



Meeting #6: Next Steps in Flourishing

Agenda, Discussion and Homework (Approximately 1 hour)

Goal: To create space for God together, to listen to the Spirit's leading through teaching, reflection, and sharing with one another, and to act on what we hear about growing a Christ-centered, flourishing church.

1. Prepare (5 minutes)

- Have each person offer a one-word check-in. (Think of one word that honestly describes how you feel right now. This is a way of connecting with each other and offering yourself to God.)
- Enter into a brief time of silence in order to still hearts, clear minds, and become attentive. Silence is a way of waiting, watching, and listening for the presence of God's Spirit in your midst. Meditate on Scripture:

Philippians 1:3-6 (MSG)

Every time you cross my mind, I break out in exclamations of thanks to God. Each exclamation is a trigger to prayer. I find myself praying for you with a glad heart. I am so pleased that you have continued on in this with us, believing and proclaiming God's Message, from the day you heard it right up to the present. There has never been the slightest doubt in my mind that the God who started this great work in you would keep at it and bring it to a flourishing finish on the very day Christ Jesus appears.

2. Listen (15 minute video) – "Next Steps in Flourishing"

3. Reflect on what we heard (3 minutes)



Facilitator Note: Make copies of the populated Excel spread sheet showing the results for the leaders to have in front of them

Reflect silently for a few moments on the compiled Church Health Survey results.

- What do you notice?
- Where does God stir your heart?
- Where do you sense He most wants your church to grow?



4. Share what we heard. (25 minutes)

Discuss the following as a large group:

- Where on the survey did you score the highest? What can you celebrate as a church?
- Where did you score the lowest? Does this accurately reflect your church?
- With the lowest scores, where do you sense God wants your church to grow?



Facilitator Note: It would be helpful to capture these responses on white board or a flipchart.

5. Decide together how we will act differently based on what we heard. (1 minute)

Read these instructions together:

Your final assignment of this series is to write a “Flourishing Church Plan” with the help of your ECO liaison. This plan will set a goal to grow in one or two of the competencies, to prepare a timeline for growth, and help you decide what you will do to work towards that goal.

We suggest that two to three people use the Church Health Survey results and the sense of the Spirit’s leading from this meeting’s discussion to work together with your ECO liaison to outline a “Flourishing Church Plan.” That plan will be presented for discussion and approval at your next meeting.

Three questions that will form your Flourishing Church Plan:

- What is your main area of desired growth and why?
- What is your specific goal?
- What do you want to be true of your church that is not true now?

6. Pray as a group about becoming more mature disciples of Christ. (2 minutes)

Pray for those who will develop your Flourishing Church Plan.



Flourishing Church Plan Worksheet



To be completed by the two to three people previously selected, along with your ECO liaison.
Please see pages 36 - 37 for sample plans.

Flourishing Church Plan

1. What is your main area of desired growth and why?

2. What is your specific goal? What do you want to be true of your church that is not true now?

3. How will you grow in this area? How will you get there? What resources are needed? What is your timeline?

When you have finalized and approved your Flourishing Church Plan, please email it to info@flourishmovement.org.



Sample Flourishing Church Plans

These three sample plans are taken from three different congregations as examples of what a church might come up with after they have gone through the *Becoming a Flourishing Church* material. The leadership of each church should determine their individual next steps after going through the material and talking with their ECO liaison. The ECO resource list on our website is also available to get ideas for how to grow in a specific area.

1. Where does your church need to grow in the coming year?

Church #1 – We have assumed that if people come to church on Sundays and are involved in a learning community such as a small group, they will be growing as disciples. However, we've discovered that most of our leaders are stalled in their spiritual growth. Therefore, we can assume that most likely many others in our congregation are also stalled in their growth. We need to be more intentional about making disciples and creating a disciple-making culture.

Church #2 – We realize we have been living out of a purely attractional model of ministry where we have simply tried to get people to church. While we still want to be an "attractive" church, we want to put more energy into being missional. We want to begin to create missional communities that will seek to minister to their surrounding communities more authentically.

Church #3 – This process helped us realize that we have been pretty comfortable with the clergy and staff doing most of the ministry. Our laity is content, by and large, to sit on the sidelines. We want to be more intentional about having our staff and clergy equip others for ministry. This goal will take new learning on the part of the staff as well as the congregation.

2. What is your specific goal? What do you want to be true of your church in a year that is not true now?

Church #1 – We want to accomplish the following in the next year:

- Train all of our small group leaders in the methodology associated with ECO's discipleship initiative, using the Discipleship Designs.
- See all of the people in small groups or Sunday school develop and live out a personal plan for their own discipleship growth, with Discipleship Designs.
- Develop a long-range plan to move into a more intentional disciple-making culture. This plan may mean we need to eliminate some strategies that aren't working now.

Church #2 – We want to accomplish the following in the next year:

- Develop two missional communities and free the individuals involved from obligations within the church in order to pursue this vision.
- Help our congregation understand the missional concepts that Jesus embodied. We would love to see at least half of our church take small steps toward missional engagement.



Church #3 – We want to accomplish the following in the next year:

- See our program staff spend at least 1/3 of their time devoted to developing other leaders.
- See our Session become a healthier community with more intentional spiritual engagement, and engage in greater trust and synergy with one another.
- Develop five spiritually mature lay leaders to be commissioned to celebrate the sacraments in micro-expressions of church (according to 2.0502 of ECO's polity).

