The following citations are from Dr. Will Haag's DMin research project:

Will Haag, "Seattle Dinner Church Movement: Participatory Motives of Nonfounding Members" (DMin diss., Seattle University, 2023), ProQuest (30523637).

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"Dinner church as an ecclesial modality is relatively young within evangelicalism, but it harbors great potential for reinvigorating the movement if nontraditional modalities are appreciated as biblically grounded and missionally effective."

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"It may be time for another reformation of Protestant ecclesiology in general and evangelical missiology in particular. In my estimation, there are [at least] three fundamental assaults laying siege to the foundations of Bebbington-defined evangelicalism (Bebbington, 1989). The first manifests in various forms of easy believe-ism; the second is a knowledge-based approach to Christianity; and the third is an insatiably consumeristic approach to the faith. The first often emphasizes personal salvation at the cost of progressive sanctification and discipleship as well as neglecting collective service to humanity. The second tends to eviscerate a personal relationship with God and often promotes various forms of religious legalism and institutional hypocrisy. The third often reduces the supernatural into the mundane, sacred into ordinary, and members of humanity into projects to be fixed through commodification and consumption of religious goods and services in lieu of spiritual encounters with the divine."

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"As Hirsch and Ferguson (2011, 29, 33) suggest, the evangelical paradigm steeped in institutionalism must go if we hope to reach the

sixty percent of the population that will not engage the traditional church. One way or the other, I support a return to core convictions within the evangelical movement while embracing new forms of church and new methods of discipleship that humbly engage and serve culture without compromising fundamentals of the faith…"

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" …local dinner church gatherings foster an authentic sense of personal value through communal experiences of invitation, acceptance, and belonging. Individual dignity and value are intrinsically linked to communal experience. Vibrant and healthy humans are nourished by accepting and relational communities, and vice versa."

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"Jesus Christ defines eternal life in terms of relationship and repeatedly refers to the Church as a communal body. In the Bible, independence from God and others routinely denotes a lack of health and sinful separation in lieu of community and holistic relationships. The Biblical metanarrative tells story after story bemoaning the willful separation of humanity from God contrasted with the beauty of penitent return and a promise of permanent relationship with a gracious and loving, intrinsically communal God. One could say the Good News of Jesus is good due to its invitation, acceptance, equality, and promise of perfect relationship(s). Maybe these qualities are interwoven into the DNA of humanity…"

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"The impact and influence of modality upon missiology and ecclesiology have remained curiously absent from evangelical conversations in the twenty-first century. For too long, evangelicals in the United States have taken the Protestant Reformation, proclamation-driven model for granted. An overreliance on buildings, budgets, pulpits,

pastors, and traditional worship services may be the undoing of Bebbington-defined evangelicalism in its modern form (Bebbington, 1989). Although the essence of the movement will live on, it may do so under a new name with less institutionalization, compartmentalization, isolation, and consumerism."

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"Familiar and comfortable may be good for a sabbath, but portions of evangelicalism have been too comfortable for too long. Though steeped in biblical knowledge and an abundance of moral emphases, these all-too comfortable churches and worship gatherings inside evangelicalism often come at the cost of diversity, unity, mutual accountability, and community engagement."

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"Gone are the days when most Americans attended a Christian church service on Sunday mornings (Lipka, 2015). Gone are the days when unchurched citizens customarily turn to traditional churches for answers to difficult life-questions (Fosner 2017, 102; G. Smith, 2021). Gone, too, are the days when the younger generations of Americans settle for passive, relationally weak, information-driven religious services.[1] Americans are generally starving for authenticity, purpose, genuine relationships, and true meaning (Barna 2005, 42). If it is true that the Church of God supports the mission of God, then the time has come for evangelicalism to free itself from building-dependent, pastor-centric, Sunday service-reliant fundamentals in favor of more invitational, participatory, and relationship-promoting modalities of ecclesiology."

[1] Evangelical megachurches may be an exception to this trend.

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"Therein lies one key emanating from this project: sharing a meal in the name of Jesus is an invitation to experience God through natural bread, supernatural bread, and communal inclusion. This medium promotes the

message of invitation, acceptance, equality, and relationship, whereas the traditional Sunday proclamation model too often falls prey to the commodification of religious services. Dinner church may not be *the* way, but the findings of this research project certainly suggest it is a very healthy and helpful way of *being* the church instead of *going* to church."

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You may contact Dr. Will Haag about his research at the following email address: will.mannafest@gmail.com