this study, therefore, is that it contributed to the understanding of missions for Filipinos in diaspora and perhaps to other visible minority groups as well as to Christian denominations and parachurch ministries seeking to plant churches among the many diaspora groups in Canada. We chose to organize our material into three parts:

1. Diaspora landscape of Greater Toronto Area to help readers better understand the cultural diversity of the city and the geographical context of Greenhills Christian Fellowship (GCF);
2. A case study of GCF’s glocal synchronic and diachronic church-planting strategy; and
3. Missiological analysis and implications for glocal missions.

“Glocal” was originally coined by Robertson (1995, 28) to express a new interweaving of local and global. It is simply “thinking globally and acting locally,” as applied in business “glocalization” (Tai and Wong 1998; Rosenau 2003). In recent years, missiologists also borrowed this glocal concept to describe the church and the local congregation’s simultaneous ministries in both global and local arenas.

The research methods employed by the writers are case studies and participant observation. The case study approach utilized in this paper is assumed to be the study of a case “over time through detailed, in-depth data collection involving multiple sources of information rich in context” (Creswell 1998, 61). We gathered data from interviews and literature on GCF, including documents from the archives.

Participant observation methodology assumes the complete participation of the observer. This is where the “highest level of involvement . . . probably

comes when [the authors] study a situation in which they are already ordinary participants” (Spradley 1980, 61). This methodology is used because one of the authors is the founding pastor of GCF-Toronto and is able to effectively make systematic observations about the birth and development of GCF-Toronto based on firsthand knowledge and familiar relationships with the mother church in Manila, Philippines and the members of the Toronto congregation involved in the past and present activities of GCF-Toronto.

CANADA-WIDE AND GREATER TORONTO AREA DIASPORA LANDSCAPE

Canada is known to be a nation of immigrants—early Canadian Western society was composed of people who originally migrated from Europe. Since early in the twentieth century Canada has opened its doors to diasporas from Asia, Africa, and Latin America. In just the last two decades, Canada has extended its immigration policy to include rising numbers of foreign workers (on work contracts) working from the vineyards of British Columbia to the oil sands of Alberta to the Tim Horton’s donut outlets inside the Toronto airport to the fishing boats off New Brunswick. There are also thousands of foreign students from the secondary school level to the colleges and universities across Canada. Also, Canada welcomes asylum seekers and refugees (e.g., political, religious, and climate refugees), who can be found living in high-rise apartments of large cities such as Toronto, Montreal, and Vancouver. Canada is a hospitable country renowned for its multiculturalism.

By December 2008, Canada had: (1) a total of 302,303 foreign workers as temporary migrant workers; (2) granted initial entry to 233,971 foreign students; (3) welcomed 27,956 refugees; and (4) granted 236,758 people permission to make Canada their home as permanent immigrants. Of these, the top ten source countries for permanent immigrants were (in descending order): China, India, Philippines, USA, Pakistan, UK, Iran, South Korea, France, and Colombia (Citizenship and Immigration Canada Facts and Figures 2008; <http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/resources/statistics/facts2008/index.asp>).

According to Canada’s migration experts, visible minorities or non-Caucasian Canadians are predicted to dominate Canada’s three megacities (Toronto, Montreal, and Vancouver) by 2017. They will mainly be South Asians and Chinese, adding to the present immigrants who are established

members of the Canadian community. They already have their own ghettos (e.g., Little Saigon, Chinatown, Bombay Palaces), places of worship, and cultural associations.

Filipino-Canadians are one of the largest immigrant groups of recent years, particularly in the Greater Toronto Area (<http://www40.statcan.gc.ca/l01/cst01/demo24a-eng.htm>; also http://www45.statcan.gc.ca/2009/cgco_2009_001-eng.htm). Like other diaspora groups, they have become active participants in shaping the communities of which they have become a part. People of Filipino descent have connected across the country, gathering locally, and branching out to other Filipinos through media and organized meetings, including political, sociocultural, and religious gatherings.

The imagination of a missiologist is bogged by Canada's multiethnic society. The multitudes of people from every corner of the globe—representing all colors, languages, smells, and cultures—are not just a quaint minority in Canada, but are truly Canadians. It is to evangelize and mobilize diaspora peoples for global mission in this Canada that God has called the Canadian disciples of Christ, including the Filipino-Canadian disciples.

GREENHILLS CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP: A BRIEF BACKGROUND

Greenhills Christian Fellowship is a thirty-two-year-old Baptist church in Pasig City, Metro Manila, Philippines. GCF was founded and pastored for fifteen years by Rev. David Yount, a Conservative Baptist missionary (Shelley 1971; Davis 2006). Rev. Yount led the church in its growth to more than 600 members through intentional evangelism and discipleship among middle and upper-middle class people in and around Manila. He also guided the church in the purchase of a lot and in the building of a church facility that could accommodate 1,500 people at the worship hall.

After fifteen and a half years, Rev. Yount handed the spiritual leadership of GCF to Dr. Luis Pantoja, Jr., who shepherded the church for the last sixteen and a half years. The ministry of Dr. Pantoja is marked with an emphasis on satellite development (the GCF term for church planting). Aside from its main church in Pasig City (called GCF-Ortigas), GCF has sixteen satellites (or church-plants) in the Philippines and Canada (fourteen in the Philippines and two in Ontario; <http://www.gcf.org.ph>).

GCF-South Metro: The First GCF Satellite

I (Narry Santos) started ministry at GCF on June 1, 1994. After serving as Christian Education Pastor in GCF-Ortigas for three years, I was assigned to plant the first GCF satellite south of Manila, which is called GCF-South Metro. On January 17, 1997, GCF-South Metro was launched (or birthed). For ten years, I was the resident pastor of this first GCF satellite. On our tenth year, we had 900 people worshipping with us, over 300 students attending our children's Sunday school, and eighty-eight growth groups (or small groups) meeting weekly (<http://www.gcfsouth.org>).

