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An Adaptive Change Project in Developing Leaders

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AN ADAPTIVE CHANGE PROJECT IN DEVELOPING LEADERS

A Dissertation Presented to the Faculty of
Harding School of Theology
Memphis, Tennessee

In Partial Fulfillment
Of the Requirements for the Degree of
Doctor of Ministry

By
Scott A. Laird

March 2019

Chairman _____

Reader _____

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Date Approved _____

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CHAPTER 1: AN ADAPTIVE CHANGE PROJECT IN DEVELOPING LEADERS

Introduction

I grew up exploring, floating, and fishing the Madison and Jefferson Rivers around Three Forks, MT. I even white-water rafted down the Gallatin River. These rivers hold memories that continue to shape my life. The Gallatin, Madison, and Jefferson Rivers not only helped mold me, but they continue to influence the people and land where they flow. Lewis and Clark traveled up the Jefferson as part of their journey "to look for an all-water route across the western two-thirds of the continent."¹ However, it is the Missouri River, originating at the confluence of these three rivers, that wields a greater influence and flows through Great Falls.

Leaders are people who influence.² Each of us has witnessed the impact of leaders. Imagine the combined influence of disciples of Christ who recognize God's work and employ God's gifts while dwelling in the community of God. Like the Gallatin, Madison, and Jefferson Rivers, every disciple has already journeyed through life being

¹ Stephen E. Ambrose, *Undaunted Courage: The Pioneering First Mission to Explore America's Wild Frontier* (London: Pocket Books History, 2003), xii.

² J. Robert Clinton, *The Making of a Leader*, 2nd ed. (Colorado Springs, CO: NavPress, 2012), 217.

influenced and influencing others. However, like the Missouri, as more disciples recognize and embrace God's work in their lives, their personal and collective influence grows. This case study examined a process where disciples of Jesus explored how God developed them to be people of spiritual influence and were then called to serve as leaders.

This chapter sets the stage for understanding this dissertation project as it applies to the Great Falls Church of Christ (GFCC)³ in Great Falls, Montana. It addresses (1) the problem under consideration, (2) ministry context, (3) review of literature related to the project, (4) theoretical framework, (5) overview of the methodology, and (6) project limitations/delimitations.

Statement of the Problem

GFCC has not established an effective long-term leader development model and I, as the minister since November 1994, have sought easier fixes than a long-term commitment of mentoring to develop local leaders.

³ The Great Falls Church of Christ will be referenced as GFCC for the rest of the dissertation.

Average attendance for GFCC over the past ten years was 238.⁴ As a mid-sized church we predominantly relied upon programs for growth⁵ while employing my administrative skills to facilitate ministry.⁶ I developed and implemented a number of programs to produce leaders since my arrival in Great Falls but have consistently been disappointed by the results. In 2014 and 2015 we conducted a thirteen-week class on elder training followed by a one-year small group program to provide skills and tools for potential elders, but we did not appoint any new elders. We began a summer preaching series in 2004 that we still use to give men an opportunity to explore preaching gifts and develop skills, but it has not developed organizational leaders in our church. I have been instrumental in facilitating three Shepherds' Networks⁷ to connect, inspire, encourage, and

⁴ "Church Record," Great Falls Church of Christ, Great Falls, MT, 1948-2018. All the statistics concerning the Great Falls Church of Christ come from these records.

⁵ Gary McIntosh, *One Size Doesn't Fit All* (Grand Rapids: Fleming H. Revell, 1999), 30-35.

⁶ Gary McIntosh, *Taking Your Church to the next Level: What Got You Here Won't Get You There* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2009), 147-48.

⁷ "Church Record," 2011-2018. The Shepherds' Network Northwest Connection has been a joint training venue provided by Harding School of Theology and the Churches of Christ in Montana.

develop existing and future elders in the Northern Plains of the United States and Canada which has encouraged our existing elders, but did not develop new elders in Great Falls. Men's and women's groups that have been in existence since 1995 to help people grow spiritually have not developed organizational leaders. Small groups called LIFE Groups (Love, Involvement, Fellowship, Evangelism) have existed since 2001 to provide heart-to-heart, face-to-face interaction⁸ with a secondary focus of using small groups as a training ground for new leaders. These LIFE Groups have been somewhat effective in developing new leaders and act as a model or stepping stone toward leader emergence.

These programs blessed the church but did not solve our leader shortage. It could be that a program-based model has not been an effective structure because it does not employ God's transformational work in developing spiritual leaders. These programs increased ministry skills but were not transformational. Consider the following insight from Bob Logan, church planter, consultant, and coach,

We are experienced enough in programs to know that they generally don't work. No program, however good, can provide what a church needs to develop leaders. . . . They might be helpful if they are part of

⁸ John W. Ellas, *Small Groups and Established Churches: Challenge and Hope for the Future* (Houston, TX: Center for Church Growth, 2005) 54-55.

something larger, but all by themselves they won't do it.⁹

Part of the problem in developing leaders through programs lies in an expectation of a predetermined outcome. Our congregation has looked for positional leaders, elders and deacons, rather than explore the potential of transformational leadership where individual Christians are encouraged, mentored, and equipped to discover their giftedness and the good works God has prepared for them to do.¹⁰ This dissertation examines leader emergence potential through the exploration of a disciple's life narrative and giftedness within the local church.

Ministry Context

Established in 1948, GFCC exists in the Northern Plains of the United States, a mission region for the Churches of Christ. We are the only Church of Christ in the area and the closest sister congregation is located over ninety miles to the south in Helena, MT. Our location and

⁹ Robert E. Logan and Tarra Miller, *From Followers to Leaders* (St. Charles, IL: ChurchSmart Resources, 2007), 205.

¹⁰ 1 Pet. 4:10-11; Eph. 2:10. All scripture references will use *The Holy Bible, New International Version* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2011), unless otherwise noted.

experience indicate most of our leaders are either developed locally or not at all.

The city of Great Falls has remained approximately the same size over the past forty years.¹¹ Malmstrom Air Force Base, located on the east end of Great Falls and only two miles from our current facilities, provides our community and congregation with new families on an ongoing transitional basis. Our active duty military families currently represent about 15% of the church's one hundred and twenty families and have been an important segment of the church since its beginning.

The congregation consistently experiences internal transition due to the Air Force reassigning active duty personnel to different bases every three or four years. At present, the ongoing membership transition coincides with the following congregational changes (1) financing and attempting to build or move into a new ministry facility in the near future, (2) departure of a long-term minister in

¹¹ From 1975 through 2014 the United States census indicates Cascade County, where Great Falls is located, has dropped from 84,700 to 82,344. Information from the United States Census Bureau, accessed March 16, 2016, <http://www.census.gov/search-results.html?q=1960+population+Cascade+County%2C+Montana&page=1&stateGeo=none&searchtype=web&search.x=0&search.y=0>. <http://www.census.gov/popest/data/counties/totals/pre-1980/tables/e7079co.txt>.

March 2016, (3) introduction of an interim minister to the ministry in February 2016, (4) beginning the search for a new minister in 2019 who will transition into my role as the lead evangelist/minister, (5) launching our two-year ministry apprentice into full-time supported ministry in April 2016 and inviting a new two-year apprentice to the ministry team in Great Falls in January 2018, (6) incorporating a new ministry facility into the church's mission, and (7) discerning the impact of generational challenges. These opportunities and challenges create a demand for more leaders and a long-term strategy for identifying and developing leaders.

Though the church experiences a high rate of turnover it continues to focus on sharing the gospel. To reflect these two realities, the congregation adopted "*Seek, Save, Strengthen, Send. All for the glory of God!*" as a mission statement in 2000. The "sending" dimension of our mission was realized when we sent out 467 members from 1995-2017, but only 389 transferred into the church during that time. This means sending an average of almost 10% of the church membership each year. Most of this turnover is a result of our military members being transferred. Typically, the individuals we send are more spiritually mature than those we receive. Our evangelistic focus has resulted in 319

people being baptized into Christ from 1995 through 2017. Seventy-six of those 319 are presently part of GFCC and represent 24% of our current membership of 224.¹² Those baptized into Christ experience basic discipleship before preparing for leadership roles.¹³

Four factors contribute to our continual need to develop additional leaders. The first factor is the transitional nature of the church. Many of those we send have grown into leadership positions before they transfer and leave a vacancy when they are sent. Experience suggests

¹² "Church Records," January 2018 membership rolls.

¹³ Discipleship begins while studying the gospel with an individual. Personal study and prayer are modeled, taught, and encouraged in our one-on-one studies. Before an individual is baptized into Christ, we count the cost using Luke 14:25-33 as a key text demonstrating the lordship of Jesus. Acts 2:36-47 functions as another key text and demonstrates the foundational concept of surrendering to Jesus as Lord at our baptism and participating in Bible study, fellowship (community), the breaking of bread (grace concept), and prayer as four foundational components for spiritual growth. Once an individual has been baptized into Christ, they continue to meet with the people who studied with them for a period of six to twelve months to encourage growth as a disciple. At the same time, they are incorporated into our small groups (LIFE Groups) as a place to develop additional face-to-face, heart-to-heart relationships. If someone identifies with GFCC through transfer, discipleship is not as deliberate. However, we provide a "Compass Class" to orient the individual to the church and explore areas where their gifts can be used in serving others. Much of the discipleship growth of those identifying with the body occurs in our LIFE Groups.

that it typically requires at least one to two years for a Christian who places membership with GFCC to discover and use his/her gifts in a leader role at GFCC.¹⁴

The second factor is the relatively young age physically and spiritually of those who move into GFCC. Malmstrom Air Force Base (MAFB), located adjacent to Great Falls, has a median age of 23.¹⁵ MAFB functions as the first-duty station for many airmen, meaning they arrive at MAFB directly from their specialized military training. From twenty-four years of personal observation it appears that if a young man or woman has been blessed with Christian parents and chooses military service, they rarely attend church in a consistent fashion until some faith crisis moves them to be more involved. Therefore, most

¹⁴ This period of time roughly reflects the individuals first LIFE Group involvement. Our groups reorganize every two years and it is often at the reorganization point that we are deliberately looking for new leaders and their giftedness. Space constraints have hindered an effective new-members class where gifts and ministry are quickly matched. Greg L. Hawkins and Cally Parkinson, *Move: What 1,000 Churches Reveal about Spiritual Growth* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2011), 210-18, support the importance and function of a new members class. GFCC began the new members' class, "Compass," in the fall of 2018.

¹⁵ "Profile of General Population and Housing Characteristics: 2010 Malstrom Air Force Base, Great Falls, MT," *American FactFinder* (United States Census Bureau), accessed Feb. 16, 2019, https://factfinder.census.gov/faces/nav/jsf/pages/community_facts.xhtml.

young Christians from MAFB, who begin worshipping with us, are spiritually immature and in crisis.

The third factor relates to a recent trend with mature military members identifying with the church. Military force reductions mean our spiritually mature military members are working longer hours and different shifts than they have in the past. This change results in increasing time conflicts between work and congregational ministry opportunities and has decreased the impact mature military members have had in GFCC.

The fourth factor involves the percentage of first-generation adult converts in Great Falls. We rejoice that 53% (119 out of 224) of our members are first-generation Christians.¹⁶ These new Christians experienced their conversion without having had the blessing of growing up in a Christian family and must first grow as disciples before growing as leaders.

Review of Related Literature

The development of spiritual leaders is a pressing topic beyond the local church.¹⁷ Biblical leadership is a

¹⁶ "Church Record," 2018.

¹⁷ Three books by Malphurs are a small indicator of the interest in spiritual leadership. Aubrey Malphurs, *Being Leaders: The Nature of Authentic Christian Leadership* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2003). Aubrey Malphurs, *Leading*

gift from God (Rom. 12:3-8) that can lie dormant and undiscovered until the circumstances of life and providence of God provide an opportunity for it to be discovered and developed (Ex. 3:1-4:17).¹⁸ Leadership and the ongoing development of leaders cross institutional boundaries including business, education, military, religion, and any other area that brings people together for a common purpose.¹⁹ Discipleship to Jesus Christ calls every follower to grow and develop. This includes how and whether an individual is called to lead. Robert Katz argues that leaders "are not necessarily born but may be developed,"²⁰

Leaders: Empowering Church Boards for Ministry Excellence, a New Paradigm for Board Leadership (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2005). Aubrey Malphurs and Will Mancini, *Building Leaders: Blueprints for Developing Leadership at Every Level of Your Church* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2004).

¹⁸ Clinton, *The Making of a Leader*. The entire book deals with leader development. Moses serves as an example.

¹⁹ Bernard M. Bass and Ralph M. Stogdill, *Bass & Stogdill's Handbook of Leadership: Theory, Research, and Managerial Applications*, 3rd ed. (New York: Free Press, 1990), 1-20. Cynthia D. McCauley, Ellen Van Velsor, Marian N. Ruderman, "Introduction: Our View of Leadership Development" in *Handbook of Leadership Development*, eds. Ellen Van Velsor, Cynthia D. McCauley, Marian N. Ruderman (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2010), 3. J. Robert Clinton, *A Short History of Modern Leadership Theory* (Altadena, CA.: Barnabas Publishers, 1992), 9, contains a footnote designating numerous disciplines influencing leader development.

providing encouragement for emerging leaders to know that God can develop them spiritually while helping them grow.

Three books provided a helpful overview of the development of leadership theory as it applied to this project and Leadership Emergence Theory (LET).²¹ *Bass & Stogdill's Handbook of Leadership: Theory, Research, and Managerial Applications*²² is an exhaustive treatment of leadership from a primarily secular perspective. Robert Clinton's, *A Short History of Leadership Theory*,²³ relies heavily upon the work of Stogdill and Bass to develop a time-line illustrating an overview of the field of leadership study from the pre-modern era (before 1881) through 1986. He then identifies ways in which these leadership paradigms influence his LET.²⁴ The third book,

²⁰ Robert L. Katz, "Skills of an Effective Administrator," *Harvard Business Review* (January - February 1955): 42.

²¹ The specific leadership theory called Leadership Emergence Theory will be identified as LET for the rest of the dissertation.

²² Bass, the entire book is devoted to exploring leadership theories.

²³ Clinton, *A Short History of Leadership Theory*.

²⁴ Clinton, *The Making of a Leader* and J. Robert Clinton, *Leadership Emergence Theory: A Self-Study Manual for Analyzing the Development of a Christian Leader* (Altadena, CA: Barnabus Resources, 1989). Both books employ Clinton's Leadership Emergence Theory (LET). Clinton, A

*Reviewing Leadership: A Christian Evaluation of Current Approaches*²⁵ by Ledbetter, Banks, and Greenhalgh, explores numerous leadership theories and their connections to Christian leadership.²⁶

Overviews of leadership theories indicate progress in the study of leadership. However, ambiguity remains in defining and evaluating leadership theory. *Reviewing Leadership* notes, "one of the chief concerns levied against leadership studies is the lack of a central theory."²⁷ The vast number of leadership theories and their nuances make using the scientific method of testing, where results are

Short History of Leadership Theory, 21, connects LET to the Great Man Era; 23, footnote 18 on page 23 highlights the importance placed on biographical and case history data by Stogdill; and 29-30, Emory S. Bogardus employed a leadership biographical methodology. Clinton's LET relies heavily on a biographical methodology as a legitimate means for developing a leadership theory as demonstrated by the works of Stogdill and Bogardus.

²⁵ Bernice M. Ledbetter, Robert J. Banks and David C. Greenhalgh, *Reviewing Leadership: A Christian Evaluation of Current Approaches*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2016).

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 65-90. Of special note is the section on "Biblical Life-Story Approach to Leadership," 75-81, which summarizes Clinton's LET. As an extra note, this book is very well referenced and provides a wealth of information for additional studies on many aspects of leadership.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, xvii.

replicable and generalizable, difficult if not impossible.²⁸ Zenger and Folkman concur. They identify sixteen variables to be considered in defining leadership and note that some of these variables are constantly changing.²⁹

Bass, Clinton, and Ledbetter provide a framework for understanding how LET compares with other leadership theories. Bass starts with an overview of general leadership paradigms. Clinton provides a brief rationale for his leadership focus on the individual leader and the development of LET. Ledbetter explores and critiques Clinton's LET in light of other faith-based leadership paradigms.

Clinton's LET argues that God works in sovereign and providential ways over time to foster spiritual, ministerial, and strategic formation.³⁰ His theory suggests that if a Christian recognizes God's work throughout his or

²⁸ Ledbetter, *Reviewing Leadership*, xvii.

²⁹ John H. Zenger, and Joe Folkman, *The Extraordinary Leader: Turning Good Managers into Great Leaders*, rev. ed. (New York: McGraw-Hill, 2009), 4-9. Some of these include; different behaviors and practices at different levels, diverse environments, different skills are required at various stages of development, major events drive leadership, a lack of agreed-upon measures, leadership as teams or individuals, etc.

³⁰ Clinton, *Leadership Emergence Theory*, 9.

her life then that individual will be empowered, encouraged, and motivated to serve God to the fullest while also helping others recognize God's impact in their lives and the subsequent call to become a leader, a person of influence.

This project used two primary resources, *The Making of a Leader* and *Deep Mentoring*.³¹ Stanley and Clinton's book, *Connecting*,³² responds to the failure of leaders to finish well by applying mentoring as a corrective to this breakdown. Finishing well is an important component of LET. *The Bible and Leadership Values*³³ goes book-by-book through the Bible to explore leadership development in different characters. At the time he wrote *Leadership Emergence Theory* in 1989 Clinton had studied nearly 500 leaders, including biblical characters, historical leaders, and

³¹ Randy D. Reese and Robert Loane, *Deep Mentoring: Guiding Others on Their Leadership Journey* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Books, 2012).

³² Paul D. Stanley and J. Robert Clinton, *Connecting: The Mentoring Relationships You Need to Succeed in Life* (Colorado Springs, CO: NavPress, 1992).

³³ J. Robert Clinton, *The Bible and Leadership Values: A Book by Book Analysis* (Altadena, CA: J. Robert Clinton, 1993).

contemporary leaders.³⁴ By 2014, the number of leaders studied using LET had risen to over 5,000.³⁵

In *Deep Mentoring*, Randy Reese and Robert Loane embrace and provide a means to explore Clinton's LET in a more engaging and popular fashion. They apply some of Clinton's terms and invite the reader into a process that enables an emergent leader to personalize Clinton's leadership timeline. Reese and Loane suggest the timeline, though not absolute, provides (1) a general description of development, (2) predicts what others might encounter, and (3) prescribes what is next in developing leaders.³⁶

Attempting to put Clinton's LET into a usable format prompted Terry Walling and some associates to develop website training at www.breakthru.com and to write three books: *Stuck*,³⁷ *Awakening*,³⁸ and *Deciding*.³⁹ These resources

³⁴ Clinton, *Leadership Emergence Theory*, 7.

³⁵ Terry Walling, Kyle Walling, and Zack Curry, *Awakening: Awakening to the Call of God* (Chico, CA: Leader Breakthru, 2014), 9. Reese, *Deep Mentoring*, 23, claims the number of leaders studied was over 7,000.

³⁶ Reese, *Deep Mentoring*, 65-66.

³⁷ Terry B. Walling, *Stuck! Navigating the Transitions of Life & Leadership*, rev. ed. (Chico, CA: Leader Breakthru, 2015).

³⁸ Walling, *Awakening*.

are founded on Clinton's LET and attempt to clarify different aspects of the theory.

One more work that relies heavily upon Clinton's theory is *Journeys to Significance*⁴⁰ by Neil Cole. Cole argues the differences in Paul's missionary trips invite a practical application of LET. For example, as the book of Acts unfolds, Paul spent increasing amounts of time in the cities where he preached the gospel, eventually spending three years in Ephesus. Cole reasons that Paul processed the results of his previous mission journeys and concluded, as understood through his actions, that a more effective mission effort required spending additional time to not only evangelize but also establish healthy leaders and churches. This concept of processing circumstances, events, relationships, etc., are foundational components of LET identified as "process items."⁴¹

³⁹ Terry B. Walling, Rick Williams, and Steve Hopkins, *Deciding: Clarifying Your Kingdom Contribution* (Chico, CA: Leader Breakthru, 2017). The fourth book by Walling, *Finishing*, is in the works.

⁴⁰ Neil Cole, *Journeys to Significance: Charting a Leadership Course from the Life of Paul* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2011).

⁴¹ Clinton, *The Making of a Leader*, 260.

Spirituality and spiritual authority are critical to leader development. Spirituality includes, but is not limited to, faithfulness to God and scripture, perseverance, practicing spiritual disciplines, trust and credibility, and demonstrating the fruit of the Spirit. It is a combination of life and attitude that demonstrates a Christ-like character. Clinton states, "the ultimate goal in authority development is to help a leader understand that spiritual authority is the primary authority base in leadership influence."⁴² Norman Shawchuck and Roger Heuser note that spirituality generates energy for the working out of God's purposes in an individual's or organization's life.⁴³ They also provide insight on how a minister can prioritize time and energy to accomplish the most important aspects of ministry when they maintain a focus on their spiritual development.⁴⁴ Perry Shaw confirms the importance of spirituality, reminding his readers that one's identity needs to be found in a relationship with God, not in what

⁴² Clinton, *The Making of a Leader*, 88.

⁴³ Norman Shawchuck and Roger Heuser, *Leading the Congregation: Caring for Yourself While Serving the People* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1993), 121.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 80-88.

is commonly perceived as success.⁴⁵ Clinton will often reference this spiritual priority with the word "being," for example; "effective spiritual ministry flows out of being,"⁴⁶ or "enduring fruitfulness flows out of being."⁴⁷

Scripture consistently points to God using faithful people in the context of a mentoring relationship to produce leaders. Examples include Moses and Joshua, Elisha and Elijah, David and Jonathan, Jesus and the apostles, Barnabas and Paul, Barnabas and John Mark, Paul and Timothy, Paul and Silas, Paul and Titus, along with others. Jesus chose to train twelve apostles rather than develop a leadership program or school. Coleman, in *The Master Plan of Evangelism*, reminds us that Jesus focused on a few while not ignoring the masses because it was essential for the apostles to not miss his purpose.⁴⁸ A. B. Bruce in *The Training of the Twelve* demonstrates Jesus worked with his apostles through three stages, taking them from believer to

⁴⁵ Perry W. H. Shaw, "Vulnerable Authority: A Theological Approach to Leadership and Teamwork," *Christian Education Journal* 3, no. 1 (2006): 125-27.

⁴⁶ Clinton, *The Making of a Leader*, 8.

⁴⁷ Ibid., 45.

⁴⁸ Robert E. Coleman, *The Master Plan of Evangelism* (Old Tappan, NJ: Fleming H. Revell Company, 1963), 24-28.

uninterrupted attendee to those chosen for apostolic training.⁴⁹ Clinton's LET depends heavily upon these types of relationship concepts. He explains an applicable purpose of LET is to "use leadership emergence theory concepts to help select and develop the future leaders who are emerging all around us."⁵⁰ Mentoring relationships are crucial in applying LET to a church setting. Stanley and Clinton's *Connecting* provides guidance in understanding the role of⁵¹ and criteria for developing mentoring relationships.⁵²

Another method associated with mentoring is coaching. A brief distinction between mentoring and coaching identifies mentoring as someone pouring into a mentee's life, whereas coaching helps draw insights and direction out of the life of the one being coached.⁵³ *Leadership*

⁴⁹ A.B. Bruce, *The Training of the Twelve* (Grand Rapids: Kregel Publications, 1971), 11-12.

⁵⁰ Clinton, *Leadership Emergence Theory*, 10.

⁵¹ Stanley, 35-46.

⁵² Stanley, 197-212. Reese, *Deep Mentoring*, 190-98, provides five practical guidelines in mentoring.

⁵³ Robert Logan, *Class Lecture Notes*, OD786 Transforming Your Leadership Development Process, Fuller Theological Seminary, Spring 2018.

Coaching by Tony Stoltzfus⁵⁴ is a good resource for developing some basic coaching skills which are applicable to LET.

The process of implementing LET into a church's DNA requires congregational changes meant to transform leader development from a program model to the establishment of a new leader development paradigm. Therefore, current discussions and theories concerning change are important to this project. For example, Heifetz, Grashow, and Linsky explore change by comparing/contrasting the difference between technical challenge (where the problem and solution are clear, enabling one in authority to provide solutions) and adaptive challenge (where both problems and solutions require learning, and stakeholders must be engaged to discern solutions).⁵⁵ Heifetz and Linsky indicate "the major reason for leadership failure occurs when adaptive challenges are treated like technical problems."⁵⁶ **I believe**

⁵⁴ Tony Stoltzfus, *Leadership Coaching: The Disciplines, Skills and Heart of a Coach* (Virginia Beach, VA: T. Stoltzfus, 2005).

⁵⁵ Ronald A. Heifetz, Alexander Grashow, and Martin Linsky, *The Practice of Adaptive Leadership: Tools and Tactics for Changing Your Organization and the World* (Boston: Harvard Business Press, 2009), 20.

⁵⁶ Ronald A. Heifetz and Martin Linsky, *Leadership on the Line: Staying Alive through the Dangers of Leading* (Boston: Harvard Business School Press, 2002), 14. Peter

this statement indicates why my previous approaches to leader development were not sustainable. Leader development has been approached as a technical change where a new class, a new program, a new something added to our existing programs would develop leaders. It has not worked.

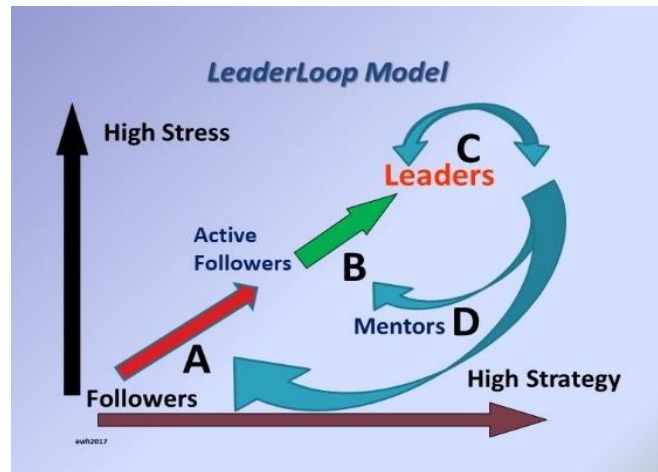
Dietterich applies Heifetz' model to explain how change impacts the levels of intensity, complexity, and difficulty within a Christian organization.⁵⁷ Bridges provides additional information on how to navigate the transition processes that occur during changes.⁵⁸ In *LeaderLoop*, (see figure below) Huffard notes the transition from leader development, based on programs, to leader development, based on mentoring, increases stress

Guy Northouse, *Leadership: Theory and Practice*, 7th ed. (Los Angeles: SAGE Publication, 2015), 257-78, provides a succinct explanation of Heifetz theory.

⁵⁷ Paul M. Dietterich, *Classes of Changes in Church Organizations* (Chicago: The Center for Parish Development, 2003), 23-27. Craig Van Gelder, *The Ministry of the Missional Church: A Community Led by the Spirit* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2007), 166-72, also explores the types and difficulties of change within spiritual organizations.

⁵⁸ William Bridges, *Managing Transitions: Making the Most of Change*, 3rd ed. (Philadelphia: Da Capo Press, 2009). The entire book is a guide to working through change.

and requires an intentional strategy.⁵⁹ These resources provide insight for successfully implementing LET into the DNA of a congregation.



