



Learning Labs Winter 2023



How Do We Do Jesus Centred Church Membership?

Church and organizational membership encapsulates many of the key themes of following Jesus: being part of a community, commitment, discipleship, baptism, faith, and covenant. However, many of our current membership mechanisms are bounded set, which are evidenced by the in-and-out thinking and stagnancy of church communities.

This Learning Lab will explore and experiment re-imagining membership as a discipleship invitation of Jesus-centred, rather than bounded set communities and organizations.

Components

- Preparation (2hrs)
 - Learning about the basics of a Jesus-centred approach to ministry and sharing learning resources to use over the 6 weeks
- Weekly Meetings (9hrs)
 - The group gathers the first six weeks to hear from key practitioners
- Execution
 - Bi-monthly meetings over 6 months to update learnings
- Debrief
 - Share your learnings with the group
 - Turn learnings into resources and tools to share

Weekly Rhythm (first 6 weeks)

- Week 1 – Introduction
 - Clearly identify and articulate the problem of current ways of doing membership
 - Reorientation to Jesus Collective perspective
 - Invitation to next steps
- Week 2 - Learning Meeting
 - Interview with Mark Baker
- Week 3
 - Interview with John Neufeld
- Week 4
 - Interview with John Hau
- Week 5
 - Marinating Time: 1 week to pray / brainstorm / capture learnings
- Week 6
 - Not fully baked plan: Each participant will present their experimental plan and gather feedback from the group



A bit about the leader: John (Vancouver, BC) is the lead pastor at Reality Church in Vancouver – a community centred on the person, life, gospel, and hope of Jesus. He has led locally, nationally and internationally with Power to Change - Students and currently is part of the Jesus Collective Extended Leadership Team.

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How Do We Honour People, Process and Scripture in Our Conversations on Sexuality and Discipleship?

This Learning Lab will explore various strategies and frameworks for having courageous and frank conversations on a complex topic like LGBTQ+ inclusion in the local church today. We will spend time learning from those who have developed models for congregational conversations and deployed them as well as testing tools that may be a fit for your context. We will wrestle with how to set the table well (church culture), what questions are worth chasing down and also which ones to gently and lovingly take off the table for your conversation (curation) as we seek to understand the WHY for your journey.

Components

- Preparation (2hrs)
 - Read the Jesus Collective blog post [Reflections on a Jesus-Centred Vision of Human Sexuality](#)
 - Listen to the Jesus Collective podcast [Exploring Approaches to LGBTQ+ Inclusion](#)
- Weekly Meetings (9hrs)
 - The group gathers the first six weeks to hear from key practitioners
- Execution
 - For the next four months in your context - what conversations do you want to have? How will you put those on the table? What barriers do you anticipate?
- Debrief
 - Share your learnings with the group
 - Turn learnings into resources and tools to share

Weekly Rhythm (first 6 weeks)

- Week 1 – Introduction
 - Getting to know you and your church (frame the question you are seeking to answer)
- Week 2
 - *When Confessions Become Weapons* with Jeremy Duncan and Bill Wales
- Week 3
 - *Is There a “Third Way” Possible Here?* With Nelson Boschman
- Week 4
 - Responding to “*But the Bible Says...*” with Marc Gagnon
Conversations with people in process
- Week 5
 - Conversation with Bruce Miller
- Week 6 – Present Your Process
 - Lab participants will come prepared to describe how they intend to put the conversation into play in their setting and invite feedback from others



A bit about the leader: Brad (Surrey, BC) is a member of the Jesus Collective Extended Leadership Team overseeing Partner Hubs and Hub Leaders. He has served for 18 years as part of the teaching and leadership team at Jericho Ridge Community Church. Brad is an avid reader, an occasional runner & kayaker, an armchair oenologist and an advocate for the marginalized.

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How Do We Do Jesus Centred Kids Ministry?

We will explore how centring on Jesus in kids ministry transforms church engagement and discipleship in a multigenerational way. From how we engage with families to the curriculum we choose, Jesus-centered kids ministry in 2023 requires both imagination and flexibility in order to reach Gen Alpha (and their grown-ups). We will explore intergenerational engagement and ministry best practices through our Jesus-centered lens.

Components

- Preparation (2hrs)
 - Learning about the basics of a Jesus-centred approach to ministry
 - Resources designated by the group leader
- Weekly Meetings (9hrs)
 - The group gathers together the first six weeks to hear from key practitioners
- Execution
 - Bi-monthly meetings over 6 months to update learnings
- Debrief
 - Share your learnings with the group
 - Turn learnings into resources and tools to share

Weekly Rhythm (first 6 weeks)

- Week 1 – Introduction
 - Clearly identify and articulate the goal of centring on Jesus in Kids Ministry: What does this mean? Moving from program to discipleship
 - Reorientation to Jesus-centred perspective
 - Invitation to next steps
- Week 2 – Learning Meeting
 - Who does Jesus-centered kids ministry impact? Who are the generations we are serving? What do they need? How does a centered-set approach serve GenC, GenAlpha, GenZ, Millennials, and the rest of the Church?
- Week 3
 - What does centring on Jesus look like in Kids Ministry? What impact does it have? What guideposts are required to keep us centered?
- Week 4
 - What are the tools required to create a Jesus-centered Kids Ministry? From events to Sundays, midweek programs to at-home engagement, how does moving to a Jesus-centered approach move the needle on discipleship for this generation?
- Week 5
 - Marinating time: 1 week to pray / brainstorm / capture learnings
- Week 6
 - Not fully baked plan: Each participant will present their experimental plan and gather feedback from the group



A bit about the leader: Christie (Waterloo, ON) is the North American Director for RaiseUpFaith. She is a strategic leader, speaker and writer who is passionate about discipling children, empowering leaders, and equipping churches with effective support. Christie is credentialed with the BIC denomination, has the Engage Certificate in Children's Ministry through Bethel Seminary, and is a certified coach with The International Network of Children's Ministry.