In 2006, GCF-South Metro was able to buy a lot and to put up its own building that could accommodate 1,500 people and a Christian school that attracted over one hundred students from preschool to high school. GCF-South Metro also spearheaded the launch of three other satellites further south of Manila. These three satellites are GCF-Batangas City (which was launched in 2001 and now has 180 people), GCF-Santa Rosa (which was launched in 2006 and now has 200 people), and GCF-Parañaque (which was launched in 2008 and now has 150 people).

Context for a GCF Diaspora Church-planting Vision

In such a context of growth, the GCF-South Metro leaders have sensed (beginning in 2004) that the Philippines was too small a place to fulfill the Great Commission. We realized that God wanted us to be part in the fulfillment of the global GCF vision: "GCF is one church reaching influencers through satellites in strategic areas worldwide." Our leaders have owned the conviction that the Great Commission is nothing less than global.

However, from 2003 to 2005, a string of five families were preparing to go to Canada as new immigrants. I was getting frustrated with this disappointing development, because after I disciplined, trained, and mentored them for years, they would all go to Toronto. I felt that my investment of time and energy was wasted. In fact, the first family that left for Toronto was one of our GCF-South Metro pioneer families, the father of which served as an able Chairman of the Council of Elders.

In hindsight, such an exodus of families was the trigger that solidified our commitment to go outside of the Philippines to help fulfill the Great Commission. These families were to be the catalysts in starting the first international GCF in North America. I began to see them not as losses to

GCF-South Metro but as core leaders of what God was about to do for GCF outside of the Philippines. Thus, my frustration and disappointment turned to hope and anticipation.

These transformed sentiments are expressed in the coffee-table book *Ten Years, Ten Values*, which commemorates GCF-South Metro's tenth anniversary: "As a global paradigm of missions was sweeping GCF South Metro in 2004 and 2005, who would have known that the initial 'losses' of key leaders and members leaving for Canada in the early years would be the very catalyst for bringing the GCF global dream into reality?" (GCF South Metro 2007, 168).

Confirmation for a GCF Diaspora Church-planting Vision

God's confirmation for a GCF *diaspora* church-planting vision came to us from both the new immigrants people in Toronto and the leadership in the Philippines. On their end, the five families took strategic steps to move toward owning a GCF church-planting vision, as seen in these efforts:

These initial families composed of the Bondocs, the Faliaos, the Geronimos, and the Tes began to conduct informal Bible studies, which became a recognized official GCF Growth Group. As the frequency of fellowship meetings increased to twice a month, Pastor Narry, Elder Peter Corvera and Elder Mark Sosmeña visited the group in 2005 to challenge the Toronto brethren to explore the possibility of launching the first ever global satellite church of GCF. As the fellowship increased, the satellite adopted the Purpose Driven small group model for church-planting and February 2006, the first evangelistic event was conducted . . . (It) continued to grow with the addition of several families from the GCF community and from new members drawn from various activities such as the Marriage Enrichment Series and evangelistic services. (GCF South Metro 2007, 168)

Moreover, the new group registered as an official religious entity in Toronto and elected its officers. On its end, the GCF-Ortigas Board of Elders (BOE) approved the request of Pastor Pantoja in his Pastoral Ministry Report at the Board of Elders meeting on April 21, 2006. The request is for a "GCF-Toronto Feasibility Study—the Senior Pastor assigned Pastor Lito Villoria to visit Elder Oddy Bondoc and the GCF core group that intends to organize itself

into GCF-Toronto. As an outcome of such visit, Pastor Lito will report to this body and to the deacons the feasibility of launching the first GCF satellite overseas” (Pantoja 2006a).

After the Toronto visit, Pastor Villoria recommended at the June 16, 2006 BOE meeting that:

GCF proceed with establishing GCF-Toronto as our first GCF overseas satellite and as the parent body, we are asked to provide a fulltime Resident Pastor and to subsidize their annual operating budget. The Senior Pastor intends to ask Pastor Narry Santos to spearhead the project on a minimum two-year assignment as GCF pastor-missionary beginning February 2007. (Pantoja 2006b)

This recommendation was passed as a resolution by the GCF-Ortigas Board of Elders (64th Resolution 2006).

I sensed God’s hand in opening the opportunity for my family and me to be part of God’s global vision for GCF. However, I realized how difficult it would be for my family to agree with this opportunity. My wife has no relatives in Toronto. My two daughters have many friends in both GCF church and GCF school in Manila. I had a growing ministry among many people whose vision is to reach many more around our strategic area.

The bottom-line question we asked ourselves was: “How can we leave the stability of our 10-year ministry at GCF-South Metro and go as a family to a foreign land and start GCF-Toronto and face all the instability that goes with a new mission work?” Yet, in my heart, I knew and already saw that God could start something totally new and exciting. I saw it when God used GCF-South Metro start GCF-Batangas City in 2001. I saw it when God again used GCF-South Metro to start GCF-Santa Rosa. Even in my absence, God again used GCF-South Metro to start GCF-Parañaque in 2008. Having seen God use us in starting satellites before, I knew in my heart that God could use us again in starting satellites for Filipinos and other different groups in Toronto and beyond.

God sovereignly arranged circumstances so that I was approached by the senior pastor and resident pastors of other satellites on June 14, 2006 and challenged to go to Toronto. The next day (June 15), Pastor Pantoja and Pastor Villoria talked with my wife and me. On June 16, the GCF-Ortigas

BOE approved the request for my family and me to go to Toronto. On June 17, Pastor Pantoja addressed the GCF-South Metro Council about our assignment. With God's grace, the GCF-South Metro leaders agreed to release me for the Canada vision. On June 18, Pastor Pantoja and GCF-South Metro Chairman informed the congregation of my new assignment.

On our tenth anniversary on January 21, 2007, GCF-South Metro commissioned my family and me to be their global missionaries, aside from installing the new pastor for GCF-South Metro. For the rest of January until March, I was asked to speak at ten different GCF satellites to challenge them to pray, give, and refer their friends and family who live in Toronto.

