

Addis Renewal Church Network

a network of urban churches, ministers, and elders seeking gospel renewal of the city

Addis Ababa has many churches, but is underserved in terms of the gospel. The number of gospel-centered churches per capita is still quite low, and there are entire segments of the city's population that are largely untouched. Many churches are inwardly-focused on building programs and denominational politics, and only serve to gather Christians that already exist in a given neighborhood—often in competition with other local churches. The church is increasingly becoming irrelevant to the young generation and to the rapidly changing urban worldview. False teachers and heretical practices are growing rapidly within the Protestant Church. Protestants are often antagonistic in their evangelism and in their relationship with the Orthodox Church in ways that hinder the gospel.

The urban church needs renewal.

We want to see the city of Addis Ababa transformed through local churches that have a biblical, passionate belief and practice of the gospel of Jesus Christ—a gospel lived out with our heads, our hearts, and our hands, in all the neighborhoods of Addis Ababa.

- HEAD** – solid, biblical theology that engages the questions and worldview of this urban generation
- HEART** – passionate prayer, worship, and ministry contextualized for the city
- HANDS** – holistic outreach and service to the whole person, whole family, and whole community

How can we accomplish this?

Our Mission: *Addis Renewal Church Network* exists to renew Addis Ababa with the gospel by supporting the local church in **church planting**, **church renewal**, and **holistic gospel ministry** in the city.

Church Planting – encouraging local churches in planting new congregations within the city that embody the network's shared mission and values

Church Renewal – supporting existing churches in practicing gospel renewal in their local context, with a broader vision and mission of reaching the city



Holistic Gospel Ministry – “caring for the whole person, the whole family, the whole community with the gospel”—for example: love for the poor; faith and vocation; having gospel presence in various urban communities: art, business, government, medicine, education, etc.; engaging growing youth population, rapidly changing demographics and worldview of the city

What network activities accomplish these goals?

We support church planting, church renewal, and holistic gospel ministry through:

Training – hosting conferences and seminars for urban ministers and church leaders; providing forums for learning from each others’ successes and failures

Leadership Assessment and Development – helping identify, train, and develop future church planters and leaders for urban ministry

Resourcing – providing resource materials and giving a context for discussion and application of new ministry ideas and practices related to church planting, leadership, gospel renewal, mercy and justice, cultural transformation, faith and work, urban ministry

Supportive Gospel Community – supportive community providing mutual care and accountability which helps churches and leaders strive after gospel renewal even when going upstream in their local contexts; we preach and live the gospel with one another

Prayer – We know that true gospel ministry only happens by the power of God’s Spirit, and so we are a network of prayer. We pray with one another and for one another.

Partnership – cooperative ministry opportunities, joint worship and prayer services, mutual financial contribution toward the network’s activities, as well as any special needs or strategic ministry initiatives that arise among the network

Our Values

Cross-Denominational -- “Partnership, not Competition”

We practice gospel partnership that breaks down competition between churches and denominations. We are not afraid to draw from the church history of Ethiopia and broader world to inform our practice and ground ourselves historically and contextually (i.e. liturgical calendar, musical tradition, historic creeds). We have a redemptive (not antagonistic) approach to the Orthodox Church.

Centered on Scripture and the Gospel of Grace

We are broadly “Reformed”— regardless of our particular Protestant denomination, we all come out of the Protestant Reformation in which these biblical truths were seen as essential: the centrality and authority of Scripture, gospel of God’s grace; sovereignty of God; biblical contextualized preaching for the city; proclamation and practice shaped by the life, death, resurrection, ascension of Jesus; biblical and joyful practice of the sacraments

Focused on Evangelism and Discipleship

We want to reach the entire community, receiving new believers, not taking people from other churches or simply planting churches for believers already in the community. We place strong emphasis on home groups for outreach, discipleship, and pastoral care; relational and culturally-engaging evangelism; broad and ongoing discipleship—making disciples who make disciples; intentional preaching and teaching that reaches believers and unbelievers and engages the big questions of our time and place

Empowered by the Spirit and Prayer

We are utterly dependent on the Spirit and prayer. We want to see the biblical practice of spiritual gifts in community for the building up of the local church, but will exercise a prophetic resistance to the prevalent health/wealth gospel, false teachings, and abuses of the spiritual gifts, while also providing gracious and attractive gospel alternatives

Holistic Ministry—“Care for the Whole Person, the Whole Family, the Whole Community”

We minister to whole people—physical, emotional, spiritual—within the contexts of their families and communities. We place strong emphasis on care and involvement of the poor; the relationship between our faith and our work; seeking gospel transformation in various areas of society and culture, engaging the growing youth population and rapidly changing demographics and worldview of the city; engaging men, women, and families based on the specific issues and strategic opportunities of the urban context

Love for the City

We love Addis Ababa, and our belief in the gospel leads us to seek the good of this city in every way. We are excited about God’s gospel purposes for the city, and the 5% of Ethiopia’s population that it represents. Sometimes the city is not seen as “unreached” because there are many churches—but often the city is underserved by the gospel relative to the numbers of people and the strategic opportunities for cultural transformation. We do not simply consider the number of churches but the movement of gospel renewal at work in the city. We do not view our presence in the city as an accident, but believe that God has great gospel purposes for Addis Ababa.

Love for the Church

We do not replace or compete with the church, but rather support and facilitate church planters, ministers, and churches to engage in gospel ministry. Our members are not denominations, but rather particular churches, ministers, and elders that continue in good standing within their own denominations and who share our values and mission

Healthy Community and Leadership

We believe the church should be characterized by grace, love, forgiveness, mutual trust, and mutual accountability. We desire partnership, not competition, between pastors, elders, evangelists, and lay leaders. We want to help local churches grow in biblical leadership practice and pastoral shepherding within various church polities/structures

How do we know when we are achieving our calling?

When we are supporting, encouraging, and helping multiply churches and church leaders who embody:

Love, Grace, Local Leadership, Partnership, Outreach and Mission, Sustainability, Living and Promoting Gospel Renewal in the City