



A list of the values that we've observed to be commonly shared among those who are gathering together in simple ways.

The Kingdom of God

- Our emphasis as Christians is on building the kingdom, not a church, or even “The Church.”
- New churches are planted and outreaches are planned in an endeavor to build the Kingdom of God, not necessarily a church or an organization.
- Allegiance within our groups and networks is to the King, not to the leadership within those groups and networks.

Ministry

- Ministry is allowed to flow naturally, both during gatherings and everyday life. It is not viewed as an event that must be scheduled, but one that occurs as directed by the Holy Spirit.
- Ministry is the right and function of all believers, not a select class or group and certainly not the exclusive function of the leadership.

Leadership and Accountability

- Leadership within each group of believers and across the wider networks is recognized and based on character, function and service rather than a title or office.
- The primary purpose of leadership to promote the spiritual growth of each believer so that their ministry to others can be stronger and more effective.
- Leadership is fluid, overlapping and never exclusive.
- Accountability, pastoring, teaching and encouraging is expected to happen naturally as a result of the relationships between believers, not because of a specific job description of those with the proper ministry “credentials.”

Structure

- Structure, organization and hierarchy is limited to however much is needed to accomplish a specific task or mission and dissolved afterwards.
- Central and authoritarian leadership is avoided in favor of leadership teams, flatter structures, and the empowerment and releasing of each believer into his/her place and function within the Body.
- Teaching is usually facilitated in the context of discussion and dialogue. Dissent and disagreement is allowed.
- Programs are de-emphasized and replaced with a dependency on the “behind-the-scenes” working of the Holy Spirit through obedient believers.

- Programs that exist are usually temporary for single or special events.
- Quality rather than quantity is used as a determination of success.
- Gatherings can be (and often are) pre-empted in favor of activities that satisfy Christian responsibilities to the poor and needy, both domestically and globally.

Finances and Giving

- Expenses of single-purpose buildings for use by the church are foregone in favor of simpler gathering spots, such as homes, offices, restaurants or any places not requiring regular rent payments.
- Expenses to support staff for the purpose of ministry are minimized in favor of volunteers and/or simpler programs.
- Believers are encouraged to give of their time and monetary resources, both collectively and individually, to those activities advocated by Christ, such as meeting the needs of poor and persecuted believers and the weaker, needier members of society.
- Often tithing is foregone in favor of sacrificial giving.

Corporate Worship

- The style, flavor and liturgy is determined by each individual group and grounded in their particular culture.
- A particular order of worship is often pre-empted by the workings of the Holy Spirit, and spontaneous expressions of worship are encouraged.
- Communion is usually observed within the context of a full meal and viewed as a metaphorical expression of the deep and authentic relationships enjoyed with each other as a result of Christ's death and resurrection.
- Children and teenagers are viewed as functioning members of the Body of Christ and are encouraged to participate in the worship and ministry during gathering times. Segregation is sometimes viewed as necessary due to shorter attention spans but is generally discouraged.

Evangelism and Our Relationship with Non-Believers

- Non-believers are welcomed into the friendship and fellowship of other believers as they are led to Christ rather than being separated from them.
- Believers purposefully engage the lost in their world and culture as a means to affect some.
- The importance of living in such a way that non-believers receive a taste of what it means to be a part of the Kingdom of God is valued as important a means of evangelism.

by the DFW Organic Church Connection Team

<http://www.story.house2house.com>