In addition, the GCF-Ortigas BOE approved this motion on March 9, 2007: "Motion prevailed that we officially receive a 'Shower of Blessing' in the form of cash donations for the month of April 2007 as our share in the ministry in Toronto" (31st Resolution 2007). As cited in the Senior Pastor's Pastoral Ministry Report, the "shower of blessing" (i.e., people's designated giving) would "cover the costs of transporting the Santos family and assisting them to settle in Toronto" (Pantoja 2007). On April 9, my family and I left Manila for our new global missions assignment.

Commitment to a Diaspora Church-planting Vision in a Multicultural City

GCF-Toronto was officially launched as the thirteenth GCF satellite on May 6, 2007 at the Centennial Community Centre in Toronto. In its almost three years, GCF-Toronto has moved from a small basement (that could accommodate sixty people) in a North York library, to three adjacent rooms (that could hold 120 people) at a Chinese Cultural Centre in Scarborough, to its current location in a ballroom (that could accommodate 220 people) at the Centennial College Residence and Conference Centre. There is now an average of 150 adults and youth who attend the Sunday worship services at 11 a.m.–12:30 p.m., an average of thirty children who attended Sunday School, and sixteen growth groups that regularly meet throughout the week.

In our first prayer, vision-casting, and planning retreat as a satellite on June 16, 2007, we discussed three issues of prime importance. In our workshop materials on that day, we summarized the three major issues this way:

1. *We Are All Placed in Toronto by God's Providence*—"God is the One who brought us to Canada, whatever be our motivation

or motive in coming here. His sovereign hand took us from the Philippines and placed us in Toronto. It's His idea for you and me, for your family and my family, to be where we are right now" (GCF-Toronto 2007, 1).

2. *We Will Not Be a Filipino Church in Toronto*—"Though almost all of the people who currently attend and serve in GCF-Toronto are Filipinos by ethnic background, GCF-Toronto is not envisioned to be a Filipino church. Being an international church in the most cosmopolitan city in the world means that we are to reach out to the different peoples found in Toronto and beyond. Again, we are not a Filipino church ministering in Canada. Rather, we are a Canadian church (i.e., a church that is sensitive to the effective ways that Canadians can be brought to Christ) ministering to the various ethnic groups that God brings our way" (GCF-Toronto 2007, 5). In addition, I emphasized to the group an important note: "I'm not saying that we lose our being Filipino in order to be a Canadian church. What I'm saying is that we can use our being Filipino to reach to other Filipino Canadians and other Canadians from different backgrounds. To do that, we need the wisdom of God to reach out to them in creative ways (1 Cor 9:19–23)" (GCF-Toronto 2007, 6).
3. *GCF-Toronto Will Be a Church-planting Church*—"Our mandate includes not just the planting of GCF-Toronto, but also the planting of other GCF international churches. In other words, we are a church-planting church. We are to have churches in our 'Jerusalem,' churches in our 'Judea and Samaria,' and churches in our 'remotest part of the earth' (Acts 1:8). We are not to be content in just becoming a big church in the best way we know how. By God's grace, we will be the missional, church-planting church in the best way God will show us how" (GCF-Toronto 2007, 6).

Birth of a GCF-Canada Diaspora Church-Planting Vision

As a result of GCF-Toronto leaders' commitment to a diaspora church-planting vision, the GCF-Canada Triple Vision was born. This triple vision is taken from the Acts 1:8 process of progress. The process begins in Jerusalem, progresses into Judea and Samaria, and peaks at the ends of the earth.

For the first seven-year cycle (2007–2014), we will trust God for this GCF-Canada Strategic Vision: seven GCF satellites in seven years in the four provinces of Canada (i.e., Ontario; British Columbia; Alberta; Manitoba). This is the proposed breakdown of the triple vision per satellite:

GCF-Toronto Triple Vision (2007–2010; God willing, one cycle of satellite triple vision takes three to five years to fulfill, plus one year to pause and pray after the first cycle, and one more year to plan and prepare for the next cycle of satellite triple vision.)

The vision to launch GCF-Toronto in May 2007
(our Jerusalem)

+

The vision to birth GCF-Peel in March 2008
(our Judea and Samaria)

+

The vision to birth GCF-Vancouver in May 2010
(our ends of the earth)

GCF-Peel Triple Vision (2008–2011)

The vision to launch GCF-Peel in March 2008
(our Jerusalem)

+

The vision to birth GCF-Etobicoke in October 2010
(our Judea and Samaria)

+

The vision to birth GCF-Winnipeg in October 2011
(our ends of the earth)

GCF-Vancouver Triple Vision (2010–2013)

The vision to launch GCF-Vancouver in May 2010 (our Jerusalem)

+

The vision to birth GCF-Surrey in October 2012 (our Judea and Samaria)

+

The vision to birth GCF-Calgary in September 2013
(our ends of the earth).

Once the GCF-Toronto Triple Vision (first cycle) is fulfilled, GCF-Toronto will pause, pray, and plan for its second cycle of its triple vision. God willing, the next GCF-Toronto Triple Vision will be by countries: (1) GCF-Canada as GCF-Toronto's Jerusalem; (2) GCF-USA. as GCF-Toronto's Judea and Samaria; and (3) GCF-New Zealand as GCF-Toronto's ends of the earth.

Seeing the GCF-Canada Triple Vision Gradually Happen

As God confirmed the GCF-Canada Triple Vision in our hearts, God gradually opened doors to make the birthing of these new satellites possible. Three months in our GCF-Toronto launch, we received a request to start GCF-Peel. In response, we started a growth group in Mississauga and then in Brampton. In September 2007, we conducted two preview worship services. From October 2007 onwards, we held weekly services until GCF-Peel was launched on March 27, 2008 (Easter). Just as GCF-Toronto was officially recognized as a religious institution in Ontario in 2006, GCF-Peel was also officially recognized in Ontario in 2009.

In January and February 2008, we challenged a few former GCF members who now live in Vancouver to consider starting GCF-Vancouver. In response, a growth group was born in March, followed by another one later in 2008. These two growth groups became the core team in conducting monthly (and later biweekly) preview services in 2009. With the interim help of Pastor Pantoja in January–April 2010, the GCF-Vancouver began having weekly worship services early that year. On May 2, 2010, this satellite was launched officially, with Pastor Hizon Cua, a resident pastor from Manila, coming that month along with his family to lead GCF-Vancouver in its own Triple Vision on a full-time basis.