This project will challenge both the church and me to move from a technical change involving program development to an adaptive change. These changes include (1) my personal growth beyond administration to greater equipping,⁶⁰ (2) leadership structures changing from a stretched cell to multiple cells,⁶¹ and (3) congregational decisions moving from being need-based to mission based.⁶²

Theoretical Framework

When churches of over 200 members use resources like Gary McIntosh and Aubrey Malphurs to develop leaders, they

⁵⁹ Evertt Huffard, *LeaderLoop*, 3rd draft (Unpublished paper 2018), 39-40. Image used with permission.

⁶⁰ McIntosh, *Taking Your Church to the Next Level*, 150. McIntosh, *One Size Doesn't Fit All*, 60-70.

⁶¹ McIntosh, *One Size Doesn't Fit All*, 37-46.

⁶² *Ibid.*, 73-82.

engage in a program model of development.⁶³ Malphurs presents leader development through three books, *Being Leaders*, *Building Leaders*, and *Leading Leaders*. These books have some great information but leave one with the impression that if churches know the right things, develop the right programs, and then train potential leaders with good programs, churches will solve their leader issues. This philosophy of leader development has been applied to GFCC for decades and has not consistently developed new leaders who effectively minister to the needs of the local church and local community.

Due to the relational nature of leaders in the local church, an organic model of leader development has the potential to become more reproducible. Clinton's LET provides a reproducible process where, through mentoring, disciples of Jesus Christ discover God's previous work in their lives with the expectation of devoting their lives deeper into the Eph. 2:10 works that God has prepared for them. At the same time, disciples learn to use their spiritual gifts. This transformation engages the potential for leader development as Christians employ their gifts and influence others. Clinton's LET states that God develops a

⁶³ Ibid., 118-22.

leader over a lifetime in three primary areas: inner life, ministry, and life maturing.⁶⁴ These cannot be adequately addressed through programs. However, mentoring within the local church provides the interaction and time necessary to uncover God's work in the life of an individual.

Clinton's theory argues leader development is a function of process items, the individual's timeline (this reveals providence), and the individual's responses to God's providential work.⁶⁵ Process items include providential events, people, circumstances, etc., which God uses to develop and/or confirm leaders.⁶⁶ The reference to time indicates leader development is an ongoing process. Individual response notes that each person is accountable for their reaction to process items and this response either supports leader development or thwarts development depending on personal choices and actions. Edwin Friedman's discussion on how one's response to life's events is worth

⁶⁴ Clinton, *The Making of a Leader*, 44-47. These are three stages on Clinton's generalized timeline containing unique learning opportunities and challenges or process items. They are addressed more fully on pages 85-87.

⁶⁵ Clinton, *Leadership Emergence Theory*, 27-29. See pages 48-56 of this dissertation for a discussion on providence.

⁶⁶ Clinton, *The Making of a Leader*, 260.

considering in the context of Clinton's process items. Friedman argues healthy responses can transform both individuals and systems.⁶⁷

Clinton continues by stating that understanding LET will accomplish four things (1) develop an understanding of God's providence, (2) provide a sense of God's work in an individual's past, (3) create anticipation that God will use that same individual in the future, and (4) inspire a more deliberate attempt to influence others for God.⁶⁸ Clinton's theory provides a foundation for mentoring both couples and individuals while recognizing God's work of transforming disciples into the leaders God has called them to be, rather than by attempting to manipulate specific leader outcomes through a program or to fit into predetermined organizational roles.

Our struggle to develop leaders involved an adaptive challenge that required new learning to identify both the problem and solution while also enlisting those involved in the change to supply the solution.⁶⁹ Heifetz identifies two

⁶⁷ Edwin H. Friedman, *A Failure of Nerve: Leadership in the Age of the Quick Fix*, eds. Margaret M. Treadwell and Edward W. Beal, rev. ed. (New York: Church Publishing, 2017), 163-65.

⁶⁸ Clinton, *The Making of a Leader*, 15.

⁶⁹ Heifetz, *The Practice of Adaptive Leadership*, 20.

characteristics that signify an adaptive challenge has been encountered. They are (1) a cycle of failure and (2) a persistent dependence upon authority.⁷⁰ Both of these indicators were present in GFCC's struggle to develop long-lasting leaders in a transitional environment. While GFCC demonstrates many signs of health, we have consistently failed to develop a process that encouraged and expected leadership growth for every Christian. Instead, we relied on programs prepared and administered by the ministry staff to produce new leaders.

This project changed leader development in GFCC from a program-based model to a mentoring model. Rather than attempting to develop a new leader program, it engaged an organic model that started with three couples. This approach involved much more than adjusting an existing program. It addressed the congregational problem of not building a long-term leader development model.

According to Van Gelder, the changes I proposed incorporated a second order (adaptive) change which is more complex/difficult and would encounter higher levels of

⁷⁰ Heifetz, *The Practice of Adaptive Leadership*, 71-74.

resistance and pain than a first order (technical) change.⁷¹ This change meant that I needed to transition from being an administrative manager to function as a mentoring leader. My roles as the minister/leader for the congregation and the mentor for a group of three couples placed me in a position to encourage adaptive change. My roles also allowed me to see the need for and communicate changes to the congregation and to those being mentored from a "balcony view"⁷² where the big picture is observed within the life of the congregation. Northouse summarized Heifetz' five additional roles I needed to fulfill in order to effectively initiate adaptive change (1) identify challenges, (2) regulate distress, (3) encourage others to stay focused, (4) give the work back to the team, and (5) protect the team.⁷³ My role was to lead the participants in these ways.

LET provided a model where Christians explored and learned to discern God's work in their lives. It also provided direction for the participants as they sought ways

⁷¹ Van Gelder, 166-72. Northouse, 257-94, provides a good resource for walking a group through adaptive change.

⁷² Heifetz, *Leadership on the Line*, 52-160. Northouse, 263-64.

⁷³ Northouse, 264-71.

to invest their lives into the lives of others to develop new leaders. This transition into becoming equippers of leaders demanded a challenging adaptive change within the congregational system and myself.⁷⁴

Methodology

Phase One

The first phase in changing the paradigm from a program-based approach to a more organic leader development model involved mentoring selected leader couples. Three married couples⁷⁵ volunteered to participate in this process and began working together with me in October 2015, eventually becoming known as the Initial Leadership Emergence Team (ILET).⁷⁶ In 2016, we explored LET while we

⁷⁴ See page 99-107 in this dissertation a description of some of these changes.

⁷⁵ John W. Ellas, *Church Growth Through Groups: Strategies for Varying Levels of Christian Community* (Houston: Center for Church Growth, 1990), 136, identifies groups numbering in the three to seven range have the most efficient face-to-face interaction. A second reason for choosing this size was a decision made by the group. They believed the depth of sharing we achieved would be hindered by the introduction of another couple or two. The third reason for this size was that it reflected what each couple would do as they worked with one or two other couples in the future.

⁷⁶ From this point on in the dissertation, these three couples will be designated ILET.

developed and shared our personal narratives.⁷⁷ In anticipation of ILET discovering how God had been involved in our lives, we consented to share this journey with others who would join us in the following phases.

Phase Two

ILET completed the narratives in November 2016 and immediately began planning to participate in Phase Two of this project which began in February 2017. Phase Two involved each couple partnering with at least one other new couple to expose them to LET. This included leading them through the discovery process of writing and sharing their narrative and discerning how God had already been at work in their lives. My equipping role transitioned into coaching ILET while leading one more group through LET. This was "an intentional proactive intervention into the system, evaluating the effects of the intervention, and drawing conclusions in order to enhance future ministerial

⁷⁷ Clinton, *Leadership Emergence Theory*, 70, speaks of leadership emergence study and provides a detailed list of what a narrative might include. Reese, *Deep Mentoring*, 95-97 123-24, 144-45, provides instruction for writing a narrative. Terry Walling, *Perspective Workbook* (San Bernardino, CA: Leader Breakthru, 2013), provides a tool for narrative development.

practice"⁷⁸ which made the methodology of this project a case study in leadership emergence pattern within a mature mid-sized church.

To determine the one or two couples ILET would work with in Phase Two, I requested input from the GFCC elders in December 2016 and submitted the potential list of couples to ILET who then chose and invited the Phase Two participants.⁷⁹ The basic criteria for selecting Phase Two couples included (1) a degree of spiritual maturity as demonstrated by their involvement with GFCC and (2) the probability of them staying in the Great Falls area for an extended period to facilitate long-term leader development.

Phase Three

Phase Three lasted from January through December 2018. The basics of Phase Two were replicated throughout the year. The major differences between Phase Three and Phase Two were (1) we established four groups of three couples instead of the previous phase of two groups with three couples and one group with two couples, (2) every group,

⁷⁸ Tim Sensing, *Qualitative Research: A Multi-Methods Approach to Projects for Doctor of Ministry Theses* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2011), 144.

⁷⁹ This example of group involvement was employed throughout the process and was one indication of the organic nature of the project.

except the one I led, had two couples who had completed at least one year of processing LET, and (3) we did not conduct quarterly follow-up meetings with group leaders.

General Timeline

The six participants of ILET finished and shared their narratives by November 2016. The second set of three groups, involving a total of sixteen participants, met throughout 2017. The third set of four groups, involving twenty-four participants, met in 2018. A total of twenty-six people participated over three years and represented 12% of GFCC.⁸⁰ Twenty of these twenty-six participants were first-generation Christians.

Exploring LET in ILET included monthly participation in the group where we (1) discussed our findings from reading *The Making of a Leader* and *Deep Mentoring*, (2) wrote a narrative timeline as a minimum, (3) presented the narrative to ILET for encouragement and debriefing, and (4) anticipated leading others through a similar process. At the completion of Phase Two fifteen of the sixteen participants presented their narratives to their specific group. All the couples who completed Phase Two were invited to continue the process of mentoring other couples in a new

⁸⁰ "Church Record," January 2018 membership rolls.

Leadership Emergence Team. Of the eight couples who completed Phase Two, seven committed themselves to serve as mentors in Phase Three which was completed with twelve couples in 2018.

Throughout the process, I evaluated leadership development through field journaling and ILET feedback. I continued to use ILET to confirm or adjust my evaluations. A third verification occurred through an onsite visit from my major professor.

Limitations/Delimitations

This project focused on three couples who developed personal narratives in which they discerned God's working in their lives. These couples comprised ILET and worked together on this discovery process through 2016. Each ILET couple worked with one or two new couples in 2017 to help each participant develop their personal narrative. In 2017, I coached ILET in their role as leaders and led two additional couples through their narratives. In 2018, I continued to do some work with ILET but mainly focused on the two new couples in my group.

This project dealt with only a small number of couples who demonstrated spiritual maturity and had the potential of remaining in Great Falls for an extended period. This project will not encompass the entire church but has the

potential of deeply impacting all members over a ten-year period.

Outline of the Dissertation

The dissertation will be comprised of four chapters. Chapter one has addressed the problem under consideration, the context of the congregation in Great Falls, a review of related literature, a description of applicable theories, a short methodology statement, and limitations/delimitations. Chapter two will document some critical theological reflections foundational to the emergence of new leaders including themes of discipleship, providence, spiritual gifts, and community. Chapter three will walk through the methodology employed. Chapter four will evaluate whether I was able to make the adaptive changes in my life necessary for equipping leaders who (1) recognize God's work in their lives, (2) discover their "bent,"⁸¹ and (3) mentor one or two other couples using LET. The evaluation will explore whether this project was able to equip leaders without the

⁸¹ J. Robert Clinton, *Strategic Concepts That Clarify a Focused Life: A Self-Study Manual Defining and Applying Focused Life Concepts to Leaders Today* (Altadena, CA: Barnabas Publishers, 2005), 35. The idea conveyed in "bent" is that disciples of Christ will have a burden-like calling that has been shaped by God through gifts, events, relationships, etc. God takes an individual and then bends him or her to accomplish God's purposes.

process being made into another church program. In addition, chapter four will summarize what has been accomplished, what has been learned that impacts the future of this project, and questions for future exploration.

CHAPTER 2: SEEKING GOD'S FOUNDATIONS IN LEADER DEVELOPMENT

Introduction

The city of Great Falls owes its name to a series of five waterfalls on the Missouri River first described in writing by Meriwether Lewis of the Lewis and Clark expedition in June 1805.⁸² We call the river, "The Mighty Mo," and she grows in strength with each stream and river that contributes to her influence. Like most things of power, the activity upstream lays the foundation for downstream influence, and so it is with the Missouri whose foundation is established with the joining of three rivers. Likewise, spiritual influence/leadership has discernable foundations. Clinton states,

*A leader, as defined from a study of biblical leadership, and for whom we are interested in tracing leadership development, is a person (1) with God-given capacity and (2) with God-given responsibility to influence (3) a specific group of God's people (4) toward God's purposes for the group.*⁸³

This definition provides a starting point or upstream perspective on leadership. A God-given capacity is not based upon position or title within a Christian organization but combines gifts from God with one's

⁸² Ambrose, 249.

⁸³ Clinton, *The Making of a Leader*, 179.

responses to life's learning opportunities, which Clinton describes as process items.⁸⁴ God-given capacity includes spiritual gifts, natural abilities, and skills.⁸⁵ Every disciple of Jesus Christ "should evaluate and use his gifts to the capacity God intended."⁸⁶ God-given responsibility combines a burden for a work of ministry and a sense of accountability for that ministry before God.⁸⁷ A specific group recognizes different spheres of influence. Leader roles vary. One individual may be called to influence in a fulltime ministry role while another person, without a leader title, influences others who possess similar gifts. Leaders seek to fulfill God's unique purposes for the specific group⁸⁸ that fit within the vision God revealed to

⁸⁴ Clinton, *The Making of a Leader*, 260. Process items references a "phrase referring to providential events, people, circumstances, special interventions, inner-life lessons, and/or anything else God uses in the leadership selection process of a person to indicate leadership potential . . . , to develop that potential, to confirm appointment to the ministry role or responsibility, or to move the leader toward God's appointed ministry level for realized potential."

⁸⁵ Ibid., 178.

⁸⁶ Ibid., 180.

⁸⁷ Ibid., 179.

⁸⁸ Examples of books that deal with the purpose, mission, or will of God include, but are not limited to: Garry Friesen and J. Robin Maxson, *Decision Making & the Will of God: A Biblical Alternative to the Traditional View*

Abraham and fulfilled in Jesus; "All nations will be blessed through you" (Gen. 12:3; Gal. 3:8-14). God's purposes, as expressed through servant Christian leaders, will result in striving to bless others.

Four questions help frame a theological understanding of leader emergence for GFCC. These questions reframe our leader development paradigm from a program-based approach, that expected predetermined results by using the "right" programs, to an approach that seeks to discern God's work which is already in progress in developing leaders. J. Oswald Sanders states, "God is always at work, unperceived by men, preparing those of his choice for leadership."⁸⁹ The following questions will frame this chapter's theological discussion of Christian servant leader development as it applies to GFCC.

1. How does discipleship equip Christians to develop spiritual influence and become servant leaders?

(Portland, OR: Multnomah Press, 1980). R. Ruth Barton, *Pursuing God's Will Together: A Discernment Practice for Leadership Groups* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Books/Formatio, 2012). Norman Shawchuck and Roger Heuser, *Managing the Congregation: Building Effective Systems to Serve People* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1996).

⁸⁹ J. Oswald Sanders, *Spiritual Leadership* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1967), 133.

2. How do spiritual gifts enable Christians to influence others?
3. How does discerning the providential work of God develop spiritual influence?
4. What is the role of the local church in developing people who have spiritual influence to become servant leaders?

Discipleship Preparation

How does discipleship equip Christians to develop spiritual influence and become servant leaders? This question explores the root motivations of those who follow Jesus and their understanding of what the Lord expects from their lives.

Adam and Eve were created in the image of God with the responsibility of administering delegated authority. They were to lead as God intended. The Fall corrupted this delegated authority and "the ideal of dominion degenerated into domination, and lies and mistrust undermined the basis for teamwork."⁹⁰ However, through Jesus, God's design for leadership through delegated authority was perfectly demonstrated. Paul's insight into Jesus' example as a servant leader is profound:

⁹⁰ Shaw, 122.

Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage; rather, he made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to death—even death on a cross! (Philippians 2:6-8)

It is when people consider Jesus, his life, his service, his relationship of submission to the Father, and his sacrifice that they begin to see leaders, servant leaders, as God designed and as something to be imitated.

Jesus defined leadership, making it clear to his disciples that leading must be rooted in service to God and others. In describing greatness Jesus said,

whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to be first must be slave of all. For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many (Mark 10:43b-45).

Being a disciple of Jesus calls for leaders who serve.

Jesus is the ultimate example. The apostle Paul wrote, "Follow my example, as I follow the example of Christ" (1 Corinthians 11:1). Jesus calls people to discipleship, "Then he said to them all, 'Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross daily and follow me'" (Luke 9:23). "Discipleship, as patterning our lives after Jesus, means that Jesus' model and teaching

become the standard by comparison to which we evaluate our innermost attitudes and our outward actions.”⁹¹

Consider what the coming and life of Jesus means as we discern discipleship’s relationship to servant leaders. Jesus serves as the model for us to imitate as we “have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge in the image of its Creator” (Col. 3:10). The new self changes the narrative of our lives. We no longer interpret our lives solely from the perspective of self, but Jesus places us within his narrative where our old identity is destroyed and a new identity, the identity of a disciple of Jesus, emerges. Our lives now have purpose and direction because they are tied to the ongoing work of God.⁹²

Embracing the concept of putting on the new self impacts every area of life, even those where an individual is not specifically gifted. Disciples are generous, holy, part of God’s community, etc., because God demonstrates these attributes first. Discipleship goes far beyond an attitude which seeks to do the minimum to be saved and embraces the desire to be completely transformed into the

⁹¹ Stanley J. Grenz, *Theology for the Community of God* (Grand Rapids: W.B. Eerdmans, 2000), 292.

⁹² *Ibid.*, 292-93.

likeness of God. A discipleship application of transformation into the likeness and narrative of Jesus includes developing as a servant leader in all areas of life to the degree God gifts and enables, even if one does not possess the specific gift of leadership.⁹³

Consider the example of Timothy. Paul shares, "I have no one else like him who takes a genuine interest in your welfare" (Phil. 2:20). Paul reminds the church of the servant leadership of Jesus which was modeled by Timothy to the church in Philippi. Timothy was "faithful in the Lord" (1 Cor. 4:17) and went to Corinth as a servant leader to remind them of Paul's way of life and teaching (1 Cor. 4:17). The church in Corinth received this instruction concerning Timothy, "when Timothy comes, see to it that he has nothing to fear while he is with you" (1 Cor. 16:10). Timothy, though faithful, received consistent encouragement to fulfill the leader roles he received. There is an appearance, if not an actual resistance, by Timothy to some aspects of leading. This struggle was highlighted as Paul commanded Timothy to not neglect his gift,⁹⁴ and later

⁹³ Spiritual giftedness is discussed on pages 43-49.

⁹⁴ 1 Tim. 5:14. In the context, it appears this gift involves both teaching and preaching.

encouraged him to fan his gift into flames.⁹⁵ However, Timothy's reluctance did not result in rebellion to the will of God. Discipleship to Jesus Christ so transformed Timothy that he faithfully took up the responsibility of being a servant leader despite personal fears.

Timothy's struggles suggest that his leadership burden was not primarily based upon his natural giftedness, but instead, it was the call of discipleship to Jesus Christ that ultimately transformed Timothy into a servant leader. Concentration on discipleship and calling changed Timothy, and this understanding may be a key in helping every Christian strive to fully develop as a servant leader. Bob Logan notes that almost all Christian leadership concerns are fundamentally discipleship issues. "Discipleship is the often less visible but absolutely essential foundation upon which leadership must rest. Without it, everything else collapses."⁹⁶

This section began with the question, "How does discipleship prepare for the emergence of servant leaders?"

⁹⁵ 2 Tim. 1:6

⁹⁶ Robert E. Logan and Tara Miller, *The Leadership Difference* (San Bernardino, CA: Logan Leadership 2017), 19. Reese, *Deep Mentoring*, 222, agrees with this fundamental conclusion.

A discipleship response to Jesus places everything one has, is, and will be under the lordship of Jesus Christ. This perspective enables God to fully utilize one's God-given capacity and calls disciples to explore growth in every area, including becoming servant leaders.

Spiritual Gifts

How do spiritual gifts enable Christians to influence others? In churches where I have served the focus has often been to enlist individuals to fill a specific need regardless of spiritual giftedness rather than allow their gifts to determine where and how to serve. In smaller churches, it is important to serve where one is needed. However, providing an environment for servant leaders to develop requires giving greater attention to spiritual gifts and not just congregational needs.

The gift of spiritual leading is from God:

We have different gifts, according to the grace given to each of us. If your gift is prophesying, then prophesy in accordance with your faith; if it is serving, then serve; if it is teaching, then teach; if it is to encourage, then give encouragement; if it is giving, then give generously; if it is to lead, do it diligently; if it is to show mercy, do it cheerfully (Rom. 12:6-8).

The gift of leading is specifically identified in this text. The word translated "to lead" is *προιστανόμενος* (root: *προΐστημι*) and signifies "to exercise a position of

leadership, rule, direct, be at the head (of)."⁹⁷ It is translated in the NIV as "care for" (1 Thess. 5:12), "manage" (1 Tim. 3:4, 5, 12), and "direct" (1 Tim. 5:17). It appears this gift encompasses the general ability to direct or manage.⁹⁸

A short list of leadership gifts given by God to his covenant people is revealed in Eph. 4:11. These include the leadership roles given to different types of servant leaders: apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers. These gifts all include a word gift⁹⁹ necessary to lead a larger group of God's people.¹⁰⁰ God's instruction to those with these roles includes the equipping of others for

⁹⁷ Walter Bauer, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and other early Christian literature*, 3rd ed., rev. and ed. Frederick W. Danker (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 870.

⁹⁸ J. A. Fitzmyer, *Romans: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, 33 (London: Yale University Press, 2008), 649. L. Morris, *The Epistle to the Romans* (Grand Rapids: W.B. Eerdmans, 1988), 442.

⁹⁹ Clinton, *The Making of a Leader*, 263, defines word gift as "a term describing the gift-cluster that is specifically used by God to reveal and clarify truth about Himself and His purposes and that will edify the believers and instill hope in them concerning God's present and future activity." These include exhortation, prophecy, teaching, evangelism, pastoring, wisdom, knowledge, and faith.

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, 56-57, argues that the ability to lead a group requires a word gift.

works of service (Eph. 4:12). These roles function as leadership gifts because they require followers and they influence the body of Christ. Additional gift lists are contained in Rom. 12:6-8; 1 Cor. 12:8-10, 28-30; 14:26 and 1 Pet. 4:10-11. As Eph. 4 contains the injunction to "equip others," so these additional gifts are for "the common good" (1 Cor. 12:8) or to "serve others" (1 Pet. 4:10). The goal of these gifts is to serve and influence others.

The potential for leading through influence inheres in every spiritual gift. Clinton notes, "one who consistently exerts influence over a group is said to manifest leadership."¹⁰¹ However, Malphurs warns against a broad expectation for all disciples to serve as leaders, "it is unbiblical to assume that all disciples have either the spiritual gift of leadership or unique God-given leadership abilities."¹⁰² While Malphurs position is valid when specifically identified with a leadership gift, especially a word gift exercised in a group, it misses the potential every gift has for influencing others. In other writings Malphurs admits this perspective, "Unlike some of the other distinctives, it is not mandatory that believers have the

¹⁰¹ Clinton, *Leadership Emergence Theory*, 40.

¹⁰² Malphurs, *Building Leaders*, 190.

leadership gift to lead, just as it's not necessary that a person have the gift of evangelism to share his or her faith."¹⁰³

Every Christian can influence: "in the best organizations, everyone, regardless of title or position, is encouraged to act like a leader,"¹⁰⁴ to be an influencer. Paul confirms the importance of every Christian and the influence they have upon others, "from him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work" (Eph. 4:16). Every Christian, every spiritual gift, fulfills a role in building up the church. **All spiritual gifts contain the potential for influence because they are vested with divine authority.**¹⁰⁵

Discovering God's gifts establishes a platform for serving and influencing others. A participant in my 2017 Leadership Emergence Team (let us call her "Jill" for this story) discovered she was gifted in both serving and

¹⁰³ Malphurs, *Being Leaders*, 21.

¹⁰⁴ James M. Kouzes and Barry Z. Posner, *The Leadership Challenge: How to Make Extraordinary Things Happen in Organizations*, 5th ed. (San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 2012), 14.

¹⁰⁵ Shaw, 127.

showing mercy. As a result of this understanding, Jill began to quietly, but consistently, visit church members who were in the hospital offering support when loved ones were in surgery or recovering. Early in 2018, another woman (let us call her "Amanda") in the church was hospitalized with an illness that eventually took her life. The only "family" Amanda had in Great Falls was her church family. Her birth family lived elsewhere and did not have the freedom to travel to see her. During the last three weeks of Amanda's life, Jill spent every day at her side and spent all but two nights with her. Jill constantly advocated with the hospital staff on Amanda's behalf which dramatically increased the quality of Amanda's care during her last weeks. I would frequently visit Amanda to encourage and pray with her but I cannot remember a time that Jill was either not there or had just been there. On more than one occasion I commented to Jill that I was thankful for the care she demonstrated to Amanda. Jill's consistent response was, "It brings me joy to use my gifts to bless others. This is not a burden to me at all." In the months after Amanda's death, Jill's example of using her gifts has spurred others on to demonstrate love and kindness to those in need. God used Jill's gift to influence the lives of many both by opening conversations

about the church with the hospital staff and by serving as an example for the church to "use whatever gift you have received to serve others" (1Pet. 4:10). Amanda's last weeks of life and even her death were used by God as a conduit for Jill to show God's love, honor, and care while enabling Jill to lead through her influence.¹⁰⁶

Consider Timothy and his spiritual gifts. Ephesus provided a challenging ministry context that required dealing with false teachers, establishing church leaders, addressing the needs of various groups, appropriate attitudes toward money, and other responsibilities. Timothy struggled with his role and appears to have desired a less demanding task than serving as the evangelist for the church in Ephesus. Paul encouraged Timothy to be the good soldier of Jesus Christ, the victorious athlete, and the hardworking farmer (2 Tim. 2:3-7). However, Paul also understood that these ministry challenges demanded that Timothy remember and engage his gifts rather than just work harder. Paul admonished Timothy, "Do not neglect your gift, which was given you through prophecy when the body of elders laid their hands on you" (1 Tim. 4:14).¹⁰⁷ Paul later

¹⁰⁶ "Church Record," 2018.

¹⁰⁷ William Hendriksen, *Exposition of the Pastoral Epistles* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1976), 159,

shared, "For this reason I remind you to fan into flame the gift of God, which is in you through the laying on of my hands" (2 Tim. 1:6). Paul clearly expected Timothy's gifting to influence others, "Be diligent in these matters; give yourself wholly to them, so that everyone may see your progress" (1 Tim. 4:15). Timothy's employment of his spiritual gifts was essential to leading the church in Ephesus.

