



CHURCH PARTNERSHIP IN MISSIONARY SENDING

From Theory to Practice: Moving from Reference Provider to Primary Sender

Based on the Missio Nexus Mobilization Research Series & 2025 Launch Survey

#1

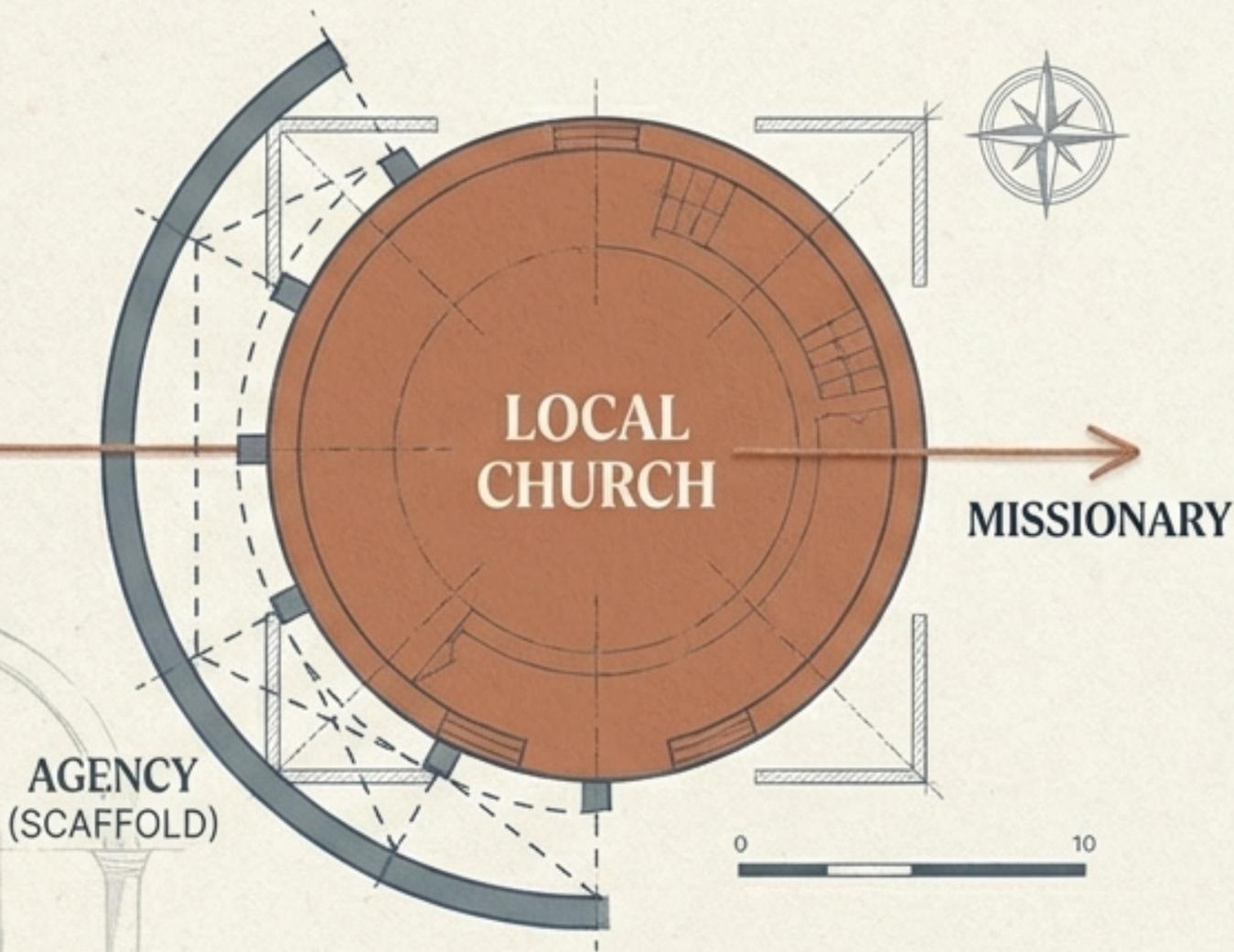
The single most predictive variable for field retention, resilience, and support raising success.