We also received a request in January 2009 from Pastor Reymus Cagampan in Winnipeg that GCF-Toronto consider adopting the new church-planting work he initiated in October 2008 to be part of the GCF family of churches. In May 2009, Pastor Cliff Gonzales, a church planter in Calgary, was referred to us by Pastor Pantoja, as a possible partner with GCF. Pastor Gonzales inquired if the new church plant he intended to start in July 2009 could be part of the GCF family.

Initially, we were hesitant about these two requests, because GCF always starts satellite development from scratch. In all the sixteen satellites that were launched by GCF in the past sixteen years, we intentionally initiated the work in different strategic areas. However, in relation to the two requests from Winnipeg and Calgary, we sensed that these requests warrant our prayer and consideration, and that this may be a new and supplementary way to fulfill God's Triple vision for us. We wanted to give such requests much thought and prayer, because they came after we publicly declared by faith that we trusted God to start GCF-Winnipeg and GCF-Calgary.

GCF-Canada Leadership Summit on May 9, 2009

The GCF-Toronto leaders were open to the mode of adopting in satellite development in addition to the birthing approach of church planting, primarily due to the corporate decision at the first biennial GCF-Canada Leadership Summit held at the Immanuel Baptist Church last May 9, 2009. In that leadership summit, sixty-eight delegates from GCF-Toronto, GCF-Peel, and GCF-Vancouver saw the value of GCF-Canada Vision in the context of our multicultural realities in Canada. Three eye-opening talks set the stage for our historic decision: (1) "Leadership in a Missional Church" (by Dr. Brian Craig, leadership development director of the Canadian Baptists of Ontario and Quebec); (2) "Leadership in a Metropolitan Community" (by Mr. Ian Mair, administrative manager of Culture Connexions, a ministry of Serving in Missions (SIM)); and (3) "Leadership in a Multicultural Country" (by Dr. Robert Patterson, the missional director of the Toronto Baptist Ministries and the communications director of CBOQ).

As a result of the summit, we unanimously agreed on this manifesto:

For the glory of God and the building up of the Church of Jesus Christ, even those whom He has called to be members of GCF-Toronto,

GCF-Peel, and GCF-Vancouver collectively known as GCF-Canada, we the Pastors, leaders, and members assembled for the First Leadership Summit of GCF-Canada held on May 9, 2009 hereby: RESOLVE,

That GCF-Canada shall be missional, metropolitan, and multicultural in its strategy and ministries;

That GCF-Canada shall be one with GCF-Philippines in its fundamental beliefs, mission, and vision but legally, administratively and financially autonomous;

That GCF-Canada shall partner with GCF-Philippines, Canadian Baptists of Ontario and Quebec, and Canadian Baptists of Western Canada in the areas of ministry, missions, leadership development, pastoral training, and other areas of ministry support.”

Aside from the GCF-Canada Manifesto, the May 9, 2009 leadership summit also focused on the GCF Vision in both its global and Canadian perspectives, and started the formulation of the GCF-Canada ethos.

GCF-Canada Covenant: The Unifying Document for our Vision

The GCF-Canada Leadership Summit Manifesto catalyzed the formation of the GCF-Canada Covenant, which established the framework of unity and partnership with GCF-Canada. Along with selected GCF-Toronto and GCF-Peel elders, Atty. Bayani Abesamis, a GCF-Peel leader, drafted the GCF-Canada Covenant, and presented it at the joint Council Meeting of the GCF-Toronto and GCF-Peel elders and deacons on June 21, 2009 at the Centennial College Residence and Conference Centre. The final form agreed at the joint council meeting was made available at the GCF-Toronto website, and was ratified at the quarterly business meeting on July 19, 2009.

The ratified GCF-Canada Covenant frames our bases of unity according to four points of agreement; namely: (1) mission; (2) vision; (3) statement of faith; and (4) ethos. These four items are designed to shape the unity of all satellites in Canada and are formulated to serve as the framework for birthing new and adopting potential GCF satellites.

GCF Mission Statement

The GCF Mission Statement, which is the same statement for all sixteen satellites, is as follows: “For the glory of God, we commit ourselves to EVANGELIZE and ENLIST people into our fellowship, to EDIFY and EQUIP them for spiritual maturity and service, and to EXALT God together in worship.”

The five “E’s” in the GCF Mission Statement refer to our five purposes as a church: (1) *Evangelize* refers to our commitment to be on mission in reaching out to our community (i.e., the people outside the church); (2) *Exalt* refers to our commitment to magnify God in worship among the crowd (i.e., the people who come on Sunday mornings); (3) *Enlist* refers to our commitment to the members in nurturing fellowship among the congregation (i.e., the people joined the satellite as church members); (4) *Edify* is our commitment to be maturing in discipleship with the committed (i.e., the members who desire to follow Jesus as his disciples); and, (5) *Equip* refers to our commitment to equip for ministry those in the core (i.e., the members who volunteer in serving God and God’s people). (GCF-Canada adopts the Purpose-Driven Church paradigm of Dr. Rick Warren, Pastor of the Saddleback Church.)

GCF Vision Statement

In addition, the GCF Vision Statement, which is the same for all sixteen satellites, is as follows: “GCF is one church reaching influencers through satellites in strategic areas worldwide.” This vision statement is clarified as follows:

1. *GCF is one church*—we affirm our unity as God’s people (especially through our mission, vision, statement of faith, and ethos), wherever God desires GCF to go worldwide;
2. *Reaching influencers*—we affirm our ministry toward leaders in society (realizing that leaders are primarily people who greatly influence others to discover and live God’s purposes [i.e., 5 E’s]);
3. *Through satellites*—we affirm our strategy of intentionally launching, sustaining, and starting other new satellites through the vehicle of growth groups;
4. *In strategic areas*—we affirm our target to locate ourselves in urban centers, where more people can be reached most readily and effectively; and,

5. *Worldwide*—we affirm our scope of missions as to all nations or to the ends of the earth.