How do gifts enable individuals to influence others as servant leaders? Some gifts, the specific gift of leading and other word gifts, such as teacher or evangelist, include both leader and followers. Other gifts demonstrated by Jill's example of mercy and helping provide an example that reflects God and calls others higher. When servant leadership is understood in terms of influencing a group over time, then all spiritual gifts contain the potential for influence because they are vested with divine authority.¹⁰⁸

argues that Paul is reminding Timothy of an event that occurred as he was sent out from Lystra. T. D. Lea and H. P. Griffin *1, 2 Timothy, Titus*, vol. 34 (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1992), 139, argues the event under discussion cannot be absolutely discerned.

¹⁰⁸ Shaw, 127.

Providence

How does discerning the providential work of God develop spiritual influence? This question is at the heart of Clinton's LET. It takes seriously both the work of God and our response to his divine care.

Paul points to God's previous activity in the lives of Christ's disciples, "we are God's workmanship" (Eph. 2:10a). God designed, blessed, adopted, redeemed, and gave his people life. God's fingerprints cover the lives of every Christian. Paul then proclaims, we are "created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do" (Eph. 2:10b). God preplanned and prepared good works for his people to accomplish. Christians are not left to their own devices, instead, they can trust and discover the works God has prepared.

Consider the works of God in the context of the will of God. God's moral will can be understood as living in obedience to the commands of God and the wisdom of God. The wisdom of God roots itself in scripture as one explores what it means to live a life that fulfills the greatest commandments to love God and love others (Matt. 22:37-39). The moral will of God essentially points back to being disciples of Jesus Christ as discussed earlier.

God possesses a sovereign will. He will accomplish what he wants to be done whether people participate or not. "Our God is in heaven; he does whatever pleases him" (Ps. 115:3). Interestingly, God's sovereign will can redeem events outside his moral will. For example, the death of Jesus would not fit within the moral will of God, but his death was essential for the sovereign will of God to be accomplished. Proverbs recognizes this concept, "The LORD works out everything to its proper end – even the wicked for a day of disaster" (Prov. 16:4).

God's will for an individual can be quite broad. God's providence in the life of a disciple should not be understood as God having only one specific and ultimate purpose for life.¹⁰⁹ Instead, discerning God's will and his providential work in one's life provides freedom to discover the works of God as it relates to giftedness, desires, personality, skills, and experiences, all within the moral will of God. However, God's sovereign will and his moral will must both be considered as one seeks to understand the ways God works. Establishing an arena for

¹⁰⁹ Friesen, 39-78, provides a good study of the sovereign and moral wills of God and how godly decisions can be made within that framework. This material rejects the concept that God has one specific plan for everyone. The following comments reflect my summation this work.

discovering God's will as individuals by first recognizing both the sovereign will of God and the moral will of God, enables disciples to see the providential work of God through a lens that recognizes God can use both the evil and the good to transform his people and work out his purposes.

The doctrine of God's providence assures his people that God foresees throughout all time and God acts to accomplish his purposes.¹¹⁰ Providence

is the sovereign, divine superintendence of all things, guiding them toward their divinely predetermined end in a way that is consistent with their created nature, all to the glory and praise of God.¹¹¹

Abraham, when asked by Isaac about the sacrifice that he and his father were to give, replied, "God himself will provide" (Gen. 22:8). After God provided the ram for the sacrifice, "Abraham called that place The LORD Will Provide. And to this day it is said, 'On the mountain of the LORD it

¹¹⁰ W. A. Elwell and B. J. Beitzel, "Providence," in *Baker Encyclopedia of the Bible*, vol. 2 (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1988), 1792. J. E. Alsup, "Providence," in *The HarperCollins Bible Dictionary*, 3d ed., ed. M. A. Powell (New York: Harper Collins, 2011), 841. W. A. Elwell, "Providence of God," in *Evangelical Dictionary of Biblical Theology*, electronic ed. (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1996), 650.

¹¹¹ Elwell, "Providence of God," 650.

will be provided'" (Gen. 22:14). God foresaw the need and provided what was needed in order to accomplish his will.

In the New Testament Paul hints at God's providential work in his short letter to Philemon as he addresses God's work in the life of Onesimus, "Perhaps the reason he was separated from you for a little while was that you might have him back forever - no longer as a slave, but better than a slave, as a dear brother" (Philemon 15-16a). Paul proclaimed the truth concerning God's providence to the Areopagus in Athens,

From one man he made all the nations, that they should inhabit the whole earth; and he marked out the appointed time in history and the boundary of their lands. God did this so that they would seek him and perhaps reach out for him and find him (Acts 17:26-27).

This text points to God's providential work in the lives of all people.¹¹² Paul engages their belief that "gods rule

¹¹² There is a debate on the concepts of time and the lands in verse 16. Time could describe seasons or historical epochs and lands may indicate habitable areas or national boundaries. Darrel L. Bock, *Acts*, Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2007), 566, concludes the purpose of Paul's statement is to point to God's sovereignty but there is uncertainty concerning specific definitions. He does provide resources for exploring the topic further. Carl R. Holladay, *Acts: A Commentary* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2016), 344, and Eckhard J. Schnabel, *Acts*, Zondervan Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2012), 735, both conclude Paul is referencing historical epochs indicated by the rise and fall of nations. Luke Timothy Johnson, *The Acts of the*

their worlds by providence”¹¹³ by proclaiming the providential work of the one true God.

Providence at Work

Participants in this project more fully recognized God’s providential work in their lives as they read *The Making of a Leader* and *Deep Mentoring* while applying the principles of providence to their lives through their narratives.¹¹⁴ Part of the narrative development explored past experiences and reflected on how God was and is at work. One participant shared about her early struggles in marriage, a divorce, a remarriage, but acknowledged God’s continuous presence throughout her life. This insight prompted the following perspective in her narrative which demonstrated a transition from being a passive follower of Jesus to becoming an active follower.¹¹⁵

Over time, my LIFE Group attending turned into serving. After a few years, I noticed God placing young women in my life that hadn’t had a positive relationship with their mothers, one after another for three consecutive LIFE Group terms. They each had been

Apostles, Sacra Pagina (Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 1992), 315, notes this is a standard statement of God’s creative power.

¹¹³ Schnabel, 735.

¹¹⁴ See Appendix B and the Leadership Emergence Teams Impact Chart on page 95 for more detailed information.

¹¹⁵ Huffard, *LeaderLoop*, 28-30.

the ones to show up in my life. I began building on my relationship with each of them. I wish I had paid closer attention to what God was up to sooner. It wasn't until after the second young woman that I began noticing this trend. Each in their own way, reached out to me. The first one, out of the blue, brought me a plant for Mother's Day. I thought how strange it was at the time. If only I had paid closer attention and been more sensitive maybe she would have taken a different road in her life and not turned to adultery. With the second woman we bonded over our common interest in quilting. Her rebellion toward her mom was clear. Eventually it turned into a sweet relationship. By the third young woman, I was ready and anxious to see who God would bring next. Our new LIFE Group met and it quickly became clear who that one was.¹¹⁶

Her ministry to these women primarily involved inviting them into her life, her sphere of influence. When she became aware of God's activity of bringing these women into her life, she used her craftsmanship gift to bond with the second woman over quilt making. With the next woman, she used her gift of helping by opening her home to the mother and her entire family, often spending weekends together. Her quilting buddy has been deployed overseas and the other has been transferred to another military base. However, prompted by her participation in the project and by discoveries made of God's providential work in her narrative she continues to lead/influence the last young

¹¹⁶ P7 Narrative. For the rest of the dissertation, participants will be identified with a code, P followed by a number, to protect identities.

mother through Facetime on a weekly basis using *Deep Mentoring* as a tool to help her recognize God's providential work in her life.

Providence and Timothy

Clinton's LET references the early years of an individual's life as being their sovereign foundations. "God providentially works foundational items into the life of the leader-to-be. Personality characteristics, both good and bad experiences, and the time context will be used by God."¹¹⁷

Timothy's early years demonstrate God's providential work. Timothy's mother and grandmother established a foundation of faith that would shape Timothy's life (Acts 16:1; 2 Tim. 1:5; 3:14-15). Timothy's Jewish heritage through his mother (Acts 16:1) eventually allowed him access, with Paul and Silas, into the synagogues for the preaching of the gospel. It is also possible that Timothy's culturally mixed home, Gentile father and a Jewish mother (Acts 16:1), meant he spoke more than one language and could adapt to the cross-cultural settings the mission field demanded.¹¹⁸ One more piece of God's sovereign

¹¹⁷ Clinton, *The Making of a Leader*, 26.

¹¹⁸ Cole, 54-55.

foundation in Timothy's life includes the impact of Paul's stoning and being left for dead in Lystra (Acts 14:19-20). Paul reminds Timothy of that time of persecution (2 Tim. 3:10-11) as a means of motivating Timothy to not give up but to fight the good fight of the gospel. Even the hardship of persecution in Paul's life was providentially used to encourage Timothy.

Impact of Recognizing God's Providence

God remains providentially involved in the lives of his people to develop leaders. Clinton concluded that leaders are generally more attuned to God's sovereign interventions, like Moses at the burning bush than God's providential intervention which occurs over time through circumstances, and which is generally understood only through reflection. Joseph's statement to his brothers, "You intended to harm me, but God intended it for good" (Gen. 50:20), is a good example of someone recognizing the providence of God through reflection.¹¹⁹ Recognizing God's work in spite of his brothers' evil behavior enabled him to respond as a leader who set the stage for Israel's eventual return to the land of promise. Today's leaders do well to

¹¹⁹ Clinton, *Leadership Emergence Theory*, 94.

imitate Joseph by reflecting on God's ongoing work in their lives in order to better discern what God may be doing.

How does discerning the providential work of God encourage leader development? When disciples recognize the providential work of God, they are provided a framework from which to begin to make sense of both the good and the bad in their lives by understanding that God has been and remains at work. Perceiving God's providence enables one to anticipate God's participation today and tomorrow. This confidence encourages disciples to step out by faith and live as servant leaders who influence others because their previous experiences now have a redeemed meaning. God's providence provides great hope to leaders because it means that God is somehow at work in all situations to eventually accomplish his sovereign will.

Community/Church

What is the role of the local church in developing people who have spiritual influence to become servant leaders? Leaders do not emerge from a vacuum. Leader emergence requires a community where individuals function as leaders and followers, with roles often reversing depending on the responsibilities and tasks. Concerning leadership, Clinton states, "One who consistently exerts

influence over a group is said to manifest leadership."¹²⁰ Bass nuances the definition of leadership but recognizes leadership as the exercise of influence upon followers.¹²¹ Northouse states, "Leadership is a process whereby an individual influences a group of individuals to achieve a common goal."¹²² The Center for Creative Leadership views "leadership as the process of producing direction, alignment, and commitment in collectives."¹²³ Zenger and Folkman conclude, "the best way to understand leadership is to examine the impact leaders have on the people they lead."¹²⁴ Each definition includes an image of some type of community in connection with a leader.

The community of the local church provides an environment where the character of servant leaders is developed and employed. The family often provides the starting point for character development within the community. Kevin Youngblood argues individuals grow in character; first within the family, then as they function

¹²⁰ Clinton, *Leadership Emergence Theory*, 40.

¹²¹ Bass, 14-15.

¹²² Northouse, 6.

¹²³ McCauley, 21.

¹²⁴ Zenger, 10.

in the social community, and eventually operating as individuals who testify to God's wisdom in the larger society.¹²⁵ In *The Ascent of a Leader*, Thrall, McNicol, and McElrath argue for a particular type of family environment, a safe community, that extends grace and provides the foundation for learning principles that reflect the character of God.¹²⁶ Character development is essential for the servant leader. The family and local church play a crucial role in that development.

Consider the impact of both the family and the church upon the life of Timothy. Paul testifies about Timothy's family, "I am reminded of your sincere faith, which first lived in your grandmother Lois and in your mother Eunice and, I am persuaded, now lives in you also" (2 Tim. 1:5). Paul continues by reminding Timothy of his first encounters with scripture, "But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have become convinced of, because you know those from whom you learned it, and how from infancy you

¹²⁵ Kevin J. Youngblood, "Cosmic Boundaries and Self-Control in Proverbs," *Restoration Quarterly*, 51, no. 3 (2009): 140, available from ATLA Religion Database through EBSCOhost.

¹²⁶ Bill Thrall, Bruce McNicol, and Ken McElrath, *The Ascent of a Leader: How Ordinary Relationships Develop Extraordinary Character and Influence* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1999), 34-36.

have known the Holy Scriptures" (2 Tim. 3:14-15a). The family and church powerfully shaped Timothy.

Luke points to the testimony of the larger community of the church as a place where Timothy continued to develop his character before he joined Paul:

Paul came to Derbe and then to Lystra, where a disciple named Timothy lived, whose mother was Jewish and a believer but whose father was a Greek. The believers at Lystra and Iconium spoke well of him (Acts 16:1-2).

Timothy's character developed within the communities of the family and the church. This enabled Timothy to grow in his sphere of influence as a servant leader.¹²⁷

The church continued to influence Timothy throughout his ministry. He accompanied Paul and his companions (Acts 16:6) as they preached in Philippi, Thessalonica, and Berea. Even when Timothy was tasked with staying behind in Berea (Acts 17:14) he was accompanied by Silas. Timothy was not expected to become a leader on his own.

Stanley identifies four different mentoring roles shared by Paul and Timothy; the contemporary model where the mentor models a ministry and invites another to join

¹²⁷ Youngblood, 140.

the work,¹²⁸ spiritual guide, teacher, and counselor.¹²⁹ Within the community of God's people, especially with Paul, Timothy was mentored while encountering opportunities to lead.

What is the role of the local church in developing servant leaders? The church provides the environment essential for character development needed in servant leaders. The church fosters mentoring. The church is meant to be a place of grace where disciples try, fail, receive grace, and try again, eventually growing into the servant leaders God called them to become. Good local churches provide a foundation where servant leaders can develop.

Theological Conclusions

Discipleship, giftedness, providence, and community provide a theological foundation for leaders to develop and reproduce in Great Falls. Consider again these concepts through the four questions posed at the beginning of the chapter.

1. How does discipleship equip Christians to develop spiritual influence and become servant leaders?

¹²⁸ Stanley, 131-45. Explores a contemporary model of mentoring.

¹²⁹ Clinton, *The Bible and Leadership Values: A Book by Book Analysis*, 285.

Discipleship to Jesus Christ is essential in developing servant Christian leaders at GFCC. The desire to be transformed into the image of Christ propels an individual to fully explore their God-given capacity as a servant leader in both attitude and skills to the degree God enables.

2. How do spiritual gifts enable Christians to influence others? All gifts are from God and are part of our God-given capacity. Some gifts like leading, teaching, shepherding, and evangelism include leadership influence by definition since they involve both a leader and followers. On the other hand, utilizing other gifts from God often provides opportunities to influence through their usage. In GFCC we want to enable every member to discover and fully utilize their spiritual gifts, thus becoming agents of influence for God.
3. How does discerning the providential work of God develop spiritual influence? God is deeply involved in all creation. When members of GFCC reflect upon their lives and how things have worked together, both good and bad, a window into God's providential work is opened. As we learn to see what God has been and is doing, trust in God grows. We understand he will

continue his work both in our lives and in the lives of those we lead.

4. What is the role of the local church in developing people who have spiritual influence to become servant leaders? The community of God's people can provide a setting where (1) the character and skills of servant leaders develop, (2) mentoring occurs, and (3) servant leaders practice leading in an environment of grace. GFCC seeks to be this kind of community.

CHAPTER 3: LEADERSHIP EMERGENCE THEORY AND GFCC

Introduction

This chapter is an application of a case study applied to developing leaders in GFCC. A case study methodology was chosen because (1) it allowed me to “access the lived experiences of others,”¹³⁰ (2) the project required “participatory action, leadership, and change,”¹³¹ and (3) this project serves as a particular intervention at a specific location and time.¹³² Because this project was “an intentional proactive intervention into the system, evaluating the effects of the intervention, and drawing conclusions in order to enhance future ministerial practice,”¹³³ the most appropriate methodology was a case study in leadership emergence patterns within a mature mid-sized church.

What’s Not Working and What’s Changing?

“Talent-rich and leadership poor.” This phrase has been repeated over and over within churches I have served throughout the north in both the United States and Canada.

¹³⁰ Sensing, 141.

¹³¹ Ibid., 142.

¹³² Ibid., 144.

¹³³ Ibid.

The gospel reaches people from all walks of life. Many of these individuals have demonstrated tremendous ability in their secular careers but struggle to transition their talents from the secular to the sacred, especially employing their gifts as Christian leaders. What can churches do to develop the spiritual gifts of servant leaders within the body of Christ?

One approach attempts to adapt a program other churches have used in the hope of imitating the results of others. For example, in 2014 GFCC had three elders in a congregation of 221 adult members.¹³⁴ We realized more elders were necessary to adequately respond to the spiritual needs of the church.¹³⁵ As a program-sized church, my response to this need was to purchase and read Ron Clark's book and to implement the elder development program described in *Emerging Elders*.¹³⁶ During the next year, 2015, I followed-up by working with three couples using the book,

¹³⁴ "Church Record," 2014.

¹³⁵ Benjamin L. Merkle, *40 Questions about Elders and Deacons* (Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Publications, 2008), 166-68, discusses different approaches to determining the size of an eldership.

¹³⁶ Ronald R. Clark, *Emerging Elders: Developing Shepherds in God's Image* (Abilene, Tex.: Leafwood Publishers, 2008).

They Smell Like Sheep,¹³⁷ with the intent that one or two of these would step up as shepherds. The material in both programs was helpful but it did not produce new shepherds. What we have done has not consistently developed the servant leaders required for GFCC. Also, as a sending church, our experience indicated we should not expect mature servant leaders to move in and fill our needs. The organic development of leaders was therefore crucial. Programs had not fulfilled our organizational leadership needs and we needed a process to promote the growth of disciples who demonstrated spiritual influence who would become our new leaders. A local church organic process enabled the church to tap into our own resources.

Organic leadership development that grows on its own, while being reproducible, was the goal of this project's intervention into the leadership development process of GFCC. This chapter describes methods undertaken to develop leaders and launch them into relationships of spiritual influence. This project's methodology (1) considers the ministry context of GFCC, (2) explores Clinton's LET in small groups, (3) employs the use of personal narratives to

¹³⁷ Lynn Anderson, *They Smell like Sheep. Spiritual Leadership for the 21st Century* (New York: Howard Books, 1997).

discern God's work, and (4) transitions into mentoring a second and third generation of leaders over three years.

The tools used to evaluate the project include (1) facilitator observations and field notes, (2) ILET¹³⁸ feedback, ILET narratives, and observations from the groups led by ILET, and (3) feedback through an onsite visit by an external observer, my major professor.

Data for assessing this leadership development project comes from six sources: (1) meeting agendas,¹³⁹ including notes from the 2016-2018 meetings, (2) input provided in the meetings over three years, (3) my reflections from these various meetings, (4) personal narratives from the groups in which I participated, (5) surveys and other input from ILET and Leadership Emergence Teams,¹⁴⁰ and (6) input from my major professor.

Timeline of the Project

As part of the Churches of Christ within the Restoration Movement, GFCC is an autonomous congregation with elders who act as shepherds of the church. Because the

¹³⁸ ILET stands for Initial Leadership Emergence Team that began in October 2015 with three couples.

¹³⁹ See Appendix A for the agendas used in this project.

¹⁴⁰ Appendix B.

elders' role within the body includes shepherding the flock, I was granted permission in an elders' and evangelists' meeting on September 8, 2015, to focus on using small groups to develop an upstream leader development process rather than continuing to attempt to develop leaders through programs.

An illustration of the overall project may help in understanding the process. Great Falls is situated on the banks of the Missouri River where Lewis and Clark spent a summer. The Missouri eventually joins the Mississippi River at St. Louis. Throughout her journey, the Missouri blesses the communities, farms, ranches, and lands she flows through. She is also strengthened by other rivers and streams joining her. However, the Missouri has a starting point in Three Forks, Montana, where the Jefferson, Madison, and Gallatin Rivers combine to form the Missouri. This relatively humble beginning eventually wields great influence.

This image of the Missouri River and her growth illustrates the impact of this project. Three couples committed to a process to personally explore God's work in their lives and then pass their experience on to others. The personal headwaters of these couples are found farther upstream than when we formed ILET on October 18, 2015.

However, the journey they made with God since October 18, 2015, has become a new headwater of spiritual influence for GFCC. ILET shared a fifteen-month journey of self-reflection and God recognition. Five additional couples were added in February 2017. These eight couples represented a confluence of rivers which resulted in an even greater influence.

In 2018 this river of spiritual influence grew, as five more couples joined the team. Clinton's LET continued to serve as a type of map helping people make sense of the bends and snags of life. Processing LET encouraged the participants to join in a greater work, a work of becoming spiritual leaders by employing their experiences and gifts in order to influence others. The image of the Missouri River growing and blessing as it joins the Mississippi River on its journey to the Gulf of Mexico reflects this project growing while blessing others.

The Emergence of Three Leadership Teams

Team selection for a project like this could be critical to the outcome. I first considered inviting couples who I believed knew the church and who would enjoy working on this project. After seeking some advice and spending time in prayer, I approached a broad section of the church, our LIFE Group leaders, to assist in leader

development. This leader pool was chosen because it represented the most active leaders at GFCC. LIFE Group leaders demonstrated discipleship, influence, and a propensity for remaining in Great Falls more than a few years. These criteria were important for the project to succeed and be sustained long enough to begin to transform the DNA of the church. I also encouraged couples rather than singles to begin the project, so everyone worked with their spouse in ILET to minimize opposite-gender distractions.

I used a portion of the October 18, 2015, LIFE Group Leaders' Meeting to explain my project for leader development through a "skills approach"¹⁴¹ in combination with Clinton's LET. After sharing about the project, I asked for volunteers. Two couples agreed to join my wife and me. With the holiday season approaching, not much was done for the first three months.

The initial direction of this project was to use Sunday evenings to develop a program for leader development using teaching time followed by break-out groups to provide deeper interaction and practice skills. ILET¹⁴² first met on

¹⁴¹ Northouse, 9.

¹⁴² By our April 28, 2016, meeting we had begun to identify our group as ILET.

February 18, 2016, under the name Leadership Development Team and planned how to use the Sunday evening assembly to develop leaders. This strategy progressed for approximately one month and was based on my initial dissertation prospectus for leader development. In March 2016, Evertt Huffard, my primary professor, and I worked together to make my project more focused, recognizing the need to develop an organic reproducible model that valued the process rather than adapt a program. This changed the prospectus and the entire project. ILET transitioned away from equipping the large group of the church assembly to focusing on the smaller group of ILET which would eventually act as leaven on the large group. On March 17, 2016, our third meeting concerning the project, I presented the proposed changes and the reasoning for the changes. We discussed what this would entail, and one group member was especially hesitant. However, the other four saw the value in the changes and after about thirty minutes of discussion, the entire ILET committed to the revised project. Once all six were in agreement concerning our direction, we established the following (1) value confidentiality, (2) use Clinton's LET as a foundational theory for our project, (3) use *The Making of a Leader* by Clinton and *Deep Mentoring* by Reese as resources, (4)

develop a personal timeline and narrative, (5) share how God has prepared his people for good works, (6) find joy and strength in how God has been at work, (7) respond to God's activities by purposefully engaging in good works, and (8) help someone else on this journey of discovery, blessing, and ministry.

Two other extremely impactful decisions were made that same night. I suggested we consider inviting a fourth couple into ILET. After considerable discussion, we decided to keep our group at three couples rather than invite a fourth. Time constraints meant we were already stretched in providing everyone opportunities to share their insights and experiences, and two additional people would have had a detrimental impact on the quality of the relationships in the group. Reflecting on this decision highlighted the importance of manageable dialogue within groups.¹⁴³ The second decision involved table fellowship. P6 used her hospitality gift, hosting our meeting and providing a meal. The next few meetings also involved meals as a convenience

¹⁴³ Unknown author, "Dividing Your Group," *Campus Journal* 30 (Fall 1987):7. The formula $R=N*(N-1)$ determines the number of relationships (R) in the group and is based on the number of people in the group (N). The dynamics of one more couple, of going from a group of six to a group of eight, would have almost doubled the potential relationships from 30 to 56.

to P5 and his work schedule. At some point in the next few months, we recognized the importance of table fellowship in our work together and made it part of the LET discovery process. Table fellowship and the smaller group enhanced our relationships. I believe this March 17 meeting providentially set the stage for the entire project.

ILET met an additional nine times in 2016. We then conducted a review of the process in January 2017. At the ILET's January 2017 meeting we discerned whom we would invite for the next phase of developing new leaders. We had been praying about this selection both individually and collectively, since November 2016. An additional five couples were invited on this journey. All five couples accepted this invitation. Eight couples comprising three teams made the 2017 LET journey. Since the first group was identified as the Initial Leadership Emergence Team (ILET) we identified these new groups as Leadership Emergence Teams (LET). For communication within the church this acronym worked fine, but for this dissertation, this acronym would be confused with Leadership Emergence Theory. To avoid confusion the Leadership Emergence Teams or groups for 2017 will be designated TEAMS2 and the groups for 2018 will be TEAMS3 throughout the rest of this dissertation.

During 2017, the second year of the project, ILET met as a self-contained group five times for training and collaborative work concerning the teams they led. The TEAMS2 met nine times in 2017. Each team was led by a couple who were part of ILET. All participants met an additional two times in 2017 at celebration events.

The second phase ended in December 2017, and the third phase began in January 2018. Seven of the eight couples who finished the process in 2017 agreed to lead others on a similar journey. These seven couples met on January 12, 2018, to discern whom to invite and mentor for the year. At this January 2018 meeting, we concluded most couples did not believe they were prepared to lead another group on their own in 2018.¹⁴⁴ Based on this discussion and the fact we had seven leading couples for 2018, we determined to organize into four groups of three couples each to explore

¹⁴⁴ The three couples who formed ILET all had some previous formal ministry training along with mentoring experiences, though we did not come to fully recognize this key common element of their background until September 2018. With this background for ILET, each couple felt equipped to lead others after one year of LET exploration. However, TEAMS2 worked with disciples of Christ who had varying degrees of leadership experience and little experience with mentoring. Based on the lack of experience the group, TEAMS2, determined to team-up with one other LET experienced couple and to invite one new couple into the group. This decision allowed for slower but deeper leadership development.

LET. These four groups became TEAMS3. Three TEAMS3 groups each included two couples who had completed at least one year of LET and one new couple. The fourth TEAMS3 group was comprised of my wife and me, along with two new couples. To keep the groups fresh, we combined TEAMS3 so no couple had previously heard another's narrative. These collaborative decisions became an important organic component in the project.

By pairing six of the 2017 couples, we provided another year for leadership to be explored and developed while inviting one additional couple into the journey. The assumption was that a pair of leaders in each group meant very little oversight would be needed for the group leaders. This assumption has proven to be incorrect and will be addressed in chapter four. So, in 2018 there were four TEAMS3 groups participating in this leadership emergence journey, with a total of twelve couples, which represented 10% of our 120 church families.¹⁴⁵ There were nine meetings for TEAMS3 in 2018, the same number of meeting as for TEAMS2 in 2017. Also imitating what transpired in 2017, there were two celebratory meetings which included everyone. These celebratory meetings were

¹⁴⁵ "Church Record," January 2018 membership rolls.

designed to provide vision, buy-in, and an opportunity to rejoice in the work God was doing.

