From English Ministry to a Multigenerational, Multiethnic Church

A workshop for English pastors and leaders in Chinese churches

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If every second-generation child stayed in the church, would that mean our English ministry had fulfilled its mission?

THE BIG IDEA

The question has changed

THEN:

How do we keep our young people?

NOW:

What kind of church is God forming us to become?

English ministry = a bridge through which the WHOLE church EXPANDS its reach beyond the Chinese-speaking community.

THE ROADMAP

Four stages of English ministry growth

1

Youth Centered

Ministry to the children & youth of the Chinese congregation

Program

2

Emerging English Congregation

An English worshiping community within the Chinese church

Congregation

3

Partner Congregations

Two distinct congregations sharing one church

Partnership

4

Multigenerational + Multiethnic

A church reaching people through a shared mission

Mission

TABLE DISCUSSION

Which stage best describes your English ministry today?

1. What is working well?
2. What tension or limitation are you experiencing?
3. What is preventing movement?
4. **Is the main barrier relationship, leadership, structure or mission?**

WHAT MUST CHANGE?

Three shifts that support healthy growth

1

Permission → Ownership

Clarify decision rights
Pair responsibility with authority

LEADERSHIP

2

Informal → Clear Partnership

Define what is shared
Define what is distinct

STRUCTURE

3

Retention → Mission

Reach beyond church families
Equip and send the next generation
Welcome the surrounding community

MISSION

RELATIONSHIP: THE FOUNDATION ALL THREE STAND ON

No structural fix holds until trust is present. Each shift above depends on it.

What carries the three shifts? RELATIONSHIP: trust between us

NOT ONLY:

“We changed the structure.”

BUT ALSO:

“We build the trust that holds it.”

HISTORY

What has gone unspoken between us?

TRUST

Do we assume good intent?

REPAIR

How do we name and heal what was broken?

Leadership, structure, and mission are all carried by relationship.
When trust is the barrier, no structural fix will hold until trust is rebuilt first.

Shift 1: LEADERSHIP > From permission to ownership

"What would you like permission to do?"



"What has God entrusted you to lead?"

CLARITY	AUTHORITY	ACCOUNTABILITY
Who decides what?	Can leaders act on their responsibility?	How do we stay aligned?

Responsibility without authority creates frustration.
Authority without accountability creates division.

Shift 1: LEADERSHIP > Two leadership cultures, one church

	1ST GEN (CM)	2ND GEN (EM)	WORKING TOGETHER
Decisions	Direction from authority	Discussion until agreement	**Decide together, speak with one voice**
Forms of control	Compliance to rules	Group commitment	**A few shared rules, mutually held**
Position to others	Hierarchical	Peers	**Honor elders, share the table**
Relational style	Structured, formal	Group-oriented, informal	**Formal enough to be clear, warm enough to trust**
To be avoided	Deviation from authority	Failure to reach consensus	**Name the fear before deciding**

Neither style is the gospel. Each is a way of caring for the church.

TABLE DISCUSSION

Where do your two leadership cultures collide?

1. What recent decision would each side have made differently?
2. When the styles clash, whose way wins, and what does it cost?
3. What practice would let you decide together and speak with one voice?

Shift 2: STRUCTURE > From informal relationships to clear partnership



Clarify together

- What decisions are joint?
- What belongs to each congregation?
- How are budgets and staff supervision handled?
- How are disagreements resolved?
- **How is shared mission evaluated?**

Shift 2: STRUCTURE Three governance models across the four stages

1 Youth Centered | 2 Emerging English Congregation | 3 Partner Congregations | 4 Multigenerational + Multiethnic

Parental Model

Fits stage 1

Chinese Pastor & Board

- **Various Departments**
  Worship, mission, education, fellowship
- **English Children Ministry**
- **English Youth Ministry**

One board, one budget. The English ministry is a department of the Chinese church, and the Chinese board decides for it.

Parallel Model

Fits stages 2-3

Chinese Pastor & Board

- **English Ministry**
  English dept (worship, fellowship, mission, etc) + youth ministry
- **Chinese Ministry**
  Chinese departments
- **Administration**
  Finance, facilities, shared services

Two ministries, still one board. English runs its own departments day to day, but the Chinese board keeps final say on budget and staffing.

Partnership Model

Fits stages 3-4

English/Chinese Pastors & Joint Boards

- **English "Council"**
  English dept (worship, fellowship, mission, etc) + youth ministry
- **Chinese "Council"**
  Chinese departments
- **Administration**
  Finance, facilities, shared services

Two congregations, two councils, one joint board. English holds its own authority rather than receiving it from the Chinese board.

TABLE DISCUSSION

Which model are you living in?

1. Which model describes you today and does it match your stage?
2. Do you hold this model because it fits your stage, or because someone would have to give something up?
3. What must change to reach the next model, and why not yet?

Shift 3: MISSION > From retention to kingdom perspective

RETENTION

“How do we keep our young people?”

MISSION

“How can we equip the English Ministry to reach the people around us?”

TARGET

From our children to our English-speaking community

IDENTITY

From ethnic boundary to cultural gift

OUTCOME

From staying to discipling, leading, and sending

Shift 3: MISSION > Shifting from old to new paradigms

CHURCH AS ONE ETHNIC FAMILY

"We are one family, one people, one language."

CHURCH AS MANY PEOPLES

"We are one family that now speaks many languages."

GROWTH AS DIVORCE

"If the English Ministry grows and separates, we have lost our children."

GROWTH AS BIRTH

"If the English Ministry grows and separates, we have given birth to a church."

TABLE DISCUSSION

Which story does your church tell about growth and mission?

1. If your English ministry doubled with people outside the Chinese community, is that success?
2. Who lives within 15 minutes of you that only your English congregation could reach?
3. What keeps your English leaders serving inside instead of reaching outside?

Honor the story. Entrust the next generation. Reach the community.

Our heritage can be offered as a gift without becoming the boundary of our future.

HOMEWORK

Name your next faithful step

1. Our current stage is...

2. The shift we need is from... to...

3. One conversation or action I will initiate is...

Who needs to be part of the conversation, and what concern must be heard first?

RESOURCES & REFERENCES

Keep learning after today

CBF English / NextGen Ministry

Denominational hub for CBF English and next-generation ministry

eng.chinesebaptists.org

30 Days on the Chinese Church

Article series by Kenneth P. Carlson

kencarlson.org/series/chinese-church/

Asian American Collection

Articles, books, and links to other organizations by DJ Chuang

djchuang.com/category/asian-american/

English Ministry Crisis in Chinese Canadian Churches

Book by Matthew Richard Sheldon Todd

amazon.com/dp/149820886X

SBC Asian NextGen Pastors Network

Networking led by Terrence Shay & Hyung Lee

sbcasiannextgen.com/