GCF Statement of Faith

The GCF Statement of Faith, upheld together by all sixteen satellites, refers to ten doctrinal affirmations on the Bible, God, Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit, angels, man, salvation, the church, the end times, and civil government, and society.

GCF-Canada Ethos

Aside from the having the same GCF Mission, Vision, and Faith Statements, the GCF-Canada Covenant also upholds our unity in the GCF-Canada Ethos. The GCF-Canada Ethos, expressed in the acronym G.R.E.E.N.H.I.L.L.S., is used to describe the ten quality characteristics, adopted from Christain Schwarz's book, *Natural Church Development*, that we consider as essential in ensuring the spiritual health of each satellite in Canada. (Schwarz lists eight quality characteristics of healthy and growing churches. In GCF-Canada, we added two characteristics that we value; namely: (1) Responsible Stewardship; and (2) Life-Enriching Preaching. The focus of each quality characteristic is not on numerical growth, but on improving the health of the satellites, with the understanding that when the satellites are sufficiently healthy, quantitative growth will follow. The GCF-Canada Ethos is spelled this way:

1. G =Gifts-based Ministry
2. R =Responsible Stewardship
3. E =Effective Structures
4. E =Empowering Leadership
5. N =Needs-oriented Evangelism
6. H =Holistic Growth Groups
7. I =Inspiring Worship
8. L =Loving Relationships
9. L =Life-enriching Preaching
10. S =Sustainable Spirituality

Aside from the four areas of unity, the GCF-Canada Covenant subscribes to three governing perspectives in our satellite development, expressed explicitly at the First GCF-Canada Leadership Summit Manifesto of May 9, 2009.

The Covenant states, "GCF-Canada shall be missional, metropolitan, and multicultural in its strategies and ministries." This is how we describe these three strategies in satellite development:

1. **Missional** Church—the satellites will be intentionally multiplying satellites (through the satellite triple vision) and will incarnationally add value to our communities;
2. **Metropolitan** Community—the satellites will intentionally and strategically minister in the urban centers (i.e., targeting the cities); and
3. **Multicultural** Country—the satellites will intentionally be on mission to the diaspora (i.e., reaching the immigrants in countries that are open to receive different ethnic groups) of "all nations."

Thus, by God's grace and for God's glory, GCF-Canada will be multiplying reproducing missional churches in metropolitan communities in the multicultural country of Canada.

Memorandum of Agreement to Launch GCF-Winnipeg and GCF-Calgary

With the ratified GCF-Canada Covenant at hand, Elder Rick Manguerra (chairman of the GCF-Peel Council), Atty. Abesamis, and I went for an exploratory visit to Winnipeg on July 23–27, 2009. We were sent by GCF-Peel to conduct the exploration, because GCF-Peel owns the Triple Vision of going to Winnipeg for its "ends of the earth" satellite. We met Pastor Cagampan and the core leaders of the new church plant in Winnipeg, presented to them the GCF-Canada Covenant (containing the GCF Mission, Vision, Faith, and Ethos), narrated our GCF-Canada two-year story of satellite development, joined their two small groups sessions and worship service with sixty people.

On their end, Pastor Cagampan and his leaders agreed to bring to their people the option that their new church plant be adopted as GCF-Winnipeg, to pray about it for one month, and to inform us of their group's decision at the end of August 2009. In a month, they informed us of the decision of the whole group to be adopted as GCF-Winnipeg.

To move this decision forward, Pastor Pantoja, Elder Joseph Cachola (chairman of the interim GCF-Canada Board), Elder Manguerra, Atty. Abesamis, and I visited Winnipeg on September 18–20, 2009 to officially sign the Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) between GCF-Canada and the new group, GCF-Winnipeg. We also trained the leaders on how to do satellite development in their target area.

In addition to visiting GCF-Winnipeg, the team also explored the possibilities on September 17–18, 2009 of having the new church plant of Pastor Gonzales and his leaders be adopted as GCF-Calgary. We presented to this leadership group the GCF mission, vision, statement of faith, ethos, and the GCF-Canada Covenant. They asked for two to four weeks to make their decision. In two weeks, they committed to be part of the GCF-Canada family of churches. Elder Manguerra and I returned to Calgary on October 14–18 to conduct satellite development training, to take part in their small group sessions and participate in the worship service with seventy people, and to sign the MOA between GCF-Canada and the new group, GCF-Calgary.

When we asked Pastor Gonzales and his leaders why they chose to be part of the GCF-Canada family of churches—knowing that we are just over two years old then and that we have meager resources to assist them—they replied that they want to be identified with a group that has a clear vision to plant churches in Canada and beyond.

Partnership with CBOQ and CBWC

At the end of our first year as GCF-Toronto, we sensed the need to be affiliated with a family of churches that had similar doctrinal beliefs and a church-planting vision for reaching the whole of Canada for Jesus Christ. We discovered that the Canadian Baptists of Ontario and Quebec (CBOQ) would be that like-minded denomination. So GCF-Toronto went through the process of being recognized as a CBOQ church and I also underwent the procedure of being accredited as an ordained CBOQ minister. As a result, GCF-Toronto and I were officially welcomed as a CBOQ church and as an accredited ordained CBOQ pastor, respectively, at the CBOQ Annual Assembly on June 11–13, 2009.

Such a CBOQ partnership with a big family of churches opened up new doors for us to connect with the Canadian Baptists of Western Canada (CBWC), a sister convention of CBOQ. As we met with CBOQ leaders, we

were also introduced to the CBWC leaders. We shared with the CBWC leaders our commitment to be part of the Canadian Baptists, wherever GCF goes, as expressed in the GCF-Canada Leadership Summit Manifesto and in Section 9.3 of the GCF-Canada Covenant: "GCF-Canada shall be affiliated with the Canadian Baptists of Ontario and Quebec, the Canadian Baptists of Western Canada, the Canadian Baptists of Atlantic Canada, and the Canadian Baptists of French Canada and such other groups and associations as the Board may decide" (GCF-Covenant 2009, 7).