Deep Processing in Leadership Emergence Teams

The process of leadership emergence in ILET, TEAMS2, and TEAMS3 included (1) value confidentiality, (2) use Clinton's LET as a foundational theory, (3) use *The Making of a Leader* by Clinton and *Deep Mentoring* by Reese as resources, (4) develop a personal timeline and narrative, (5) through the narrative share how God has prepared his people for good works, (6) find joy and strength in how God has been at work, (7) respond to God's activities by purposefully engaging in good works, and (8) help someone else on this journey of discovery, blessing, and ministry. Every member of ILET, TEAMS2, and TEAMS3 fully participated in these eight activities, except one individual in 2017. This individual participated in the group but did not write or share a life narrative.¹⁴⁶ Also, this individual and her spouse did not participate in the project in 2018.

Clinton's Leadership Emergence Theory (LET) proposes that leadership develops as a function of time, process

¹⁴⁶ An interview was conducted with this individual to develop a better understanding of what some objections to the process might be. The results of the interview are explored in chapter 4 and recorded in Appendix B.

items,¹⁴⁷ and an individual's response to those process

items:

God develops a leader over a lifetime. That development is a function of the use of events and people to impress leadership lessons upon a leader (processing), time, and leader response. Processing is central to the theory. All leaders can point to critical incidents in their lives where God taught them something very important.¹⁴⁸

Elsewhere Clinton elaborates,

Processing is the core variable around which the theory integrates. That is, critical spiritual incidents in the lives of leaders are sprinkled densely throughout their lives. These incidents are often turning points in terms of leadership insight. These incidents are perceived by the leaders as God's work of developing them for leadership. This is called processing.¹⁴⁹

The materials and assignments given through *Deep Mentoring* and *The Making of a Leader* primarily focused on identifying and exploring the critical incidents God used in an individual's life to recognize God's work and one's

¹⁴⁷ Clinton, *The Making of a Leader*, 260, defines process items as; "a phrase referring to providential events, people, circumstances, special interventions, inner-life lessons, and/or anything else God uses in the leadership selection process of a person to indicated leadership potential (inner integrity and influence capacity), to develop that potential, to confirm appointment to the ministry role or responsibility, or to move the leader toward God's appointed ministry level for realized potential"

¹⁴⁸ Clinton, *The Making of a Leader*, 22.

¹⁴⁹ Clinton, *Leadership Emergence Theory*, 29.

response. However, accessing and reflecting upon critical incidents or crucible moments¹⁵⁰ where God is present is challenging. One ILET member reflected on writing and sharing her narrative by stating it was "the hardest thing I have ever done"¹⁵¹ and was even hurtful because it resurrected old experiences and feelings. However, her husband built upon that concern by expressing the narrative was useful because it helped make sense of some incidents and built bridges to other aspects of their lives.¹⁵²

Developing Trust through Fellowship

Critical events, especially extremely hurtful memories, are not shared lightly. Relationships of trust, acceptance, and encouragement must be built in order to create an environment where participants can explore some of the deep, powerful work God has done in someone's life. The transition from information sharing in program-based leadership development to life exploration in LET proved to be a powerful adaptive change.¹⁵³ Deep trust developed over

¹⁵⁰ Robert J. Thomas, *Crucibles of Leadership: How to Learn from Experience to Become a Great Leader* (Boston: Harvard Business Press, 2008), 226.

¹⁵¹ P4 Meeting Comment, Oct. 27, 2016.

¹⁵² P3 Meeting Comment, Oct. 27, 2016.

¹⁵³ Heifetz, *Leadership on the Line*, 14, technical change applies current know-how by existing authorities

time through (1) table fellowship, (2) appropriate group size, (3) processing the material in *Deep Mentoring* and *The Making of a Leader* both personally and collectively, and (4) working on personal timelines and narratives. **Though I had not given much thought to the importance of trust at the beginning of this project, it was the crucial ingredient in making this process work.**¹⁵⁴

Table fellowship provided an environment where the groups strengthened community. Initially, ILET meetings provided a snack and coffee or tea, but these were add-ons to the task at hand. When we rotated our meeting to another host, one who has a strong gift of hospitality, we incorporated a meal into our small group. The meal increased our meeting time to about two and one-half hours, but the first hour revolved around the group's day-to-day lives. Topics ranged from work, to family, to health, etc. Table fellowship, including a meal, meant this group grew deeply in friendship, laying a foundation of trust that

within the group while adaptive change requires learning new ways and the work is done by those experiencing the problem.

¹⁵⁴ Kouzes, 36-37, establishes trustworthiness as critical to credibility. Stephen M. R. Covey, *The Speed of Trust: The One Thing That Changes Everything* (New York: Free Press, 2008), 1-2.

demonstrated itself when the group shared their narratives. Table fellowship became an important aspect of every group throughout the three years. One ILET member responded to the question; "What Leadership Emergence Team activity did you find most meaningful and why?"

Spending time sharing together in a meal with the group before the leadership emergence team meeting was great. This time allowed us to interact and share our lives. It gave us more time when we met to really come to know each other. A relationship bond was formed that I believe will go far beyond the year we spent together. We did this with the first (ILET) and third (TEAMS3) groups. We were not able to do this with the second group because of time limitations for one of the couples, and I just do not feel the same connection with that group as I do with the other two groups.¹⁵⁵

Developing Trust through Group Size

A group size of six contributed to trust development by fostering interaction. It also provided a large enough group to be able to carry one or two members who had not completed the work assigned for a specific meeting. In 2017, with TEAMS2, one ILET couple worked with only one couple in a group of four. During our 2017 ILET meetings, the leader couple expressed that four was a difficult group size because when one individual in the group did not complete their work it was difficult to carry on a dialogue

¹⁵⁵ Appendix B. P4 Long Survey, 2018.

concerning the material to be discussed. On the other end of the spectrum, large groups do not seem to work well in employing *Deep Mentoring* as a process for exploring God's work in one's life.¹⁵⁶

Proper group size allowed a group in the TEAMS2 phase to be flexible concerning meeting times so everyone could attend. In one group a member was wrestling with a potentially deadly cancer diagnosis. There were numerous trips out of state for treatments and surgeries, but with three couples making the journey together the group accommodated everyone. A group size of six persons proved to be ideal for flexibility while providing a size where trust flourished.

Trust and Learning through Required Readings

Learning new information to accomplish an adaptive change, while increasing trust, involved interacting with our primary resources, *Deep Mentoring* and *The Making of a Leader*. Each ILET, TEAMS2, and TEAMS3 meeting included

¹⁵⁶ Brandon Moore, 2016, personal conversation. The South Hills Church of Christ in Helena, Montana attempted to use *Deep Mentoring* to develop leaders in 2015. Brandon's group size fluctuated between twelve to twenty and his assessment was that the process did not produce vulnerable and transparent sharing and the result was little to no transformation. His conclusion was that a larger group size contributed to this outcome.

discussing the assigned readings and sharing our responses to a written assignment.¹⁵⁷ Throughout the three years, the groups interacted with the material in a meaningful way. For example, one ILET member responded to the question: "How does Jesus' intimate way of noticing and investing in others challenge your community's way of developing others?"¹⁵⁸

We have assumed people will grow through attendance at the different functions of the church but have not given the individual attention to people that helps them move from attendees to true disciples investing in the lives of others. There needs to be a focus on some individuals to help them develop.¹⁵⁹

This response indicated serious reflection on the material and a desire to make application into both personal lives and the life of the church. The same ILET member shared, "The discussions during the monthly meetings helped me see how other people were processing the readings and applying them."¹⁶⁰

¹⁵⁷ See Appendix A for agendas and lists of what was covered in ILET, TEAMS2, and TEAMS3.

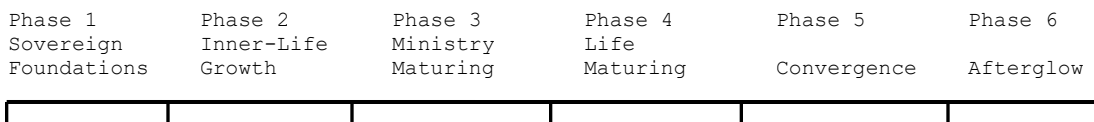
¹⁵⁸ Reese, *Deep Mentoring*, 200.

¹⁵⁹ P5, Agenda notes, August 26, 2016.

¹⁶⁰ Appendix B. P5, Long Survey, 2018.

The Timeline

Trust was crucial in enabling us to share some of the most painful, transformative moments of our lives. However, it was Clinton's LET and generalized timeline that provided a roadmap that helped us explore and express the work God had been doing in our lives. Each person's timeline is unique, but Clinton's timeline identifies common features most leaders experience. It is represented in its generalized form below:¹⁶¹



Sovereign foundations involve God's providential work through family, environment, and historical events. Inner-life growth is a phase where one seeks to know God and is often associated with a conversion to Christ. It is in this period where a new believer develops foundational spiritual disciplines and involvement in ministry while successfully transitioning through some spiritual tests. Ministry maturing involves a period of growth in skills and gifts associated with ministering to both the body of Christ and to those outside of Christ. In Phase 4, life maturing, the

¹⁶¹ Clinton, *The Making of a Leader*, 37.

leader uses his or her gifts in ministry but is further tested by experiences and events that deeply transform the individual and draws them closer to God. Convergence is a period where the gift-mix and experience of an individual are maximized. This involves equipping other leaders. Afterglow or celebration is a phase that few leaders experience. It is a time of expanded influence where a faithful life of service blesses many.¹⁶²

Reese provided a timeline development process that we adopted as our model because it was more workable in our situation which involved volunteers. His timeline consisted of four phases: (1) Foundation: A Beginning, (2) Preparation: Finding Our Way, (3) Contribution: Leading Out of Who We Are, and (4) Multiplication: Finishing Well.¹⁶³ These four chronological phases provide a framework for identifying and organizing process items and God's involvement at critical moments. Of special help in outlining our narrative was a brainstorming activity using

¹⁶² Clinton, *The Making of a Leader*, 37-39, provides the foundation for my description. However, this entire book explores how the generalized timeline is lived out.

¹⁶³ Reese, *Deep Mentoring*, 66-67.

sticky notes to first identify critical incidents and then organize them chronologically.¹⁶⁴

Writing the Narrative

By incorporating concepts from Clinton's timeline and Reese's *Deep Mentoring*, ILET, TEAMS2, and TEAMS3 explored God's work in their lives through a personal narrative focusing on process items. This activity of connecting process items to one's narrative was crucial because the narrative represented a personal case study when evaluated through the lens of LET.¹⁶⁵ Further, it invited the participant into the learning process, fostering connectivity between life experiences and LET.¹⁶⁶ Narratives served "as a philosophical building block in order to foster connectivity between the leadership development principles and the change in the life of the leader."¹⁶⁷ The discoveries that transpired in each group were important.

¹⁶⁴ Reese, *Deep Mentoring*, 95-97.

¹⁶⁵ Randy D. Reese, "A Philosophy of Education for Leadership Development through the Leadership Center Training Model." D. Missiology, Fuller Theological Seminary, 2003, 73. Also, a good description of narrative as a learner-centered approach is contained in Reese's dissertation, 73-78.

¹⁶⁶ Ibid., 78.

¹⁶⁷ Ibid.

However, it was the work of developing a personal narrative that highlighted God's work. This called for some type of response to discoveries of both God's providential work and God's individual gifting.

These personal narratives led participants to reflect upon their lives and more fully recognize how God had uniquely prepared them to be a servant leader. Participants wrestled with how their ministry burden shaped their "bent." The following narrative excerpt demonstrates this discovery process:

Our character is continually being molded by our circumstances. Who, what, and where I am today was designed by Him. I feel so blessed to serve such a gracious, merciful and loving God. I lived astray for many years and God kept drawing me closer to Him every step of the way. The Lord laid on my heart to improve my prayer life and step up to being a prayer warrior for my family.. I pray today for the Lord to help me be ready, to have eyes that see and a heart that is in tune with His divine plan. I want to help and encourage those who are hurting. I plan to keep going deeper and to continue to live more alert and permit God to tap on my heart and rearrange my day. May my heart beat in tune with His all my remaining days. I am so grateful for our church family here in Great Falls.¹⁶⁸

This participant responded to her discoveries by providing comfort to those undergoing surgeries or experiencing hospital stays.

¹⁶⁸ P7, Narrative, 2017.

Sharing and Hearing the Narratives

Once the narratives were completed, they were shared with the others in the group. Usually, two people shared at each of the September, October, and November meetings. Writing our narratives helped us reflect upon God's providential work and gifts. Sharing these narratives provided an extraordinary transformative experience because people saw more fully the providential work of God in both their lives and in the lives of others in their group. The trust established through table fellowship and relationship formation over a period of ten months provided an environment of grace that enabled deep transparency.

The narratives revealed some of the deepest pains within an individual but also demonstrated God's extreme faithfulness in using these events as process items to transform the participants. Individuals wept as they shared about the pain caused by parents, spouses, churches, and other people. Others in the group heard their stories, wept and laughed with them, and heard of God's faithful work leading to the individual's transformation and growth. The following quote by Michael Casey was verified time after time:

Among the many things we human beings require for survival and growth, one is not so generally recognized: the need I have to tell my story and have

another person hear it. We each live through a unique complex of experiences and become what they make us... If my experience is not brought into the open, it loses some of its reality, and will slowly slip beneath the threshold of my awareness. It will continue to shape my moods and reactions, but I will never know how or why.¹⁶⁹

Casey goes on, "it is of great benefit to review the course of one's life with a few other persons, perceiving different highlights with different hearers. They draw from me complementary aspects of the whole."¹⁷⁰

We applied Casey's insights concerning the need to highlight some aspects and then deeply investigate critical incidents by asking for additional feedback from the narrative's writer. This enabled both the sharer and the hearers to discern the work of God in a deeper way.¹⁷¹

As members listened to each other's narratives, it became evident people had stories to tell of God's faithfulness in their darkest moments. Consider two ILET members' responses to the following question; "How did listening to others' narratives impact you?"

¹⁶⁹ Michael Casey, *Toward God: The Ancient Wisdom of Western Prayer*, rev. ed. (Liguori, MO: Triumph Books, 1996), 134.

¹⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 135.

¹⁷¹ Questions to probe God's work in the narrative are included in Appendix D.

I have been amazed at the difficult things others have gone through, and yet they have remained faithful in their Christian walk and service to God. Unfortunately, the common thread I have found in a lot of difficult times in these people's lives has been dealing with struggles in the church and with negative treatment from other Christians. We are not a perfect people, but we are a forgiven and grace-given people. My prayer is that God's grace can flow through me and others so that we can reflect God in a better way.¹⁷²

For leadership to emerge, difficult events had to occur for all of us as God was processing us. I am more compassionate, reflective, and insightful as a result of others' narratives.¹⁷³

Exploring our narratives together was transformative. This process represents one of the most powerful ministry events I have witnessed in forty years of being a Christian. The ability to share our stories, even the worst parts of our lives, and then experience the unifying love and acceptance of other brothers and sisters in Christ transforms us. This process helped place our lives before God so he can more fully use us for his purposes.

Transparency: Leading the Way

One last thought about narratives and developing trust involves who shares their narratives and when. Leaders need to step out and lead. In this situation, it meant going first. With ILET, I read my narrative first. I was candid

¹⁷² Appendix B. P4, Long Survey, 2018.

¹⁷³ Appendix B. P3, Long Survey, 2018.

and transparent about my failures and the consequences of those failures. I believe my vulnerability set the stage for the rest of the ILET participants to demonstrate vulnerability. A similar practice was incorporated into TEAMS2 and TEAMS3. The leaders of those groups shared their narratives first and provided an example of transparency and vulnerability.

Celebration

The final two activities with ILET, TEAMS2, and TEAMS3 involved celebrating the adventure God had taken us through during the year and selecting whom to invite for the next phase of developing leaders. Our ending celebrations in December 2017, and 2018 provided an opportunity to reconnect as a larger group, remember what God had been doing, provide a venue to remind participants of the vision of developing leaders through the investment of our lives, and have fun.¹⁷⁴ Selecting whom to invite into the next phase of leader emergence occurred in January each year and highlighted the importance of new beginnings. These meetings involved all those who had completed leader emergence training and were committed to investing their

¹⁷⁴ Malphurs, *Building Leaders*, 178-179, describes this type of celebration as a rally to build the leaders' hearts.

lives and time into the lives of others. In the two transitions we experienced, ILET to TEAMS2 and TEAMS2 to TEAMS3, we were small enough to share a meal and then collaborate on organizing existing leaders and inviting new people into the process.

Mid-course Corrections

The organic aspect of this project enabled the participants in ILET to continue as a sounding board throughout the project, which helped smooth out rough spots. Specifically, they helped determine (1) group size, (2) appropriate reading assignments in both content and size, (3) a more realistic agenda for meetings, and (4) the importance of table fellowship. Items one and four have been addressed already.

What material to read and how much of it should be read was an ongoing discussion. For the first two years, everyone was expected to read *Deep Mentoring* and *The Making of a Leader*. These books were worked into the monthly assignments along with other materials, including three lectures by Evertt Huffard¹⁷⁵ and an example of an LEP.¹⁷⁶ A

¹⁷⁵ Evertt Huffard, Class Lecture Notes, Spiritual Leadership, Harding School of Theology, Spring, 2016. Seminars 1-3.

¹⁷⁶ I shared an LEP or narrative I developed on the life of King David so participants could get an idea of

fellow student from Harding School of Theology reviewed my project and shared, "My only concern is that it might be too much information."¹⁷⁷ ILET agreed with the concern and we reduced the readings for TEAMS3. *Deep Mentoring* is still the basic resource, but we now have only selected readings from *The Making of a Leader* and have eliminated the Huffard readings.

The agendas for each meeting had more items than could be covered in the time allowed. To rectify this a top relational and task goal were identified for each meeting. Within each agenda, those goals were highlighted, and the leaders were encouraged to focus on those goals even if that meant neglecting other agenda items.

Feedback and Time Commitment

Toward the end of 2018, while TEAMS3 were sharing their narratives, participants in ILET, along with TEAMS2 and TEAMS3 responded to five statements concerning providence, giftedness, and the influence of leadership. Participants responded based on the following instructions:

what a narrative would look like. This was a helpful exercise.

¹⁷⁷ Carl Williamson, Providence, to Scott Laird, Great Falls, Jan. 31, 2017.

Reflecting on; (1) completing the leadership emergence team activities, (2) finishing and sharing the life narrative, and (3) listening to other team members' narratives; the participants rated the statements from 1 - "Strongly Disagree" to 5 - "Strongly Agree."¹⁷⁸

The following chart summarizes the results. Response values higher than "3" indicate participants grew in the areas referenced in the questionnaire.

Leadership Emergence Teams Impact Chart		
Statements that participants ranked according to their experience with LET in their team. Strongly Disagree – Disagree - Neutral - Agree - Strongly Agree (1) (2) (3) (4) (5) Values above 3 indicate growth in this area.	ILET (Aug. 2018) Average Values: 6 Participants	ILET, TEAMS2, and TEAMS3 (Nov. 2018) Average Values: 26 Participants
(1) I am more aware of God's work in my life.	4.67	4.50
(2) I am more aware of God's work in the lives of others.	4.83	4.46
(3) I more fully recognize God's gifts in my life.	4.67	4.31
(4) I am more willing to engage in the lives of others to influence them to embrace God's work in their lives.	4.67	4.38
(5) I have a greater appreciation for the influence of other Christians in my life.	4.67	4.85

These results suggest growth in (1) equipping participants to recognize God's work in their lives, (2) facilitating the discovery of participants' spiritual gifts, and (3)

¹⁷⁸ These are the instructions introducing the questionnaire given to all participants.

launching leaders to mentor future leaders. Chapter four will further explore these results.

This project was time intensive for me and for those who participated. Each team member met eleven times, read the resources, and developed their narrative. I estimate this represents approximately 60 hours in the year.¹⁷⁹ ILET invested an additional 15+ hours in 2017.¹⁸⁰ I invested considerably more time in developing agendas, researching materials, engaging in private conversations concerning LET, and other administrative issues arising from implementing LET. The best estimate for my application of LET into the context of GFCC was 160-180 hours in 2016, 270 hours in 2017, and 320 hours in 2018.¹⁸¹

Conclusion

After receiving the blessing from my elders to begin a process to identify, engage, and help equip emerging leaders I initiated a project that extended over three

¹⁷⁹ Each meeting lasted at least 3 hours including travel time. Readings and narrative development would account for the additional 25 hours for every team member.

¹⁸⁰ In 2017 ILET met five additional times to prepare for TEAMS2. These meetings, with travel, took approximately three hours each.

¹⁸¹ "Church Record," 2016, 2017, and 2018. 2016 records are not as precise as following years for Scott Laird's hours on the project. 2017 and 2018 hours reflect work on the dissertation as well.

years. From 2016-2018, selected couples used Clinton's LET as a tool to evaluate God's work in their lives with the intent that they would invest in the lives of others. Three couples began this process in 2016 and in subsequent years led an additional ten couples on this journey of discovery. Those who made this journey include all our elders and their wives, a deacon and his wife, and other dedicated servants at GFCC. Just as the Missouri River begins in Three Forks, flows through Great Falls, joins the Mississippi River in St. Louis and eventually empties into the Gulf of Mexico while increasing in influence all the way, so too, these leaders are exercising an increasing spiritual influence in GFCC.

Three crucial insights are worth highlighting at this point. One, trust must be developed for this process to work. This project facilitated trust development through confidentiality, appropriate group size, and table fellowship. Two, take the time to make the journey together. If someone cannot make a meeting, adjust your meeting time so everyone can be present. Three, everyone should write and read their narrative to their group. The verbal expression of one's narrative touches both the reader and the hearer deeply. It also enables the group to minister into some deep hurts that may have never been

shared before. This ministry is crucial for assisting individuals to reorient their narrative and see God's work in all aspects of life's journey. It also helps individuals see the impact of their story on the lives of others.

CHAPTER 4: GFCC LET EVALUATION AND FUTURE APPLICATIONS

Introduction

When you arrive in Great Falls off I-15 and catch 10th Avenue South you cross the Missouri River about one mile from the Interstate exit. Looking left you notice the muddy waters of the Sun River emptying into the clear blue waters of the Missouri. You are surprised to observe that the Missouri has cleansed the muddy impact of the Sun River within a quarter-mile. You also recognize that the Missouri has grown.

This project attempted to facilitate an upstream development of leaders by exploring Clinton's LET in GFCC. Much like the Missouri and her contributing rivers, individuals in the church have lived lives of influence. So, joining lives and sharing life stories illuminated God's providential work and encouraged Christians to explore the "good works which God has prepared in advance for us to do" (Eph. 2:10). At the same time, this project tended to "clean-up" the muddy parts of our lives by providing a clearer picture of God's work and our responses. Like the Missouri's cleansing influence on the Sun River waters, our time together made our lives less muddy and therefore, potentially more influential.

To accomplish this upstream leader development I anticipated (1) making adaptive changes in my life necessary to equip leaders, (2) equipping participants to recognize God's work in their lives, (3) facilitating the discovery of participants' "bent," ministry burden, or calling, and (4) launching leaders to mentor one or two other couples in the LET process. I also expected this project to help GFCC grow beyond the program-based focus of a mid-sized church to aspects of a large church; demonstrated by leadership structures changing from a stretched cell to multiple cells¹⁸² and congregational decisions moving from need-based to mission based.¹⁸³ The two major theories explored throughout the project were Clinton's Leadership Emergence Theory¹⁸⁴ (LET) and Heifetz's theory concerning adaptive change.¹⁸⁵ Additional principles and theories were also applied. The remainder of this chapter evaluates effectiveness, considers theories and principles, and explores additional insights.

¹⁸² McIntosh, *One Size Doesn't Fit All*, 37-46.

¹⁸³ *Ibid.*, 73-82.

¹⁸⁴ Clinton, *Leadership Emergence Theory* and *The Making of a Leader*. Both books explore LET.

¹⁸⁵ Heifetz, *Leadership on the Line* and *The Practice of Adaptive Leadership*. Both books explore this theory.

Adaptive Changes

At GFCC leader development has been approached as a technical change where a new class, a new program, a new something added to our existing programs would develop leaders. It has not worked.¹⁸⁶

The first move in leader development required me to change, and change is hard. The predominant gift throughout my life in Christ has been evangelism. Shepherding and teaching represent two additional primary gifts, while an administrative gift also fits.¹⁸⁷ This project challenged me to transition into a leader who develops leaders. I needed to make an adaptive change,¹⁸⁸ which meant a need to adjust my unrealistic expectation¹⁸⁹ that I could add this project into my already busy life. To gain leaders for GFCC meant sacrificing something.

In *The Effective Executive*, Peter Drucker concludes that a leader who impacts their organization turns his

¹⁸⁶ This statement was initially introduced on page 21 of the dissertation.

¹⁸⁷ Experience, community confirmations, and numerous spiritual gifts inventories have consistently highlighted these areas as being my primary areas of giftedness.

¹⁸⁸ Heifetz, *Leadership on the Line*, 13-15.

¹⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, 15.

“attention away from his own specialty, his own narrow skills, . . . and toward the performance of the whole.”¹⁹⁰

In other words, there are times personal interests must reside in the background while the leader employs gifts to transform the entire organization.

These insights emphasized the depth of my challenge as I discovered the need to prioritize mentoring and administration over evangelism. This reduced my evangelistic studies from three to one weekly and resulted in some pushback from a co-worker. The time used for evangelism was reinvested in learning, planning, implementing, and mentoring. *LeaderLoop* identifies my role change as moving from C (leading and managing) to D (leading and mentoring) where mentoring is the predominant responsibility of the leader.¹⁹¹ Huffard’s insight that this shift would require an intentional strategy and would encounter increased stress¹⁹² is correct. The intentional strategy involved substantial reading as well as the

¹⁹⁰ Peter F. Drucker, *The Effective Executive: The Definitive Guide to Getting the Right Things Done* (New York, NY: Harper Business, 1967), 53.

¹⁹¹ Evertt Huffard, Class Lecture Notes, Leadership Development, Harding School of Theology, Spring 2017.

¹⁹² Huffard, *LeaderLoop*, 11.

integration of what I was learning into the LET process. My increased stress was expressed through conflict with a co-worker concerning my role change from the primary evangelist to mentoring. This stress was heightened by a general tone of resistance and complaining by some participants.¹⁹³

My adaptive change involved a substantial time commitment while learning and applying new information as anticipated by Heifetz' adaptive challenge theory.¹⁹⁴ My work involved developing project tasks and goals, organizing meetings and agendas, communicating with project participants, leading a group, and mentoring other leaders. I anticipate the time commitment needed to continue to develop leaders using this model to be significant, possibly up to 200 hours per year or 10% of the workweek going forward.

The adaptive challenge involved more than my personal change. Northouse's summary of Heifetz' theory claims adaptive change requires (1) a leader who sees the big picture, (2) identifying challenges, (3) regulating distress, (4) encouraging others to stay focused, (5)

¹⁹³ Appendix E. Notes from the Huffard site visit.

¹⁹⁴ Heifetz, *Leadership on the Line*, 14-15.

giving the work back to the team, and (6) protecting the team.¹⁹⁵ The experience of this project confirms these requirements. I was called upon to fulfill each of these at some point during the three-year project.¹⁹⁶

The team readings, projects included in the agendas, and narratives meant the participants experienced an adaptive change. An indicator that this was an adaptive change in the lives of the participants was demonstrated by their struggles.¹⁹⁷ During the Huffard site visit, one participant after another shared how hard this process of discovering God's work in their lives was. P26 shared that she didn't sleep well for weeks before sharing her story because it was so hard. She continued by stating it was God's story now and she demonstrated that by sharing her narrative with her children to help them see God's work in

¹⁹⁵ Northouse, 262-71.

