

The GlobalChurch Project
www.theglobalchurchproject.com



Kevin Doi

Local Church Small Group Resource

This resource is designed to help your small group discussion. It's shaped to inspire you to consider new ways for understanding the mission of the church. Questions are organized in themes. Consider choosing the themes appropriate to your small group context. You don't need to cover all the questions. Allow for a time of response.

Small Group Preparation:

- Video: Kevin Doi, 44 minutes.
- Scripture: 1 Peter 2:4–10
- Participants are encouraged to bring their own journals or writing materials.

Themes explored in the video:

- **Embracing and loving a neighborhood and place**
- **Cultivating slow and deep relationships and discipleship**
- **Joining with Jesus in his mission in your neighborhood**
- **Opportunities and challenges facing the church today**

Beginning the conversation

Consider the questions suggested below to start the conversation for your small group. They'll consolidate the content of the video, after you've viewed it.

1. What were the major themes in Kevin Doi's responses?
2. How does Kevin Doi describe the importance of community and neighborhood for churches?
3. Discuss the difficulties of the content. What was difficult to understand? Was there anything you would like to clarify with the group?
4. How is Kevin's theology informed and shaped by his practical ministry?
5. What approaches does Kevin take in understanding God in the context of his day-to-day experiences and ministry?

Going deeper

Explore the major themes raised in the video. Critically engage with Kevin's theology. Consider the questions that respond to the issues raised in your preliminary discussion.

1. **Embracing and loving a neighborhood and place:** What shifts happened in EPIC church, as it grew to embrace and love its neighborhood and place?
2. **Embracing and loving a neighborhood and place:** What does EPIC church value? How does this church, in their local neighborhood and place, express community, justice, and healing?
3. **Embracing and loving a neighborhood and place:** How does an emphasis on community, justice, and healing enable human flourishing (in church and local neighborhoods)?
4. **Embracing and loving a neighborhood and place:** Discuss the ways in which some church growth thinking led churches to focus on "disembodied communities where place doesn't really matter," or to focus on "a certain type of person, but not a place"? How do you see these ideas expressed in your church (or in churches you've been a part of)?
5. **Embracing and loving a neighborhood and place:** Have you been convicted by the Spirit of God that place does matter?
6. **Embracing and loving a neighborhood and place:** Do you believe that God is at work not only within your church, but also outside of your church, in your neighborhood and city? If so, how is that conviction shaping your ministry, mission, and worship?
7. **Embracing and loving a neighborhood and place:** What does it mean to discern and understand discipleship as an engagement with a concrete, particular, local neighborhood?
8. **Embracing and loving a neighborhood and place:** "The church of God doesn't have a mission; the mission of God has a church." Discuss what that means for your church?
9. **Embracing and loving a neighborhood and place:** Where do you see God at work in your community today? How will you participate with him in what he is already doing in your city and neighborhood?
10. **Cultivating slow and deep relationships and discipleship:** What are the biggest challenges for building slow and deep relationships, community, and discipleship?
11. **Cultivating slow and deep relationships and discipleship:** How can worship gatherings be used (in practical ways) to create intentional connections as people gather?
12. **Cultivating slow and deep relationships and discipleship:** What is the role of house churches (or small groups) and eating together, in creating slow and deep community?
13. **Cultivating slow and deep relationships and discipleship:** Do you agree that we live in an age of hypermobility, upward-mobility, social fragmentation, and wanderlust? What effects does this have on church, community, and discipleship? How can the church be an alternative to this mobility, disembodiment, restlessness, and social fragmentation?
14. **Cultivating slow and deep relationships and discipleship:** Why does EPIC church celebrate the Lord's Supper every Sunday? How does the Lord's Supper invite the church to engage each week with the presence of Jesus?
15. **Cultivating slow and deep relationships and discipleship:** What does Kevin Doi mean, when he says: "You can tell a lot about a church by how often it eats, and who it eats with." Do you agree with him?
16. **Cultivating slow and deep relationships and discipleship:** "Jesus died because of who he ate with." Discuss what this means? What are the implications for your church?
17. **Cultivating slow and deep relationships and discipleship:** How are meals symbols and practices of hospitality, friendship, and inclusion? How do we invite people who are different from us to meals?
18. **Cultivating slow and deep relationships and discipleship:** Why make meals central to the life, worship, and mission of the church?

