

3. Let a Hundred Flowers Bloom: Ways of Being a Local Missional Church

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1. Intro: A Hundred Flowers

In the early days of the People's Republic of China, between 1955 and 1957, there was a campaign to encourage people to experiment with a variety of creative solutions to national challenges. Mao Tse-Tung's slogan was this: "Letting a hundred flowers bloom and a hundred schools of thought contend is the policy for promoting progress in the arts and the sciences and a flourishing socialist culture in our land."¹ (The sad thing, of course, is that after flushing out lots of different views the political climate changed markedly and many of those flowers were lopped off at the base, figuratively speaking.)

Tonight I'd like to encourage you to experiment, to have a go, to try innovative ways of being the local church. I'd like to suggest that the church needs to try a hundred different ways of being Christians together. We won't know until much further down the track which ways are going to turn out to be authentic and relevant. We won't know what shape the local church will have ten, twenty or fifty years from now.

The two reasons for this need to reimagine the church and reimagine mission are our context and our Christian call.

Our context is one where the traditional church is largely failing to gain a hearing amongst Australians, particularly younger Australians. What we're doing, by and large, isn't working, so it's time to ask ourselves whether we're doing things the best way.

But, even more centrally, it is our Christian call that invites us to continually reassess whether our church buildings, church structures, ways of worship, patterns of discipleship and ways of relating to the culture around us are the most appropriate way to be followers of Jesus.

Let's remind ourselves who he was: he was a sandal-wearing, wandering story-teller, a person who never wrote a book, never himself founded a religion and never set up a church building. He seemed to gather friends, eat with them, break the rules and embody a world-changing, upside-down order of relationships where outsiders were insiders and the boundaries were being crossed all the time. When we hold our contemporary churches up against this picture of Jesus, it prompts us to ask, "How can we better reflect what our founder and energizing Spirit stands for?"

¹ 'Mao Tse-Tung quotes', *ThinkExist*, <http://thinkexist.com/quotes/mao_tse-tung/3.html>, accessed 18-8-09.

The local church gets knocked a lot, but I'm a strong supporter of the local community of faith trying to live out its life together in Christ. Sometimes it's going to look fashionable and cool and sometimes it clearly isn't. But if we believe that Jesus Christ is present wherever the Word is preached, wherever the bread is broken and wherever the outcast is being welcomed, then it's worth pursuing this vision with vigour and passion.

I'll try to unpack some of the ways in which the local missional church has real potential.

2. Missional Church Is Just Church as It Should Be

First, what do I mean by "missional"? A missional church is one that lives in all of its dimensions as a sent-people.² That is, it is shaped by mission.³

Another simple way to say it is that is outward-looking in its whole stance. A third way is to say that a missional church exists to be a sign of the gracious reign of God.

The vision of the missional church is to join God in the mission of God. We see God as outgoing, loving, forgiving and reconciling, deeply wanting the world to live in right relationships by turning to God's way and, through the reconciling work of Jesus Christ, receive the Spirit, which empowers us as we co-operate with God in the world.

So mission is God's and we are witnesses to it. We seek out where God is active and try to fan the flames. To be missional is simply to live up to our calling to be a sent people. A missional church is just church as it should be.

In a way, a missional church is the same as a missionary church. Both words are the adjectival form of the word "mission". But because "missionary" has become associated with sending people overseas, and because some people became uncomfortable with the term "missionary", feeling it to be too crusading or triumphalistic, missiologists have cast about for a new word, and, as far as I can see, just made one up.

3. Where the "Emerging Church" Fits

Here it might be worth clarifying how the "missional church" and the "emerging church" are related. The "emerging church" refers to some of the fledgling experiments which are trying to respond to rapid social change and substantial church decline in the West. They're innovative, non-mainstream and new—they're still emerging and it's not clear what shape they'll eventually take.

In Australia the emerging church movement is most associated with Forge Australia, a mission training network founded by Alan Hirsch and Michael Frost, though Forge

² Darrell L Guder, ed. *Missional church: A vision for the sending of the church in North America* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998), 4.

