

2 | 20 | 200 | 2,000 | 20,000
(A PARADIGM FOR A PARISH LIFE)

2 | CHURCH as PERSONAL

WHY IT IS IMPORTANT:

- We experience formation and transformation in following the Way of Jesus most often when 2 people cultivate a reciprocal and vulnerable relationship with each other.

WHAT ARE OBSTACLES:

- We may have an ideal of what this relationship looks like. We may miss who is right in front of us
- Those who are gifted in leading churches and ministries are often not naturally inclined or gifted at mutually vulnerable and reciprocal relationships; therefore, it is rarely an application of a sermon.

WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE:

- Two people together every week to pray for one another and encourage one another.
 - Various labels have described this relationship: accountability, mentoring, or discipleship.
 - It is a shared commitment to be formed in the Way of Jesus; to mature in love for themselves, their families, friends, coworkers, and neighbors.
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20 | CHURCH as RELATIONAL

WHY IT IS IMPORTANT:

- Following the Way of Jesus can only truly be done in the context of community.
- If 2 people is where we experience formation; 20 people is where we experience connection.
- Observational data from years of ministry have taught me that when people find a group that they feel connected to and cared for their connection to faith will last far longer than if they are isolated.
- The most durable expression of Christian community may be the oikos, or "household of faith."

WHAT ARE OBSTACLES:

- Our lives and relationships lack overlap and integration. We have relationships with 20 people, but it is rare they have a shared vision or align to a common end.
- We may find it difficult when a group of people like this comes to an end to give ourselves to another group of people to be known by and cared for.

WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE:

- Two people fit in a car. Twenty people fit in a home.
 - Twenty neighbors connecting monthly to share a meal and share their lives with each other.
 - We often label this group as: small group, home group, house church, or missional community.
 - The connections and care beyond the scheduled time and place are what creates its' culture.
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200 | CHURCH as FORMATIONAL

WHY IT IS IMPORTANT:

- A congregation of 200 provides the size to serve our neighbors and neighborhood well.
- 200 people provides a community big enough to meet people with commonalities, small enough to be known, diverse enough to have a variety of life stages, and intimate enough to be missed.
- A congregation of 200 provides the important financial sustainability to be invested for the long term in the spiritual and social renewal of the neighborhood.
- Congregations larger than 200 may actually be multiple congregations within a single structure
- 150 in social science is referred to as Dunbar's Number. It is a suggested number of people with whom one can maintain stable social relationships - relationships in which an individual knows who each person is and how each person relates to every other person.

WHAT ARE OBSTACLES:

- 200 may feel "too big" for some, and "too small" for others based on their past church experience.
- Churches increase numerically differently based on the leadership, context, and cultural moment.
- We may resist leadership who seem too focused on numerical growth.

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WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE:

- 200 people fit into most existing buildings designed for weekly worship.
 - 200 people aligned in their desire to follow the Way of Jesus – UP towards God, IN towards themselves and others, OUT to their neighbors and neighborhood – is a dynamic community.
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2,000 | CHURCH as MISSIONAL

WHY IT IS IMPORTANT:

- The church is at its brightest when it is a creative minority, cultivating a Kingdom movement.
- We all want to be a part of something bigger than our own private projects and agendas.
- 2,000 people creates movement and mission.

WHAT ARE OBSTACLES:

- Maintaining a sense of unity for the common good within the diversity of 2,000 neighbors in our divisive moment is difficult.
- Aligning 2,000 people towards a common goal for the good of the neighborhood is dynamic and will be a consistently shifting scenario about how to inspire, invite, and engage a community.

WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE:

- 2,000 people working for the common good on shared initiatives and projects.
 - Multiple congregations of 200 collaborating and building connections to create a movement of 2,000.
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20,000 | CHURCH as MYSTICAL

WHY IT IS IMPORTANT:

- The average neighborhood in Denver is approximately 20,000 people based on population density.
- We want to form the imagination of people when we pray, *"Your Kingdom come, Your Will be done..."* the context for their prayer is the 20,000 people near them.
- God alone knows who in the 20,000 woke up this morning praying, *"Please help me."*
- Although vision statements like "changing our city" are inspirational, they are aspirational, and honestly impossible to ever measure. We can measure neighborhood change.
- 20,000 brings a focus to both our prayer and practice of following the Way of Jesus.

WHAT ARE OBSTACLES:

- Neighborhood and community development is patient work that requires perseverance and permanence, two qualities that are lacking in our cultural moment.
- The reputation of the Church in America in this cultural moment is not seen as an ally of the city.
- The humility to acknowledge the increase in quality of life for 20,000 is due to a web of variables, not singular inputs and outcomes that religious organizations have often operated in.

WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE:

- Listening and learning the [qualitative data](#) about our neighbors and neighborhoods including: poverty, education, food access, and housing.
- The quality of life for our 20,000 neighbors is rooted in the alignment of the 2, 20, 200, and 2,000.