

7 Reasons to Participate in Missional Leadership Initiative

CGGC Enews—Vol. 9, No. 43

October 23, 2015

Seven Reasons Why You or a Leader You Know Should Participate in the Next Cycle of the Missional Leadership Initiative.

In January 2016, we will launch the fourth cycle of the Missional Leadership Initiative (MLI). Since 2010 we've seen over 100 leaders from across the CGGC be stretched, frustrated, challenged, encouraged and equipped to do Kingdom ministry in a world that's continuing to change rapidly. Here are some of the reasons I think you or someone you know should take advantage of this great opportunity.



1. **You've got to be a learner to be a leader:** You will be stretched and challenged through the two-year process of MLI. I know that there are lots of ways in which we can learn, but there's something significant about working through an intentional learning process that produces opportunities for real change and real fruit in our lives. You will learn about yourself, you'll learn about the changing culture and what that means for the church, you will learn how to fail forward, and you'll even learn what you need to "unlearn" to be able to move forward on God's Kingdom agenda!
2. **You need the support of other leaders going through the same struggles:** Isolation is everywhere. I hear it on a regular basis – "I feel like I'm alone" or "I wish I had someone working on this with me". Leaders need other leaders who understand what they're going through and help provide support and encouragement to keep moving forward. Leading alone doesn't really work all that well. In order to make the shifts that need to be made, you can't do it alone. You need other leaders in your life who will support you and encourage you during the frustrating times when it appears that you're moving backward rather than forward. One of the side benefits of an experience like MLI is the resulting friendships and relationships that are formed across the CGGC through the process of learning to live on mission together.
3. **You get access to a leading voice in the missional movement in North America:** For two years you will get to benefit from the wisdom, experience and teaching of Reggie McNeal. Over my years of working with Reggie, I've just been blown away by his willingness to be accessible and helpful to the people he's serving. Just this past year one of our MLI participants was looking for help with particular challenges in his unique ministry context. Reggie was able to connect him to another leader (from his vast circle of influence) who is a few steps ahead of our friend and who will be able to help him take the steps forward that will result in real and lasting change.
4. **You need to go deeper than you what you can get through just reading a book or attending a conference:** Over the years I've had people tell me "I can just read the books and that will probably be enough for me." In my own experience, I've appreciated the learning that comes from a conference or seminar, but far too often the application of what I learned is far less than what I thought it would be. MLI is designed to take you through an intentional learning process of

applying what you're learning so that you can lead yourself to different behavior; then you can lead others through a similar kind of shift. For most of us, this kind of learning-shift doesn't happen through reading a book in isolation or attending a two or three day conference.

5. **You need to make a significant investment in your own leadership and ministry:** Be honest, when was the last time you made an investment in yourself as a leader? It's fairly natural for ministry leaders to give and give and give, serve and serve and serve, teach and teach and teach – you get the idea. When was the last time that you intentionally took the time to replenish your soul, sharpen the saw, or develop yourself so that you can continue to invest into others? For those of you who are “paid” leaders in the church, if the last time you can think of is your seminary experience 20 years ago, I'm pretty sure you're overdue and need to take the time to invest in your own leadership and ministry. You won't regret it and the folks you lead will appreciate it too.
6. **The status quo is not acceptable:** For most of us, what's worked in the past is no longer working. The culture has shifted and that means we have to think more like missionaries than like 1950's church leaders (where the church was familiar, respected and seen as an asset to the surrounding community). We find ourselves living in a pluralistic society that looks more like the 1st century than it does the 20th century. To keep “playing church” in this kind of context will not produce the fruit that I believe we genuinely desire to see and moreover, it will most likely ensure that'll miss out on God's Kingdom agenda. If you want to do more than just attract some disaffected Baptists from across town then you're going to have to do things differently and MLI will help you to begin making those changes and moving towards a new narrative for your life and ministry.
7. **It just may be that God will use you to help someone else move forward:** I'm sure you'll get something out of the MLI experience (I haven't had one person tell me this was a waste of their time, energy or money), but perhaps that won't be the big take away from your own MLI journey. Perhaps God will use you in the life of one of the other leaders in MLI to help them in their own journey. Perhaps you are the person who is a step or two ahead of someone else and it will be your insights, experience and wisdom that helps someone else know how to take their next step and keep moving forward. Perhaps it really isn't about what you'll receive from the experience (although I think you'll receive a lot), but rather what you give into the lives of your fellow participants and how the Lord uses you to bless and encourage someone else.

The deadline is fast approaching. Do you need to get in on this next cycle? Does someone in your circle of influence need to be there? Be sure to visit <http://www.cgqc.org/ministries/transformational-ministries/leadership/> or contact Angie Lavey at resources@cgqc.org for an application or more information.

Christ's Peace,

Lance