¹⁹⁶ Examples of this include, but are not limited to, mentoring individuals who struggled in their team, initiating and facilitating discussions on challenges concerning teams meeting outside of ideal conditions, providing a broad structure of support while allowing individual teams to adapt to specific needs, and intervening when those outside the project questioned the legitimacy of diverting resources from existing programs to facilitate LET.

¹⁹⁷ Appendix E. Note how many participants shared about how hard the process was.

her life.¹⁹⁸ P25 related that he went home after the first meeting thinking this was really stupid. Through the encouragement of P8, P25 continued the process and experienced one of the most compelling examples of the church's role in reinforcing the truth of God's forgiveness. When P25 finished sharing his narrative he was deeply grieved. Rather than let that grief go unanswered, P3 spoke into P25's life and said, "You are forgiven." P25 experienced a physical manifestation of God's great grace through the words of P3. P25 went from considering the process as being "stupid" to wanting to grow deeper.¹⁹⁹ P22 revealed the first time she developed her narrative she had to relive feelings of abandonment but in the second sharing she was liberated and her pain could now be employed to minister to others.²⁰⁰ These are just a few of the personal stories shared by the participants which demonstrate an adaptive change is painful and hard, but it is worth it. Participants who endured the difficult process of vulnerable personal reflection began to apply Friedman's

¹⁹⁸ Appendix E. Huffard site visit, January 4, 2019.

¹⁹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰⁰ Ibid.

concept of differentiation²⁰¹ and grew into healthier disciples of influence.

Transitioning to a mentoring role was a big part of my adaptive change. A principle from *The Leadership Baton* speaks to the importance of mentoring and highlights my mentoring challenge:

For mentoring to be ingrained in the culture of the church, it must begin with the senior pastor. Since other leaders tend to pattern their way of doing ministry after the examples of those who lead them, unless the senior pastor makes mentoring a priority it never becomes a core value in the church's culture. . . . This value is especially critical in churches that give preference to a strategy of leadership *development* over one of leadership *acquisition*.²⁰²

This insight is especially significant in my context because GFCC must develop leaders. Acquisition is not an option due to our location in the Northern Plains, far removed from Church of Christ training resources. Organic, in-house, development of disciples who properly exercise spiritual authority is essential.

This project revealed there remains a strong pull for me, as the minister, to move from a mentoring role back to

²⁰¹ Friedman, 194-98.

²⁰² Rowland Forman, Jeff Jones, and Bruce Miller, *The Leadership Baton: An Intentional Strategy for Developing Leaders in Your Church an Intentional Strategy for Developing Leaders in Your Church* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2004), 167.

leading and managing more than mentoring.²⁰³ Jesus mentored the twelve. The principle of focusing on the development of a few faithful leaders of influence is God's design. However, a mentoring model faces strong headwinds in a medium-sized, program-oriented, administrator-led church.²⁰⁴ My context may make this even more difficult as I have preached weekly at two assemblies during the past fourteen years. Each of these assemblies identifies as a small church and expect the minister to be relational and available.²⁰⁵

The mentoring principle, requiring devoting more time to fewer people is necessary for mentoring to take hold in a church. This was validated in the second year of the project as I devoted time to mentor ILET who in turn mentored other leaders. In year three I mentored new leaders rather than continuing to mentor mentors. This was possibly reverting from D to C in *LeaderLoop*, but the move allowed me to mentor our ministry apprentice, an elder, and their wives. Time limits prevented me from doing everything

²⁰³ Huffard, *LeaderLoop*, 39. This indicates reverting back to C from D.

²⁰⁴ McIntosh, *One Size Doesn't Fit All*, 18-34, 59-70. Huffard, *LeaderLoop*, 39, also notes mentors face institutional and organizational headwinds.

²⁰⁵ McIntosh, *One Size Doesn't Fit All*, 59-70.

I wanted. Strategic decisions must be made as suggested in *LeaderLoop*.²⁰⁶

I missed, and still miss, the excitement of evangelistic studies, but I have witnessed project participants P3, P5, P6, P7, P9, P10, and P13 engaging in new evangelistic endeavors. These participants had been involved in evangelism before, however, in discerning the "good works which God prepared" (Eph. 2:10) they have re-engaged in evangelism and transitioned into being evangelism leaders by partnering with other members in the work of evangelism. Essentially, God multiplied my efforts by developing new leaders. My apparent loss resulted in more workers taking the lead in sharing the gospel.

How has this adaptive change impacted the roles I fulfill in my ministry? Another way to ask this is, how does my role today as a minister at GFCC compare with how I functioned four years ago at the start of this project?

1. I am becoming a mentor of mentors and believe that role will increase in the future.
2. I have sacrificed some personal evangelism to develop the skills needed to mentor selected GFCC members

²⁰⁶ Huffard, *LeaderLoop*, 46-47.

through an adaptive change that will impact the entire church over time.

3. Preparation time for teaching Bible Classes has been reduced to devote time to LET development. This time constraint has forced me to lean more on my partners in team-teaching. These team-teachers have risen to the challenge and have grown.
4. On the DiSC profile, I have moved from operating as a C to a D while providing a clear direction for the church.²⁰⁷
5. In view of the church's transition into a new ministry facility and the impact of LET on over ten percent of the church, God seems to have prepared me for the next phase of growth at GFCC. God has been developing a large church skill set in my life.²⁰⁸

Trust and the Community of Small Groups

This important component was not on my radar at the beginning of the project but needed to be addressed. Our experience suggests **developing trust precedes and**

²⁰⁷ DiSC Classic Version 9.0. (Minneapolis, MN: Wiley, 2001). DiSC Dimensions of Behavior (Carlson Learning Company, 1994). In 2000 the profile identified me as a high C/S. In 2018 the profile identified me as a high D/C. This change correlates with my growth as a leader.

²⁰⁸ McIntosh, *One Size Doesn't Fit All*, 59-71, speaks to the role changes for the preacher as the church grows.

facilitates employing LET as a model for leader

development. This supports Thrall's principle where environments and relationships of grace are essential to empower emerging leaders:

Where do we begin the process of cultural change? It seems logical to start with principles, move to application in relationships, then hope for an environment to emerge. While this may sound logical and linear to a leader attempting to foster change, individuals rarely respond in such a planned fashion. Instead, they seem to embrace change from the opposite direction. First, they intuit the environment, feeling for a sense of safety and affinity before they enter into more intimate relationships. And only after relationships begin to "work" for them will they begin to understand, articulate, and espouse the underlying principles behind the process they have been through.²⁰⁹

I anticipated that the development of personal narratives would help us recognize God's work in our lives because of personal experience.²¹⁰ However, I did not anticipate the raw emotions experienced by the groups when the narratives were shared. Nor did I foresee the intense bond of trust this common journey would develop and how important trust-building experiences were. Stephen Covey's

²⁰⁹ Thrall, 34-35.

²¹⁰ Evertt Huffard, Class Lecture Notes, Spiritual Leadership, Harding School of Theology, Spring 1997. I wrote a leadership emergence paper or narrative and it had a profound impact on how I understood God's work in my life. My experience suggested the process would help others.

trust formula states, "Trust always affects two outcomes - speed and cost. When trust goes down, speed will also go down and cost will go up. When trust goes up, speed will also go up and costs will go down."²¹¹ For us, this meant that raising trust decreased the fear of being vulnerable (cost) while enabling participants to authentically interact with each other within a few months (speed). Vulnerability is a crucial component of LET. Scripture bears witness that every biblical character who finished well was vulnerable.²¹² **Therefore, trust is an essential component in the adaptive change of leader development.**

1. Trust was high as I began this project and remained high. As of November 1, 2018, I entered my 25th year of ministry at GFCC. I have helped lead the church through various crises resulting in a deep trust with the elders and the rest of the congregation. ILET trusted me enough to initially join this project and all the elders participated in the project. Participation by key leaders reinforced the influence of previously established trust and allowed this

²¹¹ Covey, 13.

²¹² Clinton, *The Making of a Leader*, 204-05. Clinton speaks of maintaining a learning posture in order to finish well.

process to begin, flourish, and continue. Clinton would describe the influence I have in the church as "spiritual authority,"²¹³ which is "the major power base of a leader who has learned God's lessons during maturity processing."²¹⁴ This type of power base was important for the success of the project because spiritual authority is established through trust. A key to any successful change involves developing trust. Bridges notes when people trust their leaders "they're willing to undertake a change even if it scares them."²¹⁵ Thrall's, Clinton's, Covey's, and Bridges' principles of environment and trust were confirmed as applied to this project.

2. Trust must be mutual for organic change to take root and grow. A reason this process was organic and reproducible lies in our willingness to trust each other in order to develop collaborative solutions to

²¹³ Clinton, *The Making of a Leader*, 145, 261. Spiritual authority refers to a source of credibility from God that permits leaders to influence followers through persuasion, modeling, and moral expertise.

²¹⁴ Ibid., 145.

²¹⁵ Bridges, 109.

challenges. Examples of collaborative solutions include:

- 1) ILET transitioning from a program approach of skill development to the process of discovering God's work through LET.
- 2) Adding the fellowship meal into our meetings to deepen relationships.
- 3) ILET reworking the readings and agendas in year three to make them fit the new groups.
- 4) Staying with three couples rather than expanding to four in our original group.
- 5) Group consensus on whom to invite in years 2 and 3.

These examples demonstrate the ways in which the participants cooperated, gave direction, and provided the energy which made the process organic. They also demonstrate an adaptive change because the work was given back to the team. Our experience indicates that an organic process will require an adaptive change.

3. The journey of seven or eight months where participants in the small groups grew to know each other through table fellowship and common assignments helped develop the trust needed to share honestly and deeply about their lives in the narratives. Our experience cautions against trying to get into the

narratives any quicker. The time together was enhanced by limiting the group to six people, which created a manageable number of relationships.²¹⁶ This is considered an appropriate size for a primary group which is in the process of developing values²¹⁷ and our experience confirmed this size facilitated the intensive interactive work as well as the need for every member to participate in every meeting.²¹⁸ On the other hand, our experience also confirmed that a group of four people was not large enough to overcome an occasional lack of preparation by one or two participants.

²¹⁶ Relationship formula $R=N*(N-1)$ determines the number of relationships (R) in the group and is based on the number of people in the group (N). The dynamics of one more couple, our going from a group of six to a group of eight, would have almost doubled the potential relationships from 30 to 56.

²¹⁷ Ellas, *Small Groups and Established Churches*, 54-55. These groups can contain as "few as five or six members and can manageably stretch to fifteen or sixteen for short periods." Ellas also describes group typology and the interaction of relationship and task orientation, 65-75.

²¹⁸ Malphurs, *Building Leaders*, 152-56, 161-62. Our small group orientation reflected an application of Malphurs' mentor-driven training model. Our experience confirmed his assessment that small groups are an appropriate vehicle for mentor-driven training as they are relational, interactive, flexible and they allow for various content. Our groups were more time intensive than Malphurs model indicated.

4. Trust development was verified in Dr. Huffard's site visit. During a debrief session on January 4, 2019, a number of participants expressed how close they got to others in their groups. What surprised me was that trust went beyond the individuals within each group but was extended to others who had participated in the process.²¹⁹
5. Trust relies on personal relationships. P25 shared the only reason he kept participating with the process was that P8 invited him to experience LET and encouraged him to continue. **Trust produces influence.**
6. An important foundation for trust development lies in our church's long experience with LIFE Groups. These congregational small groups have built a culture of openness and confidentiality. This project built on LIFE Group practices by taking relationships to an increased level of trust and vulnerability. P10 stated LET had taken Christians to a deeper level of relationships than LIFE Groups.²²⁰

²¹⁹ Appendix E. It contains summary statements from the Huffard, January 4, 2019, site visit meeting. Note comments by P18 and P23.

²²⁰ Ibid.

7. Another factor in developing a level of trust that enabled twenty-five of the twenty-six participants to be vulnerable enough to share the good, bad, and ugly in their lives is that I went first. I was the first to be vulnerable in year one by sharing hurtful and shameful moments and seasons of my life. I also went first in years two and three. Modeling vulnerability increased trust and provided me the opportunity to coach the other group leaders to go first. **Leaders must go first in order to influence a deeper trust.**

Without trust, this project would not have developed Christians who were empowered to influence others. **We don't need the greatest skill set to influence others, but we do need to be trusted.** Bridges statement rings true, when people trust their leaders "they're willing to embrace change even if it scares them."²²¹ Our experience in trusting relationships took us to a level of community beyond LIFE Groups and laid a foundation for greater vulnerability, grace, growth, and influence.

Discipleship

Bob Logan noted that **almost all leadership concerns are fundamentally discipleship issues.** "Discipleship is the

²²¹ Bridges, 109.

often less visible but absolutely essential foundation upon which leadership must rest. Without it, everything else collapses."²²² All twenty-six participants have served as leaders or co-leaders in GFCC LIFE Groups and had already demonstrated a life of discipleship to Jesus Christ in order to serve in these roles. Discipleship was demonstrated by loving God and others (Matt. 22:36-40), the fruit of the Spirit (Gal. 5:22-23), being good followers, faithful in fellowship with the local church, evidence of good fruit and transformation, a spiritual hunger for knowing God in Bible study and prayer, and service to others.

A foundation of discipleship was assumed in the lives of the participants during the three years of this project. That will not be the case moving forward because we have already worked with many of the most spiritually mature members of GFCC. There is an ongoing need to train participants as disciples of Jesus while they explore God's providential work throughout the process. Starting with discipleship as the spiritual basis for emerging leaders means that when people are added to the pool of existing

²²² Logan, *The Leadership Difference*, 19. Reese, *Deep Mentoring*, 222, agrees with this fundamental conclusion.

organizational leaders there will be a spiritual basis for continuing influence. If a spiritual life of discipleship has not been established in an individual, future participants may require more than a two-year journey exploring LET.

Project Members' Input

Participants provided a wealth of information for this project. Some insights have been reflected in the previous pages but the Leadership Emergence Teams Impact Chart (page 95) provides some other important insights as applied to Clinton's LET. Participants feedback indicated that they experienced growth in understanding providence, giftedness, and a willingness to engage in mentoring. However, before exploring the areas just mentioned, let me reflect on some differences in the values associated with ILET in comparison with the aggregated values of all the participants from the Leadership Emergence Teams Impact Chart (page 95).

Every couple in ILET had served in some type of supported ministry in the past and had a heightened degree of ministry maturity augmented by formal training. Only one couple of the additional ten participating couples had similar training. The higher scores for ILET in questions 1-4 may indicate that their previous training and

experience prepared them to more fully recognize the work God was doing. The lower cumulative score for ILET on question 5 may indicate they have been blessed with previous mentoring relationships, while this was a first-time experience of deep vulnerability and trust for the rest of the participants.

The next several pages explore the project's impact concerning (1) the providence of God, (2) giftedness and "bent", and (3) mentoring in the lives of the participants.

Providence

Participants in the project grew in recognizing God's providential work in their lives and the lives of others.

1. The Leadership Emergence Teams Impact Chart (page 95) indicates the twenty-six participants acknowledged their experience with LET helped them become more aware of God's work in their life and the lives of others. This was demonstrated by the score of 4.5/5.0 concerning providence in their lives and 4.46/5.0 concerning providence in the lives of others.

Recognizing God's work is crucial in leader development.

2. Narratives also revealed God's providence. Participants shared, "it showed me God's consistent

love, care, provision, and involvement in my life;"²²³ and "when thinking of the past there is blatant evidence of God's handiwork in my life. It was good to get an overview of how He has worked."²²⁴ Seeing how God works confirmed an understanding of both the existence and the purpose of various events in life. Clinton called these process items.²²⁵ Clinton states, "Understanding of God's processes helps bring more effective processing toward leadership development issues."²²⁶ Our experience confirms Clinton's assessment.

3. Ongoing relationships between participants indicated an increased acknowledgment of God's providence. This was demonstrated in the on-site visit with Dr. Huffard as participants frequently referenced learning to discern what God was doing. This discernment primarily came about as the grouped processed their narratives.²²⁷ P21 reflected, "I learned I am not

²²³ P4 Questionnaire.

²²⁴ P6 Questionnaire.

²²⁵ Clinton, *The Making of a Leader*, 260.

²²⁶ Clinton, *Leadership Emergence Theory*, 95.

²²⁷ Appendix E contains summary statements from the Huffard site visit on January 4, 2019, meeting.

alone. Others have been through some very similar struggles. God seems to have providentially put me with people who could help me on my journey.”²²⁸

4. Reading *Deep Mentoring* and *The Making of a Leader* helped participants recognize God’s providence. The books exposed all participants to the principle of God’s providence and led to greater recognition of God’s work. Growth in understanding providence helped participants recognize God’s work throughout their timeline. In a sense, the timeline helped participants exegete²²⁹ their life experiences through the lens of divine providence. In addition, shared readings produced a common language to describe our life situations in terms of God’s work.
5. A caution is warranted concerning the readings. One of the participants came from strong charismatic roots and resisted the terminology, along with some applications in *The Making of a Leader*.²³⁰ Some of Clinton’s process items, like double-confirmation,

²²⁸ Appendix E.

²²⁹ Evertt Huffard, Memphis, to project participants, Great Falls, January 4, 2019, during the site visit.

²³⁰ Appendix B. Note comments associated with P20.

were more experience based than scripture based. Clinton addressed this concern in his discussion on identifying principles using an authority scale.²³¹ Explaining Clinton's process items and his certainty continuum²³² might help participants recognize that Clinton's principles vary in application and authority.

6. Narratives enabled participants to grow in recognizing God's providence as well as their opportunities to influence and help others. During the project, 25 of the 26 participants wrote and shared their narratives. Every group member participated in listening to the narratives in their group. Reese notes that narratives "help people who are on a developmental journey make sense of past and present experiences, as well as gain a sense of clarity in regard to the future."²³³ This statement was repeatedly confirmed by the participants. Consider the following insights,

I am working on using the negative experiences I had with the positive ones, so I can in turn, be

²³¹ Clinton, *The Making of a Leader*, 162-63.

²³² Ibid.

²³³ Reese, "A Philosophy of Education," 76.

able to help others look at their life experiences and see God's hand in it all.²³⁴

I look at this last 3 months in --- as a very defining time in my life. It was me, my husband, and God. I believe we could easily have lost our spiritual lives at this time. I thank God that he is faithful, and I learned a lot about the grace of God, his mercy and the need to forgive others.²³⁵

7. Narratives provided an opportunity to explore providence in community. I noticed that when others read their narratives, I instinctively asked a series of reflective questions designed to help the participant, who was sharing, reflect on God's work in their life. However, when I shared my narrative it was followed by silence rather than questions to encourage deeper reflection. This experience provided a teaching opportunity. I worked with ILET to develop a series of questions to help the groups better discern the providence of God and how God has prepared us to influence others. The questions that follow were the result of that learning moment. They were introduced

²³⁴ P2 Narrative.

²³⁵ P4 Narrative.

in October 2018 in order to become part of the follow-up when a narrative was shared.²³⁶

- 1) What helped you see God's work in your life at this point? (In reference to a narrative incident.)
 - 2) What prompted you to accept your first responsibilities as a Christian?
 - 3) After experiencing hurt/disappointment in the church, what helped you to move forward and continue to serve rather than quit?
 - 4) Based on what you have seen through your narrative what ministry/service do you think God has prepared for you to accomplish?
 - 5) How can your experience help someone else?
 - 6) What do you perceive as the high point of your walk with the Lord?
8. Narratives provided concrete testimonies of God's providential work in the lives of the participants, especially as they reflected on various crises. Almost every narrative included times of deep pain indicating the participants had developed enough trust to explore some of the most powerful moments of their lives

²³⁶ Appendix A. Information on when those questions were incorporated into the discussion. Appendix D highlights these questions.

together. This enabled participants to graciously encourage one another and to model grace to one another. The participants consistently acknowledged God's presence and work in a crisis. Our narratives confirmed Clinton's insights about crisis:

Identifying this process item will help you recognize its major function, drawing you into a deeper dependence on God both as your source of life and as your motivation to live and minister.²³⁷

Not only did the narratives provide an opportunity to interpret the process items of life but they confirmed the foundational time element of LET; "God develops a leader over a lifetime."²³⁸

Providence Outcome

One of the most powerful outcomes of the three-year process was the collective deep appreciation for and anticipation of God's providential work in our lives as individual disciples as well as in the life of the local church. This experience has encouraged participants to minister to and mentor others because they know God is present; they increasingly became disciples of influence.

²³⁷ Clinton, *The Making of a Leader*, 143.

²³⁸ Clinton, *The Making of a Leader*, 22. Clinton, *Leadership Emergence Theory*, 29. The theory notes that time is an essential ingredient for leader development.

Giftedness and "Bent"

The design of the project was not program oriented with a preordained goal of producing new elders, deacons, teachers, etc. Instead, I expected participants to discover their "bent" by exploring their spiritual giftedness and by evaluating their narrative within their group.

Leader emergence often begins when a disciple of Christ is given a ministry task²³⁹ and he or she begins to discover ways of engaging in God's good works in the context of the church. Likewise, disciples discover their burden for ministry²⁴⁰ by these same good works and through the various experiences of life. "Bent," burden, and call reflect the result of discovering how one's experiences and spiritual gifts lead toward the good works God has prepared. Our narratives confirmed this discovery process.

This project had some success in helping participants recognize their giftedness but did not move many to the second phase of recognizing their "bent" in life.

1. The Leadership Emergence Teams Impact Chart (page 95) indicates participants gave a 4.31/5.0 score in

²³⁹ Clinton, *The Making of a Leader*, 79.

²⁴⁰ Clinton, *Strategic Concepts That Clarify a Focused Life*, 35.

responding to the statement "I more fully recognize God's gifts in my life." This is the lowest score in the assessment but may reflect a decent grasp of the concept based on prior teaching of GFCC on gifts and gift discovery.

2. New or renewed ministry efforts by some participants indicate both recognition of and employment of their gifts. For example, P3, P5, P6, P7, P9, P10, P13, and P19 have invested heavily in evangelistic efforts. P7, P8, P2, P4, P10, P15, and P16 have embraced a support ministry to those in the hospital. The emergence of this enhanced hospital ministry was inspired by the example of P7.²⁴¹ P23 has devoted herself to administrate large congregational activities. P1, P2, P3, P7, P8, P10, P15, P16, P23, P24, P25, and P26 have all been involved in supporting a family through a recent crisis. Some ministry burdens I have borne in Great Falls for twenty-four years were picked up by others in order to free me to focus more on leader development.

²⁴¹ P7 ministered to a dying Christian in a profound way as she discovered her "bent." See pages 45-46, for a description of her ministry.

3. "Bent" in life was not adequately explored.
 - 1) As I reflect on the team activities focused on discovering one's "bent," I realized there was only one group activity devoted to spiritual gift(s) discovery and confirmation. This one group activity was helpful in that it introduced the concept of "bent," but I don't believe sufficient time was devoted to exploring this concept.²⁴²
 - 2) Most participants focused on the critical moments contained in their timelines. This highlighted God's providential work but did not address what is next in the participant's life/ministry based on God's shaping and the good works he had prepared in advance (Eph. 2:10). Three participants (P1, P3, and P13) did reflect on their "bent" and the development of a ministry philosophy in their narratives but these three all had ministry

²⁴² Appendix A. During the first two years of the project the agendas did not focus on "bent" in life. This changed in year three. Evaluating the focus of the agendas in year three revealed that: one meeting focused on God's providence, five meetings dealt with various process items and the application of providence as it related to our lives, one meeting dealt with gifts, and three meetings dealt with reading and listening to narratives. While these narratives powerfully reflected God's work, they seldom ventured into an application of gift usage or "bent."

training and experience. As we move forward, we will use a participant's first year to explore their timeline and God's providential work. The second year will transition to using LET to evaluate how process items and giftedness point toward one's "bent." This will be accomplished by having the year two and following participants focus on Clinton's *The Making of a Leader*. They will also focus on identifying the impact of process items as they relate to how God is shaping individuals. To further identify "bent," those who complete year two will meet with a shepherd or evangelist to help identify where they might most effectively fulfill their "bent" or giftedness in the church, thus increasing their influence.

- 3) Our use of Reese's timeline activity²⁴³ lent itself to examining providential moments. This fits well with Clinton's "Sovereign Foundations"²⁴⁴ and "Life Maturing"²⁴⁵ concepts.²⁴⁶ However, adding Clinton's

²⁴³ Reese, *Deep Mentoring*, 95-97.

²⁴⁴ Clinton, *The Making of a Leader*, 26-27.

²⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 133-151.

²⁴⁶ Reese's and Clinton's timelines are explored on pages 85-87 of this dissertation.

timeline categories of "Inner-life Maturing"²⁴⁷ and "Ministry Maturing"²⁴⁸ will more adequately prepare a Christian to discern their "bent." One way to look at the timelines developed in the project is that they act as a tool to exegete one's life.²⁴⁹ Exegeting God's providential work is an essential role of the timeline but developing disciples of influence involves taking the exegesis of life one step further to discern how God has developed Christians to bless and influence others.

Giftedness and "Bent" Outcome

While appreciation and understanding of giftedness have grown throughout the project, recognizing "bent" did not significantly increase. I anticipate a future transition into recognizing and living out our "bent" as we devote more emphasis on this in the second year of the process. Giftedness and "bent" are essential in preparing us to better influence/lead others for God's purposes.

²⁴⁷ Clinton, *The Making of a Leader*, 49-64.

²⁴⁸ Ibid., 65-107.

²⁴⁹ Evertt Huffard, Memphis, to project participants, Great Falls, January 4, 2019, during the site visit.

Mentoring Others

Since the project addressed leader development it expected participants to use their influence to develop new influencers/leaders. One of Clinton's major leadership conclusions of LET states, "effective leaders recognize leadership selection and development as a priority function."²⁵⁰ Our experience indicated most disciples of Jesus are willing to help others on a growth journey if they have a clear process to follow.

1. As referenced in the Leadership Emergence Teams Impact Chart (page 95), the project assessment scored 4.38/5.0 in response to the statement, "I am more willing to engage in the lives of others to influence them to embrace God's work in their lives." This indicated growth in desiring to influence or lead others.²⁵¹
2. Mentoring in this project involved a one-year commitment to lead others who were willing to explore LET and discover their Eph. 2:10 good works. Participants were then encouraged to mentor others and

²⁵⁰ Clinton, *Leadership Emergence Theory*, 14.

²⁵¹ Only one couple out of thirteen did not commit to mentoring others.

repeat the process. Making the process repeatable was intended to foster an organic reproducible dynamic within the project. Our experience indicates anyone could help lead or co-lead the process of LET exploration by year two assuming they began the process by already living as a disciple of Jesus Christ.

3. Reese suggests that the timeline perspective could facilitate a mentoring process by (1) producing a description of spiritual development, (2) predicting potential next steps in spiritual development, and (3) prescribing what might be needed for continued growth.²⁵² Our experience validated the descriptive nature of the LET timeline but not the predictive and prescriptive phases. These two phases would enhance mentoring; however, more practice is needed for them to be effectively utilized.
4. Mentoring provides an opportunity to explore discipleship to Jesus on a deeper level. Two actions revealed a need for greater emphasis on discipleship: reflections from the on-site visit with Dr. Huffard; and conversations with P3 and P13. This emphasis can

²⁵² Reese, *Deep Mentoring*, 65-66.

be addressed in the groups but will likely also require additional leader interaction with group members to encourage sustained growth as disciples of Jesus Christ.

