

Introduction

Lower Mountains Anglican gathers to proclaim Christ serving in mission (reaching those who do not know Jesus) and ministry (caring for those who do know Jesus) to the glory of God.

One of the tensions that exist in any effective church are the competing agendas – the *missional agenda* to ‘look out’ and the *ministry agenda* to ‘look in’ (all while looking up!).

The topic we focus on today, is how to help our Growth Groups to be intentional in sending members out.

In the *immediate*...

In the *short term*....

In the *long term*...

This topic relates to what we have already looked at concerning our *evangelism* (i.e. ‘Seminar 3B – Evangelism in Growth Groups’) and our *pastoral care* (i.e. ‘Seminar 3C – Pastoral Care in growth Groups’) – yet is distinct as we consider more what we actually do equip those in our groups to serve – some to be ‘sent’ out more permanently.

Diagnostic Question for Discussion:

Here is our stated goal for Growth Groups:

Growth Groups (and our other 'Grow' ministries) exist as a smaller expression of Lower Mountains Anglican Church - where the Bible is central - and where the group can explore, discuss, understand and apply God's Word – in order to prayerfully grow one another in Christian mission and ministry. These ministries are also the best place to offer deep and intentional pastoral care.

Think about your current Growth Group –

- a) In what ways does the Group intentionally equip its members (for mission or ministry)?

- b) In what ways does the Group intentionally look to multiply members?

Jesus the Sender

As we seek to serve God and others, there are some inevitable implications – you do what God calls us to do and you reach further afield than you would if you were only serving yourself!

Jesus modeled that pattern of outward looking discipleship.

⁵ These twelve Jesus sent out with the following instructions: “Do not go among the Gentiles or enter any town of the Samaritans. ⁶ Go rather to the lost sheep of Israel. ⁷ As you go, proclaim this message: ‘The kingdom of heaven has come near.’ ⁸ Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse those who have leprosy, drive out demons. Freely you have received; freely give. ⁹ “Do not get any gold or silver or copper to take with you in your belts— ¹⁰ no bag for the journey or extra shirt or sandals or a staff, for the worker is worth his keep. (Matt 10:5-10)

What do you notice?

Read Matt 9:35-38.

What was Jesus’ activity? What was his motivation? What was command?
What was his desire?

Discussion:

Think about your current Growth Group – one of the strengths of a Growth group is the space it provides to comfort and nurture the members. We come to value the friendships and the connections that we make. This is good.

Thinking about what Jesus did with his disciples: calling them together to send them away - what are the risks or weaknesses of a Growth Group who make that comfort and connection the most important thing?

Paul the Sent and the Sender

Read the following verses from Philippians. What do we learn about Paul's motivation and sending intention?

Phil 1:3-9

Phil 1:12-27

Phil 2:1-11

Phil 2:12-16

Phil 2: 19-30

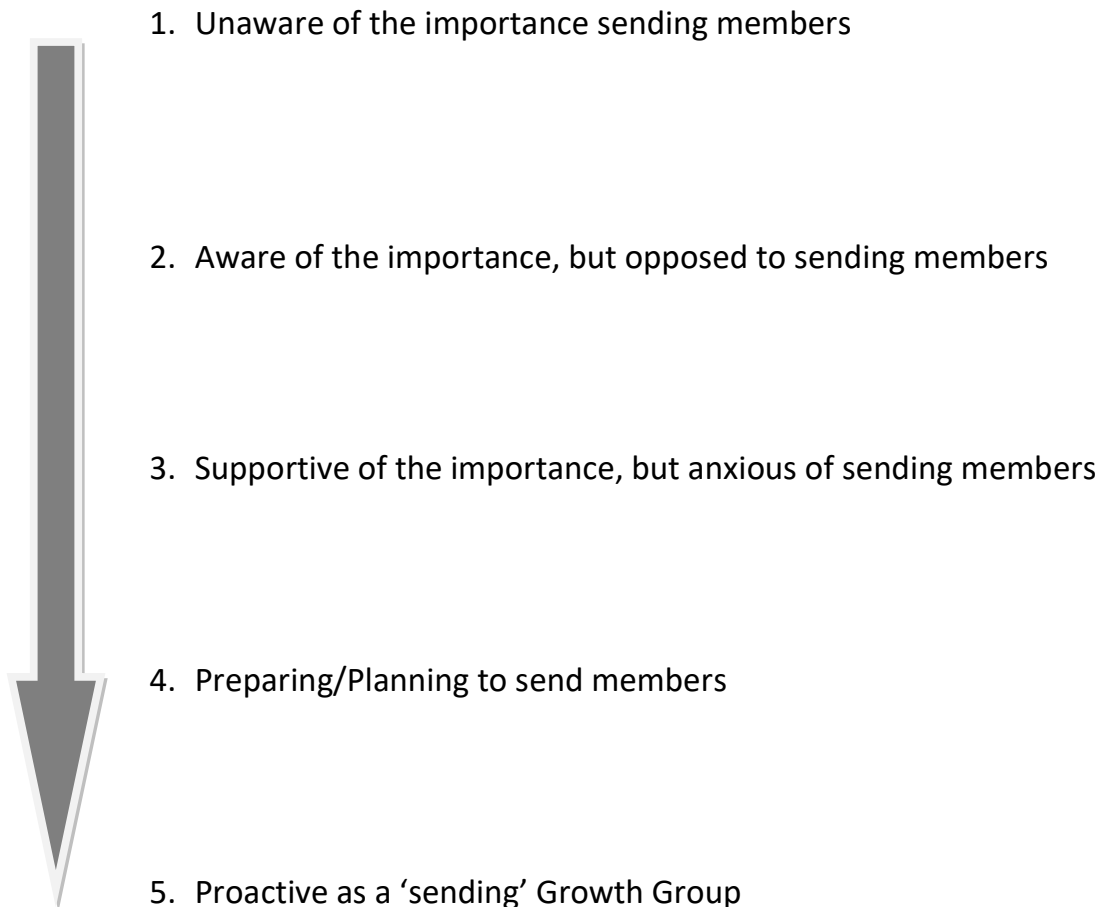
Discussion:

How do we encourage the same kind of gospel concern in our Growth Groups? A concern that both gathers members (to care and equip one another) and sends members (so that the gospel continues to spread)?

Becoming a Growth Group who Sends

Seeing the need to 'send' may in reality be a big jump to actually sending someone (or others) in mission in ministry?

Break down the steps – and consider what your Growth Group could do (and when) to help build a sending culture. Perhaps take some of the suggestions that were made in the previous exercise and place them into these steps.



Discussion:

What would need to happen to grow your group (under God) so that it became two groups?