³ Church of England Mission and Public Affairs Council, *Mission-shaped church: Church planting and fresh expressions of church in a changing context* (Brookvale, NSW: Willow Publishing, 2005).

doesn't use the term "emerging church". Its mission statement is "helping birth and nurture the missional church".⁴

In the United States it coalesces around a movement called *Emergent*.⁵ Key figures include Brian McLaren, Tony Jones and Dan Kimball. Now that Alan Hirsch lives in the US he's also attracting a lot of attention.⁶ Michael Frost's comment on *Emergent* is that it arose largely out of the Alternative Worship movement and is more of a renewal movement than a missional one.⁷

In the United Kingdom much of the energy comes from two movements, Alternative Worship⁸ and Anglican interest in fresh expressions of church.⁹

The limitation of the term "emerging church" is that, like the term "post" in "postmodern", it says little about the actual content of the movement. "Post" tells us only that it comes after something. Similarly, "emerging" only tells us that something is growing out of something and is not yet fully formed.

Another limitation is that emerging-church talk quickly became associated with making sharp distinctions between new ways and the old ways. Sometimes our identity is defined most easily by saying what we are not. Sometimes we try new things because we've been hurt by the old things.

It's not surprising, therefore, that almost before the term "emerging church" has become widespread many have reacted against it. Some see the movement as full of disaffected Christians or younger people trying to be Christian and cool. Some have said, "Emerging church? I thought the church emerged two thousand years ago!". So the term already has some baggage and isn't always useful.

As the emerging-church movement has grown, it's been pleasantly surprised by how thirsty the rest of the church is for ways of being more missional and culturally relevant. I remember the founder of Forge, Alan Hirsch saying to me at the first national Forge Summit, in 2006 in Melbourne, that he was bowled over by how many had come—about 600, I would guess — and how many older people from mainline churches were there.

So, even though the term "emerging church" is useful in pointing to a powerful impulse to try new and culturally relevant ways of planting missional churches, I'm more interested here in the broader idea of the local missional church. It is what all churches have always been called to be. And an ordinary local church, with inherited traditions, can still be missional.

⁴ 'Mission and distinctives', *Forge Australia*, <<http://forge.org.au/about/mission-and-distinctives/>>, 2009, accessed 18-8-09.

⁵ <www.emergentvillage.com>

⁶ For example, through his book *Forgotten Ways* (Alan Hirsch, *The forgotten ways: Reactivating the missional church* (Grand Rapids: Brazos, 2007) and in the leadership forum of *Christianity Today* (www.christianitytoday.com/le/2008/002/7.32.html).

⁷ Michael Frost, 'The emerging church in Australia: Future directions and challenges', Paper delivered at the Emerging Church Consultation of the Baptist Union of Australia, Adelaide, 14-15 February 2006.

⁸ <www.alternativeworship.org>.

⁹ Church of England, *Mission-shaped church*.

4. The Local Church Is Still Central

Why am I focussing on the local church, and not on cyberspace, or networks, or denominations, or public theology, or relating Christian faith to the arts and sciences? Well, all of these are also important—and I will address public theology in my next presentation—but there is something central about the call of Jesus Christ to enter a new community, characterised by a new set of relationships where love is expressed and the feast of God is experienced. Of course, it varies in size and some will be more regional than local. Some also will consist of networks rather than physically local groups. But I'm particularly interested in the local, and there are many reasons, which I'll just mention, without going into them.

We are embodied people. The gospel has to take shape in the flesh. We can only enjoy primary relationships with a limited number of people. We can only care for a limited number. We are being fragmented by a commuting and jet-setting society and I believe the gospel contains a strong call to be local again. The earth is groaning and being local is one way of recovering our roots and reducing our footprint on the earth.

I cycle to church. My cell group is a local group, called the Kernot St Group (though over time some have had to move further away). Most of the people I engage with on the edges of my church or beyond it live locally. I know the networks, the resources, the political issues, the parks, the bus-routes, the people I can call on to help. I know "local" is not the only way, but I'm convinced that rediscovering the local is part of the road to recovering the wholeness of being human together. My colleague at Whitley, Simon Holt, has written an excellent book on this called *God Next Door: Spirituality and Mission in the Neighbourhood*, which gently prods us to recover the potential of the local in our mission.¹⁰

5. Mission Has a Church: Jesus, Mission, Church

At the centre of the vision for a missional church is the idea—radical to some people—that aiming to be the church is not as fundamental as aiming to follow Jesus.

