



The Flourish Collective Academy 2017-18

Coaching Congregations Into Vocational Stewardship for the Life of the World

Summary

A year-long learning community led by Flourish San Diego, composed of leaders from ten churches from San Diego County. Its purpose is to learn together how to form disciples who are stewarding their vocational power to love our city to life. We encourage and invite interested churches to inquire and apply for the 2017-18 Cohort.

What Are We Trying To Do?

Here at Flourish San Diego, we believe that the kind of discipleship that will lead people to follow Jesus into his work of renewing and restoring humanity and creation is one that must embrace a robust understanding of calling, vocation, and work. Toward this end, we are working to catalyze a network of churches in San Diego that can continually learn and collaborate in the kingdom work of renewing culture and flourishing our city.

What Will It Look Like?

Together, the 2017-18 Collective Academy will:

- a. learn, champion, and infuse a robust understanding of faith, work, and economics into congregational life and practices
- b. discern how to collaborate together in new initiatives, drawing on their members' gifts and callings to flourish our city.

The Flourish San Diego team, together with alumni, volunteers, and friends, will facilitate and curate the learning experience. The teaching team will include notable practitioners and authorities in the arenas of "Faith and Work," "Calling/Vocation," spiritual formation, and economics.

2017-18 Retreat & Gathering Dates

- **Academy Dinner One** – September 14, 2017 in San Diego from 6:00 to 8:00 pm
- **Retreat One** – October 4 - 5, 2017 in San Diego, with a focus on critical theological foundations
- **Retreat Two** – November 8 - 9, 2017, with a focus on formation and catching a vision for individuals, churches, and networks to Shalomify their city.
- **Retreat Three** – January 17 - 18, 2018, with a focus on implementation and organizational change, using each participant's completed Infusion Plans.



- **Retreat Four** – March 7 - 8, 2018 in San Diego At Point Loma Nazarene University at our annual For* Conference focusing on stewardship, international development, and economics.
- **Meeting Five** – May 10, 2018 In San Diego – (One Day) A check-in on status of new activities as per the Infusion Plans. We'll also gather feedback and stories; and glean insights from participants.

Who Is This For?

Our Intended Audience

While this learning community will not be for just anyone, we believe there are many audiences that can be served by what we are trying to do.

Our work will resonate with those who:

- Have a sneaking suspicion, or a flat out conviction that “more and faster” does not describe the best way forward for the church to be a redemptive presence in our communities.
- Believe that the gospel offers more than a ticket to heaven but points to the kind of life that we are both created for and yearn for.
- Know that discipleship is the answer, but yearns for a fresh way of following Jesus that embraces all of life.
- Seek a different posture to our prevailing culture that remains distinct within it, yet is perceived as being for the city.

In the end, Flourish San Diego is interested in fostering a network of churches who learn, journey and collaborate in effort help the body of Christ flourish San Diego. We call this network the Flourish Collective and believe it will be an important network to help seek the shalom of our city.

Team Composition

An important part of the design of this learning community is that we are asking for a minimum of two people from each church to attend and participate. Churches that bring a third or fourth person will be given priority consideration for participation.

One person should be a pastor or church employee with direct influence in the areas of discipleship and missions or outreach. The other person should be a person who is living into their callings in the marketplace, community, or home.

- The “pastor” does not need to be the head or lead pastor though that would be great. Ideally, we are looking for the person who has the freedom to direct and create discipleship curriculum, as well as the authority to implement it. Pastors or ministry directors oriented toward outreach, missions, and/or justice matters, are the people who will really resonate with our approach.
- The “partner” should be someone who lives into his or her callings outside of the church. We are looking for people who know that God has created them for “X” and “X” is how God will use them to bring a foretaste of the kingdom into the present. (Where “X” may represent a marketplace person, entrepreneur, nonprofit volunteer, elected official, neighbor, mom, and/or spouse, etc.) This person has tended to turn into a great partner in championing vocational understanding at the church.

Feel free to inquire with Geoff on who you think would be best suited for this learning community. We recommend the third or fourth participant from a church to be key elders or staff.

Selection Criteria

To best steward the generous resources entrusted to us, below you will find a brief list of selection criteria that we’ll be using to help us discern who will be participating with us for the 2017-18 Cohort.

- People who love Jesus, love their churches, and love their community.
- We are aiming for diversity in the denomination background of participating churches.
- We are aiming for diversity in the size of participating churches (church plants to much bigger churches).
- We are aiming for churches at different places in their awareness of calling, vocation, faith and work, spiritual formation, to name a few of the renewal streams we will be integrating.
- People who will honor a high commitment to the reading, learning, and application to their contexts. The dates for the upcoming meetings have been posted, and while situations may arise, our expectation is that participants would be able to attend all the retreats and trips.
- Churches who will want (or are willing as best as they can determine at the point of application) to collaborate, share best practices, and journey together in this “divine conspiracy.”

- Churches with three or four participants will receive priority consideration. We have found these larger delegations to have the best opportunity to bringing lasting change in their congregational practices.

