

Note: This Work has been made available by the authority of the copyright owner solely for the purpose of private study and research and may not be copied or reproduced except as permitted by the copyright laws of Canada without the written authority from the copyright owner.

Santos, Narry F. "What's a Missionary Doing in Canada? The Story of Greenhills Christian Fellowship," In *Green Shoots out of Dry Ground: Growing a New Future for the Church in Canada*, edited by John Bowen, Pages 97-110. Eugene Ore: Wipf & Stock, 2013.

Green Shoots out of Dry Ground

Growing a New Future for the Church in Canada

JOHN P. BOWEN, EDITOR

WIPF & STOCK • Eugene, Oregon

GREEN SHOOTS OUT OF DRY GROUND
Growing a New Future for the Church in Canada

Copyright © 2013 John P. Bowen. All rights reserved. Except for brief quotations in critical publications or reviews, no part of this book may be reproduced in any manner without prior written permission from the publisher. Write: Permissions, Wipf and Stock Publishers, 199 W. 8th Ave., Suite 3, Eugene, OR 97401.

Wipf & Stock
An Imprint of Wipf and Stock Publishers
199 W. 8th Ave., Suite 3
Eugene, OR 97401
www.wipfandstock.com

ISBN 13: 978-1-61097-862-0
Manufactured in the U.S.A.

All scripture quotations, unless otherwise indicated, are taken from the New Revised Standard Version Bible, copyright 1989, Division of Christian Education of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the United States of America. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

7

What's a Missionary Doing in Canada?

The Story of Greenhills Christian Fellowship

Narry F. Santos

FIVE YEARS AGO, MY church in the Philippines sent me, along with my family, to do church-planting in Canada. This act of sending a missionary to Canada raises unfamiliar questions for Canadians. In particular, Why would a missionary be sent to Canada? Is Canada really a mission field needing evangelizing and the planting of new churches?

PREPARATION FOR A VISION BEYOND THE PHILIPPINES

IN 1994, I STARTED serving as Christian Education Pastor at the Greenhills Christian Fellowship (GCF), a thirty-three-year-old church founded by a Baptist missionary from the United States, which now has fifteen satellites (or church plants) in the Philippines and six in Canada. Three years into my GCF Christian Education ministry, the senior pastor asked me to begin GCF-South Metro, the first GCF satellite south of Manila. I agreed, and was blessed to see GCF-South Metro grow and help launch three other satellites farther south of Manila.

In light of this experience, in its fifth year, GCF-South Metro leaders sensed that the Philippines was too small a place for our response to the

Green Shoots out of Dry Ground

Great Commission, and that our mission was meant to be nothing less than global, though there was no opportunity for us to bring that conviction to fruition.

However, in the next three years we saw an exodus of five families from GCF-South Metro. They left one after another, in order to migrate to Toronto. At that time, I felt frustrated and discouraged. After investing in the discipleship and leadership development of these families—one leader even served as the chairman of our church board—I saw them leave our spiritual home. It took two years before these frustrating circumstances turned into hope-filled confirmation.

The GCF senior pastor then asked me to start the first GCF satellite outside the Philippines. I agreed, seeing that this was confirmation of our opportunity to minister globally. When we explored where we were to be sent, Toronto became the designated mission field. Why? Toronto was the city that the five families called their new home. These families could then be part of the core leadership team, who would take the lead in launching GCF-Toronto.

In 2005, we challenged these five families to take ownership of the vision to start GCF-Toronto. By faith, they accepted the challenge and owned the vision. We now understand in hindsight that what started as a frustrating experience of an exodus from our church in the Philippines was to be transformed into a fresh experience of church planting in Canada.

Another reason we saw Toronto as a mission field was that this city is a favourite destination for immigrants from the Philippines. Out of the four hundred thousand Filipino-Canadians, about half reside in the Greater Toronto Area. There are more than 102,000 Filipino-Canadians who call Toronto their home. We sensed that God was about to use dispersed Filipino Christians—the diaspora—to reach Filipinos and other ethnic groups in Canada.

Thus my family and I were sent off to Canada by the GCF mother church and the Philippine satellites in April 2007 to help fulfill the GCF vision of reaching people “through satellites in strategic areas worldwide.” Toronto was to be the starting point for our new global missions assignment.