Theologically speaking, the missional church holds to a missional ecclesiology.¹¹ In other words, to be a follower of Jesus means, first, to centre our lives on following Jesus, then, second, to engage in living and speaking the Good News as creatively as we can, and then, thirdly, to consider what it might mean for the shape of the church.

As Alan Hirsch often says, our christology should determine our missiology, which then determines our ecclesiology. In other words, it goes "Jesus, mission, church".

I basically agree, though I want to rephrase his slogan with a Trinitarian basis. It doesn't sound half as snappy, but I want to say that it goes God-the-outgoing-and-loving-Creator-Renewer-and-Transformer, then our mission in response, and then shaping church in that light.

¹⁰ Simon Carey Holt, *God next door: Spirituality and mission in the neighbourhood* (Brunswick East, Vic.: Acorn Press, 2007).

¹¹ Craig Van Gelder and William David Taylor, *The essence of the church: A community created by the Spirit* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2000), 27-44; Guder, ed. *Missional church*.

As David Bosch puts it so well:

Mission is, primarily and ultimately, the work of the Triune God, Creator, Redeemer and Sanctifier, for the sake of the world, a ministry in which the church is privileged to participate. Mission has its origin in the heart of God. God is a fountain of sending love. ... It is impossible to penetrate deeper still; there is mission because God loves people.¹²

Or, as Stephen Bevans, says provocatively, “Mission has a church”.¹³ He means that “mission ... is prior to the church, and constitutive of its very existence”.¹⁴

This is the vision behind the recent report of the Church of England called *Mission-shaped Church: Church Planting and Fresh Expressions of Church in a Changing Context*.¹⁵ A missional church is one that that is shaped by mission in all aspects of its life.

6. “Living into the Kingdom”, Whatever Shape that Means Locally

Mission is living into the kingdom of God, or the “commonwealth of God”. It is straining for the gracious reality of God’s presence in the world.

So mission is much broader than evangelism or engaging in “missions”.

It involves at least giving an account of our faith, and seeking peace, justice and the integrity of creation.

Wherever we see God at work in bringing shalom, community, love and justice, we see the signs of God’s gracious realm. The church’s role is to be a sign of this realm. The church is not the kingdom of God, just a wobbly, fallible, faltering, distorted sign of it.

If you were to imagine a world where God’s ways were followed, what would it look like? We know because Jesus has shown us the way: It would be a world where people love each other and care for each other practically. It would be a world where the poor and vulnerable are not left to fend for themselves. The table would be shared all the time. We would celebrate joys together and share suffering together. We would seek just social policies and the participation of people in setting society’s directions. We would foster the full development of each person, through education, meaningful work, encouraging the arts and developing each person’s competence. We would not discriminate according to gender, race or class. We would defend freedom of speech, religion and lifestyle where others were not being harmed.

¹² David J Bosch, *Transforming mission: Paradigm shifts in theology of mission* (Maryknoll: Orbis, 1991), 392.

¹³ Title of a lecture given by Stephen Bevans as part of a lecture tour across Australia in the first half of 2009.

¹⁴ Stephen B Bevans and Roger P Schroeder, *Constants in context: A theology of mission for today* (Maryknoll: Orbis, 2004), 13.

¹⁵ Church of England Mission and Public Affairs Council, *Mission-shaped church*.

I could go on, being quite specific. The gracious realm of God is not airy-fairy. It is basically the new order of relationships you and I have been living into, in our faltering way, all along. It's not new, but I'm passionate about it and prepared to give my life for this vision.

The point here is that if this new order of relationships is the centre of our mission, then it's not very important what shape our gathering to be a sign of the kingdom takes. We might meet in a pub, or in a home. We might tap into a traditional liturgy, with its depth and rhythms, or we might just pray and read the Bible and eat together. It depends on our culture and sub-culture. It depends on our context. We need to explore ways of living into the gracious realm of God, whatever shape it takes locally.

I'll tell you what shape it takes for me where I am in Melbourne's western suburbs. Let me be clear that this is not a model to follow, just one possible shape for the church.

I'm a member of a Baptist church, but our life really happens in our small groups. My small group is really a house church. We meet on a Wednesday evening from about 6 to 8.30. We eat together, with maybe an informal communion as we say grace. We catch up. We have a "group box" on the table, which is really like a "poor box", for donations which we later spend in small ways to support someone. We get a cuppa and then perhaps hold a Bible study or discuss a topic. We have guests, we watch videos, we sometimes just share. Then we pray very simply, with a candle burning. It might be conversational prayer, talking together in a framework where we've been reminded that God is amongst us and hears our prayers.