“You can’t be an island—you have to be connected to the church. The church is sending; we are partnering with them.”

— Agency Mobilization Director

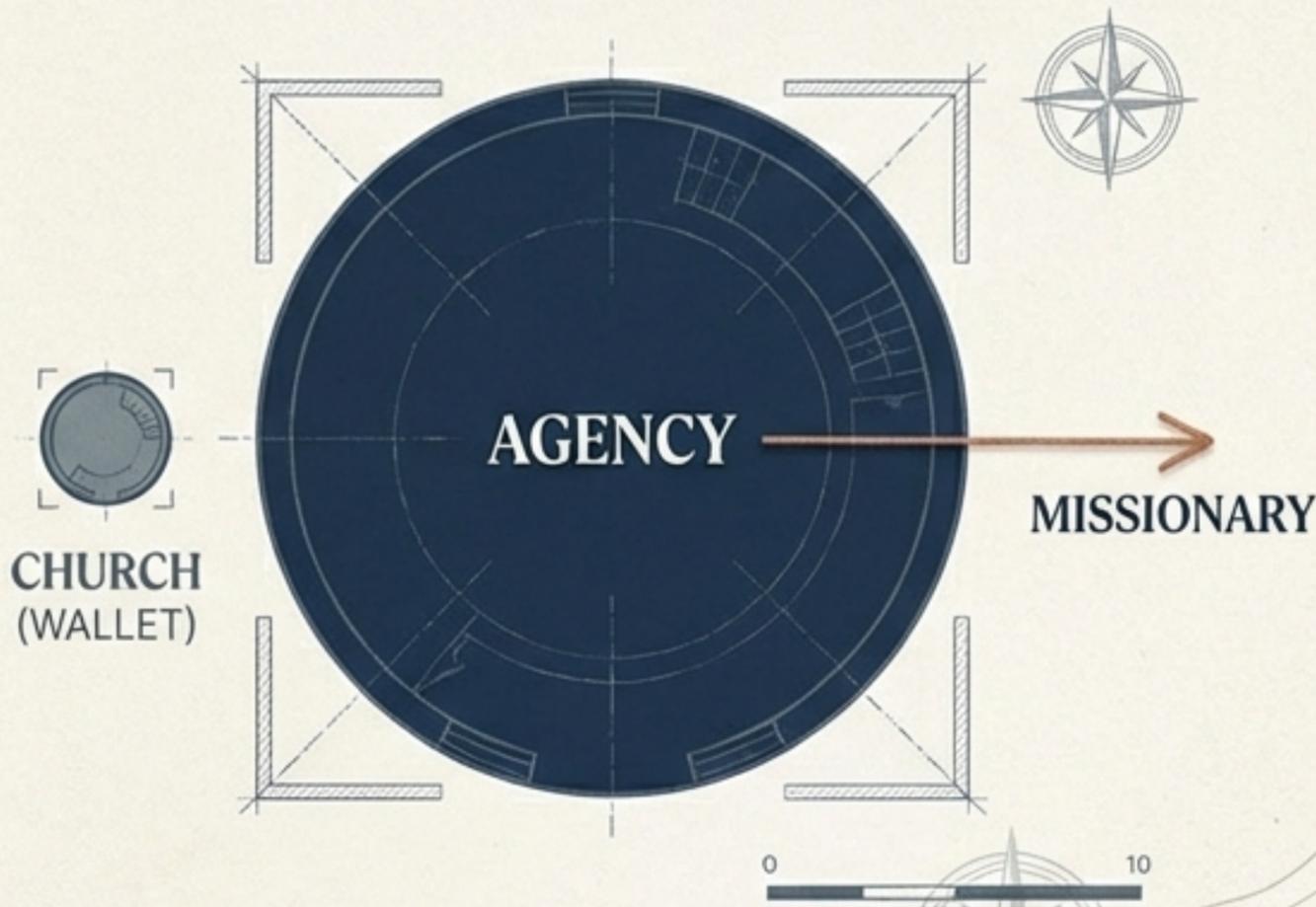
The Theological Baseline vs. The Parachurch Drift

THE ANTIOCH MODEL (ACTS 13)



Covenantal. Community. Responsibility.

