



9½ commandments for growth

We need and want churches to grow again - to thrive!

To achieve this we have to move out of our current inward way of thinking and engage again with the culture and with our local communities. We have an amazing life and world changing message that is more relevant than ever! We do not need to become 'the world', but to speak to our world with our incredible values, to challenge and demonstrate positive alternatives (love).

There are plenty of allies and friends as well as resources - energy, creativity and skills that can assist us positively, but we need an outward looking and generous approach, and to be sowing again in order to reap.



1. Make the most of our fantastic values

We have an amazing life and world changing message and values that are more relevant and attractive than ever, but these also get lost in obscure doctrine

and obsolete or mystifying language – keep it simple, relevant and positive.

2. Look outwards for resources

There is a lot of goodwill as well as untapped resources – we have to be creative and generous in our offer. We have great spaces, and opportunities for expression and community impact – people do want to be involved and connected.

3. Focus on new people

In an unchurched society we will not see 'natural' growth. The potential for growth in each community will be different e.g. young families, the recently retired, single parents – our resources and efforts need to be focussed in the context of particular local dynamics and opportunities.



4. Have a narrative and better communications

Be clear about the (other than the Sunday morning) offer that you want to make to your community; will you be their ‘home’, gallery, family, café – a fabulous place to care, connect, create or celebrate? How will you communicate in a coherent, consistent and quality way, the niche that you will occupy in their lives and in the life of your community?

5. Work with others that will add value

Who are you trying to reach? Research whom it is that is working well with them now. Who are the real local change agents? A local pub, popular with young families? Entrepreneurs, an art gallery, a school? Who can you work with, that really does know and has a positive reputation with your target group?

6. Rethink how your spaces feel

Make your spaces more welcoming, flexible, readable and navigable – lighter, more comfortable and with a range of spaces/zones – café, lounge, table etc. More colour and the wider creative use of all the spaces, signalling the change.

7. Take risks to release resources and energy

We need new models and we have to

release the resources and energy for new work – stopping what doesn’t work (or what we are trying to “keep going”) – create meaningful new celebrations and new traditions, releasing creativity of ourselves and others, bringing in new energy and resources from allies and making it pay!

8. Be disruptive and take symbolic actions

We can easily be noticed – to go from; “where is that?” to “what the f*ck is that?” We can change expectations as we have been forgotten or are seen as safe to ignore. Being creative, challenging and doing something new and positively disruptive to the dominant culture, you will get noticed.

9. Build a team

We need to attract new people – start with one or two – be clear about the change you want to make and the offer that you want to develop. Early events and allies will bring in new people who can develop into volunteers and leaders if encouraged – they will be keen to work on something new and positive.

9½. Have fun and share the joy!