

HOW HOW FIVE TYPES OF WILL WE INNOVATORS ARE CREATING INNOVATE?

A BETTER NORMAL FOR THE CHURCH



CYCLICAL INC

We are not the first to want to see the Church transformed.

We stand on the shoulders of saints who have gone before us, who in times of dire crisis and great opportunity have faithfully innovated forward to create new and better normals for the Church. They did it because they were pointing to something greater, witnesses to something that they could see on the horizon.

Today, we continue living in that legacy of innovation. What new thing do you bring to the Church? Is it a new church or a new kind of church? Is it an idea that can change lives? Is it a new kind of business that bears witness to God's reign on earth? Is it art or liturgy that redirects our worship? Is it a set of conversations with people who are just discovering who Jesus is?

However you are innovating, you're going to face significant challenges.





How will we innovate?

The Church needs innovation like fire needs oxygen. Even so, changes are often perceived as threats. You may have been perceived as a threat. You may already have faced opposition or obstruction as you've tried to faithfully innovate something new through the Church. You may have asked yourself:

How will I innovate...

- When I'm not part of a church?
- When I'm not a "church leader?"
- When I don't have enough funding and support?
- When our church is not meeting the way it used to?
- When I can't connect with denominational leaders?
- When I don't fit within traditional church leadership paradigms?
- When I'm disillusioned with the Church?
- When I'm angry with the Church?
- When I'm spiritually burned out?
- When my vision isn't shared by my church?

These are significant emotional, spiritual, and interpersonal roadblocks for innovators. You don't always have the space you need to experiment and learn as you develop your idea. You sometimes feel like you're the only one who's doing this kind of work, who sees these problems and opportunities. Being an innovator can feel isolating and frustrating at times.

Although innovators like us often feel alone in our calling, we've found that there are ways to move from isolation into action. Over the past eight years, Cyclical has been joining innovators of all abilities and identities, and we've found that there are three primary things we need in order to overcome these obstacles to create better norms for the Church.

First, innovators need mutual relationships. People who are starting something new often feel isolated and alone. They have few trusted people with whom they can share their ideas and collaborate. When they join together in ecosystems, innovators are finally connected with others who are also innovating in similar areas. They learn from each other. They support each other. They inspire each other to keep stepping forward.

Second, innovators need post-industrial frameworks. The 20th century Church handed us a playbook that for the most part no longer fits today's context. What worked thirty years ago doesn't work today. For our post-everything context, we need new frameworks. Cyclical has been learning on the ground and developing post-industrial frameworks that help guide us in staying faithful as we innovate.

Third, innovators need a culture of learning. We rarely know exactly what will work in any given context. What works in Kansas City won't necessarily work in Athens, Greece. As we start forward in our work, Cyclical is a community that can reflect and learn together, and celebrate our failures as opportunities for faithful innovation.

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When Cyclical started, we were solely focused on starting new churches. But we soon realized that there are other innovators in the church as well. Because **we believe in God's love for the world inspiring faithful innovation through the Church**, Cyclical made a transition from being exclusively an ecosystem of church starters to joining denominations, congregations, and individuals of all abilities, backgrounds, and identities in faithful innovation.

God's love is widening the plausibility structures for who can create a better normal for the future of the Church. That means **God is not just calling church starters**. God is renewing the Church by empowering faithful innovators of all kinds: pastors of existing churches, church starters, artists, entrepreneurs, authors, community builders, thinkers, poets, teachers, spiritual guides, storytellers, and coaches. In fact, there are five main categories of innovators that we see emerging right now.



1. Church Starting Innovators (beginning at the discernment season)

People who are discerning whether they are called to start a church often don't know the first place to start. People who have recently started a church are often facing unique challenges that are not shared even by other pastors.

Cyclical Churches is a family of ecosystems that offers support, training, coaching and frameworks for discerners and starters of new churches. Find out more at cyclicalchurches.com and take the Should I Start a Church quiz as a preliminary step.



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2. Content Innovators (thought leaders, artists, and authors)

As the Church in the West is transforming, we will need to elevate new voices, perspectives, and narratives in the form of a book, course, podcast, or other published content that is shared with the world.

Cyclical Content is an ecosystem of innovators who create and publish their content faithfully, grow their networks, and build new streams of revenue. They created a publishing house for books and a writing community to join authors and artists of all types from idea all the way through publishing. You can browse their books, join the writing community or submit a book idea at CyclicalPublishing.com.



3. Marketplace Innovators

(business leaders bringing their faith into the marketplace)

Moving into post-industrial and post-Christendom ecclesiology means the Church will have to change funding models. But it also means faithfully innovating in the marketplace as a witness to God's reign. We will need new kinds of businesses and new kinds of business leaders.

Cyclical Social Enterprise is a network of existing business leaders and non-profit executives who support one another through training and mutual consulting in order to grow their own competencies. In addition, this group supports up-and-coming entrepreneurs with finances, coaching, and mentoring.

If you'd like to connect or know someone who may, visit cyclicalinc.com/cyclical-social-enterprise to schedule a call.

4. Liturgical Innovators

(leaders in worship giving voice to God's prophetic activity)

Innovators have been creating liturgical content for thousands of years. These liturgists are gifted to faithfully innovate worship language that fits their context and also bears witness to God's prophetic voice.

Today, Cyclical Liturgy is a developing ecosystem of liturgical leaders who are intentionally jumping into this stream of people through various initiatives. From consulting, to cohorts, to content creation, Cyclical Liturgy will gather a diversity of people for creating more robust liturgical content for which the world is calling.

Are you interested in this or know somebody who may want to connect? Visit cyclicalinc.com/cyclical-liturgy.



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5. Disciple-Making Innovators

(growing in their ability to make disciples in their context)

It's no secret that disciple-making formulas are not working. A one-size-fits-all approach has done too much damage to our neighbors who don't identify as Christian. And yet, we long to better join God in cultivating spaces where new disciples can be made.

Cyclical Full Circle is an ecosystem of innovators who are creating contextual experiments and cultures of experimentation in existing churches. Guided by a new publication, *Missional Disciple-Making Handbook: Growing as Disciples and Innovating Together*, Rob Douglas is leading groups and individuals into a garden filled with opportunity. If you'd like to create something new in your church or know someone who may be interested, visit cyclicalfullcircle.com.

No matter what kind of faithful innovator you are, you are not alone. Christ has gone ahead of you on mission and the Holy Spirit is actively accompanying you on your journey to affirm God's call and gifts for everything you need ahead.

We also would be honored to join you. The first step in getting involved with any of these ecosystems is a conversation. We would love to talk with you individually about how you're innovating, what obstacles you're encountering, and how Cyclical can join you in faithful innovation in your context. Simply email us, we'll find a time to talk, and we'll see if we can help you get moving forward.

Imagine being surrounded by a group of humans who know what it's like to risk and who encourage each other to keep innovating. Imagine being inspired and trained in post-industrial frames that are fitting for your context, not foreign to it. Imagine being a part of an ecosystem that is creating not just a new normal, but a better normal for the Church.

If you're ready to take the next step in innovation, schedule a call today so we can discuss how to join you in faithful innovation in your context.

Schedule a Call at
cyclicalinc.com



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