We are about ten in number. We've often been intergenerational, but at the moment we're all adults. At least five have mental illness of one sort or other and are on anti-depressants. Two have intermittent gambling problems, two have drinking problems. We are at all points of the faith spectrum, but something draws us together, and I'd guess it's the shared meal and the warm welcome. To be honest there's always someone unable to come due to sickness or a life crisis. But we offer each other primary pastoral care. We're a rag-tag army, an odd bunch. We're just the sort of people Jesus welcomed. Some of us can hardly read, but we've had amazing theological discussions. This is my community. Messy as it is, I believe that my small group is living into the realm of God.

7. Adapting to Post-Christendom

My primary context is that of the urban poor. But on the broader canvas there are big cultural shifts that call us to reimagine the ways we shape ourselves as local missional churches.

One of the biggest reasons for imagining different ways of engaging missionally and different ways of being church is that, in the so-called Christian West Christianity has moved from the centre to the margins. We are in a post-Christendom context. Our society is, for the greater part, post-Christian. A generation ago there were many lapsed-Christians; now there are probably many more "never-been-Christians".

In my last presentation I mentioned a list of changes in the situation of the church, from Stuart Murray in his book, *Post-Christendom*. I regard these as calling for a fundamental reassessment of our approach. He says we've moved from the centre to the margins, from the majority to the minority, from being at home in our culture to being aliens in it, from privilege to plurality, from control to witness, from maintenance to mission, and from institution to movement.¹⁶

We may still own buildings which soar high and sit in the centre of town or on top of a hill, but if we proceed on the assumption that we are at the centre of our community we may find that no-one's listening. Unless we think creatively about how to use a large traditional building it's likely to end up empty, cold and needing half-a-million dollars to restore to its historic beauty.

8. Adapting to Postmodernity

Another huge cultural shift that deeply affects how we relate to people around us in the local church is the reaction in the West against the main emphases of modernity. It is true that at the same time we also depend on the achievements of modernity for many things from day to day, such as medicine, communications and technology. But people see the period after the Enlightenment in the 18th century, until about the middle of last century, as a time when thinkers hoped to use reason to find universal answers, when scientists predicted a better world based on science and technology and when large worldviews fought it out — Christianity, evolutionary science, communism, capitalism.

Postmodernity is a notoriously difficult social reality to define. It is full of contradictions, which is to be expected of a movement reacting to another movement.

Among the characteristics often listed are these (you can argue for ever about them):

- i. We suspect universal **reason** is used to dominate people (Whose truth? Whose rationality?)
- ii. We reject **metanarratives** (grand stories, overarching accounts of reality) and live with partial explanations, cobbled together enough to live by
- iii. We don't think there are sure **foundations** (such as God or science) for truth; we judge things as a whole, intuitively
- iv. **Language** doesn't simply correspond to reality "out there"; the meaning lies in the way we use language, and it varies between communities
- v. Our way of deciding right and wrong depends on the culture or group we are part of; it is **relative**
- vi. We are less analytical and atomistic and think more in terms of **relationship**, connectedness, ecology and holism
- vii. We seek community and constant **communication**
- viii. We distrust **institutions** and don't commit to causes for a long time
- ix. We live in a **multimedia** world, saturated with images, information, entertainment
- x. We take **consumer** choice and technology for granted
- xi. We live in a **globalised**, "broadband internet" world

¹⁶Stuart Murray, *Post-Christendom* (Carlisle, UK: Paternoster, 2004), 20.

- xii. Boundaries between things and meanings have become blurred; **virtual reality** is seen as real and style can matter more than substance
- xiii. We accept **pluralism** and relativism in many areas of life
- xiv. We “**deconstruct**” texts, going behind what the author meant and paying more attention to what is not said, what we see in it and how different groups would respond to it
- xv. **Aesthetically**, art and architecture is playful, eclectic and self-conscious
- xvi. We turn more to art and **imagination** to express the irreducible mystery of reality

While postmodern groups are not the only focus of missional churches, postmodernity is the dominant social context for Australians. Local churches need to look for creative responses to the postmodern context.