5. Entering a mentoring relationship may not be for everyone. Stanley provides ingredients for co-mentoring that should be considered in selecting whom to invite into the LET teams.²⁵³ Based on an exit interview with a participant it is worth noting that LET mentoring did not work well as a vehicle to help a struggling married couple.²⁵⁴ As an alternative, LET may be useful in a struggling marriage if the wife processed her journey with other women while the husband processed his journey with other men.

Mentoring Outcome

Our experience with this project demonstrated that disciples of Jesus were willing and able to peer-mentor²⁵⁵

²⁵³ Stanley, 190-95.

²⁵⁴ Appendix B. Comments by P20. Based on an exit interview and ILET input, one husband and wife entered the project expecting outcomes from exploring LET that were not realistic. This resulted in frustration within the marriage and a lack of interest by one individual in personally processing LET.

²⁵⁵ Stanley, 190-95.

other members of our church for two reasons. First, they found this process personally rewarding. Second, they were provided with an organic process of mutual discovery. Peer-mentoring modeled how to influence/lead others in a healthy nonmanipulative environment and thereby prepared participants to influence others in a similar fashion.

Growing Beyond a Program-Focused Mid-Sized Church

At its inception, I anticipated this project would challenge both the church and me to move from a program-oriented technical change to an adaptive change. These changes would include (1) my personal growth beyond an administrative focus to greater equipping,²⁵⁶ (2) leadership structures changing from a stretched cell to multiple cells,²⁵⁷ and (3) congregational decisions moving from being need-based to mission based.²⁵⁸ These outcomes anticipated both my own transformation as well as LET teams which would multiply disciples of influence who would become leaders of new ministry opportunities oriented around our mission. The motive for identifying these as important transitions are

²⁵⁶ McIntosh, *Taking Your Church to the Next Level*, 150. McIntosh, *One Size Doesn't Fit All*, 60-70.

²⁵⁷ McIntosh, *One Size Doesn't Fit All*, 37-46.

²⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 73-82.

rooted in church growth theories. McIntosh postulates that if medium-sized churches²⁵⁹ don't make the adjustments needed to grow they will plateau or decline, and the pull down is stronger than the pull up.²⁶⁰ GFCC wants to continue to grow. The following explores how the project addressed these expectations as well as other outcomes.

1. This project transformed me through an adaptive change.²⁶¹ I anticipate this change being permanent in spite of a tremendous pull to revert back to a program orientation.²⁶²
2. LET marginally encouraged another step toward developing a multiple cell leadership structure. GFCC already incorporated aspects of multiple cells through two worship assemblies, an eldership, LIFE Groups, deacons operating as servant leaders, a strong women's ministry, and an apprenticeship program. This project developed another identifiable cell of new leaders in

²⁵⁹ Ibid., 18, identifies GFCC as a medium-sized church since our average attendance is about 235.

²⁶⁰ Ibid., 33.

²⁶¹ See pages 101-109 for a fuller explanation of my transformation.

²⁶² Appendix C represents a potential next phase in leader development in GFCC.

preparation for growth, but it did not make us a multi-celled church.

3. Rather than moving from needs-based decisions to mission-based, LET has developed some gift-based ministries. The new evangelistic studies, a new hospital ministry, and raising up a new event coordinator were not predetermined mission-oriented outcomes. Other unanticipated new ministries have sprung up around LET participants. P5 has developed an acapella singing training ministry targeted at the high school and middle school students. P15, P25, and P24 have established a safety team.²⁶³ P25 and P26 initiated a ministry to support our young adults. When ministry is determined by the intersection of a disciple's giftedness and time, on the one hand, and the communities' needs, on the other hand, then each of these new or renewed ministries have the potential of being mission-based while being led by people whose gifts match the needs.
4. An unanticipated outcome was the development of transformative groups that went deeper than the

²⁶³ This is in response to recent shootings and fits well with our child-safe program.

relationships experienced in LIFE Groups by fostering relationships of deep vulnerability and trust. During the site visit with Dr. Huffard the participants consistently shared they revealed things in their narratives they had never shared before and in so doing, they found a community of great grace. P25 stated, "When I finished my narrative P3 said, 'you are forgiven.' At that moment I felt like a great weight was lifted. I felt free."²⁶⁴ Of special note is that P25 is the one who went home from the first meeting gripping his steering wheel tightly and saying, "This is stupid." But, because P25 had a relationship with P8, he didn't quit, with the result that he was transformed through the process.²⁶⁵ This was one example of numerous testimonies of transformation. It is strong evidence of how **authentic relationships influence others for God's purposes.**

5. All but one participant indicated the process helped them grow as a disciple who has a desire for employing

²⁶⁴ Appendix E. January 4, 2019, meeting.

²⁶⁵ Appendix E. January 4, 2019, meeting.

spiritual influence as a leader.²⁶⁶ The process is a win. It is a success to be celebrated.²⁶⁷

Growing Beyond a Program-Focused Mid-Sized Church Outcome

We are still a program-focused mid-sized church. However, as a key leader in the church, I have been deeply changed. I have recognized a "bent" to equip others and to become a mentor of equippers. The church is developing new cells and expanding her ministries. It is especially encouraging to witness how this process transformed lives in the context of a grace-filled community and how it has empowered others to influence/lead. The project has demonstrated the need for GFCC to rework her mission statement in order to recognize the transition toward equipping and engaging in ministries driven by giftedness. A new mission statement focused on releasing disciples into our communities to bless and influence could be "Seek,

²⁶⁶ Appendix B. Leadership Emergence Teams Impact Chart All 26 Participants.

²⁶⁷ John P. Kotter, *Leading Change* (Boston, MA: Harvard Business School Press, 1996), 121-24. Jim Herrington, Mike Bonem, and James Harold Furr, *Leading Congregational Change: A Practical Guide for the Transformational Journey* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 2000), 88-89. Anthony B. Robinson, *Transforming Congregational Culture* (Grand Rapids, MI: W.B. Eerdmans Pub. Co, 2003), 129-30. All these references point to the importance of recognizing and celebrating small wins. Small wins sustain change and energy.

Save, Shape, and Serve in order to bless others. All for the glory of God!"²⁶⁸

Cautions

This project raised a few cautions to consider.

- This is not a tool to help couples in crisis.
- Consider whether participants have enough life experiences to benefit from the process of applying LET while writing their narrative.²⁶⁹ My opinion is that a participant should be over thirty.
- This process requires great trust.
- This process is not for new converts. A foundation of discipleship to Jesus Christ is necessary.
- Once a narrative is shared it is vital that the group help the one who shared recognize God's work and forgiveness. The church must be the voice of God's providence and grace to redeem the most difficult moments of one's life. Don't let silence follow the narrative.

Next Steps

We anticipate the following steps at GFCC as we continue to engage LET in developing leaders.

- Time and resources will be dedicated to equipping leaders who are guiding the LET process.

²⁶⁸ Any revision of our mission statement will include input from the church. This is provided as a potential direction based on the findings of this project.

²⁶⁹ In the TEAMS3 group I was leading, a younger participant seemed to struggle with connecting LET to life in the narrative. However, the younger couple expressed appreciation at hearing the older participants narratives. These narratives provided hope.

- We will conduct additional training for leaders. Skill acquisition will compromise part of the training.
- I will transition to become more an equipper of equippers.

The Significance of the Project

The following highlight some things gained and the significance of the project for GFCC.

- LET acted as a powerful resource for instigating an organic participatory journey exploring God's providence and leader development in a local church.
- Our timeline and narrative process provided a tool for participants to exegete or interpret their lives from the perspective of God's providential work.
- Understanding adaptive change helped me anticipate the needs while enduring the stressful challenges associated with transitioning from a preordained program-oriented philosophy to an organic leader development process.
- The DNA of leader development in GFCC has been permanently changed. GFCC has begun to seek, develop, and launch disciples of influence.
- I am different. My role has transitioned from an administrative manager to a mentoring leader who still does administrative work.
- Applying LET transformed the participants. They experienced personal growth and are in the process of influencing others.
- Exploring God's work in one's life while discovering the good work God has prepared (Eph. 2:10) is a difficult adaptive challenge. However, the transformation is worth the struggle.

Other Ministry Contexts

I believe applying Clinton's LET in other ministry contexts is possible. Let me highlight some keys that go beyond trying to replicate this project.

- Spiritual authority must be the primary spiritual foundation for leaders of influence.²⁷⁰ In another ministry setting, someone with "spiritual authority"²⁷¹ will need to either lead or champion the process, while engaging existing leaders. Do not ignore Clinton's organizational insight; "people in power usually win whether right on a given issue or not."²⁷² Become or enlist the leader with "spiritual authority" because it is the major power base from which to lead others.
- The leader of the project must devote significant time to the project.
- It will most likely demand an adaptive change.
- Trust among the leaders is vital.
- Target existing leaders as the first participants in order to facilitate greater mutual trust while encouraging a common purpose among leaders.

Areas of Exploration

As I complete this period of leader development in GFCC I am left with some unanswered questions which are found below in order to prompt future considerations.

- Does the age of the participant make a difference?

²⁷⁰ Clinton, *The Making of a Leader*, 145, 261.

²⁷¹ Ibid., 145.

²⁷² Clinton, *The Making of a Leader*, 150.

- In what ways might this process change as groups comprised of or including singles or same-sex groups are established?
- Is it feasible to expect a minister to fulfill the D process in *LeaderLoop* while carrying the major load of preaching and teaching for a church?
- In what ways might church size impact the dynamics of the minister as a mentor?
- In what ways might the introduction of additional leader support and training impact the process?
- What are the most important theological underpinnings concerning LET?
- If discipleship and community were predominantly stressed, would exploration of giftedness and the understanding of providence naturally come to light?

A Final Thought and Prayer

I enjoy walking along the Missouri River to marvel at God's creation and pray. The Missouri reminds me of strength and influence. As the Missouri is made stronger by every stream and river that joins her journey, so too, the church in Great Falls grows in influence as members discover the good works God has prepared (Eph. 2:10) and contribute to the work of blessing others. May God help us to "Seek, Save, Shape, and Serve in order to bless others. All for the glory of God!" May this project help increase the influence of this mission and contribute to an ever-increasing flow of godly leaders and mentors.

Appendix A: Agendas for 2016-2018

Meeting on March 17, 2016 at P5&6's

1. Prayer requests and prayer
2. Eph. 2:10 - What good works has God prepared in advance for you?
3. Transition with Scott Laird's doctoral project
 - a. LEPs (Leadership Emergence Paper)
 - i. Example
 - ii. Resources: Clinton, *The Making of a Leader* and Reese, *Deep Mentoring*
 - iii. Develop a time-line with some type of reflection on your time-line
 - iv. Share how God has prepared you for good works
 - v. Find joy and strength in how God has been at work
 - vi. Respond by purposefully engaging in good works
 - vii. Help someone else with this journey of discovery, blessing, and ministry
 - b. Discussion
 - c. Willingness to continue?
 - d. Someone else?
4. Feedback from our March 3 breakout into groups: John 13
5. Upcoming Sundays
 - a. First discussion: what are the major goals we want to accomplish or needs we want to meet?
 - b. How to use the different opportunities to address these needs?
 - i. March 27: Easter ideas
 - ii. April 3: Father/Son devotional sharing
 - iii. April 10: LIFE Group
 - iv. April 17: LIFE Group leaders and co-leaders meeting
 1. Suggestions on what to address with the group?
 2. How to present?
 - v. April 17: ??
 1. Suggestions on what to address with the groups?
 2. How to present?
 - vi. April 24: LIFE Group
 - vii. May 1: ??
 1. Suggestions on what to address with the groups?
 2. How to present?
 - viii. May 8: Mother's Day - ??
 1. Thoughts on what to do with Mother's Day?
 - ix. May 15: LIFE Group
 - x. May 22: ??
 1. Suggestions on what to address with the groups?
 2. How to present?
 - xi. May 29: Memorial Day Weekend
 1. Thoughts on what to do with this weekend?
 - xii. June 5: Start of the summer series
 - xiii. Sept. 4: Labor Day: End of the summer series
6. Other thoughts to share?

7. Next meeting and where?
8. Prayer

April 28, 2016 at P3&4's Home @ 7:00 PM

Agenda

1. Prayer
2. Discussion on:
 - a. *The Making of a Leader* pages 56-75
 - b. *Deep Mentoring* pages 1-96
3. Reflections on the process from last time of our working on process items in our lives.
 - a. How has God been at work in your life lately or in the past?
 - b. Keep those papers and try to add to what you have put down already.
4. Exercises on pages 74-75. Make sure and try to identify your personal process items from those questions and begin to add them to your sheet of paper where you are identifying process items and boundaries in your life.
5. Work for next time.
 - a. Read *The Making of a Leader* pages 77 through 97 and work on #'s 1-5 on pages 96-97. These will help you with the following assignment.
 - b. Read *Deep Mentoring* pages 97-124 and work on the activities on pages 123-124.
6. Update on prospectus and the group ID for the prospectus: ILET
7. Day, time, and place for our next meeting.
8. Close in prayer.
9. If time allows we will have some discussion for the Sunday nights of May 1, 8, and 22.

May 26, 2016 ILET Meeting at P3&4's at 7:00 PM

Agenda:

1. Prayer
2. Devotional thought
3. Review of the assignments
 - a. Read *The Making of a Leader* pages 77 through 97 and work on #'s 1-5 on pages 96-97. These will help you with the following assignment. Focus on # 3, 4, 5.
 - b. Read *Deep Mentoring* pages 97-124 and work on the activities on pages 123-124. Do some work on the "A Narrative Exercise for Your Context." We will discuss some things that come up from this exercise.
 - c. "Background Information Sheet." This will be helpful as you work on "b" above.
 - d. Read Huffard's Seminar 1
4. Other information to share.
5. Assignments for next time:
 - a. *Deep Mentoring* pages 125-145. Work on "A Narrative Exercise for Your Context" on pages 144-145 and I would suggest our next time together include a meal.

- b. *The Making of a Leader* pages 99-151. Work on question 2 on pages 124, and question 1 on page 149.
 - c. Read Evertt Huffard's Seminar 2.
6. Next meeting?
 7. Prayer

Agenda June 23, 2016 7 PM at P1 and P2's

1. Time for fellowship and visiting
2. Prayer requests and prayer.
3. Devotional thought: P1
4. Work through the reading and homework assignments
 - a. Evertt Huffard's Seminar 2. Any thoughts you want to share?
 - b. *The Making of a Leader* pages 99-151.
 1. Insights from this section?
 2. Work on question 2 on pages 124 (authority insight process item), and question 1 on page 149.
 3. *The Making of a Leader*, pg. 124, #3. Where are you and where are the people you are helping?
 - c. *Deep Mentoring* pages 125-145.
 1. Insights from this section?
 2. Work on "A Narrative Exercise for Your Context" on pages 144-145. How has it gone in defining boundary items for your life? Can you define the boundary items for your life?
 3. How is going working on your narrative? How can we help if this is a struggle?
5. Assuming our times together and the readings have caused you to reflect on how God has been at work in your life, what has been your major "take-away" to this point. Everyone should answer.
6. Assignment for next time.
 - a. *Deep Mentoring*. Read pages 146-171 and 225-236.
 1. Answer the four questions on page 171.
 2. Write a paragraph on what stands out to you on "Lessons From Those Who Finish Poorly," pages 225-228.
 3. Write a paragraph on what stands out to you on "Lessons From Those Who Finish Well," pages 228-231.
 4. Finish a basic time-line of your life. Consider using Evertt Huffard's time-line on page 1 of "Seminar 2," Reese's time-line on page 232 of *Deep Mentoring*, or Clinton's time-line on page 44 of *The Making of a Leader*.
 5. Keep working on your life narrative. See the encouragement in *Deep Mentoring*, pages 123-124 and 144-145.
 - b. *The Making of a Leader*. Read pages 153-174.
 1. Answer #1 on page 173.
 2. Answer #3 on page 174. This should be a pretty short answer.
 3. P3: Are you willing and able to pick out one concept from this chapter for the basis of a short devotional for our next meeting?

7. Determine who is willing to share their narrative in:
 - a. September
 - b. October
 - c. November
 - d. December will be a debrief on all of our narratives and what we have learned and how to implement the lessons we have learned.
8. Determine our next meeting date, time, and place.
9. Close in prayer.

Agenda for July 22, 2016 P1&2's at 7:00 PM (Eat early for those who can make it. :-))

1. Time of fellowship, food, and visiting
2. Prayer requests and prayer
3. P3 shares a devotional thought
4. Work through the assignments
 - a. Were there any "aha" moments or thoughts from the readings or some event in your life in the past month?
 - b. Who will present their timelines/life during?
 1. September: P1 and ?
 2. October
 3. November
 4. December will be a debrief on all of our narratives and what we have learned and how to implement the lessons we have learned.
 - c. *Deep Mentoring*. Read pages 146-171 and 225-236.
 1. Answer the four questions on page 171.
 2. Write a paragraph on what stands out to you on "Lessons From Those Who Finish Poorly," pages 225-228.
 3. Write a paragraph on what stands out to you on "Lessons From Those Who Finish Well," pages 228-231.
 4. Finish a basic time-line of your life. Consider using Evertt Huffard's time-line on pages 1 & 2 of "Seminar 2," Reese's time-line on page 232 of *Deep Mentoring*, or Clinton's time-line on page 44 of *The Making of a Leader*.
 5. Keep working on your life narrative. See the encouragement in *Deep Mentoring*, pages 123-124 and 144-145.
 - d. *The Making of a Leader*. Read pages 153-174.
 1. Answer #1 on page 173.
 2. Answer #3 on page 174. This should be a pretty short answer.
5. How has God either been at work through your life during the past month or touched you through your reading/experience to call you higher as a servant investing in the lives of others?
6. Other comments.
7. Assignments for our August meeting.
 - a. The Making of a Leader
 1. Read pgs. 175-194

2. Complete questions 1 & 2 on page 194.
- b. Deep Mentoring
 1. Read pgs. 175-200
 2. Complete "Reflect on Your Life" second bullet point on page 199.
 3. Write a paragraph or two on "Reflect on Your Context" first bullet point on page 200.
 4. Continue to work on your time-line.
8. Next meeting?
9. Close in prayer

August 26, 2016 Meeting Agenda

Meet at the P5&6's at 6:00 PM for a meal and then ILET time after.

1. Prayer requests and prayer.
2. Devotional thought.
3. Thoughts or comments from *Deep Mentoring* pages 175-200.
4. Thoughts or comments from *The Making of a Leader* pages 175-194.
5. From *The Making of a Leader* what are some personal and ministry philosophy statements? The following might help give you an example.
 - a. Faithful with little, faithful with much: Every task given and accepted is important and reflects on the larger realm of faithfulness, Lk. 16:10.
 - b. Speed of trust: When trust is high then things can move ahead quickly. When trust is low then any work requires a great deal of time.
6. From Deep Mentoring how did you respond to: "How does Jesus intimate way of noticing and investing in others challenge your communities way of developing others?"
7. What have you noticed changing in your life/attitude as we have made this journey over the past nine months?
8. Assignment for the next meeting:
 - a. P1 presents
 - b. P2 presents
 - c. Read *The Making of a Leader* pages 195-205.
 - d. Read *Deep Mentoring* pages 201-223. On page 223 answer the three questions under "Reflect on Your Context" with a paragraph or two for each question.
9. Determine time, date and place for the next meeting.
10. Close in prayer.

Agenda for September 22, 2016 Meeting at 6:00 PM for Dinner at P3&4's

1. Share a meal and fellowship.
2. Time in prayer requests and prayers.
3. Reading: Psalm 105 - The importance of remembering.
4. Reflections or thoughts from *The Making of a Leader* pages 195-205.
5. Reflections or thoughts from *Deep Mentoring* pages 201-223.
 - a. What do you need to think clearly about regarding the leadership formation of the persons in your setting? Pg 223

- . What do you need to design in order to invite adults into an honoring learning process? Pg. 223
- a. How will you cultivate the learning process so that it bears the fruit of individual life change and change within your community? Pg. 223
- 6. P1 share leadership emergence and receive feedback.
- 7. P2 share leadership emergence and receive feedback
- 8. Determine time, date and place for the next meeting. P3 and P4 will share about their leadership emergence thoughts. Meet at the P5 and P6's on Oct. 27, 2016 at 6:00 PM for dinner and sharing.
- 9. Close in prayer.

October 27, 2016 ILET Meeting at the P4&5's

The agenda was for fellowship and listening to P3 and P4 present their LEPs.

1. Opening prayer and requests.
2. Devotional thought: Scott Laird
3. Scott and Shirley both read their LEPs. Provide feedback.
4. Close in prayer.

Next meetings: 11/17/16 at P1&2 with P5 and P6 reading. 12/22/16 at the P3&4 to debrief and look at next couples.

November 17, 2016 meeting at P1&2's

1. ILET shared a meal together with P5&6's children. The kids left about 7:30 and we began our time together concerning P5 and P6 reading their personal LEPs.
2. P1 read a portion of Ps. 107 and focused on God restoring lives that have been broken.
3. P3 led our prayer and we took prayer requests.
4. P6 read her LEP first.
5. P5 read his LEP next.
6. Provide feedback.
7. P1 closed in prayer about 9 PM.

ILET meeting 1/5/2017 at P3&4's

1. Meal
2. Opening prayer
3. Devo: P1 - 1 Cor. 15:58 your labor in the Lord is not in vain.
4. Reflect back on what activity or concept was most helpful/enjoyable.
 - a. Verbal affirmation from one another
 - b. Narratives were helpful
 - c. Narratives were hard to write, but they were good and we need to write them the second time around
 - d. P1 led by example on being vulnerable
 - e. Being vulnerable with one another was really important

- f. Fellowship with one another was good
- g. Good to read through the narratives again.
- 5. We are having an exploration fun dinner with all those interested in participating in round two
 - a. We have set either Jan. 13 or 27.
 - b. P21&22 can only make the 13th.
- 6. Next meeting on Feb. 16 to discern what to do with each group. All groups will do the same thing. The question is what to do with each meeting.
- 7. All the consent forms were signed for 2017.

Agendas for 2017 Meetings

"First" LET (Leadership Emergence Teams) meeting tentatively scheduled for March 2017.

1. Assignments: *Deep Mentoring*, 11-48, *The Making of a Leader*, 13-55, and Huffard "Unseen Influence."
2. Meal at leaders' home.
3. Fellowship
4. Prayer requests and prayer
5. Short devotional using *Deep Mentoring* pages 29-32.
6. Longer discussion from the devotional, "What good works do I believe God has uniquely gifted and created me to do from Eph. 2:8-10?"
7. Discuss the readings. *Making of a Leader*, pg. 55, #4. *Deep Mentoring*, pick a couple of reflections from pages 47-48.
8. Discuss expectations and any concerns about the meetings. Reminder of the outcome of writing a "life narrative" of how God has equipped you for service and the desire for this process to continue on with one or two other couples next year. Best guess is to try to keep the time together to 2 1/2 hours including the meal.
9. Set next meeting for April.
10. Assignments for April. *Deep Mentoring*, 49-97, and *The Making of a Leader*, 57-75.
11. Prayer

"Second" LET meeting. April 2017

1. Assignments: *Deep Mentoring*, 49-97, *The Making of a Leader*, 13-55, and Huffard "Unseen Influence."
2. Meal at ? Home
3. Fellowship
4. Prayer requests and prayer
5. Short devotional
6. Short discussion on the reading. Spend some time on defining Clinton's "process items" and use the chapter in *The Making of a Leader* to help define those specific process items. On page 33 there is a definition but it isn't that great. I might need to write out a better definition to share. *Deep Mentoring*, 62-64, help with the overall theory that Clinton is using.

7. The majority of the time will be devoted to working through the preliminary lifeline using *Deep Mentoring*, 95-97, as the resource.
8. Set next meeting for May.
9. Assignments for May. *Deep Mentoring*, 99-124, "Narrative Exercise," 123-124, and *The Making of a Leader*, 77-97, questions 1-4, 96. Take a gift inventory from www.churchgrowth.org if you do not know your gifts. Huffard, "Process-Character Development: LEP Process."
10. Prayer.

"Third" LET meeting. May 2017

1. Assignments for May. *Deep Mentoring*, 99-124, "Narrative Exercise," 123-124, and *The Making of a Leader*, 77-97, questions 1-4, 96. Take a gift inventory from www.churchgrowth.org if you do not know your gifts. Huffard, "Process-Character Development: LEP Process."
2. Meal at ? Home
3. Fellowship
4. Prayer requests and prayer
5. Devotional:
6. Have each person share what their gift profile revealed and if they were surprised at all by any of the results. Have the rest of the group confirm any of the gifts that they have witnessed in the individual's life.
7. Skimming *The Making of a Leader*, 57-97, what "process items" have you experienced in your life?
8. Share any reflections from the books.
9. Pick one of the questions from *The Making of a Leader*, 96, to discuss.
10. Share about your experience in writing your Leadership Emergence Paper and the importance of the advice on page 124 of *Deep Mentoring*, "start writing."
11. Set next meeting for June.
12. Assignments for June. Assignments for June. *Deep Mentoring*, 125-45, complete the three bullet points in "Reflect on your life," 144, and *The Making of a Leader*, 99-124, question 2, 124. "The Life of David" by Scott Laird.
13. Prayer.

"Fourth" LET meeting. June 2017

1. Assignments for June. *Deep Mentoring*, 125-45, complete the three bullet points in "Reflect on your life," 144, and *The Making of a Leader*, 99-124, question 2, 124. "The Life of David" by Scott Laird.
2. Meal at ? Home.
3. Fellowship
4. Prayer requests and prayer
5. Devotional
6. Share any reflections from the books.
7. Discuss/share question 2, page 124 from *The Making of a Leader*.

8. Discuss/share "Reflect on your life," page 144 from Deep Mentoring. Especially share about a "boundary time" (136-141) you have experienced or may be in at this point. What did you learn in the "boundary time?"
9. What has been your major "take away" up to this point?
10. Determine who is willing to share their narrative in:
 1. September: _____
 2. October: _____
 3. November: _____
 4. December will be a debrief and hopefully a celebration with all the couples who have gone through this process having the opportunity to share some of the ways they have grown or been blessed from the process.
11. Set the next meeting for July.
12. Assignments for July.
 1. *Deep Mentoring*, 146-71 and 225-236, complete the four questions, 171.
 - i. Write a paragraph on what stands out to you from "Lessons from Those Who Finish Poorly," pages 225-228.
 - ii. Write a paragraph on what stands out to you from "Lessons from Those Who Finish Well," pages 228-231.
 2. *The Making of a Leader*, 125-51, on pages 143-45 the issues of crises and conflict are discussed. Write a paragraph or two on how God has used a crisis or conflict in developing your life.
 3. Pay attention to the lives of others around you and note whether you observe someone experiencing a process item in their life.
13. Prayer

"Fifth" LET Meeting in July 2017

1. Assignments for July.
 1. *Deep Mentoring*, 146-71 and 225-236, complete the four questions, 171.
 - i. Write a paragraph on what stands out to you from "Lessons from Those Who Finish Poorly," pages 225-228.
 - ii. Write a paragraph on what stands out to you from "Lessons from Those Who Finish Well," pages 228-231.
 2. *The Making of a Leader*, 125-51, on pages 143-45 the issues of crises and conflict are discussed. Write a paragraph or two on how God has used a crisis or conflict in developing your life.
 3. Pay attention to the lives of others around you and note whether you observe someone experiencing a process item in their life.
2. Meal at ? Home
3. Fellowship
4. Prayer requests and prayer
5. Devotional
6. Share any reflections from the books.
7. Each person share one or two thoughts from the four questions on page 171 of *Deep Mentoring*.