GCF-CANADA CHURCH-PLANTING VISION AND ITS UNFOLDING STORY

The GCF-Canada church-planting vision is directly linked to the birth of GCF-Toronto. GCF-Toronto was officially launched as the first

international GCF satellite on 6 May 2007, at the Centennial Community Centre in Toronto. A month later, we discussed three affirmations of prime importance at our first prayer, vision-casting, and planning retreat for leaders. The three affirmations may be summarized as follows: (1) We are all placed in Toronto by God's providence; (2) We will not be a Filipino church in Toronto; and (3) GCF-Toronto will be a church-planting church. The leaders agreed with these affirmations and committed to take part in this Canadian church-planting vision. As a result of the GCF-Toronto leaders' commitment to this church-planting vision, the GCF-Canada "Triple Vision" was conceived. This vision is taken from the process implied in Acts 1:8. Mission begins in Jerusalem, then progresses into Judea and Samaria, and peaks at "the ends of the earth." For the first seven-year cycle (2007–2014), we are trusting God to bring about this GCF-Canada Strategic Vision: seven GCF satellites in seven years in four provinces of Canada (Ontario, British Columbia, Alberta, Manitoba). The vision unfolds in three movements:

GCF-Toronto Triple Vision

The vision to launch GCF-Toronto (our "Jerusalem")

+

The vision to birth GCF-Peel (our "Judea and Samaria")

+

The vision to birth GCF-Vancouver (our "Ends of the Earth")

GCF-Peel Triple Vision

The vision to launch GCF-Peel (our "Jerusalem")

+

The vision to birth GCF-York (our "Judea and Samaria")

+

The vision to birth GCF-Winnipeg (our "Ends of the Earth")

GCF-Vancouver Triple Vision

The vision to launch GCF-Vancouver (our "Jerusalem")

+

The vision to birth GCF-Surrey (our "Judea and Samaria")

+

The vision to birth GCF-Calgary (our "Ends of the Earth")

Green Shoots out of Dry Ground

Once this first cycle of the GCF-Canada Triple Vision is fulfilled, GCF-Canada will pause, pray, and plan for a second cycle. God willing, the next GCF-Canada Triple Vision will be by countries: (1) GCF-Canada as our “Jerusalem”; (2) GCF-USA as our “Judea and Samaria”; and (3) GCF-Australia as our “ends of the earth.”

As God confirmed the GCF-Canada Triple Vision to us, God gradually opened doors to make the launch of these new satellites possible. Three months into our GCF-Toronto launch, we received a request to start GCF-Peel. In response, we started small “growth groups” for Christians interested in growing spiritually and being involved, in two areas of Peel—Mississauga and Brampton. In September 2007, we held two “preview” worship services, and shortly afterward started weekly services until GCF-Peel was finally launched at Easter in 2008.

In early 2008, we challenged a few former GCF members who now live in Vancouver to consider starting GCF-Vancouver. In response, they formed one growth group in March, another group later in the year. These two groups became the core team, conducting monthly and later biweekly preview services in 2009 and weekly services in January 2010. On 2 May 2010, this satellite was launched officially, with a former GCF satellite pastor from Manila serving as the full-time GCF-Vancouver Pastor.

In 2011, we saw the birth of GCF-York, the “Judea and Samaria” satellite of the GCF-Peel Triple Vision. Four families from GCF-Peel volunteered to be involved in this satellite, along with three families living in Vaughan. God also sent an elder from GCF-Toronto, who sensed a call to serve this satellite, volunteering his time and efforts while studying at Tynedale Seminary. This core team began with two new growth groups, and held worship services, increasing from monthly to biweekly and finally to weekly services, until GCF-York was officially launched on 5 June 2011.

As well as seeing God start new satellites by this process of church “birthing,” we also saw God open doors to having new satellites “by adoption.” In early 2009, a Winnipeg pastor requested that GCF-Toronto consider adopting the church plant he had initiated the previous year as part of the GCF family of churches. In the spring of that year, a Calgary church planter was referred to us as a possible GCF partner. This pastor asked if the church plant he was planning to start in 2009 could be part of the GCF family.

Because GCF to this point had always started satellites from scratch, we were initially hesitant about these two requests. In the sixteen satellites that had been launched by GCF in the past sixteen years, we had

intentionally initiated the work in different strategic areas. However, we sensed that these requests from Winnipeg and Calgary warranted our prayer and discussion, believing that this might be a supplementary way to fulfill God's Triple Vision for us.

