

7 Reasons to Live Among, In and With Your Neighbourhood



A CRC Communications Webinar Presented by Karen Wilk
September 17, 2014

Why Neighbourhood?



Seven Reasons



1. God IS IN the neighbourhood.

Shekinah, the visible glory of God is described (already in Exodus) as taking up long term residency in a neighbourhood; God makes His dwelling place in the midst of the people, where they live. Exodus 24:16, 40:35; Numbers 9:16-18.

- *I live here too—I, GOD, live in the same neighborhood with the People of Israel.* Numbers 35:34 MSG
- *I'll set up my residence in your neighborhood; I won't avoid or shun you; I'll stroll through your streets. I'll be your God; you'll be my people.* Leviticus 26:11-12a MSG

WHAT IF God lives next door?

"Shout and celebrate, Daughter of Zion! I'm on my way. I'm moving into your neighborhood!" GOD's Decree.

Zechariah 2:10

"I heard a voice thunder from the Throne: 'Look! Look! God has moved into the neighborhood, making his home with men and women! They're His people, He's their God.'"

Revelation 21:3

**The Word became flesh and blood,
and moved into the neighbourhood.
John 1:14 MSG**



Jesus in the neighbourhood

- ❑ **For 30 years!**
- ❑ **Known as JESUS OF NAZARETH**

The teaching and ministry of Jesus only underlines the fact that covenant relationship with God is intimately tied in with the health of neighbourhood relationships. Holt



**According to both Old & New Testaments,
neighbourhoods and neighbourly
relationships play host to the
presence of God.**

Simon Carey Holt, *God Next Door*

Why Neighbourhood?

- 1. God IS IN the neighbourhood.**
- 2. Loving our neighbours _____**



Why Neighbourhood?

1. God IS IN the neighbourhood.
2. Loving our neighbours
IS GOD'S COMMAND.

Love your Neighbour

You shall love your neighbour as yourself.

Matthew 19:19b, Matthew 22:39-40, Mark 12:31

You do well if you really fulfill the royal law according to the Scripture, "You shall love your neighbour as yourself.

James 2:8, Romans 13:8, 15:2, Gal.5:14

.... **"Do it and you'll live."** (Jesus) Luke 10:28

God calls us to be attentive to our neighbours.

- Neighbourly relationships were essential for survival and played a central role in everyday life...
- More than **40** specific laws are directed toward neighbourhood relationships as well as the last **5** of the 10 commandments!
 - “Shall not”s
 - “Shall”s



Love your Neighbour

- **Neighbour** is ‘the person right in front of your nose’
- **Love-** is a call to relationships of responsibility; to act in a neighbourly way (vs. affection and intimacy)
- The version in Lev.19:18 occurs 4 times in the Hebrew Bible... better translated “**to be of use to**” – be beneficial to... practical, daily, helpful....
- Restated **9 times** in New Testament



Why Neighbourhood?

1. God has moved into the neighbourhood.
2. Loving our neighbours is God's command.
3. When God goes on mission, Godself sends and goes in person and in place.

When God goes on mission- *sends*-
it is in person and place.

- Moses to Egypt...
- Jonah to Ninevah
- Ruth to Bethlehem
- Nehemiah to Judah

God sent Abraham, Esther, Deborah, Joshua,
Jonah and all the prophets (2 Chron. 24:19)

**When God goes on mission- sends-
it is in person and place.**

**Jesus sends the 70/72 to 'remain' in the
neighbourhood –Luke 10**



When the church is 'placeless' it struggles for ...

1. An authentic way to relate to and take responsibility for its immediate neighbourhood.
 2. An authentic way to practice the greatest Commandment and follow Jesus...
- And the local neighbourhood is impoverished and weakened as it lacks the tangible Presence of Jesus living amongst...

*This is the difference between being stake
holders vs. service providers.*

Why Neighbourhood?

1. God has moved into the neighbourhood.
2. Loving our neighbours is God's command.
3. When God goes on mission, it is always in person and in place.
4. **Proximity and Presence are important for bearing witness ... the Kingdom of God *COMES NEAR*.**

The Tangible Kingdom – a video courtesy of
tangiblekingdom.com

Proximity is important if we are to...

- *Love one another that the world may know*
John 13:35
- *Demonstrate the Oneness of the Body*
John 17, 1 Corinthians 12, Romans 12
- *Do life together bearing witness*
Acts 2:42-47, 1 Peter 2:9

And I keep praying that this faith we
hold in common keeps showing up
in the good things we do, and that
people recognize Christ in all of it.
Philemon 1:6 MSG

The church is the **PERSONAL** presence of
God through the Spirit in the world. vanGelder

**"The Kingdom of God
is the Presence of Jesus
Himself."** Lesslie Newbigin
*The Gospel in a Pluralist
Society*

*In following, His
followers are the
Kingdom of God
where/when we are
'present'.*

Why Neighbourhood?