8. Have one person share their paragraph on "Lesson from Those Who Finish Poorly." Let the group discuss.
9. Have one person share their paragraph on "Lesson from Those Who Finish Well." Let the group discuss.
10. Each person share their experience with crisis or conflict. *The Making of a Leader*, 143-45.
11. Have we noticed anyone experiencing a "process item" in their life? Discuss insights and any actions taken.
12. Reminder and any discussion on working on everyone's personal narrative.
13. Set the next meeting for August.
14. Assignments for August. *Deep Mentoring*, 175-200, complete the four bullet points on 199-200. *The Making of a Leader*, 153-174, question 1, 173.
15. Prayer

"Sixth" LET Meeting in August 2017

1. Assignments for August. Assignments for June. *Deep Mentoring*, 175-200, complete the four bullet points on 199-200. *The Making of a Leader*, 153-194, question 1, 173.
2. Meal at ? Home
3. Fellowship
4. Prayer requests and prayer
5. Devotional
6. Share any reflections from the books.
7. Share insights from *Deep Mentoring*, 199, second bullet point under "Reflect On Your Life."
8. Discuss the "Summary" on pages 166-73. Especially focus in on how God has used "isolation" in your life.
9. What are some "ministry philosophy principles" (*The Making of a Leader*, 178) that you have discerned from your experiences? How do you use those principles?
10. Who do you think you can encourage with a "ministry challenge" (*The Making of a Leader*, 85-87) during the next month? What area of ministry can you invite that person?
11. Reminder to keep working on the personal narrative.
12. Set the next meeting for September.
13. Assignments for September. *Deep Mentoring*, 201-23, complete the third bullet point on 223. *The Making of a Leader*, 195-211. Write a paragraph or two on three "challenges" on pages 196-97. First two personal narratives are read in September unless there are only two couples. If only two couples maybe one narrative can be read in September and October, with two being read in November.
14. Prayer

"Seventh" LET Meeting in September 2017

1. Assignments for September. *Deep Mentoring*, 201-23, complete the third bullet point on 223. *The Making of a Leader*, 195-211. Write a paragraph or two on three

"challenges" on pages 196-97. First two personal narratives are read in September unless there are only two couples. If only two couples maybe one narrative can be read in September and October, with two being read in November.

2. Meal at ? Home
3. Fellowship
4. Prayer requests and prayer.
5. Short devotional due to sharing of narratives.
6. Short discussion on any reflections from the books.
7. Have one of the people not sharing their narrative report on their response the "challenges" from *The Making of a Leader*, pages 196-97.
8. Share the one or two personal narratives.
9. Provide insights and positive feedback.
10. Begin to pray and think about who can be invited to the next round of LETs.
11. Set the meeting for October.
12. Assignments for October. Keep working on personal narratives. One or two people share in October.
13. Prayer

"Eighth" LET Meeting in October 2017

1. Assignments for October. Keep working on personal narratives. One or two people share in October.
2. Meal at ? Home
3. Fellowship
4. Prayer requests and prayer
5. Short devotional.
6. Any thoughts someone wants to share before reading the personal narratives?
7. Share the one or two personal narratives.
8. Provide insights and positive feedback.
9. Begin to pray and think about who can be invited to the next round of LETs.
10. Set the meeting for November.
11. Assignments for November. Two people share personal narratives.
12. Prayer.

"Ninth" LET Meeting in November 2017

1. Assignments for October. Keep working on personal narratives. One or two people share in October.
2. Meal at ? Home
3. Fellowship
4. Prayer requests and prayer
5. Short devotional.
6. Any thoughts someone wants to share before reading the personal narratives?
7. Share the one or two personal narratives.
8. Provide insights and positive feedback.
9. Begin to pray and think about who can be invited to the next round of LETs.

10. Set the meeting for November.
11. Assignments for December. Consider to who to invite in the next round of LETs and lay a foundation. Prepare for a celebration and debrief on how the year went.
12. Prayer.

"Tenth" LET Meeting in December 2017

1. Assignment: Prepare for celebration and debrief.

2018 Agendas

Feb. 9, 2018 LET Fun Night

When we meet at the building around 6 PM on Friday, Feb. 9, 2018 we will meet down in the basement area. There will be four LET (Leadership Emergence Teams) all meeting together. If P5&6 could make it that would give us a total of 12 couples. The groups are as follows:

1. P9&10/P21&22/P17&18
2. P3&4/P7&8/P25&26
3. P5&6/P15&16/P23&24
4. P1&2/P11&12/P13&14

Since I am a lousy party planner I need some help. I need someone to take charge of the time at the building where we share some hors d'oeuvres and fellowship. I can handle sharing about what the year will look like and try to field questions. Some who have made the journey already will share what the year of discovery has meant to them and what they have learned.

So, who wants to organize the hors d'oeuvres at the building. Feel free to recruit from the couples to get help for bringing food.

After the time in the building we will break into two groups. Groups 1&2 above and Groups 3&4 above will go their separate ways and enjoy a progressive dinner.

The idea of a progressive dinner is you have one part of the meal at one place or house and then move on to another house for the next part of the meal. It is quite a bit of fun plus we get into each other's homes for a period of time.

Someone in the two big groups will need to coordinate what the main meal and the desserts will be. Both big groups will have different menus so each big group needs an organizer. Feel free to volunteer to be the organizer for one of the big groups. Clear as mud, right?

OK, what do we need now?

1. Organizer for the hors d'oeuvres time at the building
2. Two organizers, one for each of the two larger groups to figure out the meals.
3. Two homes for each of the two larger groups to have their meals.
4. Expectation that God will be at work.

5. Realization that each family may be asked to contribute one or more items to these meals.
6. A great attitude and a sense of humor as we make this work. :-)

Please reply to all as you volunteer for an area so we know when a position is filled. Thanks for participating. THIS WILL BE A LOT OF FUN AND VERY REWARDING. God bless.
Scott Laird

"First" LET (Leadership Emergence Teams) meeting March 2018.

1. Assignments: *Deep Mentoring*, 11-48, *The Making of a Leader*, 8-47 (this reading provides a framework for the rest of the time together).
2. Major goal(s):
 - A. Explore and clarify expectations
 - B. Explain the basics of developing a personal life/leadership narrative
3. Meal at someone's home.
4. Fellowship
5. Prayer requests and prayer
6. Have one of the men who have already gone through the LET process lead a short devotional using *Deep Mentoring* pages 29-32. Focus on Eph. 2:8-10 and how the illustration of discovering diamonds in Ituna reminds us that God has done a priceless work in our lives and He is waiting for us to discover how to use our gifts for Him.
7. Longer discussion from the devotional, "What good works do I believe God has uniquely gifted and created me to do from Eph. 2:8-10?"
8. Discuss the readings. *Making of a Leader*, 47 #4. *Deep Mentoring*, pick a couple of reflections from pages 47-48.
9. Discuss expectations and any concerns about the meetings. (first major goal)
 - A. Travel the journey together. This might mean you will miss a month because of things going on in peoples lives, but you can meet twice in another month.
 - B. If possible, join together for a meal each time you meet. Table fellowship is so important in making a journey as a group.
 - C. Sometimes it is helpful to set the schedule for two to three months in advance.
10. Define the basic aspects of our life/leadership narrative. *The Making of a Leader*, 37-40, provides a generalized timeline and definitions. It is important to know this timeline is generalized and does not mean that everyone's life will fit all of these areas. This timeline will help the team visualize part of the next assignment as they develop their personal timeline. **(second major goal)**
11. Discuss the hoped for outcome of writing a "life narrative," how God has equipped you for service and that we all see God at work in our lives. Out of this backdrop

we are motivated to join with one or two other couples next year so they can see God's work in their lives.

12. Best guess is to try to keep the time together to 2 1/2 hours including the meal.
13. Set next meeting for April.
14. Assignments for April. *Deep Mentoring*, 49-97, and *The Making of a Leader*, 49-64. Consider the major events of your life; birth, marriage, coming to Christ, birth of children, job changes, major moves, etc. and put them down on a rough time-line. This will help prepare us for an exercise in the next meeting.
15. Prayer

"Second" LET meeting 2018 (Target is April). Date and Place

1. Assignments: *Deep Mentoring*, 49-97, begin thinking about the significant events in your life. However, **please do not start filling out your timeline yet**. The group assignment will start this process and should be a fun sharing time. *The Making of a Leader*, N:49-64. Answer question #4 on page 64.
2. Meal at _____ home.
3. Fellowship: building an environment and relationships of grace. **This is the top relational priority.**
4. Prayer requests and prayer.
5. Short devotional: _____. (Suggestion: something that helps us see that previous encounters prepare us for the future. An example is David protecting the sheep providing confidence that God would handle Goliath, 1 Sam. 17:34-37.)
6. Short discussion on the reading. Spend some time on defining Clinton's "process items" and "inner-life." (I have come to see "inner-life" as a discipleship issue. Do we listen to the Lord and respond to him? "Life maturing," addressed later deals more with healthy responses to difficult situations with others and life in general.) Use the chapter in *The Making of a Leader* to help define specific process items. On page 28 (bottom) there is a definition of process items in general. In the back of the book there is a glossary with definitions and this is helpful. *Deep Mentoring*, 62-64, helps with the overall theory that Clinton is using.
 1. Inner-life: this deals with the heart of the person and their foundational character. These tests usually come fairly early in a Christians life and will include process items like; word, integrity and obedience checks.
 2. Ministry: this deals more with training to develop skills. Both formal and informal training will be useful.
 3. Life maturing: this is a point where both an individual's life and gifts are used to influence others. This is when character matures. Giftedness emerges and so do priorities. Some areas of that will likely be addressed in this phase are conflict, stress, criticism, and maybe isolation.
7. **The majority of the time** will be devoted to working through the preliminary lifeline using *Deep Mentoring*, 95-97, as the resource. **This is the top task priority.** **Remember, don't do your timeline early, but use this exercise to work through the basics of your timeline. It will be more enjoyable. For those of us who have already**

worked through our narrative, do the exercise again and deliberately try to think of new events.

8. Schedule next meeting. (Maybe schedule the next three meetings if possible.)
9. **Assignments for meeting in May.** *Deep Mentoring*, 99-124, "Narrative Exercise," 123-124, and *The Making of a Leader*, 73-74, and "Discovering Spiritual Gifts, 78-80, questions 1, 3, on page 83. Take a gift inventory from www.churchgrowth.org if you do not know your gifts.
10. Prayer.

LET #3 May 2018 developed by P3 (the rest of the agendas have been by Scott Laird)

1. *Deep Mentoring*, (Chapter 4) p. 98-124, Just begin working on your Narrative-- "Narrative Exercise" 123-124. *The Making of a Leader*, (Chapter 4) p. 73-81, questions 1, 3, on p. 83. If you have not done so already, take a gift inventory from www.churchgrowth.org.
2. Dinner & Fellowship
3. Prayer requests and prayer
4. Devotional: Eph. 4: 7-16 We have been gifted in ways that make us necessary to others. Others have been gifted in ways that make them necessary to us. Whatever gifts we have, they are important for the spiritual growth of others. Since God has a purpose for each of us, it is important for us to strive to know him better through prayer and meditation on his word. As we seek him and step out in faith, he will show us what our gifts are and how we can use them to help others. As we share our gifts and receive the giftedness of others we will find the body of Christ growing stronger and healthier.
5. Have each person share what their gift profile revealed and if they were surprised at all by any of the results. Have the rest of the group confirm any of the gifts that they have witnessed in each individual's life.
6. Skim *The Making of a Leader*, 73-81, Discuss questions 1,3 on page 83.
7. Share any reflections from the books.

8. Share about your experience in beginning to write your Leadership Emergence Narrative/Paper and the importance of the advice on page 124 of *Deep Mentoring*, "start writing."
9. Set a date for next meeting
10. Prayer
11. Assignments for June: *Deep Mentoring*, (Chapter 5) p.125-145, Complete the bullet points in "Reflect on your Life "on Page 144. *The Making of a Leader*, (Chapter 5) p.85-107. Just concentrate on question 2 on p. 107.

"Fourth" LET meeting. June 2018

1. Assignments for June.
 1. Read *Deep Mentoring*, (Chapter 5) pgs. 125-45. Complete the three bullet points on "Reflect On Your Life," pg. 144.

2. Read Chapter 5 in *The Making of a Leader*, pgs. 85-107. What I perceive as most important are pgs. 85-92 (until Ministry Conflict), 99-102 prayer and faith challenges, 105-106 summary. Answer Question 2, pg. 107.
 3. Read or skim through "David: Inner Life Growth" pdf by Scott Laird. This is an example of things that might be included in your narrative as you reflect on God's working. The pdf is attached. The chart is informational, and the writing is the narrative.
2. Share in a meal and fellowship (**major relationship activity**).
 3. Prayer requests and prayer.
 4. Devotional: *Deep Mentoring*, "A Note on Character and Identity," pgs. 135-36. Whoever leads the devotional could use Moses to get input and discussion as to what and who did God use to shape Moses' character. Why is character/being so crucial in leadership?
 5. Share any reflections from the books.
 6. Discuss/share Question 2, pg. 107 from *The Making of a Leader*.
 7. Discuss/share "Reflect On Your life," pg.144 from *Deep Mentoring*. Especially share about a "boundary time" (pgs. 136-141) you have experienced or may be in at this point. What did you learn in the "boundary time?"
 8. What has been your major "take away" in our time together up to this point? (**major transformational activity is to learn to begin to see God at work**)
 9. Determine who is willing to share their narrative in:
 1. September: _____
 2. October: _____
 3. November: _____
 4. December will be a debrief and hopefully a celebration of the journey with all the couples who have gone through this process. Any takers for organizing the celebration?
10. Set the next meeting for July.
 11. Assignments for July.
 1. *Deep Mentoring* (Chapter 6), pgs. 146-171 and (Appendix 1-4) pgs. 225-236. Complete the four questions, pg. 171.
 - i. Write a paragraph on what stands out to you from "Lessons from Those Who Finish Poorly," pgs. 225-228.
 - ii. Write a paragraph on what stands out to you from "Lessons from Those Who Finish Well," pgs. 228-231.
 2. In *The Making of a Leader*, read "The Flesh Act," pgs. 118-120. On pg. 125 starting with "Crises," read through pg. 130. Write a paragraph or two on how God has used a crisis or conflict in developing your life.
 3. Pay attention to the lives other others around you and note whether you observe someone experiencing a process item in their life.

12. Closing Prayer

"Fifth" "Our Eph. 2:10 Journey" Meeting, July 2018

1. Assignments for July.
 1. *Deep Mentoring*, 146-71 and 225-236, complete the four questions, 171.
 - i. Write a paragraph on what stands out to you from "Lessons from Those Who Finish Poorly," pages 225-228.
 - ii. Write a paragraph on what stands out to you from "Lessons from Those Who Finish Well," pages 228-231.
 2. *The Making of a Leader*, 113-115 Mentors, 118-120 Flesh Act, 125-127 Crises and Conflict. Please write a paragraph or two on how God has used a crisis or conflict in developing your life.
 3. Pay attention to the lives of others around you and note whether you observe someone experiencing a process item in their life.
2. Meal at ? Home and Fellowship: **Primary relationship goal.**
3. Prayer requests and prayer
4. Devotional
5. Share any reflections from the books.
6. **The following five tasks are all important, but your group will probably gravitate to one of these four to discuss more deeply. That will be your groups primary task goal.**
7. Each person share one or two thoughts from the four questions on page 171 of *Deep Mentoring*.
8. Have one person share their paragraph on "Lesson from Those Who Finish Poorly." Let the group discuss.
9. Have one person share their paragraph on "Lesson from Those Who Finish Well." Let the group discuss.
10. Each person share their experience with crisis or conflict. *The Making of a Leader*, 125-27.
11. Have we noticed anyone experiencing a "process item" in their life? Discuss insights and any actions taken.
12. Reminder and any discussion on working on everyone's personal narrative.
13. Set the next meeting for August.
14. Assignments for August.
 1. *Deep Mentoring*, 175-200, complete the four bullet points on pgs.199-200.
 2. *The Making of a Leader*, 133-51; question 1, pg. 151.
 3. Start writing or keep writing your narrative.
15. Prayer

"Sixth" LET Meeting August 2018

1. Assignments for August.
 - a. *Deep Mentoring*, 175-200, complete the four bullet points on 199-200.
 - b. *The Making of a Leader*, 133-51; question 1, pg. 151. I know this is the entire chapter but the material here is very important to the process.
 - c. Read the one-page pdf on "Life Purpose" or Bent in Life.
2. Meal at ? Home
3. Fellowship: primary relationship goal
4. Prayer requests and prayer

5. Devotional
6. Share any reflections from the books.
7. Based on the pdf and your readings, what do you think your “life purpose” or “bent” in life is? **primary task goal** (Bent is defined as how God has used your experiences, your gifts, process items, and his providence to develop a special burden of ministry, something you need to do.)
8. Share insights from *Deep Mentoring*, 199, second bullet point under "Reflect On Your Life." Maybe develop a paragraph or two in preparation.
9. From *The Making of a Leader*. Discuss the "Summary" on pages 145-50. Especially focus in on how God has used "isolation" in your life if he has.
10. Who do you think you can encourage with a "ministry challenge" (*The Making of a Leader*, 69-72) during the next month? What area of ministry can you invite that person?
11. Reminder to keep working on the personal narrative.
12. Set the next meeting for September.
13. Assignments for September.
 - a. *Deep Mentoring*, 201-23, complete the prayer assignment under REFLECT ON YOUR LIFE on page 223.
 - b. *The Making of a Leader*, 153-176. Identify 2 or 3 principles of ministry that you have witnessed, 162-64 provides some examples.
 - c. First two personal narratives are read in September. These will probably be very personal and emotional so don't be too surprised.
 - d. Reflect on the personal narratives and ask questions like; (1) When did you feel closest to God? (2) What do you think helped you get through _____. (3) Consider some other helpful follow-up questions to understand their journey.
14. Prayer

"Seventh" LET Meeting in September 2018

1. Assignments for September.
 - a. *Deep Mentoring*, 201-23, complete the prayer assignment under REFLECT ON YOUR LIFE, 223.
 - b. *The Making of a Leader*, 168-170, Warren Wiersbe Section. The purpose is to introduce all of us to discerning principles we have learned. Write down one or two principles that you might use in your narrative.
 - c. First two personal narratives are read in September.
2. Meal at ? Home
3. **Fellowship: primary relationship goal.**
4. Prayer requests and prayer.
5. Short devotional due to sharing of narratives.
6. Short discussion on any reflections from the books.
7. **Share the two personal narratives: primary task goal.**
8. Provide insights and positive feedback. The following are some potential questions to follow-up the reading of the narrative.
 - a. What do you perceive as the high point of your walk with the Lord?
 - b. What helped you see God's work in your life at this point?

- c. What prompted you to accept your first responsibilities as a Christian?
- d. After experiencing hurt/disappointment in the church, what helped you to move forward and continue to serve rather than quit?
- e. Based on what you have seen through your narrative what ministry/service do you think God has prepared for you to accomplish?
- f. How can your experience help someone else?
9. Begin to pray and think about who can be invited to the next round of LETs.
10. Set the meeting for October.
11. Assignments for October. Keep working on personal narratives.
 - a. Two people share in October.
 - b. *The Making of a Leader*, 177-187. Be prepared for a short discussion on the three "challenges" on 178 and how they apply to your life.
12. Prayer

"Eighth" LET Meeting in October 2018

1. Assignments for October. Keep working on personal narratives.
 1. Two people share in October.
 2. *The Making of a Leader*, 177-184. Be prepared to discuss the three "challenges" on page 178 and how they apply to your life.
2. Meal at ? Home
3. Fellowship
4. Prayer requests and prayer
5. Rather than a short devotional discuss the three "challenges" on page 178 in *The Making of a Leader* and how they apply to your life.
6. Any thoughts someone wants to share before reading the personal narratives?
7. Share the one or two personal narratives.
8. Provide insights and positive feedback.
9. Continue to pray and think about who can be invited to the next round of LETs.
10. Set the meeting for November.
11. Assignments for November. Two people share personal narratives.
12. Prayer.

"Ninth" LET Meeting in November 2018

1. Assignments for November. Keep working on personal narratives. One or two people share in November.
2. Meal at ? Home
3. Fellowship
4. Prayer requests and prayer
5. Short devotional.
6. Any thoughts someone wants to share before reading the personal narratives?
7. Share the one or two personal narratives.
8. Provide insights and positive feedback.
 - What do you perceive as the high point of your walk with the Lord?
 - What helped you see God's work in your life at this point?
 - What prompted you to accept your first responsibilities as a Christian?

- After experiencing hurt/disappointment in the church, what helped you to move forward and continue to serve rather than quit?
 - Based on what you have seen through your narrative what ministry/service do you think God has prepared for you to accomplish?
 - How can your experience help someone else?
9. Discuss and pray about who should be invited to the next round of LETs and how to best do the invitations.
 10. Assignments for December. Consider to who to invite in the next round of LETs and lay a foundation. Prepare for a celebration and debrief on how the year went.
 11. Prayer.

"Tenth" LET Meeting in December 2018

1. Assignment: Prepare for celebration and debrief.

Appendix B: Leadership Emergence Teams Impact Charts

Survey Given to Six ILET Members on August 9, 2018

Exit interview with one participant on October 10, 2018. Questions 6 and 7 were added for this interview.

Thank-you for participating with a Leadership Emergence Team. Your input with this interview is important as I attempt to consider strengths and weaknesses of leadership emergence theory and the readings, specifically *Deep Mentoring* and *The Making of a Leader*.

Candid feedback is important as it allows me to strengthen aspects of the process that are effective and change things that are not as helpful.

Please respond to the following, providing as much information as you need.

1. What Leadership Emergence Team (LET) activity did you find most meaningful and why?

P2: The consistent time together helped me begin to focus on what God was doing throughout my life. Also, the eating together was good and allowed us to get to know each other better.

P3: It was a serendipity that we discovered. As we began to eat together with the family to help meet P5's need to eat in his busy schedule it blessed the group. The eating together was a huge benefit.

P4: Spending time sharing together in a meal with the group before the LET meeting was great. This time allowed us to interact and share our lives. It gave us more time when we met to really come to know each other. A relationship bond was formed that I believe will go far beyond the year we spent together. We did this with the first and third group. We were not able to do this with the second group because of time limitations for one of the couples, and I just do not feel the same connection with that group as I do with the other two groups.

P5: The discussions during the monthly meetings helped me see how other people were processing the readings and applying them.

P6: Getting together with people; eating, sharing ideas, and encouragement. You guys wanted my kids to eat with us and share in their lives, that was the best example of leadership! It is hard to make reading a priority but the books with great people stories help explain concepts, for me that is the easiest way for me to get the concepts.

P20: Some journaling was helpful.

2. What LET activity did not add to your growth, if any? Please explain.

P2: The books helped me once we discussed them, but the readings and the amount of time for the readings were a chore for me. I think that was because of needing to learn technical language in Clinton and the length of the readings.

P3: None. Some things were more beneficial to others than they were to me so they all add value to the group.

P4: The sticky note exercise was not that helpful for me. With the first group, I understood that we were to work on our timeline before we came together for the meeting. I had it pretty well mapped out, so the sticky note exercise was just copying down my timeline info. I think it is hard for people to brainstorm events in life without time to think ahead about it. There really is not time at the meeting to do the brainstorming effectively. It is very rushed because of time constraints. I spent a few hours thinking about my timeline and writing it down before I came to that first sticky note exercise. I have not sensed that the exercise during the meeting has been that helpful to people.

P5: Nothing really. There might have been some additional readings that were interesting but not essential.

P6: Right now, I feel stagnant, but I think it is because of my life and not the “Journey” we have been on. Also, summer interrupts everything and I don’t have a regular schedule.

P20: Didn’t feel capable of doing the narrative. My past was very depressing.

3. How did writing your narrative impact the perception of your life?

P2: I saw the providence of God more clearly.

P3: I am more aware of God’s work in my present life and past.

P4: I labored hard over writing my narrative. It was very painful for me at times. I brought up a lot of difficult memories that I don’t like to remember. However, it showed me God’s consistent love, care, provision, and involvement in my life. It reinforced that I am who I am now because of all that I have experienced in life.

P5: Just pulling together seemingly unrelated events to see an interrelated story of how God is working. To see how past “failures” result in present triumphs.

P6: I have always seen God working in my life. Especially after having a bad boyfriend and the steps leading me into the military. When thinking of the past there is blatant evidence of God’s handiwork in my life. It was good to get an overview of how He has worked the past.

P20: I did not write a narrative.

4. How did listening to others’ narratives impact you?

P2: I saw their pain in the telling and hearing of their stories from past to present. What they highlighted was helpful in getting to know them and their views of God’s working in their lives.

P3: For leadership to emerge difficult events had to occur for all of us as God was processing us. I am more compassionate, reflective, and insightful as a result of others’ narratives.

P4: I have been amazed at the difficult things others have gone through, and yet they have remained faithful in their Christian walk with God. Unfortunately, the common thread I have found in a lot of difficult times in these people’s lives has been dealing with

struggles in the church and with negative treatment from other Christians. We are not a perfect people, but we are a forgiven and grace-given people. My prayer is that God's grace can flow through me and others so that we reflect God in a better way.

P5: To see that everyone goes through hurts and failures, but we are all still laboring together.

P6: Learning where people have come from and how their lives have shaped them to this day is always a revelation. We often base our decisions and the way we live today on what has happened in our past. It is good for us all to reflect on our lives and figure out why we are the way we are and change the things that need to change.

P20: I enjoyed listening to P5's and understood the process. Listening to P19's made me mad.

5. Which book, *The Making of a Leader* or *Deep Mentoring*, did you find most helpful? Why?

P2: The more recent one, *Deep Mentoring*. I could tell that God brought the author and Clinton together and that alone was a good example of providence and the entwining of their lives.

P3: Both books are necessary and helpful. The reduced reading in year three was helpful for some of our participants.

P4: This is a hard question because I don't think either book stands well on its own for our purpose. In my opinion, *The Making of a Leader*, does a much better job of taking us through the stages of life and was very helpful to me in writing my life narrative. It seems to be written more to those who are in full-time ministry. I think it tends to bog down those who have not had a lot of ministry experience. *Deep Mentoring* is written more simply and is a little easier to relate to. Reading both books all the way through was somewhat of a difficult task. I like that the reading assignments this last year have included both books but have cut out some of the reading.

P5: *Deep Mentoring* – it was less like a textbook. There are still parts of *Making of a Leader* that I wouldn't want to miss though.

P6: I found *Deep Mentoring* easier to read but *The Making of a Leader* was more explanatory. Maybe reading through the books in their entirety will help, at least, understand them better. I have never looked in the back of the book to see if there is a chart of all of Clinton's processes and timelines. I would like to see the concepts in his book in chart form.