GCF-CANADA LEADERSHIP SUMMIT AND GCF-CANADA COVENANT

At the first GCF-Canada Leadership Summit held in the spring of 2009, GCF-Toronto leaders agreed that they were open to the idea of satellite development by "adoption." At that summit, sixty-eight delegates from GCF-Toronto, GCF-Peel, and GCF-Vancouver also agreed on the value of the GCF-Canada Vision in light of our multicultural realities and changing circumstances in Canada.

That summit also saw the signing of a manifesto intended to catalyze the formation of a "GCF-Canada Covenant," to establish a framework of unity and partnership among the different parts of GCF-Canada. This Covenant specifies four points of agreement—mission, vision, statement of faith, and ethos. These are the values intended to shape the unity of all satellites in Canada, and to serve as the framework as we continue to "birth" and "adopt" GCF satellites.

The GCF-Canada Covenant also specifies three governing perspectives: "GCF-Canada shall be missional, metropolitan, and multicultural in its strategies and ministries."

1. *Missional* speaks of churches: the satellites will intentionally seek to multiply themselves, following the Triple Vision, and will incarnationally add value to our communities.
2. *Metropolitan* speaks of communities: the satellites will strategically minister in urban centres, targeting our cities.
3. *Multicultural* speaks of the country: satellites will deliberately be on a mission to the diaspora of "all nations," that is, reaching out to immigrants in countries that are open to receiving different ethnic groups.

Thus, by God's grace, GCF-Canada will continue to multiply and reproduce missional churches in metropolitan communities in the multicultural context of Canada.

Satellite Development Shift: Both Birthing and Adopting

With the ratified GCF-Canada Covenant in hand, we went for an exploratory visit to Winnipeg in the summer of 2009. We were sent by GCF-Peel because they regarded Winnipeg as the best location for their “ends of the earth” satellite. We met the pastor and the core leaders of the new church plant hoping to be adopted, presented to them the GCF-Canada Covenant, told them the GCF-Canada two-year story of satellite development, and joined in the meetings of their two small groups and their worship service.

On their end, the Winnipeg group agreed to present to their people the option that their new work be adopted as GCF-Winnipeg, to pray about it for one month, and to inform us of their decision at the end of August. In a month, they informed us of the group’s decision to be adopted as GCF-Winnipeg. We visited Winnipeg again in the fall to sign the official Memorandum of Agreement between GCF-Canada and the new group. This marked a major shift in our GCF-Canada policy: as well as birthing daughter churches, we can now adopt new churches. As a result, GCF-Winnipeg was launched as a satellite on 2 October 2011.

We then explored the possibility of adopting the new Calgary church plant as GCF-Calgary. We presented to the pastor and his leadership group the GCF mission, vision, statement of faith, ethos, and the GCF-Canada Covenant. Two weeks later, they committed to be part of the GCF-Canada family of churches. We returned to Calgary in October to conduct satellite development training, to take part in their small group sessions, to participate in their worship service, and to sign a memorandum of agreement.

When we asked the pastor in Calgary and his leaders why they chose to be part of the GCF-Canada family—knowing that we were just over two years old then, and that we had meagre resources to aid them—they replied that they wanted to be identified with a group that has a clear vision of planting churches in Canada and beyond. As a result, GCF-Calgary was officially launched as a satellite in May 2010.

Thus, in its first four years, GCF-Canada has seen the launch of six satellites: GCF-Toronto (May 2007); GCF-Peel (March 2008); GCF-Vancouver (May 2010); GCF-Calgary (May 2010); GCF-York (June 2011); and GCF-Winnipeg (October 2011). God allowed us to see this fruit as part of our intentional effort to plant churches throughout Canada.

WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED THROUGH THIS PROCESS?

Our GCF-Canada story has not only been a journey of planting new churches but a story of learning missional and intercultural lessons in a multicultural ministry context. These lessons came in the form of two encouragements and two challenges facing GCF-Canada.

Encouraging Lesson #1: Strategic Partnership with Like-Minded Groups

Since there are no Baptists of our particular denomination in Canada, we decided to partner with a like-minded family of churches, the Canadian Baptists of Ontario and Quebec (CBOQ) for GCF-Toronto, GCF-Peel, and GCF-York, and the Canadian Baptists of Western Canada (CBWC) for GCF-Vancouver, GCF-Calgary, and GCF-Winnipeg. It is affirming to belong to a bigger family of churches whose mission and vision resonate with ours. In addition, CBOQ committed to support the GCF-York church plant for three years, while CBWC has supported the church plants of GCF-Vancouver, GCF-Calgary, and GCF-Winnipeg for two years. We are blessed to be part of a larger family that comes to our side and assists us in fulfilling God's vision.

