

What do Missional Communities do?

by: Rob Wegner

If you look at what is happening in the church in the West, in terms of cultural proximity, best estimates say that we are within cultural proximity to 40 percent of the population. In other words, in a 10-mile radius of Granger Community Church, we have 310,000 people, and, at best, maybe 145,000 people are within reach of what we're doing currently.

But that means 60 percent, culturally, are not within reach of what we're doing, and they never will be. And that's a huge problem.

The reality is that the 60 percent is growing and the 40 percent is shrinking. So that means every subculture in our community needs a missionary presence. And that's on us.

We can't expect everyone to come to us and speak our language and embrace the culture that we're currently expressing the gospel and church through. So, with that in mind, a missional community becomes a platoon of people living together on mission to be the church among a pocket of people. Most groups are probably going to be 20 to 50 in size.

So for those people, it's kind of like a smaller church within the church, but they are living together to live outward beyond themselves to demonstrate the gospel and work and eat in their neighborhoods or workplace or the pocket of people that they're called to. But the pocket of people they're on mission with – their missional community - will be within the 40 percent.

Now, for the 60 percent, we actually use a different title. We call it an *essential church*. A missional community and an essential church mean basically the exact same thing. An essential church is again a platoon of people who go on mission to be the church among a pocket of people. It's a group of probably 20 to 50 people in size, and they are trying to bring the gospel in word and deed to a neighborhood, workplace, or their pocket of people.

An essential church is going to be focusing on a pocket of people that is in the growing 60 percent. So, essential churches are our strategy to reach these people who've never darkened the door of Granger Community Church. We're basically taking church to them; you plant the gospel and the church grows up out of it and reflects the culture that is being planted.