THE MODERN DRIFT



Transactional. Checkmark. Displacement.

Mission agencies do not send missionaries; they facilitate the sending that belongs to the gathered people of God.

The Cost of Sidelining the Church

Lost Home
Connection

Lost Field
Context

DOUBLE DISPLACEMENT



Higher attrition
rates



Weaker support
networks



Greater isolation
on field



Poor
reintegration

"The longer I served, the more convinced I became it was the church that should have been more central." — Current Missionary, 2025 Launch Survey

Phase 1: Discovery & The Critical Question

What feedback have you gotten from your pastor?

AFFIRMED



Proceed with confidence.

QUALIFIED / DEVELOPMENTAL



Move to Nurture Pipeline.
Honor pastor's timeline.

ABSENT / HIDING



PAUSE. Coach the candidate.
Do not proceed until resolved.

Note

This question reveals the candidate's post's posture toward accountability.

Phase 2: Assessment as Community



FROM → TO



Key Insight: Pastors see character flaws and patterns over years that agencies miss in a weekend assessment.

FROM: Letter of Reference

Documentary, Static, Bureaucratic.

TO: Active Participation

Relational, Dynamic, Covenantal.

Action Box

Strategy: Invite church leaders to sit in on interviews and share observations before acceptance.

Phase 3: Defining the Covenant

Case Study: The Partnership Agreement (East-West Ministries)



THE CHURCH

- Spiritual formation
- Pastoral care
- Primary sender



THE AGENCY

- Field expertise & logistics
- Legal cover
- Member care systems



THE MISSIONARY

- Submission to both authorities
- Communication

✦ Clarity prevents conflict. ✦

Phase 4: Mobilizing the Body (Support Raising)

OWNERSHIP

Church feels responsible for the calling.

RESILIENCE

Candidate is supported by a body, not just donors.



GENEROSITY

Financial partnership follows conviction.

Candidates with genuine church buy-in raise funds faster and with more resilience.

Phase 5: Integrated Preparation

Church-Supervised Curriculum:
Mentor-led modules.

Cohorts: Discipleship embedded in local context (e.g., Launch Global).



**Don't extract the candidate;
equip the church to train them.**

Phase 6: Field Service & The Long Tether



Warning Signs: When to Pause



The Enthusiastic but Vague

Loves missions, but barely knows their pastor. Vision is individual, not communal.



The Hiding Candidate

Pursuing agency approval to bypass church hesitation or avoid accountability.



The Misunderstood Genius

Interprets pastoral caution as being unspiritual. Ignores wisdom.

AIM Protocol: Requiring a sending church is non-negotiable.

Weak Partnership is a Coaching Opportunity

Do not reject immediately

Coach towards connection

Developmental Pathway



Why is the connection weak?

How can we help you build a missions culture there?

Willingness to build this relationship predicts field coachability.

The Partnership Toolkit

Partnership Agreement

Formalizing expectations

Church Role Summary

One-pager for new senders

Pastoral Resource Packet

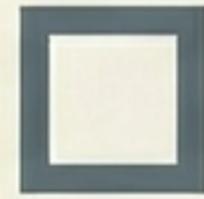
Theology & Context

Comm Templates

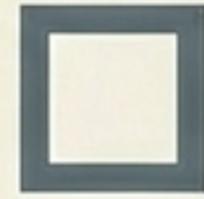
Intro letters & updates

**Don't just ask for things;
equip the church to provide them.**

The Leadership Audit



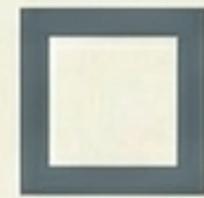
Do we ask 'The Question' in the first call?



Do we treat pastors as partners or just reference providers?



Does our training extract candidates or integrate the church?



Do we have a protocol for when church affirmation is absent?



Does our stated theology match our actual process?

Recovering the Sending Church



This is not a strategy for efficiency; it is a theological necessity for fruitfulness.

Organizations that make this shift report missionaries who are better formed, serve more resiliently, and return more whole.