Desired Outcomes

Flourish San Diego believes that three key elements are necessary to help form churches that are seeking the common good of their world. Such churches:

- Understand the comprehensive scope of the God's mission in the world (the renewal of all things);
- Embrace the biblical vision of vocation, wherein God gifts and calls His people into other-centered service; and
- Implement effective discipleship practices that form congregants' hearts and minds for authentic, powerful, and glad participant in the missio Dei.

Consequently, the Flourish Collective Academy will:

Inform participating churches with a sense of Mission that:

- Is conversant with an economic/stewardship lens, giving a more helpful picture of how to help the least among us; one that is informed by economic realities;
- Embraces the image of God in all people, including their innate calling to create and produce in service of others;
- Anticipates the renewal, redemption and restoration of all things, not just the rescuing of souls; and
- Is shaped by the narrative of God's work in history as recorded in scripture.

Teach a robust understanding of Vocation and Calling:

- That embraces people's gifts, passions, training, and resources to be employed in the specific places of God's mission into which He is calling them;
- Which is increasingly free of the debilitating dualism that elevates the sacred while devaluing the ordinary and everyday;
- That sacralizes ordinary work whether in the marketplace, the community or the home; and
- That informs parishioners of ways they can steward their lives in fresh new avenues of service that contribute to the shalom of their cities.

Reframe or recover a Discipleship that:

- Transforms the inner life and character of people so that they are willing to live into their callings to flourish the world;

- Motivates people into kingdom service because of the gospel of grace rather than religious performance;
- Embraces spiritual practices as a means to cultivate and increasingly reflect the imago Dei; and
- Places a high value on hearing/listening for God's voice to foster the kind of reliance and response to Him for which we were created.

Vocation Infusion Plan

The central outcome of this local Learning Community will be the development of a customized "Vocation Infusion Plan" composed by each church's delegation. This plan will identify activities or initiative(s) that leaders will commit to implement so as to infuse their learning into their congregations.

Based on the experiences reported by churches participating in the last four years of these learning communities, we anticipate that participants will:

- Begin offering more and better preaching and teaching on vocation, faith, work, and whole-life stewardship;
- Place greater emphasis on vocational stewardship in adult education programs, youth ministries and worship services;
- Strengthen congregants' participation in God's mission of cultural and community renewal; and
- Launch new (or re-engineered) initiatives that flourish their neighborhoods, our city, and our world, which are based on sound economic understanding.

Ongoing Collaboration For The Life Of San Diego

Each year, we grow the number of churches in the network we call the Flourish Collective. Through the Collective, we are committed to developing ongoing relationships and offering continued learning experiences around vocational stewardship. These efforts seek to establish a growing collaborative network of churches—clear on mission and strategy and rooted in one city.

This network has the potential to implement significant new initiatives that draw on the unique strengths of multiple congregations, for advancing the common good.

Costs, Funding & Registration Fee



Registration Fee

Each church who participates in the 2017-18 Academy will pay a \$500 registration fee (as represented in the grey area in the graphic above).

Academy Tuition & Scholarships

The actual cost of tuition for each participating church, which also covers food, hotel & travel for the first two participants from that church, will be approximately \$15,000. This amount (represented in the gold area above) is eligible for scholarship requests. The 2017-18 Academy Application includes a section for scholarship requests. These generous scholarships will be made available in conjunction with our fabulous ministry partners.

Additional Participants

Since we have learned that larger teams get the best benefit from our Academy, we are prioritizing teams of three and four people. Each church will be responsible to pay the fees for third and fourth members of their team, which will be \$500 per person (represented in the red & green areas above) and covers each member's hotel & travel fee. A couple of travel notes: We may be traveling to Phoenix, and are budgeting for four, double-occupancy hotel nights during the year.

Applications

We will be accepting churches on a rolling basis. Scholarships will be available at the time of application. We hope to have enough funding for the entire cohort, but we encourage early application.

Mutual Commitments

Flourish San Diego commitment:

- We commit to creating a learning environment that will help you form disciples that will seek the common good of our communities.
- We will expose you to great reading, video resources, discussions on topics that will help your church and your people be formed into their vocation(s).
- We will do our best to put before you great examples of people and churches who are flourishing their communities.
- We hope to put before you the kinds of resources that will help you thrive as a church: ideas, examples, funding, etc.

We ask of you:

- A written and signed commitment to do the reading and homework in a timely yet unrushed manner.
- Completion of the Vocation Infusion Plan. It is a powerful self-assessment and planning tool. Its completion is centrally important for ongoing reporting regarding the effectiveness of effort.
- A \$500 registration fee to participate in the learning community.
- Consistent participation in retreats and exit interviews.
- A willingness to journey together in partnership with Flourish San Diego to love our city to life.

Logistics

- Expenses related to hotel, airfare, meals and conference registrations where applicable will be covered.
- Hotel stays will be double occupancy. We are planning for local San Diego retreats to include hotel stays to facilitate relationships and networking. If your circumstance requires single occupancy, if available, you will be responsible for the additional costs.
- We are working on this year's reading list, but you will be supplied with the books and video resources needed for the learning community.

I hope you will consider applying to join our 2017-18 Collective Academy. If you have any questions or would like a copy of the application, please feel free to contact Geoff Hsu at geoff@flourishsandiego.org.