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## AWAKEN PARISH NETWORK



# Awaken Parish Network

Parish Model Church Planing

\* thanks to Trinity Grace for much of the inspiration in creating this document.

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# SUMMARY

### Objective & Vision

To increase the scope and capacity of what God is doing at Awaken by creating a network of Awaken churches through a “parish” model of church planting. We long to be a part of a movement of God in our city through a network of parishes connected to one another by name and a shared sense of mission, vision and values.

### Parishes

The parish model is a highly relational, deeply interdependent, kingdom-focused vision of the city church. It enables church to remain small enough for each member to be known intimately and to involve every person in ministry while maintaining a kingdom-sized vision for renewing the city. **It is based on the conviction that each Parish has spiritual responsibility over a specific geographic area.**

With a local pastor the parish is guided by local elders and a leadership team who provide spiritual direction and a specific missional vocation for the congregation. Each parish also has its own structures for pastoral care.

Permanence, proximity and priority in relationships are so elusive in city life but crucial to neighborhood transformation. For this reason, leaders establish their roots in their neighborhood near one another and encourage members of the church to do the same if they are able.

Each parish holds weekend worship gatherings, the purpose of which is to celebrate the signs of the kingdom of God breaking out across the neighborhood. Each parish has the freedom to contextualize its worship to the culture of its neighborhood communities--meeting in areas with many families may cause a parish to focus on developing a thriving children’s ministry, while a gathering in a neighborhood full of artists may include interactive, creative elements in its worship.

### Leadership

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## AWAKEN COMMUNITY

In order for the city parish church to actually feel and function like one church family, the bonds between the leaders must be very strong. Beyond all that must be done to foster a leadership culture among the staff, elders and other lay leaders within each parish church, real deep relationships must exist between the leaders in each parish.

The culture of the pastoral team comprising all the parish pastors is central. The culture of rivalry and envy must be intentionally broken through genuine vulnerability and friendship. The pastors must spend a great deal of time praying together, bearing each other's burdens, and developing a spirit of brotherhood & sisterhood.

The church also has **at least** one event a year in August, where all the leaders from each parish come together to pray, worship, celebrate God's faithfulness and dream together for what could be as God's kingdom advances in the city. The city parish church is one wherein all the parishes have the same mission, DNA and culture. They have the same vision of what a disciple of Jesus is. Beyond that, the neighborhood church has the freedom to find its own unique rhythms, expression and missional focus.

Each parish will have its own Core Team (ministry team) and Advisory Team (overseers team). Parish pastors have the freedom to structure their Core Teams as they see fit for the ministry done in their context. The Advisory Teams will be nominated and affirmed by the partners at the annual meetings for each parish yearly.

### Governance

#### Parish Advisory Teams

Awaken parishes will be independently incorporated entities whenever possible. They will govern themselves as congregational churches within the Evangelical Covenant Church, electing and affirming their own Advisory Teams to oversee the ministries of each parish including the use of budget resources for ministry and staffing.

#### Awaken Network Board

The Awaken Network Board (Awaken Network Board) will be the highest decision making body of the Network. The Awaken Network Board will be the guardians of the Awaken DNA (name, mission, vision, values). The Awaken Network Board will consist of representatives from its member churches.

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The Awaken Network Board will incorporate independently as a distinct organization. The Board will consist of at least two representatives (lead pastor, chair) from each Awaken church. Larger Awaken congregations will send additional representatives.

Average Annual Sunday Attendance	Number of Representatives to the Awaken Network Board from each Awaken church
1-249	2
250-499	3
500-749	4
750-999	5

As the number of Awaken churches increase via church planting and adoption, the size of the Network Board will continue to increase. Thus, for efficiency, a smaller (5-9 members) **Awaken Network Executive Board** will be formed within the larger Awaken Network Board. Like any non-profit organization required by the state, the Awaken Network Board will have four officers: Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary and Treasurer to be determined by the sitting members of the Awaken Network Board.

While the Awaken Network Board is being created, the Awaken St. Paul Pastoral Advisory Team will act as such, governing and ensuring the Awaken DNA, mission, vision, and values in each of its parishes.

### **New Awaken Parishes**

New Awaken parishes will be in concert with the efforts of the Evangelical Church. As such, each parish will operate under the legal auspices of the Northwest Conference (NWC) for the first 3 years until it is welcomed into the denomination as a member congregation. During that time, the NWC will act as the highest decision making body of each new parish, but will do so in partnership with the Awaken Network Board, unless there is not an Awaken Network Board yet, in which case it will do so with the Advisory Team(s) of the planting parishes. After covenant agreements are signed with the NWC and Awaken Network Board, Parish Pastors are expected to form a Pastoral Advisory Team from their launch team and congregation to perform the functions of overseers and advisors without the legal authority of a member congregations Pastoral Advisory Team. This team will assist the Lead Pastor to set and manage the budget, oversee strategic ministry objectives and care for the overall health and direction of the parish and its staff.

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## Church Planting & Mission Giving

Each parish will contribute a portion of its regular tithes and offerings to denominational ministries and to future Awaken parishes. The breakdown of those funds are as follows:

- 6.5% = Evangelical Covenant Church
- 3.5% = Northwest Conference
- 5% = Awaken Network Church Planting
- 5% = Central Ministries

Parish planting will always begin with the identification of a potential parish Pastor and a parish residency of at least 6 months. The residency will ensure fit and call to plant in the Awaken network. Residencies do not ensure the end product of an Awaken parish but rather a process by which Awaken and the parish Pastor can discern God's leading. The decision to extend residencies will be decisions made by the Awaken Network Board

## Central Ministries

Central Ministries is an administrative and communication hub to support the Awaken Network's member churches. The functions of Central Ministries include:

- Generating Shared Resources and Tools for Local Ministry
- Planning of Annual Calendar
- All Awaken Events
  - (e.g. All Awaken Worship, Serve Day, Fall Retreat)
- Website, Branding, Social media, Blogging, Marketing (e.g. Google)

Each parish contributes 5% of its regular tithes and offerings to fund Central Ministries. Consolidating these functions within the city parish church allows the parish pastor and local leadership teams to focus on the work of ministry rather than getting bogged down in everything else required for the organization to function day to day.