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How Do Jesus Centred Leaders Empower and Equip Communities to Make Good Decisions Together?

How do we help groups of people find alignment to make good decisions together?. Countless stories have emerged of church decision making processes going sideways; either coercive 'top down' approaches, consensus-based aimlessness, or hijacked processes by unhealthy congregants.

A centred-set approach believes that the church is healthier when power is shared in a way that draws upon the gifts and involvement of everyone—one name for this process is a "community hermeneutic". This Learning Lab will explore ways in which this mutually submissive 'community hermeneutic' can be practiced in life-giving ways:

- How leaders determine which people to include in which decisions?
- Practices that empower people and foster good listening, while avoiding "paralysis by analysis" or the "hijacking" of proceedings
- How leaders can lead groups without becoming dictatorial

Participants will be invited to (re)imagine, and experiment with ways in which they might equip and lead churches to make better decisions in better ways together.

Components

- Preparation (5hrs)
 - In addition to the 4 required items listed in the Learning Lab Prep Work document, read chapters 4, 7-8 in *Faithful Presence* by David Fitch
- Weekly Meetings (9hrs)
 - The group gathers the first six weeks to hear from key practitioners
- Execution
 - Bi-monthly meetings over 4 months to update learnings
- Debrief
 - Share your learnings with the group
 - Turn learnings into resources and tools to share

Weekly Rhythm (first 6 weeks)

- Week 1 - Introduction
 - Confessing our Mistakes: What leadership and community decision making failures have you experienced?
 - Confessing Our Hopes: What is/are the question(s) you seek to answer/the posture(s) you wish to adopt?
 - Naming Our Circumstances: Your role and setting (the "system" you work in – all its opportunities and limitations)?
- Week 2 - Learning Meeting
 - *Biblical Grounds for Mutual Discernment* with Meghan Good
- Week 3
 - *Theological Resources to Remain Realistic about Leadership and Communities* with John Stackhouse
- Week 4
 - *Mutual Submission & Discernment* with David Fitch
- Week 5
 - *Case Study: How One Church Decided Together to Intentionally Release and Empower Women into Ministry Leadership* with Brad Sumner
- Week 6
 - Not fully baked plan: Each participant will present their experimental plan and gather feedback from the group



A bit about the leader: J Janzen (Abbotsford, BC) has been facilitating intergenerational, participatory experiences for over two decades as a radio producer, magazine editor, university instructor, baseball coach, and father of 4 children. Since 2008, J has served as pastoral elder at Highland Community Church. J is a member of the Jesus Collective Extended Leadership Team.

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How Do We Do Jesus Centred Youth Ministry?

What does Jesus-centred youth ministry look like? Explore alongside two Youth Pastors as we focus a discussion on Jesus in the world of teens and their families. As a community we will listen, discuss, and respond to how the Spirit may be inviting us to make Jesus more central in the formation of youth living in a rapidly changing world.

Let's be real - Youth Ministry is the best. We get to be part of one of the most crucial stages for identity and faith development. As youth workers, we get to be fellow pilgrims along the great and transformative journey of following Jesus. It's fun, exciting and never fails to keep us on our toes.

However, Youth Ministry is also complex. Walking alongside youth and their families is filled with a multitude of emotions, "setbacks" and, at times, heartbreak. With our world (and theirs!) rapidly changing, the daily practice of (re)centring on Jesus must be talked about in the youth ministry context.

- In this Learning Lab we will be pulling in resources, experts and our supervisors/managers* to help us focus on Jesus and the youth we've been invited to love and serve. We will meet for 90 minutes, once a week for 6 weeks. The day and time will be determined via a group poll after the application close date.
- After we wrestle through ideas and conversations, and learn together - we will create a plan to trial
- Once we've all completed the trial in our respective spaces, we will gather together and share what we've learned!

So, grab your favourite brew and take some time over the next 6 weeks to sit with like minded people and see where Jesus takes us.

**Note: we are going to invite all our supervisors/managers in for a convo on how this plays out in the wider church. We want to build trust and communication within our ministry teams and local church communities and not "go it alone" as Youth workers. We want you to succeed, and our supervisors/managers are a key player in that success.*



A bit about the leader: Mitch (Vancouver, BC) is driven by the vision to be a pastor to youth and households in the "neighbourhood." He regularly talks about how teens are crucial to the life of the church as they are now, not simply as future leaders. Mitch serves as the Youth and Community Pastor at Reality Church Vancouver. His ideal sabbath day includes a pour over coffee from a local roaster, trail running in the mountains with friends and inhaling freshly made popcorn.



A bit about the leader: Sarah (Stouffville, ON) has been in youth ministry for over 18 years, having worked in small town, suburban and urban in both church and para church contexts. She is deeply passionate about Jesus, teenagers, relationships, and coffee – and loves when she gets to combine all four. As a new mom, Sarah is deeply committed to engaging the church to serve the Next Generation and their families.

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