We are also blessed to have an ongoing partnership with the Tyndale Intercultural Ministries (TIM) Centre. Since we wanted to learn how to become missional and intentionally intercultural, God provided the TIM Centre as our partner to teach us major lessons about these approaches. This partnership began in the fall of 2008 when the centre's director, Robert Cousins, conducted an eight-week class for fifteen of our GCF-Toronto leaders on "Preparing Leadership for Intercultural Ministry." This class was followed by an ongoing coaching relationship with Robert that began the following September. Through consulting, teaching, and preaching, he has come alongside our leaders to help us to apply missional and intentionally intercultural lessons.

When GCF-Toronto relocated to a ballroom at the Centennial College Residence and Conference Centre (CCRCC) for our worship services in May 2010, we sensed that God had a specific purpose for placing us in the midst of students. We discovered that the residence had four hundred students, one hundred of whom were international students. Since we did not have the experience and expertise to do campus ministry among international students, we saw the need to partner with International Students

Green Shoots out of Dry Ground

Ministries Canada (ISMC) in order to minister to these students. As a result, ISMC's Toronto director, Margery Topalian, now assists and coaches us on how to connect with and care for the international students in an ongoing manner.

Encouraging Lesson #2: Creative Training for Home-Grown Church Leaders

Aside from strategic partnerships with like-minded groups, our other encouraging lesson as a missionary church has been the creation of a training program for our church leaders. Since we cannot keep "importing" GCF-Philippines pastors for GCF-Canada (something we had done for Toronto, Vancouver, and Peel), by 2009 we saw the need to "home-grow" local leaders.

As a result, the TIM Centre sought and received approval from Tynedale Seminary to give our fifteen GCF leaders (and other church leaders from different ethnic groups) an eight-course, non-degree, diploma program called Foundations of Missional Ministry and Church Leadership. The eight courses are divided into two categories, four courses on missional ministry and four on church leadership, with each course requiring forty hours of class time and course work.

CBOQ has generously agreed to credential the graduates of this diploma program as Level Two Part-Time Pastors or Church Workers. CBOQ has also given GCF-Toronto a Barnabas Initiative Grant to support this leadership development program. Discussions are continuing through CBWC, seeking to explore possibilities in Western Canada for a similar program to train the leaders of our Vancouver, Calgary, and Winnipeg churches. These training opportunities are critical in developing healthy satellites that will later be able to reproduce other healthy and multiplying satellites.

Challenging Lesson #1: Learning How to Become Missional

The first challenge is to keep learning how to become missional in our ministry. We desire to add value to our *community*, realizing the importance of a theology of place: that is, God has a purpose for us to fulfill in the neighbourhood where God has placed us. But we have had to realize that missional ministry takes time and that engaging in this kind of ministry can be difficult. In the past three years of experimenting with how to

become missional, we feel that we are just taking baby steps in the long journey of developing relationships of trust with our community, and of seeking to love our neighbour.

Yet even in these baby steps, we have seen God open opportunities to serve and show acts of kindness—for example, to the international students at the CCRCC. After much prayer, we approached the CCRCC Community Life Coordinator in September 2010 to ask her how we could serve the international students. She replied that we could help by carrying the bags of new and returning students on the students' "Move-In Day."

After that, the coordinator allowed us to hold some holiday events: a Canadian Thanksgiving dinner for the one hundred international students; a Christmas lunch for ten international students in the week before Christmas; three Ontario Family Day luncheons for thirty-five international students, hosted by twenty church members at the college-run restaurant; a seminar with an immigration lawyer from our church for forty-two international students in April; and an Easter dinner for eighty international students. As a result, I was able to conduct weekly Bible studies with three international students (two from mainland China and one from India) during the spring semester.

Then, toward the end of the school year, the coordinator phoned to tell me that of all their residence activities for the school year, including the events sponsored by the church, those related to international students had received much commendation. Apparently, that year had seen the highest number of international students ever to be involved in community events. She requested a meeting with me to personally thank the church, and to ask us to be involved in planning the next school year's student events since CCRCC now considers us part of their community. In addition, she gave us permission to have a Thursday evening "Chips and Chow," an informal get-together to play games, eat chips, and practise English conversation with the international students.