## Citywide Gatherings

Critical to the city parish model is the practice of gathering all the congregations together for nights of worship, celebration, and intercession for the city at large. These citywide gatherings feature stories of

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transformation, freedom, healing, and renewal from all across the city reuniting individual parishes to a common vision and expanding their knowledge of the movement of God throughout the city. These citywide gatherings of a single city church also leverage influence, steward momentum, and display unity to the city at large.

### **Affiliation & Beliefs**

Awaken and all parishes are a part of the Evangelical Covenant Church. Each parish is expected to be a church in good standing within the denomination. As a denomination and churches, we affirm:

1. The Centrality of the Word of God
2. A necessity for new birth
3. A conscious dependence on the Holy Spirit
4. The Church as the fellowship of believers
5. The whole mission of the Church
6. Freedom in Christ

### **Pastoral Commitment**

Awaken parish Pastors will commit to:

1. Rule of life which will include
  1. Practice of and keeping of a 24 hour sabbath for themselves and their family.
  2. Monthly day of silence and prayer.
  3. Participation in spiritual direction while in ministry.
  4. At least one relationship of accountability to ensure your mental and spiritual health
  5. Physical exercise and the participation in healthy hobbies outside of church.
  6. Using all vacation afforded to you in a year.
  7. 3 month sabbatical every 7 years.

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## Parish Commitment

Awaken parishes share the same mission, vision, and values. While parishes commit to a common language and brand to ensure continuity, each parish is free and encouraged to find its own unique rhythms and expressions of missional activities.

### **Mission - Why do we exist**

The renewal of all things.

### **Vision - What do we see**

People following Jesus by:

- Live - Cultivating Community outside of Sundays.
- Serve - Our neighbors and our world
- Gather - To remember who and whose we are

### **Values - What is the culture**

1. **Jesus** - Jesus is the highest authority. He is the Word revealed. What he says matters most.
  2. **Demonstration** - We will demonstrate with our lives the love of God we have experienced.
  3. **Announcement** - This love must be shared, talked about, and articulated.
  4. **Transformation** - by God's Spirit, our lives, neighborhoods, schools and homes are changed.
  5. **Safety** - a safe place to journey, ask questions, heal and be sent out on mission in the world.
  6. **Generosity** - our lives will be marked by sacrifice.
  7. **Beauty** - wonder, delight, art, creativity & inspiration are the gifts of God for the church because they are a part of God.
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## Vision - Live / Serve / Gather

**Live / Community:** We want to cultivate community outside of Sunday mornings where authentic relationships can be fostered and grown. The heart of each parish is a network of community groups that exist to equip each believer to live a kingdom life and practice the way of Jesus.

**Life Groups** are smaller communities of 3-15 people, and are another way community life is organized in each parish. These smaller groups will: share of meals, serving together, pray, and engage in meaningful conversations of faith and life and scripture. Life Groups cultivate vulnerability through committed relationships, servanthood, and love, and very often meet over a meal in the home of a fellow member. These groups allow believers to gather outside of Sunday for deeper connection and friendship.

**Covenant Groups** are gender specific groups of 3-5 people that meet 2 times per month for the purpose of discipleship, growth and maturity in faith. These groups are highly committed and highly intentional about the study of scripture together and what it means to follow Jesus. In a years time, they will cover key areas of discipleship including:

- Sabbath: the spiritual life begins with stopping.
- Seeing: the ability to see God at work in my life and the world around me.
- Hearing: the ability to hear God's voice in my own life.
- Recognizing: the ability to recognize what is being asked of me.
- Responding: the courage to respond to what God is asking of me.

### Serve

Each parish is encouraged to seek out local and global partnerships to demonstrate and announce the way of Jesus. The parish model is built on the assumption that a local congregation is invested in and cares for the community in which it exists. What if the church saw itself engaged in a loving relationship with its neighborhood? What would it look like for the church to "romance" the city it worshipped in? To this end, each congregation will seek to discern the ways in which God is active in its community, and then attempt to partner and get involved. Each parish is also encouraged to seek out a global partner to invest time and resource in over an extended period of time.

**Gather:** Awaken parishes will gather weekly to tell and retell the story of Jesus in creative and compelling ways. Gatherings at Awaken include practices of the historic Christian church including; scripture, silence, prayer, sacraments, song, art, and the church calendar. These forms serve the

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purpose of the church being encouraged and sent into the world remembering whose we are and who we are.

## BUDGET

### Parish Plants Financial Needs

Awaken parish plants will be a part of the Evangelical Covenant Church and therefore will be in partnership with a number of sources to fund and enable new expressions of the Awaken family. These commitments reflect a 3 year time table and will be dispersed in a declining fashion.

Description	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Total
Evangelical Covenant Church	\$ 25,000	\$ 20,000	\$ 15,000	\$ 60,000
Northwest Conference	\$ 25,000	\$ 20,000	\$ 15,000	\$ 60,000
Awaken Network & possible partner churches	\$ 25,000	\$ 20,000	\$ 15,000	\$ 60,000
Parish Pastor Fundraising				
<b>Total</b>	<b>75,000</b>	<b>\$60,000</b>	<b>\$ 45,000</b>	<b>\$ 180,000</b>

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