It is our assumption that (as with every culture) the gospel will resonate with aspects of postmodernity and challenge other aspects. It is our ongoing task to discern where mission is deeply culturally at home and where mission will be counter-cultural.

9. Eating, Praying and Serving: Worship, Community, Mission

How elastic is the idea of church? And what are the limits to its flexibility in responding to the culture around? I'd like to suggest some very simple things which are at the heart of all ways of being church.

What is necessary for us to be disciples together, for us to be a Jesus-following community?

I'll follow Robert Warren in thinking in terms of three overlapping circles:¹⁷

- i. Mission (including evangelism, service, community development, social action, care for creation)
- ii. Worship (including praise, the Word, intercession, response)
- iii. Community (including pastoral care, healing, education, children and youth)

We tend to emphasise one or the other, but all three are needed, even though the way we express them will vary greatly.¹⁸

What I'm suggesting is that if we embrace mission, community and worship, the structures of church can be entirely open, flexible and contextual. What day of the week we meet; how we pray; whether we sing; who leads; how long we meet for; where we meet; how formal we are; whether we set up a nice space or use a lounge room, pub or café; what language we use; how we read the Bible; whether and how we include communion and baptism; and so on.

There is a question, of course, of how worship relates to mission. Michael Frost and Alan Hirsch have critiqued the dominant mission method of more traditional churches,

¹⁷ Robert Warren, *Being human, being church: Spirituality and mission in the local church* (London: Marshall Pickering, 1995), 89.

¹⁸ Murray, *Post-Christendom*, 255.

which is to invite newcomers to a worship program. They call these approaches “attractational” and “extractational”.¹⁹ This means that newcomers are attracted to the programs and warm atmosphere, join up, and end up being extracted from their old environment and not having any non-Christian friends any more. Frost and Hirsch argue that we should be incarnational, not attractational. That is, our new life transforms their old life, in their setting, taking flesh in ordinary life.

I strongly agree with the call to be incarnational. We do have to be aware that “attractational” has a special definition, because otherwise it’s misleading. If we are to be a sign of the God’s realm we would hope that our life together is attractive (in the usual sense of the word), even if we don’t seek to put on a great show “at the centre” to which we expect people to come.

Some missional communities work hard to make their **worship** events open to non-believers. The approach is, “This is what we do and you’re welcome”. They aim for acceptance, simplicity, not too much traditional baggage and a clear sense of meaning for the Christians who take part, the hope is that others will feel at ease and hang around. They may belong before they believe. Of course, there are usually other things going in the life of the missional community, but worship is a vital means of welcoming others.

We could call this “mission through worship”. It still works for many, but there are increasingly people in our society for whom worship is simply weird, and they won’t feel at ease amongst Christians praying and praising God.

A second type of missional community links mission to its **community** life. Again, we would hope this is attractive. It’s more natural for people to be welcomed into the daily lives of a group who care for each other. The “space” this occurs in is not a “churchly space” but our homes and neighbourhood. It is more neutral, though still an invitation into our lives and circles. It is a welcoming space with porous boundaries.

The third type emphasises the mission of **service** or social action out in the community. This is the “church scattered”, or the church in service mode, working towards the community development aspects of the kingdom of God. This is clearly “incarnational” rather than “attractational”. It might include work in schools, community centres, soup kitchens or drop-in centres. We might even work in coalition with other groups, including non-Christians

In these second and third types, missional communities have to sort out when they gather to worship and when they are “scattered” or simply being themselves in the wider community. I venture to suggest that to be on mission is not necessarily to be explicitly worshipping. The two may go together, but at times one or the other might be the intentional focus.

¹⁹ Michael Frost and Alan Hirsch, *The shaping of things to come: Innovation and mission for the 21st-century church* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2003), 39-40.

10. Incarnational Mission

We learn how to engage in mission from God. As God became one of us and dwelt among us, “taking shape” in our reality, so also Jesus-followers are called to take the road and live and tell the Good News in the midst of the reality of those around us. We are not primarily called to bring people into somewhere, but to go out to them and take Good News to where they are. This is easy to say, but it actually takes a huge change in mindset for most churches. Is the gospel primarily active out there or in here?

This is embodied mission, lifestyle mission, all-of-life mission, costly mission. In the context of the local missional church, it calls for long-term identification with those around us.