Currently, we are processing the membership of GCF-Vancouver, GCF-Calgary, and GCF-Winnipeg with CBWC, through the help of Pastor Tom Lavigne, the CBWC church-planting director. In addition, Atty. Abesamis is helping out in the process of having GCF-Vancouver, GCF-Calgary, and GCF-Winnipeg officially recognized as religious institutions in their respective provinces. Pastor Lavigne has budgeted for 2010 a specified amount to support the satellite development of each of the three GCF satellites in Western Canada. Moreover, Pastor Lavigne and Pastor Rob Ogilvie (CBWC British Columbia director) plan to represent CBWC at the launch of GCF-Vancouver on May 2, 2010. Pastor Lavigne and Pastor Dennis Stone (CBWC Alberta director) also have expressed their commitment to be present at the launch of GCF-Calgary on May 16, 2010. Pastor Lavigne and Pastor Ken Thiessen (CBWC Manitoba director) are also scheduled to grace the launch of GCF-Winnipeg on October 3, 2010.

In addition, CBOQ has committed to partially support for three years (2009–2011) GCF-Peel's satellite development of GCF-Etobicoke (which is GCF-Peel's Judea and Samaria satellite). We are currently in communication with Vision 360 in Toronto through Mt. Andrew Lamme, the Vision 360 Toronto City Catalyst, to explore the possibilities of GCF-Etobicoke being financially supported by this new church-planting movement in Toronto. God willing, we will have that arrangement in place for 2011–2013. For now, there is one growth group in Etobicoke, and one other growth group will be started in April 2010. By faith, GCF-Etobicoke will be launched on 10-10-10 (or October 10, 2010), which will be attended by CBOQ leaders as well.

CBOQ has also been extending their services, training, resources, and assistance to us in tangible ways—speaking at GCF-Toronto and GCF-Peel as guest preachers; giving training sessions at our leadership summit; extending training subsidies to me as pastor (e.g., Church-Planting Congress; Natural

Church Development; Axiom training with Forge); facilitating the processing of government documents (e.g., my Ontario license to officiate weddings). We are blessed to be part of a bigger family that comes to our side and assists us in times of need.

Continuing Partnership with GCF-Philippines

God willing, in its three years of being on mission, GCF-Canada may be able to see six launched satellites by the end of 2010: (1) GCF-Toronto (May 6, 2007); (2) GCF-Peel (March 23, 2008); (3) GCF-Vancouver (May 2, 2010); (4) GCF0-Calgary (May 16, 2010); (5) GCF-Winnipeg (October 3, 2010); and (6) GCF-Etobicoke (October 10, 2010). However, with such growth in the number of satellites comes the challenge of producing and reproducing spiritual leaders who will shepherd the GCF-Canada satellites. So far, I am the only full-time pastor, serving full-time in GCF-Toronto and part-time in GCF-Peel. In the first two years, I would shuttle back and forth Toronto and Peel to preach in the two satellites (i.e., 9:30 a.m. at GCF-Peel and 11 a.m. at GCF-Toronto).

GCF-Ortigas has been a continuing help in providing pastoral assistance to the GCF-Canada churches. Aside from providing pastoral assistance to GCF-Toronto by assigning me as resident pastor, GCF-Ortigas has been financially supporting GCF-Toronto since 2007 and will continue to do so in decreasing amounts until the end of 1012. Additionally, GCF-Ortigas released Pastor Hizon Cua (formerly the resident pastor of GCF-Northwest in the northwest portion of Manila) to be the Resident Pastor of GCF-Vancouver. He and his family are scheduled to arrive in Vancouver on April 22, 2010, in time for the GCF-Vancouver launch on May 2, 2010.

In addition, in his retirement years starting January 2010, Pastor Pantoja is tasked to give interim pastoral leadership in places where his ministry is needed. For January–April 2010, he is interim Pastor of GCF-Vancouver, and he will be functioning in the same interim capacity at GCF-Peel for May–July 2010, until a permanent resident pastor arrives.

Though there is willingness to help from GCF-Philippines, there is a limit to the number of pastors who can be sent to Canada. Strategically, it may not even be helpful in the long run to get a pastor in the Philippines to minister in Canada. In fact, it may be wiser to raise new leaders in Canada or look for like-minded pastors from Canada. We see the need to look for or raise new

pastors who will have the heart and skills to start and build intentionally intercultural churches in order to fulfill God's mission to GCF.

Initial Initiatives to our Missional and Multicultural Mandate

As GCF-Canada, we are forced to answer these two questions: "How will we raise new spiritual leaders who will lead our satellites in the future? How can we as churches learn the skills of becoming intentionally intercultural in order to fulfill God's mission for us?"

In answer to the first question, GCF-Toronto has taken the following seven baby steps in order to move toward being an intentionally intercultural:

1. At the May 2009 Leadership Summit, the three satellites of GCF-Toronto, GCF-Peel, and GCF-Vancouver decided to abide by the three ministry approaches: (1) missional (i.e., going to the community through satellite development and incarnational acts of service); (2) metropolitan (i.e., targeting the urban centers or cities where people of different groups flock); and (3) multicultural (i.e., reaching out to the different diaspora groups or people on the move).

2. Since 2008, GCF-Toronto has contracted the part-time services of Mr. Eric Hart as our Youth Ministry Worker. Mr. Hart was born and raised in Toronto, and his parents originally came from Trinidad and Tobago.

3. There were fifteen church leaders who attended the SUBS (School for Urban Biblical Studies) class called "Preparing Leaders for Intercultural Ministry," which was taught by Pastor Robert Cousins for eight Monday evenings in October and November 2009. Pastor Cousins is the director of the TIM (Tyndale Intercultural Ministries) Centre and is missionary with the AIM (Africa Inland Mission).

4. Pastor Cousins has made himself available to help and coach us for ten hours every week starting September 2009 toward becoming intentionally intercultural (including preaching at GCF-Toronto and GCF-Peel on missional and multicultural themes).

5. All our fifteen growth groups served in different volunteer capacities in our community during the "Better Together" spiritual growth campaign of November–December 2009.