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3. When God goes on mission, it is always in person and in place.
4. Proximity is important-... *the Kingdom near*.
5. The early church was _____

5. *The early church was at home in the neighbourhood.*

They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, praising God and enjoying the favour of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved." Acts 2:46-47

Every day they were in the Temple and homes...Acts 5:42

...proclaiming the message to you and teaching you publicly and from house to house...Acts 20:20-21

The early church was incarnational...

5. The early church was at home/ in the neighbourhood.

Give my greetings to... and the church in her house.
Col.4:15

...and to the church in your house... Philemon 1:2

When the day arrived, they came back to his home with a number of their friends...Paul lived for two years in his rented house. He welcomed everyone who came to visit. Acts 28:23, 30

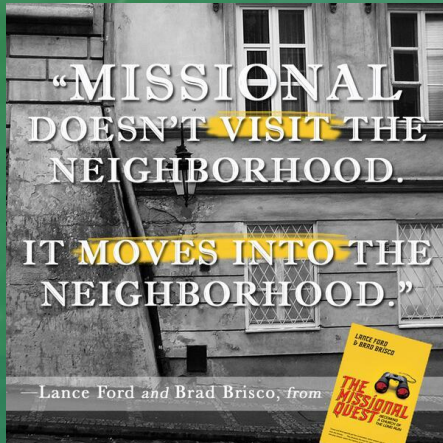
The early church was incarnational...

5. The early church was at home/ in the neighbourhood.

Every truly Christian household is a church, and as such, it is competent for the discharge of any function of divine worship, whatever it may be. Are we not all priests? Why do we need to call in others to make devotion a performance? Let every person be a priest in their own house. Are we not all royalty if we love the Lord? Then make your houses palaces of joy and temples of holiness. One reason why the early church had such a blessing was because her members had such homes. When we are like them we will have added to the church those who were being saved.

Excerpt from Charles H. Spurgeon's Acts 2 Sermon "Building the Church" April 5, 1874.

The early church was incarnational...



"The early church was local in character and mission...it was in the neighborhood.

As we look at the earliest communities of faith, what stands out is just how *local* in nature they were. In fact, it's fair to say they were *local* in character and mission before they were anything more grand or universal."

THE CALL TO...



- Neighbourhood is part of and important to being human... *We are neighbours.*
- Neighbourhood is important to the way God is encountered.
- Neighbourhood is important to the identity and mission of the church.

The call to neighbourhood is about seeking, living and breathing the redemptive peace and presence of God not in every place, but in this place, not in every relationship but in these relationships, those most immediately before us. Holt

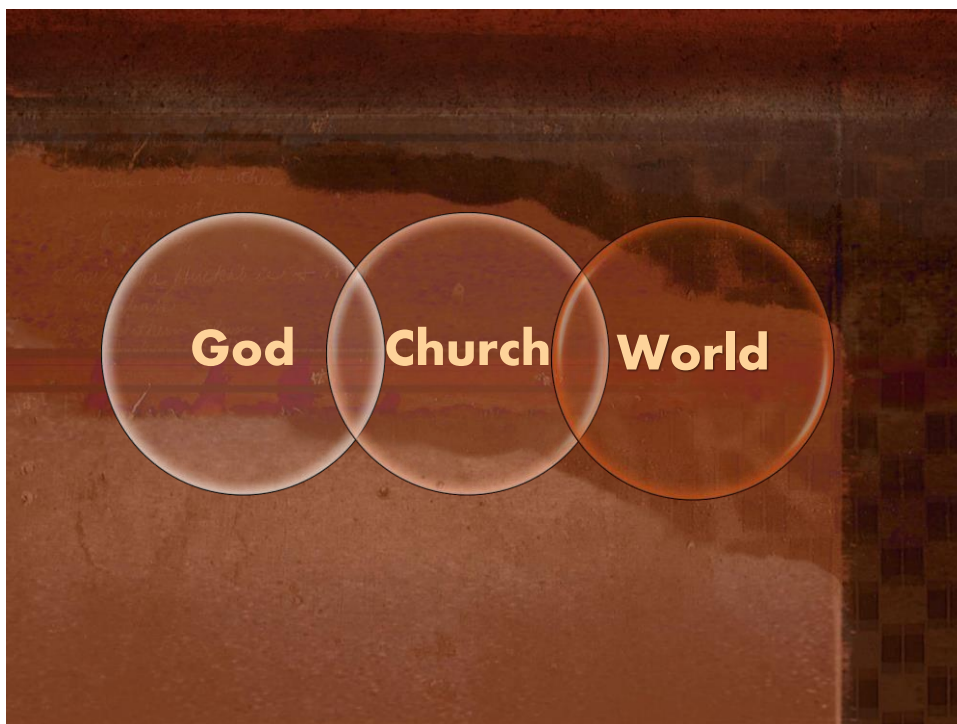
Why Neighbourhood?