Frost and Hirsch summarise it this way:

An incarnational mode creates a church that is a dynamic set of relationships, friendships, and acquaintances. It enhances and “flavors” the host community’s living social fabric rather than disaffirming it. It thus creates a medium of living relationships through which the gospel can travel.

One of the ways of expressing incarnational mission is to seek out and build up the community’s “third places”. Work and home can be considered the first and second places of people’s lives. Coffee shops, bookstores, bars, hairdressers, and football social clubs are the third places, places where people hang out for the pleasure of it, meeting people, relaxing together. Sociologist Ray Oldenburg, who popularised this idea in his book *The Great Good Place*, remembers how good he felt the first time he went to his town’s skating rink. A home away from home, he called it, a place to hang out. Interestingly he calls these places occasions for “public congregation”.²⁰ Churches which build a basketball stadium or community centre are locating themselves in these third places, alongside the people when they’re at their most relaxed and open.

11. Recovering Neighbourhood, Friendship, Community Rhythms

The patterns of the local missional church are not dissimilar from the principles of community development—we look for ways to encourage community, seek justice, make peace, bring reconciliation, nurture local leadership, encourage networks that support the vulnerable, isolated and poor. The Hebrew Bible word for the well-being of a community like this is “shalom”. Jesus’ word for it is “salvation”, or “wholeness” or “being made well”.

I suspect that most local churches are already pursuing mission in this way.

In my church we discovered that, despite it being a poor area, no local doctors would bulk-bill low-income people. All the doctors only worked part-time in our area; they lived outside the district and wouldn’t visit out of hours. So we started a medical clinic, initially staffed by Christian doctors with a sense of mission, but now, twenty years

²⁰ Ray Oldenburg, *The great good place: Cafes, coffee shops, bookstores, bars, hair salons, and other hangouts at the heart of a community*, 3rd ed. (New York: Marlowe, 1999), ix.

later, staffed by committed doctors whether Christian or not. It is a patient-run co-op, the only one of its kind in Australia. It has supported clinics in Central America. It has offered church-supported pastoral care. We have run a frozen casserole bank supplying families under pressure through the clinic. It now offers a wide range of services, from acupuncture to dentistry.²¹ It is one of the hubs of our community. I can't see a doctor without meeting and chatting to half the neighbourhood.

Currently there are many Burmese refugees moving into our district. Our church has begun playgroups for the young mothers, with English conversation as part of them. We've applied for some grants and now employ someone to run the groups and be a community developer. The organiser is an ordained Burmese woman—this is a holistic expression of mission. It is the Good News in local form, recovering neighbourhood and friendship.

12. Varieties of the Missional Church

I chose the title of this presentation—"Let a Hundred Flowers Bloom"—deliberately, because there is no one way forward for the local missional church. I've suggested several missiological principles that can guide us. But so much depends on our context. And the resources we have, or the passions we hold, or the things that just happen that often lead to mission engagement—these all shape the actual specific rhythms of our local life together as church.

Some missional churches operate out of traditional buildings and manage to be a community hub. Some missional churches own no buildings and meet in a café, or pub, or restaurant or home. Some missional churches are focussed on social action or welfare activities. Some are experimenting with worship, whether recovering ancient rhythms or being seeker-sensitive or stripping it down to minimal patterns.²² Some are focussed on the urban poor, or on university students, or on skateboarders, or on city-based lawyers.

To take just one creative example, in Melbourne there is a community called Inspiral.²³ It began by inviting university students interested in discussing then radical ways of Jesus, and most of the first fifteen regulars were unchurched seekers. It's a very informal house church. Its mission statement is this: "We aim to inspire people to engage with Jesus, include everyone in the radical way Jesus did, and involve ourselves with those experiencing poverty and injustice". Its leader, Simon Moyle, is right into peacemaking and has twice engaged in civil disobedience in resisting the Talisman Sabre joint military exercises run by Australia and the US in North Queensland.

13. We'll Need Them All

If the local church is to respond to our changing context and express some of the radical transforming power of the Good News we'll need to encourage as many different ways forward as possible. This is not a time to dismiss other people's attempts to be church

²¹ Westgate Health Co-operative, <www.westgatehealth.coop>

²² Murray, *Post-Christendom*, 251–285.

²³ <www.inspiral.org.au>.

in their district. It is a time to let a hundred flowers bloom, for the sake of the gospel and our world.

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