6. We formed one multicultural growth group in May 2009. This growth group is composed of church members who originally came from Burma, India, Ireland, Canada, and the Philippines.

7. We started celebrating Multicultural Sunday in March 2010. This special Sunday featured Pastor Cousins' sermon "Does God Love Diversity?" and two song numbers from forty Karen people from Burma.

The second question was, "How will we raise new spiritual leaders who will lead our satellites in the future?" In answer, we have two students who are currently enrolled at Tyndale Seminary (one from GCF-Toronto and one from GCF-Peel), and our part-time youth staff is studying at Master's Bible College. A new immigrant who serves as an elder in GCF-Toronto will also take a master's degree at Tyndale Seminary.

Moreover, we are consulting with Dr. Brian Craig, the CBOQ leadership development director, to explore the possibilities of taking a specified number of courses that CBOQ can recognize, so that our leaders who take these courses can work toward being accredited part-time CBOQ pastors. Hopefully, we can also partner with Pastor Cousins and the TIM Centre through the Life-Long Learning program to make such leadership development possible.

Two Realities and Realizations toward Integrative and Incarnational Initiatives

In light of our missional mandate to start and reproduce GCF-Canada satellites and to add value to our communities, we have discovered two realities and two realizations toward integrative and incarnational initiatives. Our desire is that these two sets of realities and realizations would move us forward in seeking to become multicultural and missional GCF satellites.

Our primary reality is this: "Our outreach events have been intentional, but have been focused on the attractional approach." We thank God for the specific times we were able to share the gospel through evangelistic events in church (e.g., Valentine's Day, Easter Sunday; Mothers' Day; Anniversary Sunday; Philippine Day; Christmas). We know that God has used the attractional approach in proclaiming the good news to pre-Christians. However, the reality is that we are having difficulty in bringing more people to church.

On the other hand, we have occasionally tried the incarnational approach through acts of kindness and community service (e.g., giving bottled water;

volunteering in homes for the homeless; hosting garage sales; donating in times of crisis). Though this approach is commendable, our acts of service have been few and far between. In other words, they have been part of a church campaign, not of the church culture.

In light of this reality, we have seen the value of realization number one: “To be healthy in our church outreach, we need to focus on loving our neighbor.” Though we need to keep proclaiming the gospel to those who would hear, we now realize that we are to be more intentional in going more often to our community and in serving continually our neighborhood (Mark 9:35; 10:43–45). We now know that we must integrate our efforts to share the gospel of grace with our efforts to serve the people as a gracious expression of love that comes from the gospel (Mark 12:31).

In addition, we learned Reality #2: “Our new church recently moved to a new area, but the area has many churches around it already.” GCF-Toronto has moved from a basement of a library in North York to a Chinese cultural center, and now to a college residence and conference center in Scarborough. Our current location is bigger than the other two sites, and has potential for expansion in it. However, this location is surrounded by a good number of other churches (including a big church near us).

In relation to this second reality, we now understand better Realization #5: “To reach out better to the people in and around our current location, we need to know our neighborhood and help meet the needs of the people there.” For now, God has providentially placed us where we are—right at the heart of the Centennial College Residence and Conference Centre. Is it not part of God’s divine appointment (Acts 16:9–10) that we are here now in order to reach the college students?

Aside from the students, our church has been able to reach the new Filipino immigrants. It seems that as immigrants ourselves, we are naturally being used by God to reach other immigrants in our area. If that is part of God’s sovereign plan for us (i.e., as immigrants, God wants us to reach other immigrants), can we intentionally know the needs of the new immigrants (not just Filipinos but also the other groups) in our neighborhood and seek to help meet their needs? Of course, it will be helpful to not just understand the demographics of our area, but to also appreciate the way God sovereignly placed us among them to reach out to them.

What four steps are we taking to equip and connect us to our neighborhood?

1. CBOQ has sponsored my missional training through the five-day (once a month) Axiom sessions with Forge Canada from February—June 2010.

2. Pastor David Devadason, who is passionate in reaching Hindus and Muslims, equipped the GCF-Toronto people on Friendship Evangelism for three Sundays afternoons beginning April 18, 2010.

3. Pastor Cousins is seeking to connect GCF-Toronto to a parachurch ministry focusing on student ministries (e.g., Power to Change) and to a church with passion to serve the community (e.g., Salvation Army), so we can partner in reaching our neighborhood.

4. Mie Tha Lah, a host program worker for Karen Youth in Toronto, who is a GCF-Toronto member and who joins our Multicultural Growth Group, is planning to introduce our church volunteers be part of a Host Program for new immigrants (i.e., two hours/week for six months of interaction time [e.g., shopping; theatre; English practice] with assigned new immigrant(s) to volunteer(s)[either individually or as a family]) to intentionally build relationships with people.

We realize that these are baby steps to seek to connect with our neighborhood and to serve our neighbors. May God honor such steps, so that GCF-Canada satellites will not simply plant churches, but seek to serve the communities where God sovereignly places us.

MISSIOLOGICAL ANALYSIS AND IMPLICATIONS TO DIASPORA GLOCAL MISSIONS

The church plant that is GCF-Toronto is now ministering in partnership with a network of Canadian churches, and we anticipate the ripple effects of her glocal ministry. The data provided in the previous section will now be analyzed through the lens of missions history and sociology in order to provide transferable concepts for other diaspora congregations.

Legacy of Colonial Missions Forces

Protestant mission in the Philippines began at the dawn of the twentieth century when the United States of America took possession of the Philippines from the Spaniards (1556–1898) at the Treaty of Paris in 1898. Today, adherents of the Roman Catholic and Protestant churches make up approximately 95 percent (see *Operation World*, “The Philippines”) of the Philippine

population. Due to this fact, the Philippines is considered to be the most Christian nation in Asia. Indeed, the Philippine Church is growing and the evangelicals are advancing.

However, when is a country or a nation considered reached or evangelized? There is an ongoing debate among mission practitioners about the moratorium of missions to what they call a reached country. Some mission pundits say that it is when there is a vibrant or mature national church that is fully self-supporting, self-governing, and self-propagating. If we use this measurement of success, then the Philippines is an evangelized nation. Consequently, foreign missionaries are no longer needed in the Philippines.