Challenging Lesson #2:

Learning How to Become Intentionally Intercultural

The second challenging lesson that we are faced with is to keep learning how to become intentionally intercultural. Since I am a pastor of Filipino ethnic background and our church leaders are of the same background, many of the people who have been coming to church are Filipino Canadians. Therefore, we need to be intentional if we are to become intercultural.

Green Shoots out of Dry Ground

In 2008, GCF-Toronto hired a part-time Youth Ministry Worker who was born and raised in Toronto, but whose parents originally came from Trinidad and Tobago. Three years ago, the TIM Centre director began to coach our leaders on how to take practical steps to move toward an intentionally intercultural ministry. Then, two years ago, a Karen leader from Myanmar was elected as a member of our satellite council.

Though these baby steps have yielded baby results, we are challenged not to give up on this journey. In fact, since mid-2011, GCF-Toronto has seen some open doors of communication and service to the residents of Tuxedo Court, a high-need area in Scarborough, Ontario, housing over five thousand people in five buildings, one of which is part of Toronto Community Housing Corporation (TCHC). In Tuxedo Court, 81 percent of residents are considered visible minorities, many of them South Asians, and, in the 2006 census, the unemployment rate was 14.8 percent, compared to the 6.7 percent average for the rest of Toronto.

As a result of prayer and a visit to Tuxedo Court in the summer of 2011, a couple from the church started a weekly Bible study there with three elderly Filipino women. This has now grown to eleven residents, from a variety of ethnic backgrounds. The church was also able to host a Canada Day celebration in the party room of the building. We brought South Asian delicacies, performed a traditional dance, sang special songs, and gave a message of hope in both Tamil and English. Forty-three residents came, half of them South Asians, and thirty-nine church members helped in the food and program preparation.

This relationship-building event was followed by a summer barbeque in the backyard of the TCHC housing at the end of the summer, and by a Christmas party for the residents in December. These events have led to two worship services, one in March and the other in April 2012, in Tuxedo Court, attended by twenty-three residents and led by those who attend the Tuesday Bible studies. These residents were also visited during the week and prayed for in their homes.

In these ways, we are able to see more fruit coming out of our intentional intercultural ministry. But I look forward to the time when different ethnic groups will not only be present in GCF but will be partners in serving, leading, and guiding GCF's ministries.

MY PERCEPTION OF THE CHURCH IN CANADA

I would like to share my limited understanding of the church in Canada during my five-year residence in Toronto, and my church-planting experience in the GTA and some cities in Western Canada. This limited understanding is nuanced by my exposure to and involvement with the ministry of the Canadian Baptists for the past four years. In this light, I present two areas of strength and two areas for growth.

Two Areas of Strength

The first area of strength that I see in the Canadian church is the presence of long-term established churches, along with parachurch groups, seminaries, and mission agencies, which provide a legacy of valuable lessons in ministry. The Canadian church has had a wide range of opportunities during past decades to serve in different contexts—rural, urban, church planting, First Nations, and international students. The Canadian Baptists, with whom we are now linked, for example, began in 1889, and have engaged Canadian culture through multifaceted ministries such as church plants, contextual outreach, mission catalysts, social justice, and ministry to refugees.

The second area of strength I observe is the rich array of church and mission resources. These resources are available for pastoral training and for the development of emerging church leaders. Resources also come in the form of finances, facilities, and systems that can make church ministry more effective. Our denomination, for example, has created clear guidelines for ministry placement (through a manual on the topic) and for human resources (through the personnel handbook), offers ongoing means of communication (through the Canadian Baptist magazine and several e-news services for church, pastors, and youth), provides annual grants for new ministry endeavours, and has given upgrades in ministry and leadership skills for emerging and established pastoral leaders (through new pastors' orientation and Reignite conferences).

Two Areas for Growth

In addition to these two areas of strength, I observe two areas for potential growth for the church in Canada. First, it seems to me that, given the changing times and circumstances in the nation, there is a need for more

Green Shoots out of Dry Ground

willingness on the part of the Canadian church to make needed changes in how to minister—for example, providing more training for church planters and evangelists.

One observable change in the Canadian church landscape has been the decline in attendance over recent decades. While there is admittedly some variation in the statistics, the clear trend over the last fifty years is a considerable decline in weekly church attendance.

