

Planting Mission-Shaped Churches

Church Planting is not just about more churches, it is primarily about planting churches which are fit for purpose. How can we plant churches which have mission as the beating heart of all that they do? What are priorities and key elements that would distinguish such churches?

Martin Robinson is Principal and Chief Executive of Springdale College: Together in Mission. Martin was born in India of missionary parents and then brought up in Scotland where his father was a church planter. When Martin was in his early twenties he trained for the ministry, and his first church was in the inner city of Birmingham. This multi-ethnic congregation was engaged in church planting, and Martin together with his wife Lynda led one of the new church plants. After thirteen years in local ministry, Martin went to work for the Bible Society in the UK in a variety of roles. In a period he was the Director of Mission and Theology. Martin has written many books on the broad theme of mission, including *Faith of the Believer* and *Invading Secular Space*. In 2002 Martin became national director of Together in Mission. In 2008 he became Principal of Springdale College. These two organizations (Together in Mission and Springdale College) became one organization in 2009 and will soon take the name ForMission.

I. The Context for Mission Shaped

- a. The contribution of Lesslie Newbigin
- b. Gospel and Our culture
- c. Missional church
- d. The North American Conversation
- e. The European Conversation
- f. Engaging practitioners
- g. Missional or mission shaped?

II. What is Mission Shaped?

- a. Not a programme
- b. Not a model of church
- c. It is a way of thinking about our context
- d. New Evangelisation: "...not a re-evangelisation but a new evangelisation: new in its ardour, in its methods and in its expression" (Pope John Paul II)
- e. A third space

III. Three key Mission-Shaped Components

- a. Leadership
 - i. Leadership is always more than one
 - ii. Leadership reflects the 5 fold ministry gifts
 - iii. Leadership equips the saints
 - iv. Leadership models the community it seeks to create

- b. Congregational Life
 - i. Redolent of the gospel
 - ii. Generous / hospitable
 - iii. Table Talk
 - iv. Spiritual Practices
- c. Neighbourhood
 - i. Listening and looking for the presence of God
 - ii. People of peace
 - iii. Moving back to neighbourhood – inhabit
 - iv. Responding to need
 - v. Changing the conversation
 - vi. Human flourishing

Suggested Readings:

Robinson, Martin, *Planting Mission Shaped Churches Today*, Monarch, 2006.

Roxburgh, Alan, *Missional: Joining God In The Neighborhood*, Allelon Missional, 2011.

Sparks, Paul, and Soerens, Tim and Friesen, Dwight, *The New Parish: How Neighborhood Churches Are Transforming Mission, Discipleship and Community*, IVP, 2011.

Moynagh, Michael, *Being Church, Doing Life: Creating Gospel Communities Where Life Happens*, Monarch, 2014.