GCF, as described in the preceding section of this paper, is a legacy of American Conservative Baptist missionary work through the ministry of Rev. (and Mrs.) David Yount. The Baptists began their work in the Philippines in 1900. The Younts were deployed to the Philippines in 1967. However, it must be noted that at the time of the founding of GCF in 1978, the debate on moratorium was at its height. In fact, just a few years before, respected Filipino theologian, Emerito P. Nacpil, then president of Union Seminary in Manila, proclaimed that:

Cooperation between Asian and Western Christians can only be a partnership between the weak and the strong. And that means the continued dependence of the weak upon the strong and the continued dominance of the strong . . . In other words, the most missionary service a missionary under the present system can do today in Asia is to go home. (1971)

Had the Conservative Baptists followed the Pied Piper and succumbed to the trend of withdrawing foreign missionaries from the Philippines, and had the Younts not responded to the call of Christ to minister in the Philippines, one can only imagine the outcome of their decisions. We praise God for his providence and attribute the growth of GCF to Western missionaries such as the Younts and the many others who spent years of faithful service in foreign missions.

Yet, there remains the unfinished task of the Great Commission. For now, however, we give glory to God and celebrate the colonial missionaries who evangelized the Filipinos.

Filipino Global Scattering

Scattered: The Filipino Global Presence (Pantoja, Tira, and Wan 2004) is a compendium describing the global scattering of the Filipino people. In their seminal work, the contributors agreed that the Filipinos are widely scattered (in over 210 countries) for a divine purpose. The Filipino diaspora is caused mainly by economic and political reasons. However, Filipino missiologists noted that many Christian Filipinos in the diaspora are actively witnessing for Christ and planting churches. Migrant Filipino workers are found in the 10/40 window, particularly in the Buddhist, Islamic, Hindu, and Jewish worlds (Pantoja, Tira, and Wan 2004). They also can be found in the Western world, particularly in North America.

Evidently, their Filipino global presence (even on the oceans as seafarers) is an act of God. They are a providentially dispersed nation, destined to be heralds of the gospel. While many of them became born-again Christians while working abroad, many also have lived out their faith wherever they are. This is the case of many Filipino immigrants in GTA who have become members of GCF-Toronto.

Diaspora Filipinos, therefore, are not only subjects of evangelism but can be mobilized to help fulfill the *missio Dei*! Revisiting the topic of moratorium and global partnerships for missions, one is amazed at the providence of God in raising Filipinos to partner with the whole church in bringing the whole gospel to the whole world.

GCF, specifically GCF-Toronto's, global vision and mission is to become a missional congregation—ministering both globally and locally simultaneously. It is important to nurture their vision and support their mission in order for them to reach other diasporas in Canada. We appeal for practical partnerships with like-minded individuals and organizations for kingdom advance. Reaching the diasporas in GTA requires healthy partnerships.

Glocal Missions: GCF-Toronto Agenda and Ripple Effects

Andrew Walls, a former missionary to Sierra Leone and Nigeria and founder of the Centre for the Study of Christianity in the non-Western World at the University of Edinburgh seems prophetic in his description of the new reality of diasporas and Christianity. In his unpublished paper, "The Future of Musicology: Musicology as Vocation" presented at the University of Aarhus in Denmark, Dr. Walls summarizes:

Another people movement began, as thousands upon thousands from Africa and Asia and Latin America came to Europe and North America. All the evidence suggests that this process will continue for the foreseeable future . . . It has brought Latin America to North America with immense force. It has made Hinduism and Sikhism and Islam into Western religions, and it has brought vast numbers of Christians of non-Western origin, to Europe and North America, often bringing with them expressions of Christian faith and practice new to the host societies in the West. (January 2010)

GCF-Toronto is but one example of this process. Diaspora congregations in Canada are on the rise as the flow of migration continues. However, GCF-Toronto seeks to be different, and while her ties to the homeland and her hub are evident as indicated by her choice of name “Greenhills Christian Fellowship” and affiliation with fifteen other GCF satellites, GCF-Toronto endeavors to be purposely missional, metropolitan, and multicultural in the city where God has placed her.

Seeking to be international and not Filipino by definition, GCF-Toronto seeks to bring people of diverse cultural backgrounds together, as Dr. Walls envisions, to “cohere, live, and learn together, all functioning as necessary organs in the Body of Christ; hearing each other’s stories, getting an inner realization of . . . the stories of others who live under the Cross.”

It is our hope that the GCF-Toronto model will inspire many other diaspora congregations to join in this movement of reaching beyond cultural borders, and partnering for the *missio Dei*. May there be a ripple effect of diaspora church plants across the country, and even around the world, cropping up as quickly as the waves of migration and God’s providence take them.

CONCLUSIONS

The church-planting strategy of GCF and GCF-Toronto is an exemplary case study of diversity in evangelical missions. It is also a model of diaspora missions in action as outlined by Evangelical Missiological Society President, Enoch Wan (2007), in that it is conceptually deterritorialized and multidirectional and that, in contrast to traditional missions strategies of sending and receiving, GCF moves providentially where God places people spatially and spiritually.

In diaspora missions and for GCF, every person outside the kingdom of God is priority, and these persons are everywhere. GCF, specifically GCF-Toronto, remembers that it is God who determines where people will live at certain times, so that wherever they are in the universe, they can call upon God and find God (Acts 17:26–28).

It is evident that GCF-Toronto is a product of a providential history, from the early missions initiatives of the colonial period in the Philippines to the great scattering of the Filipino peoples of the last three decades. In August 2007, Dr. Mary Wilder of Western Seminary said of the Filipinos, “100 years ago, the Filipinos were a mission field. Now, they are moving out to take their place in missions, reaching around the world in very creative ways!” Indeed, we affirm GCF-Toronto’s role as a diaspora church reaching the world in our diverse nation. May her model be emulated by diaspora congregations in Canada and everywhere around the globe.

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