Another major change in Canada over the last few decades has been the steady replacement of Christian values with secular ones. Bruce Clemenger, president of the Evangelical Fellowship of Canada, observed that Canada is in transition: “In the aftermath of a period of rapid secularization, Canada is searching for a clearer sense of its identity amidst the diversity of culture, race, religion, lifestyle, social, and political visions.”¹

In light of this trend, the church in Canada could benefit from a greater willingness to make major adjustments in ministry. One such adjustment is the move toward becoming more incarnational, integral, or missional in our approach to ministry. As GCF-Canada has learned the importance of adding value to our community and of loving our neighbour, the church in Canada can also be more intentional in doing this kind of missional ministry to those in our community.

I also observe the need for traditional churches to be more open to recognizing the role and contribution of diaspora Christians, and of missionary churches, to the cause of Christ in Canada. According to the United Nations Development Program, there are now 214 million international migrants. All nations have been affected by this international mass migration.

By the end of 2008, Canada had a total of 302,303 foreign workers as temporary migrant workers, had granted initial entry to 233,971 foreign students, had welcomed 27,956 refugees, and had given 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, the Philippines, the United States, Pakistan, the United Kingdom, Iran, South Korea, France, and Colombia. 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.

1. Jim Coggins, “The State of the Canadian Church,” *Canadian Christianity* (21 December 2007), www.canadianchristianity.com/faith/state-canadian-church-part-iii-christians-danger-persecuted-minority.

In other words, the immigrants who come to Canada are a huge mission field. They can be reached for Jesus while they are here among us. Immigrant Christians can also be mobilized to partner with missionary and established churches to serve other immigrants as well as Canadian-born residents. The sooner established churches can see the potential of the diaspora, and the value of missionary churches, the better prepared the church of Canada will be to have an intentionally intercultural ministry and to develop a fresh or renewed passion for church-planting.

THE FUTURE: WHAT MISSIONARY CHURCHES AND ESTABLISHED CHURCHES CAN LEARN FROM EACH OTHER

Finally, I would like to offer two lessons that can be learned from missionary churches, and two lessons that can be learned from established churches. These two sets of lessons can help us see our shared value and unique contribution in building the body of Christ in Canada.

Two Lessons that Established Churches Can Learn from Missionary Churches

The first lesson that can be learned from missionary churches is their zeal in starting church plants and new ministries. These churches and leaders bring with them the passion and determination to plant churches and to pioneer new work in Canada as their host country, coming as they do from thriving, dynamic ministries in their home countries. The leaders of these missionary churches have either been officially sent to Canada to do ministry (as is my case and that of GCF ministry), or have arrived as new immigrants, later sensing the call of God to be part of church ministry in Canada. Either way, missionary churches thrive with a sense of destiny, eagerness, and passion for Jesus.

The second major lesson that can be contributed by missionary churches is a flexibility of approach and creativity of method in order to fulfill the mission in any area. Being relatively new in Canada, missionary churches are teachable and eager to learn how to become effective in ministry, given the different set of contexts, cultures, and circumstances. They are quick to make changes, open to experiment, and keen on flexing whenever there is a need to adjust. They are committed to becoming students of culture and people in their area of assignment.

Green Shoots out of Dry Ground

Two Lessons that Missionary Churches Can Learn from Established Churches

I also see two lessons that missionary churches can learn from established churches. The first is the importance of stable structures and support systems for the church's ministry. The stability that these resources offer comes out of a wealth of experience in doing faithful ministry, and surfaces from a reservoir of programs and projects that worked in their time and context. From these sets of effective practices have arisen principles and perspectives that missionary churches need to consider in their new work.

The second crucial lesson to be gleaned from established churches is the depth of their understanding of different cultures and varying contexts for ministry in Canada. The established churches have been faithful ministers over the past decades. They have been witnesses to changes in Canadian culture and in their communities in relation to different aspects of life. Brian Stiller, former president of Tyndale University College and Seminary, observed that the established Canadian church has a better sense of how the Gospel touches the intellectual, social, physical, and spiritual dimensions of life.² Missionary churches and leaders must learn this lesson, especially those of us who are simply content to proclaim the good news of Jesus without being sensitive to the social needs of the poor and dispossessed.

My prayer for the church in Canada is that our missionary and established churches can learn how much we need each other and that we are partners in building God's kingdom in Canada and beyond.

2. Ibid.