19. **Joining with Jesus in his mission in your neighborhood:** What struck you about Kevin’s work with JOYA Scholars? www.joyascholars.org
20. **Joining with Jesus in his mission in your neighborhood:** Discuss the ways that Kevin’s Doctor of Ministry studies are reshaping his approaches to pastoral leadership and ministry. What are the key things he is learning about church, leadership, and mission?
21. **Joining with Jesus in his mission in your neighborhood:** How does Kevin describe God’s mission? How does the church join with God in his mission in the world?
22. **Joining with Jesus in his mission in your neighborhood:** How do we discern what God is doing in our context and neighborhood? How do we go about joining with God in what he is doing in our neighborhood?
23. **Joining with Jesus in his mission in your neighborhood:** Why is mission a long-term commitment to a particular, local place and group of people? What is hard about this? What joys are found in this?
24. **Joining with Jesus in his mission in your neighborhood:** How do buildings help us in mission and ministry? How do buildings restrict our mission? How do they make us focus on “inviting people into our building” and “getting people to come to us” rather than joining with God in what he’s doing in our neighborhood? Discuss the pros and cons of having church buildings?
25. **Opportunities and challenges facing the church today:** Do you agree that a general shift has occurred in many Western cultures, whereby churches are no longer at the center of people’s lives and their neighborhoods? Do the people who live in your neighborhood embrace the Christian story? Do people in your neighborhood look to the church for hope, answers, social cohesion, and spiritual and moral guidance?
26. **Opportunities and challenges facing the church today:** Is it bad that the church has moved more to the margins of society?
27. **Opportunities and challenges facing the church today:** Why won’t tinkering with worship services, buildings, facilities, and programs help the church, given the shifts that are happening in Western cultures? Why are these misguided efforts? If such tinkering won’t help us, then what do we need to change?
28. **Opportunities and challenges facing the church today:** What is the *Missio Dei*? https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Missio_Deī How does this concept offer answers for how we might respond to the changes happening in Western societies and churches?
29. **Opportunities and challenges facing the church today:** How do culturally marginalized churches and Christians (e.g. Asian American, Native American, African American, Latin American, etc.) help us understand what it means to be a minority voice that: (1) rediscovers mission from the margins, (2) earns respect, and (3) pursues intentionality in relationships?
30. **Opportunities and challenges facing the church today:** Do you see both “nominal” Christians and “once committed” Christians leaving the church today? If so, what is causing this? How does the church need to change to address this issue, and engage people in discipleship, mission, ministry, fellowship, and worship?
31. **Opportunities and challenges facing the church today:** How can the church call people to make a long-term commitment to discipleship and community, over a long period, in a particular place?
32. **Opportunities and challenges facing the church today:** Do you see a movement toward particularity and place among the people in your church? How do you help people commit to less desirable and more demanding local places (like poor or troubled neighborhoods)?

Application

Ensure the discussion is specifically drawing on your local setting. Make sure the discussion is relevant to the lives of faith for your small group. Encourage relevant and thoughtful examples from each participant.

1. **Embracing and loving a neighborhood and place:** Are you growing to embrace and love your neighborhood and place? Is your church moving in this direction?
2. **Embracing and loving a neighborhood and place:** How can your church (in its local neighborhood and place), express community, justice, and healing?
3. **Embracing and loving a neighborhood and place:** Is your church or ministry emphasizing community, justice, and healing in a way that enables human flourishing (in church and local neighborhoods)?
4. **Embracing and loving a neighborhood and place:** Do your church attitudes, practices, and programs lead to a sense that church is a “disembodied community where place doesn’t really matter,” or to focus on “a certain type of person, but not on a place”? If so, how will you change this?
5. **Embracing and loving a neighborhood and place:** Do you believe that place does matter?
6. **Embracing and loving a neighborhood and place:** Do you believe that God is at work not only within your church, but also outside of your church, in your neighborhood and city? If so, how is that conviction shaping your ministry, mission, and worship?
7. **Embracing and loving a neighborhood and place:** What does it mean to discern and understand discipleship as an engagement with a concrete, particular, local neighborhood?
8. **Embracing and loving a neighborhood and place:** “The church of God doesn’t have a mission; the mission of God has a church.” Discuss what that means for your church?
9. **Embracing and loving a neighborhood and place:** Where do you see God at work in your community today? How will you participate with him in what he is already doing in your city and neighborhood?
10. **Cultivating slow and deep relationships and discipleship:** What are the biggest challenges for building slow and deep relationships, community, and discipleship, in your particular setting?
11. **Cultivating slow and deep relationships and discipleship:** How can your worship gatherings be used (in practical ways) to create intentional connections as people gather?
12. **Cultivating slow and deep relationships and discipleship:** How do the following things affect the people in your church: hypermobility, upward-mobility, social fragmentation, and wanderlust? What effects does this have on your church, community, and discipleship? How can your church be an alternative to this mobility, disembodiment, restlessness, and social fragmentation?
13. **Cultivating slow and deep relationships and discipleship:** “You can tell a lot about a church by how often it eats, and who it eats with.” How often does your church eat? Who does it eat with? What does this tell you about your church? Does anything need to change?
14. **Joining with Jesus in his mission in your neighborhood:** How are you seeking to discern what God is doing in your context and neighborhood? How can you and your church join with God in what he is doing in your neighborhood?
15. **Joining with Jesus in his mission in your neighborhood:** If your church or ministry has buildings, how have these helped or hindered you in mission and ministry? Discuss the pros and cons of your church or ministry having buildings?
16. **Opportunities and challenges facing the church today:** How can your church move from merely tinkering with worship services, buildings, facilities, and programs, to going through deeper, missional change?
17. **Opportunities and challenges facing the church today:** What are some practical things you can do to learn from culturally marginalized churches and Christians (e.g. Asian American, Native American, African American, Latin American, etc.)?

18. **Opportunities and challenges facing the church today:** How can your church call people to make a long-term commitment to discipleship and community, over a long period, in a particular place?

Informing community

Facilitate the space for your group to respond to the discussion. You might consider this section as a personal time of written journal responses to the following questions.

1. What is God encouraging our class and me, to do?
2. In response to the issues raised in the video, what are areas I want to ask God for forgiveness in? How do I need to change? What does God want me to stand up for?
3. How do I need God to minister to me and my community, for us to better engage with the contextual issues of our community?
4. How can I gain a better understanding of long-term commitment to a neighborhood and place? What do we ask that God would do in our hearts?

Prayer

Spend time in prayer over what you've learnt.

Invite the ministry of the Holy Spirit to clarify, heal, and inspire change for your participants and communities.

Links

Website: www.theglobalchurchproject.com

Book: Graham Hill, *GlobalChurch: Reshaping Our Conversations, Renewing Our Mission, Revitalizing Our Churches* (IVP Academic, 2015)