1. God has moved into the neighbourhood.
2. Loving our neighbours is God's command.
3. When God goes on mission, it is always in person and in place.
4. Proximity is important...*the Kingdom of God comes near.*
5. Church is at home.
6. **We are called to be IN the world; living among others as "COMMUNITAS."**

...Jesus answered, "The kingdom of God is not coming with things that can be observed; ²¹nor will they say, 'Look, here it is!' or 'There it is!' For, in fact, **the kingdom of God is among you.**" Luke 17:20-21

The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Messiah, and he will reign forever and ever. Revelation 11:15

Your kingdom come. Your will be done, **on earth as it is in heaven.** Matt.6:9,10; Luke 11:2



Communitas

- *Community* has an inward focus.
Communitas has an outward focus.
- *Community* focuses on encouraging each other.
Communitas focuses on the mission.



COMMUNITAS A COMMUNITY ON MISSION

Community seeks to create a “safe place.”

***Communitas* seeks to transform lives and communities (neighbourhoods) bearing witness to the reign of God in this place!**

Community is something to be formed.

***Communitas* is something experienced in the pursuit of something greater.**

Why Neighbourhood?

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3. When God goes on mission, in person and in place.
4. Proximity is important... The Kingdom *comes near*.
5. Church is at home.
6. We are called to be IN the world as "communitas" among 'the nations' .
7. Nurturing 'abundant community' in our neighbourhoods is participation in and bears witness to the redemption of all things.

We take up our "PRIESTLY ROLE"...

Adding value~
SHALOM~
to the places where
we live and ~
*God transforms lives
and communities!*



What if....

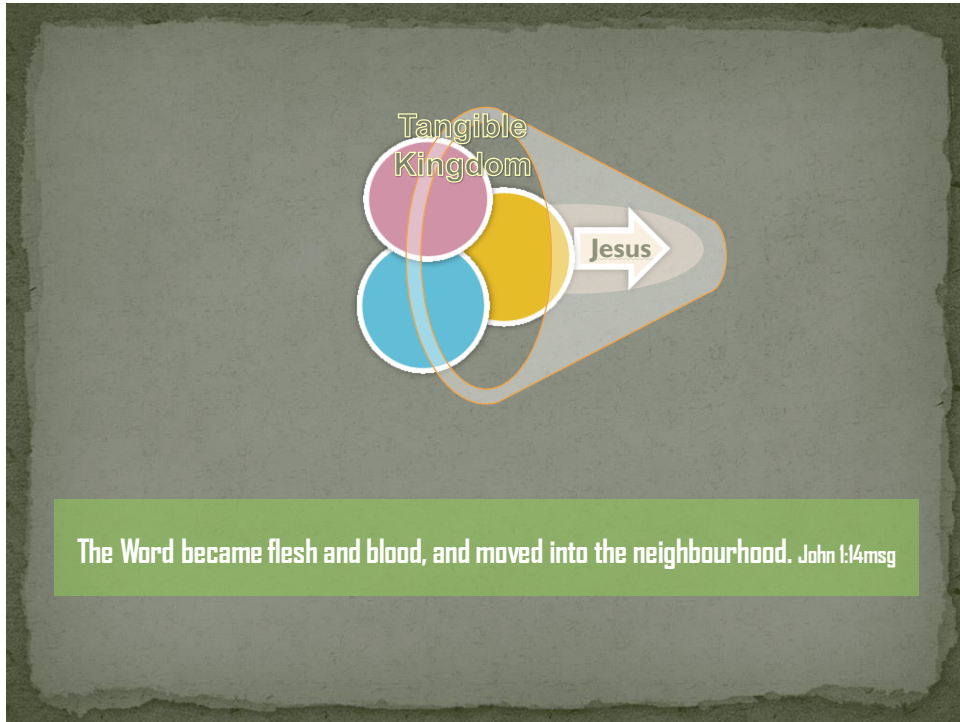
The Art of Neighboring a video from
Jay Pathak and Dave Runyon
Familychristian.com

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h2iJ7loirU0&feature=youtu.be>

***People will always be drawn to people
who look, smell and behave like Jesus...***

Tangible Kingdom, 178

The church is the **PERSONAL** presence of
God through the Spirit in the world. vanGelder



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Reflections,
Questions,
Take-away's

Take-away's
Questions
Reflections



GROWING
NEIGHBOURHOOD LOVE

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