P20: I liked *Deep Mentoring* but it was long and sometimes hard to comprehend.

NOTE: Only one individual was asked these last two questions in an exit interview.

6. What concerns do you have with the books or the process you experienced?

P20: I was raised Pentecostal and recognized a lot of the words used from that background. Double confirmation is not found in scripture but Pentecostals look for confirmation in

everything making faith extremely mystical. I would suggest these books for mature Christians only.

7. What additional input would you like to add?

P20: Struggling couples should not pursue this. It could possibly more damaging than helpful. There were meetings that it was obvious people had not come prepared. There needs to be a commitment to doing the work. I would suggest future times when a group of men or a group of women could pursue this journey. With other women only I may have been will to open up about my life and receive input on how God is at work.

Reflect on; (1) completing your LET time for the year, (2) finishing and sharing your life narrative, and (3) listening to the other team members' narratives and complete the following questions. Circle the number that best describes your experience. These questions will involve a 1 to 5 scale, where 1 means "strongly disagree" and 5 means "strongly agree."

1. I am more aware of God's work in my life.

Strongly Disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree
 1 2 3 4 5

2. I am more aware of God's work in the lives of others.

Strongly Disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree
 1 2 3 4 5

3. I more fully recognize God' gifts in my life.

Strongly Disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree
 1 2 3 4 5

4. I am more willing to engage in the lives of others to influence them to embrace God's work in their lives.

Strongly Disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree
 1 2 3 4 5

5. I have a greater appreciation for the influence of other Christians in my life.

Strongly Disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree
 1 2 3 4 5

Leadership Emergence Teams Impact Chart for Six ILET Members					
	Value Q1	Value Q2	Value Q3	Value Q4	Value Q5
P1	5	5	5	5	5
P2	4	4	4	4	4
P3	5	5	5	5	5
P4	5	5	4	4	4
P5	5	5	5	5	5
P6	4	5	5	5	5
Ave. Value	4.67	4.83	4.67	4.67	4.67

Survey Given to All 26 Participants on October 17, 2018

Thank-you for participating with a Leadership Emergence Team. Your input with this questionnaire is important as I attempt to consider strengths and weaknesses of leadership emergence theory.

Reflect on; (1) your LET time for the year, (2) processing your life narrative, and (3) listening to the other team members' narratives; then complete the following questions. Circle, highlight, or place an "x" behind the number that best describes your experience. These questions will involve a 1 to 5 scale, where 1 means "strongly disagree" and 5 means "strongly agree."

1. I am more aware of God's work in my life.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5

2. I am more aware of God's work in the lives of others.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5

3. I more fully recognize God' gifts in my life.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5

4. I am more willing to engage in the lives of others to influence them to embrace God's work in their lives.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5

5. I have a greater appreciation for the influence of other Christians in my life.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5

Leadership Emergence Teams Impact Chart All 26 Participants					
Participant	Value Q1	Value Q2	Value Q3	Value Q4	Value Q5
P1	5	5	5	5	5
P2	5	5	4	4	5
P3	5	5	5	5	5
P4	5	5	4	4	4
P5	5	5	5	5	5
P6	4	5	5	5	5
P7	5	4	4	5	5
P8	5	5	5	5	5
P9	4	4	4	4	5
P10	5	5	5	5	5
P11	4	4	5	4	5
P12	3	4	3	4	4
P13	4	4	4	4	5
P14	5	5	4	5	5
P15	5	5	5	4	5
P16	5	4	4	4	5
P17	4	4	5	3	5
P18	5	5	4	4	5
P19	4	4	3	4	5
P20	2	3	3	3	3
P21	4	4	4	5	5
P22	5	5	5	5	5
P23	5	4	4	4	5
P24	4	4	5	5	5
P25	5	4	5	5	5
P26	5	5	3	4	5
Average Value	4.50	4.46	4.31	4.38	4.85

Appendix C: Strategy for Developing Leaders of Leaders

The goal for the following strategy is to develop leaders by training disciples/leaders who have already discerned their Ephesians 2:10 “good works prepared by God.” This plan equips leaders to guide others on a similar discovery journey and is mentoring focused while providing skill development and community encouragement. My anticipated destination is these disciples/leaders will discover, learn, and apply specific leadership skills identified in the project and be motivated to continue to the process of both guiding disciples on the “Eph. 2:10 Journey” and developing new leaders. The following strategy is the next step in developing a process whereby someone else can step in behind me and continue to train leaders, so all members can eventually participate in the “Ephesians 2:10 Journey.”

The basic outline for this strategy will be an adaptation of Robert Logan’s path of leadership development explored in *From Followers to Leaders*.²⁷³ The adaptation will incorporate one of the most influential features of Great Falls, the Missouri River. Strategic stages will involve; (1) the parking lot, (2) the boat launch, (3) the tailgate, (4) river training, (5) more river training, (6) shore lunches, (7) the landing/destination, and (8) invitation to become a river guide. Because this training occurs over time it is helpful to recognize this work with existing leaders involves a process approach rather than a one-time event approach for training.²⁷⁴ In addition, the development of these leaders requires sending them out to lead groups. These new groups provide a community setting

²⁷³ Logan, *From Followers to Leaders*, 27-45.

²⁷⁴ Malphurs, *Building Leaders*, 151.

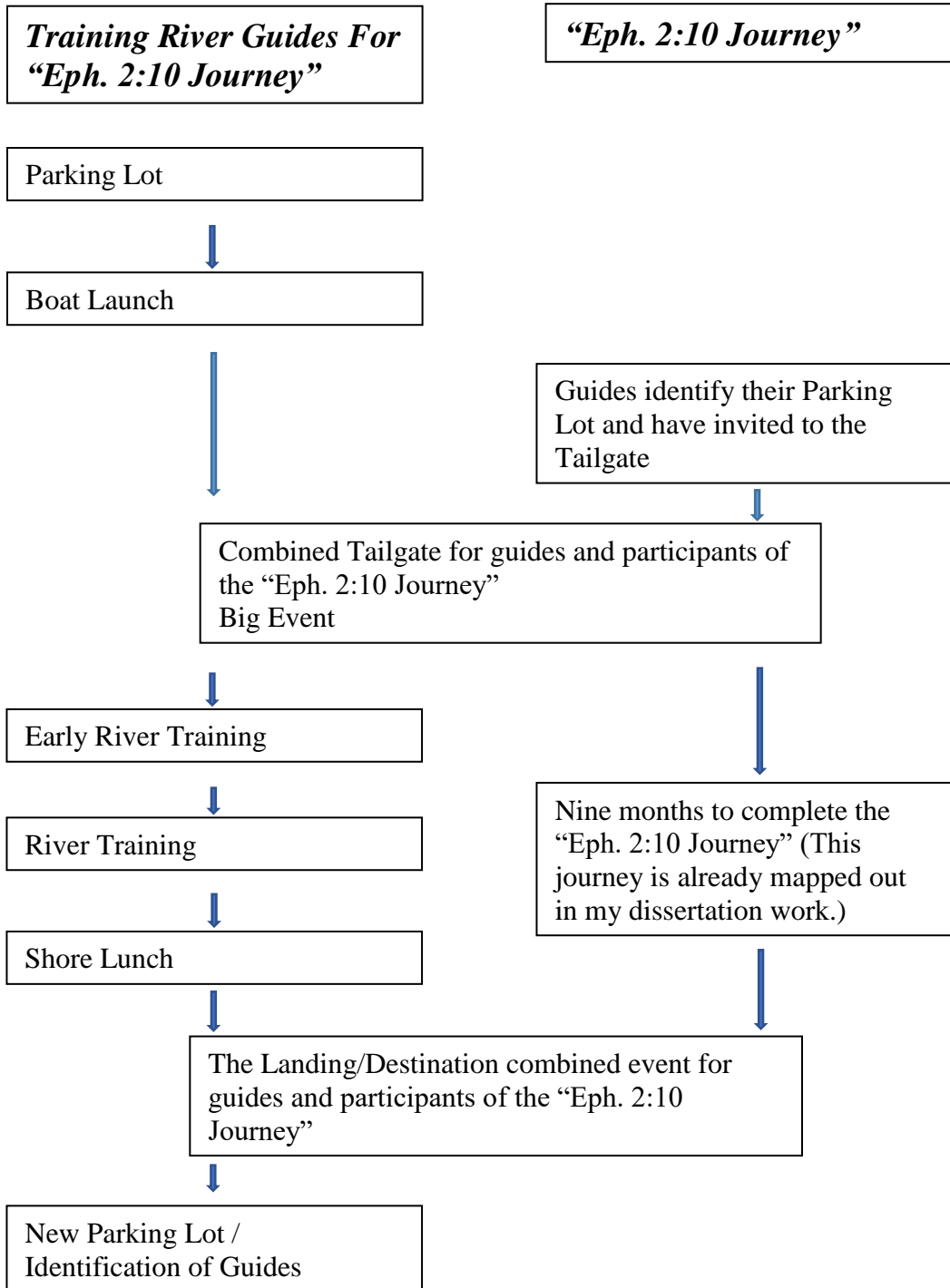
to discover, discern, and participate in the good works God has designed for them to do. Malphurs' phases 1-4 in *Building Leaders* will function as a resource for designing leader training throughout the strategic process.²⁷⁵

This leader development plan is meant to equip guides for the “Eph. 2:10 Journey,” but a secondary goal not elaborated upon in this strategy will be to lead these equipping sessions with some help from existing leaders in the first year, to co-lead this process the second year, and to finally be an advisor/coach for the third year releasing new leaders into ministry.

This is an initial proposal only and will be subject to input and changes by the groups who have experience with leadership emergence theory. It is always harder to create than to edit so this “creation” is meant to be edited to bless the church as she develops disciples who influence others for the purposes of God.

²⁷⁵ Ibid., 127-188.

To help visualize two separate, but interconnected processes the following diagram is shared to help recognize the timing and work of developing leaders in comparison to guiding people on “The Eph. 2:10 Journey.”



TRAINING RIVER GUIDES FOR THE “EPHESIANS 2:10 JOURNEY”

Use Logan’s path of leader development²⁷⁶ to explain the journey. Adapting Logan’s leadership path to Great Falls means (1) the parking lot will remain the parking lot, (2) the trailhead will be the boat launch, (3) the tailgate incorporates a celebration focusing on future accomplishments²⁷⁷ and is an adaptation for our environment, (4) the beginning of the trail will be early river training, (5) along with trail will be river training, (6) campfires will be shore lunches, (7) the end of the trail/destination will be the landing/destination and will again incorporate a celebration.

Parking Lot (This is primarily Scott Laird’s responsibility, but P3, P5, and P13 will be invited to observe this process.)

1. Discern the parking lot to identify potential guides/leaders. This involves people who have successfully completed at least one “Ephesian 2:10 Journey” and demonstrate the leadership capabilities of guiding others on a similar journey.
2. Contact those who have successfully completed the journey and ask if they want to serve as guides.
3. Remind potential guides of the importance of the journey.
4. Ask the potential guides to serve as a co-guide unless they have made at least two trips. If they have already made two successful journeys where they have discovered the good works God has prepared for them and they have acted as a co-guide on the “Ephesians 2:10 Journey,” then they may be asked to guide two new couples on the journey.

²⁷⁶ Logan, *From Followers to Leaders*, 27-52.

²⁷⁷ Malphurs, *Building Leaders*, 178-79.

5. Let the potential guides know when to meet at the boat launch if they are willing to guide. This requires that the time and place for the boat launch has already been set.
6. Have the potential guides begin to pray about who to invite on the “Ephesians 2:10 Journey.”
7. Great Falls is presently focused on couples for the “Eph. 2:10 Journey,” but an additional strategy will need to be developed to take singles on this journey of discovery. This current strategy recognizes the future need but does not address the issue.

Boat Launch (90 Minutes): The description of a “turbo group” where “the goal is to impart all of the critical information (emphasis mine) that the individual needs to get started in leadership”²⁷⁸ appears to be a good approach for organizing these groups in the launch and river training phases of the journey because they all employ skill development. The basic concepts of a turbo group include; (1) provide skill training to prepare leaders, (2) relationally oriented, (3) provide modeling environment for leadership and skill development, (4) relatively short-term and focused, (5) a group size of three to twelve, and (6) allows for launching a group of leaders at the same time.²⁷⁹

Agenda

1. Welcome and begin with prayer for God to direct us and use us as guides to bless his people.
2. Remind these guides of the importance of the “Ephesians 2:10 Journey.”

²⁷⁸ Malphurs, *Building Leaders*, 163-64.

²⁷⁹ Ibid.

3. Tell an “Ephesians 2:10 Journey” story of transformation.
4. Rainbow Trout exercise:²⁸⁰ Share one memory from your last “Ephesians 2:10 Journey” that blessed your life.
 - a. Provide a minute or two to gather thoughts.
 - b. Introduce the rainbow trout process.
 - c. Conduct the rainbow trout process.
5. Conduct the “Identifying Potential Leaders” skill exercise.²⁸¹ (I do not expect this skill exercise to change from year to year because each group will have new guides who need to know how to make selections for leadership development.)
6. Describe briefly the parking lot, tailgate, landing, early river training, river training, shore lunches and the landing/destination to remind participants about what we are trying to accomplish both in our journey together and those we are guiding. Provide a handout for this description.
7. Next steps as an “Eph. 2:10 Journey” guide.
 - a. Remind each other that we are guides on this journey and we will not have all the answers. Our role is to help guide others on a similar journey, not to provide answers.

²⁸⁰ The Rainbow Trout Exercise is an adaptation of the “Frog” from Logan, Class Lecture Notes. The basic idea starts with all participants standing and a stuffed rainbow trout will be tossed from one participant to another. The individual who has the rainbow trout can share a thought. Once the individual has shared, they toss the rainbow trout to another participant and then sit down. This continues until all participants have shared and consequently sat down.

²⁸¹ Robert Logan, “Developing Leaders: Leader Guide,” *Leadership Skills Guide* (2016), 3-4, accessed April 2018, <https://loganleadership.com/>. Logan, *The Leadership Difference*, 74-75.

- b. Guides need to discern their own parking lots and invite others to the landing to start the journey. Remind these guides of what the parking lot and the landing looks like and what information is shared at each site.
 - i. Assuming two guides on each tour break into groups of two couples, four people, for ten minutes to ask who God wants on their journey. Pick two possibilities from the suggestions.
 - ii. Return to larger group of guides and share who their #1 and #2 invitees are and make sure the different guides are not inviting the same people.
 - iii. Get input on how to invite others to the journey. Collaborative work.
 - 1. Call or personal contact?
 - 2. What needs to be shared in the invitation?
 - 3. Set a time for people to be contacted and invited to the landing.
 - 4. Determine how guides will report this to the rest of the guides.
 - c. Remind guides they will receive more training while they are on the river and set a date for this training.
 - d. Envision the destination and begin to plan the celebration. Delegate celebration preparation.
8. Reminders of safety on the river of life journey.
- a. Life-jacket: prayer and support from other guides

- b. Canoe: Reese, *Deep Mentoring*²⁸²
 - c. Paddles: agendas for each meeting
 - d. Pace: set the date for the landing
9. Close with a few minutes of “Mr. Whiskers.”²⁸³
10. Pray

Tailgate Party (approximately 2 ½ hours): This is a crossover event that will include both guides and participants in the “Eph. 2:10 Journey.” It is designed to touch the hearts of all who will be participating in this life-changing adventure.²⁸⁴

Agenda

1. Find someone to organize the event. Because each tailgate party will be different the agenda includes only the big picture items to be accomplished.
2. Celebrate the beginning of the journey. This involves a meal/table fellowship to build trust within the community and some type of activity that prompts interaction.
3. Cast the vision for the journey.
4. Introduce the guides and honor their role.
5. Remind the participants why they sacrifice and provide encouragement.

Early River Training (90 minutes)

Agenda

²⁸² Reese, *Deep Mentoring*, is the primary text outlining the journey.

²⁸³ Logan, Class Lecture Notes.

²⁸⁴ Malphurs, *Building Leaders*, 178.

1. Welcome and prayer
2. Devotional: Matthew 9:35-38 (compassion, prayer, and workers)
3. Early river questions²⁸⁵ (remember that learning must incorporate experiences to maintain value)²⁸⁶
 - a. Is this the right direction? The right pace?
 - b. What obstacles need to be overcome?
 - c. What's the first goal/milestone?
 - i. Build trust within each group being guided.²⁸⁷ Table fellowship will be very important in trust development along with confidentiality. Discussion should occur as to other ways to develop trust.
 - ii. Each person on the "Eph. 2:10 Journey" develops his or her timeline.²⁸⁸
 - d. What's the best approach?
4. Skill development (The following skills may be changed from year-to-year depending on the skill set of the incoming guides, but the plan is to use the *Leadership Skills Guide* by Robert Logan.)

²⁸⁵ Logan, *From Followers to Leaders*, 39.

²⁸⁶ *Ibid.* 148.

²⁸⁷ Patrick Lencioni, *The Five Dysfunctions of a Team: A Leadership Fable* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2002), 187-190.

²⁸⁸ Reese, *Deep Mentoring*, 95-97.

- a. Facilitating small groups²⁸⁹
 - b. Active listening²⁹⁰
 - i. Explanation
 - ii. Practice
 - c. Open ended questions about God's work.²⁹¹
 - i. Explanation
 - ii. Application of how to ask
5. Feedback from guides on what additional equipment/training may be needed.
 6. "Mr. Whiskers" time.
 7. Close with prayer.

River Training (90 minutes)

Agenda

1. Welcome and prayer
2. Devotional: (to be determined based on needs)
3. Advanced river guide questions²⁹²
 - a. What progress can we celebrate?
 - b. What's the next intermediate goal?

²⁸⁹ Robert Logan, "Pastoral Skills: Leader Guide," *Leadership Skills Guide* (2016), 9-10, accessed April 2018, <https://loganleadership.com/>.

²⁹⁰ Robert Logan, "Communication Skills: Leader Guide," *Leadership Skills Guide* (2016), 3-4, accessed April 2018, <https://loganleadership.com/>.

²⁹¹ *Ibid.*, 5-6.

²⁹² Logan, *From Followers to Leaders*, 41.

- c. What mid-course corrections do I need to make?
 - d. How can we improve?
4. Skill development (The skills developed may change from year-to-year depending on the needs of the guides and those they are leading.)
- a. Appreciative inquiry questions to be used when those on the journey read their narratives.²⁹³
 - i. Explanation
 - ii. Practice
 - b. Importance of a non-anxious presence.²⁹⁴ Watch Steinke's DVD and process the films together.
5. Feedback on additional resources/training needed.
6. Set the meeting for the "shore lunch"
7. "Mr. Whiskers"
8. Close in prayer

Shore Lunch (90-120 minutes depending on discussion)

Agenda

- 1. Welcome and pray
- 2. Fellowship and meal

²⁹³ Mark Lau Branson, *Memories, Hopes, and Conversations: Appreciative Inquiry and Congregational Change*, 2d ed. (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, an Alban Institute Book, 2016), 137-156.

²⁹⁴ Peter Steinke, "The Anxious Congregation" and "The Responsible Congregation," DVD vol. II (HealthyCongregations, 2005).

3. Open forum to discuss: (Put these questions on a board so people can see them and possibly use break-out groups for more discussion.)
 - a. How do you see God at work personally and in your tour?
 - b. What has surprised you?
 - c. What has worked well?
 - d. What might you do differently?
 - e. What has excited you about the journey?
 - f. What additional support would prove helpful?
 - g. What is needed to finish the journey?
4. Provide time to evaluate what works and what needs adjusting.²⁹⁵

The Landing/Destination (2 ½ hours): Celebration for all who completed the journey.

This is another rally event and is designed to encourage the hearts of both guides and participants.²⁹⁶

Agenda and preparation

1. Secure a coordinator for the event.
2. Discern a date that allows for maximum attendance.
3. The actual event
 - a. Celebratory meal that may include something like a mystery theme that provides for an enjoyable evening.
 - b. Celebrate the accomplishments of the “Eph. 2:10 Journey.”

²⁹⁵ Logan, *From Follower to Leader*, 167. Logan, *The Leadership Difference*, 149-50, suggests that it will require at least three cycles on a project to get it functioning as planned. Malphurs, *Building Leaders*, 183-86.

²⁹⁶ Malphurs, *Building Leaders*, 178.

c. Target the hearts of all the participants.

Return to the Parking Lot and begin again. This time support the process as another leader takes the reins.

Appendix D: Narrative Exploration Questions

When listening and reflecting on the narrative it is important to highlight certain aspects and deeply investigate critical incidents by asking for additional feedback from the narratives. This process allows both the sharer and the hearers learn to discern the work of God in a deeper way. The following questions were developed by ILET to engage in further dialogue.

- What do you perceive as the high point of your walk with the Lord?
- What helped you see God's work in your life at this point?
- What prompted you to accept your first responsibilities as a Christian?
- After experiencing hurt/disappointment in the church, what helped you to move forward and continue to serve rather than quit?
- Based on what you have seen through your narrative what ministry/service do you think God has prepared for you to accomplish?
- How can your experience help someone else?

Appendix E: Dr. Huffard's Site Visit

Friday, January 4, 2019, 7:00 PM Meeting of All Participants

The meeting lasted approximately two hours and had a great spirit throughout.

Dr. Huffard asked a series of questions.

1. What did this process do for you?
2. How much time did the process take?
3. What did this process do for the church as a whole?

The following are summaries of the statements made by participants at the meeting to the question, "What did this process do for you?"

- P5: the first time through the process I began to realize God does not waste anything. This includes the mission opportunity where I struggled in my past. The process has helped free me for new ministry, and I recognize the importance of the group supporting me. I learned that I disciple others by first being a disciple. The concept of "being" is crucial.
- P2: I gained fresh insight into the lives of others and understand more of why people act in certain ways. Also, people's hidden gifts came to light.
- P21: I learned I am not alone. Others have been through some very similar struggles. God seems to have providentially put me with people who could help me on my journey.
- P18: I drew closer to people and developed deeper relationships. Not just with the people in my group but also with all who have gone through this process.
- P4: My process with this started differently. We were working on developing skills with LIFE Group leaders but our direction changed to processing LET. This process has developed a special bond with those in ILET. My narrative was especially hard because I had to relive some very difficult moments but, in the end, I was blessed by God's goodness and the faithfulness and perseverance of others.
- P26: My story was really hard, and I did not sleep well for weeks as I prepared to share my narrative. My

story is now God's story and I want to use it to help others. After sharing my narrative with my group, I shared it with my two sons to encourage them to see how God powerfully works.

- The group recognized it was important for our children to hear our stories so their faith might grow.
- P13: I had worked through a narrative before, but this opportunity helped me make peace with a crisis. I believe I am in a boundary event at this point in my life and the process gives me hope.
- P3: This has helped me understand and process life events. I have begun to pay more attention to the especially odd events and ask, "What is God up to?"
- P25: I was invited by a brother I knew and respected. I thought the process was stupid and wanted to quit but the one who invited me encouraged me to stick it out. I am glad I did stick it out because it has been great for relationship building and I want to grow deeper in my walk with the Lord and his people.
- P24: I found it really hard to share.
- P23: I found it really hard to share, but it has helped me develop closer relationships with those in my group and with the others who have gone through the process.
- P22: The first time I shared my narrative I experienced a deep sense of being abandoned. Not by the group, but by how I had been treated by others. However, during the second year when it came time to share my narrative my life was now a ministry tool to teach others. The second time was very liberating.
- P10: This process took away isolation from my life and the lives of others.

The following are summaries of the statements made by participants at the meeting to the question, "How much time did the process take?" (Dr. Huffard took a few minutes explaining how the timeline is mentoring tool in that it explores what an individual has been through and what they might expect in the future. He also noted that Clinton's material is a way to "exegete" one's life and begin to better understand what has been up to.)

- P6: It was time consuming, but we make time for what is most important. She continued by sharing the time

commitment was important for the new relationships to begin.

- General conversation in the group: Some type of relationship is needed for the process to begin. There is a fundamental basis of trust needed for the process. Because of this each group had the final input on who to include in their group.
- P10: There was value in going through the process at least two or three times because the material seemed fresh each time. That is probably due to fact we are discovering new things about our lives and the lives of others.
- General observation: No one made a definitive comment on how much time it took. They all agreed it was time consuming but was worth the investment.

The following are summaries of the statements made by participants at the meeting to the question, "What did this process do for the church as a whole?"

- P23: The process was unifying and built trust. A spin off from the specific groups is that some groups are combining to spend time in fun and relationship building activities.
- P2: The process has uncovered resources of people who connect and minister to members of the church who are hurting now.
- P24: I have become a better listener and I try to use that skill in listening to some of the young people who hang out in the back where I am as part of the safety team.
- P7: The church seems to be more patient with those who are really struggling.
- P13: Leadership demonstrated the grace and acceptance that P7 spoke of in his life. He sees this example spreading from the leadership to the church.
- P3: The process has provided a common language for the leadership in addressing needs and direction for the church. He sees that the idea of investing into the lives of others has prompted some to embrace a more deliberate role in being intergenerational to provide mentoring models.

- P10: LET groups have drawn people closer than they have ever been before. This has taken LIFE Groups to the next level and should be experienced by all.
- P1: Not all of these can be said to be a direct result of the LET process but it is worth noting these ministries have sprung to life as people have processed their lives through LET.
 - P5 mentored the teens to teach the entire church new songs using the Keith Lancaster method. However, rather than listen to a DVD we listened to the teens P5, P2, and P13 worked with.
 - P15 has spearheaded a safety team. P24 is a vital part of that team and has become an active follower.
 - P25 and P26 have begun a young adults ministry on weekends to bless our group of Christians in their 20s. They are incorporating/mentoring a young couple to lead this.
 - Our ministry space group is led by P3.
 - P6, P23, and P9 have used their celebratory gifts more frequently.
 - P8 and P7 have begun a hospital ministry that is influencing others to be very active in hospital visitation.

Saturday, January 5, 2019, 10 AM with those who did not participate in the project.

Dr. Huffard wanted to get feedback from others who might know a little about the project but had not participated.

There were seven individuals in the meeting, five who had not participated along with Dr. Huffard and me. NP1, NP2, NP3, NP4, and NP5 are all LIFE Group leaders or co-leaders.

When asked what they knew about the process that had gone on for the past three years none of the group members knew very much.

The question was rephrased, and the group was asked to share what they had observed or heard about the process.

- NP2: It has hurt the recruitment of teachers for Sisters With A Purpose (ladies' class). Some women who

were approached to teach one class reported that they were too busy with LET to take that responsibility on.

- NP2: She has heard a lot of grumbling about the amount of work for LET, especially the amount of reading.
- NP2: There is no place for singles or widows/widowers to plug into the process. It is only for couples.
- NP1: He felt that the readings would be too introspective, and he spends more than enough time doing that on a regular basis as is.

This was all good information to help us do a better job at branding the process and explaining to the participants how our attitudes influence others for good or for bad. Not only is it important to share the struggles of the process, but also to share the value and transformation as well.

Two additional meetings were conducted. ILET met on Saturday, January 5, 2019, 5 PM for dinner and reflection. The elders met on January 6, 2019, 5 PM for reflection and direction.

- Both of these meetings were for reflection on what had gone on and points of direction for the future.
- Field notes were taken for these meetings.

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