3. How will we grow in this area? What is our timeline and what resources do we need?

Church #1

- We will engage in ECO's *Flourishing Disciples* course in order to change our church culture into a disciple-making culture.
- We will take time in every Session meeting to check in with each other's current individual Discipleship Design.
- In four months, we will begin to train our small group teachers in the Discipleship Design model presented in *Becoming a Flourishing Church*.

Church #2

- We will engage with Alex Absalom and Dandelion to train us in the development of missional communities and the transformation of our culture (get connected through our ECO liaison).
- We will spend the next six months preaching missional concepts.
- Each month in worship we will share stories highlighting those who have taken missional steps.

Church #3

- We will begin the *Flourishing Leaders* course through ECO (This is the ECO specific version of Elder Leadership Institute.)
- We will create a six-month process to develop and train lay leaders to celebrate the sacraments utilizing resources from ECO and our own material.
- We will take time in every Session meeting to check in with each other's current Discipleship Design.



Healthy Church Competency Descriptions

There are many wonderful instruments that are useful in considering how well a church is flourishing. For our purposes, we are going to adapt the “Six Movement Competencies” or qualities that have been identified by the 100 Movement Initiative (100M). These movement competencies were originally identified in Alan Hirsch’s book, *The Forgotten Ways*, as necessary components for exponential church growth.

We are using this specific tool for the following reasons. First, the leaders of the 100 Movement Initiative have identified ECO as an organization that has the potential to become a true Christian movement if we truly live out our mission statement. As we looked at the 100M metrics, we saw a parallel between their six competencies and the five shifts that ECO previously identified:

- From *clergy-centered* to an **unleashed laity**
- From *safety and preservation* to **risk-taking and expansion**
- From *homogeneous leadership prepared for Christendom* to **preparing all of God’s people for a post-Christian culture**
- From *purely attractional model of ministry* to **missional AND attractional**
- From an *addition/subtraction mentality* to **multiplication mindset**

In using the 100M competencies, we are not changing directions, but enhancing where we are already going. Below is a brief description of the competencies using terminology that may seem very foreign, but we feel strongly that these competencies are descriptive of the areas where we want churches to grow. Please take the necessary time to familiarize yourself with this terminology.

Competency #1 – Knows Its Unique Identity & Calling (Identity Declaring)

In several pointed conversations, Jesus asks his followers to declare that He is Messiah- the sent one of God. He tells people that when they declare him as Lord, it will require a clear focus and commitment. Jesus tells them that they will need to choose Him even above their own families. This competency looks at the extent to which a congregation is able to have a singular commitment to Lord. It asks the church to look at its vision and mission to see if they clearly identify Jesus as Lord in word and in deed. To be truly identity declaring, the mission and vision of a church needs to be clear. The mission and vision also needs to be embraced by the congregation and it needs to be consistent with the values of God’s Kingdom for the greater community. This competency also looks at the extent to which the covenant partners sacrificially serve God’s purposes in the congregation and in the world.

Competency #2 – Normalizes Risk Taking (Risk Tribalizing)

Scripture is full of stories of God calling people to risk for the sake of His mission. We see God calling Abram to leave the land with which he was familiar to go to an unknown place. When Jesus calls the disciples, he tells them to leave everything and follow him. These are not just individual stories, but reflect the theme that if we are going to be His disciples, we must pick up our cross daily and follow Him. This competency examines the extent to which a congregation, its covenant partners, and its leaders are willing to risk for the sake of the mission. It also examines if a congregation takes occasional or normative risks.



Competency #3 – Expects Disciple-Making (Disciple-Making)

The desire of Christ is that we “make disciples of all nations, teaching them to obey everything he has commanded.” This competency looks at how well the church makes fully devoted followers of Jesus Christ. It asks the extent to which a congregation is structured and devoted to the making of mature disciples. It also asks whether the covenant partners, especially the leaders, are intentionally investing in others to help them in their maturity as followers of Christ.

Competency #4 – Nurtures Missional Living (Incarnational Messaging)

The beauty of God’s mission to restore a relationship with us was that he didn’t require us to first come to Him, but sent Himself in the person of Jesus. We not only see important theology in the incarnation, but we see the strategy of God who was willing to meet us in the messiness of our context. Often churches try to evangelize by attracting people rather than trying to send its people into the world. This competency measures the willingness and consistency with which the church and its covenant partners authentically engage in their surrounding community for the gospel.

Competency #5 – Generates Multiplying Leaders (Leader Releasing)

In recent history, the church has been centered upon the leadership of the clergy and staff of the congregation. The resulting culture that has evolved is that the congregation pays the clergy and staff to do the ministry for them. Every true Christian movement, however, has had at its core an embracing of the totality of the ministry by all of God’s people. This competency looks at a couple of factors. First, it looks at the extent to which the clergy and staff view their role as encouraging, equipping and empowering the body to do its role. Competence in this area means that clergy and staff train and release the people into ministry, rather than do it themselves. This competency also measures the extent to which the congregation understands and embraces their role with the five-fold ministry presented in Ephesians 4.

Competency #6 – Prepares to Launch (Multiplication Organizing)

This competency looks at if the church is organized in such a way that encourages the multiplying of leaders, groups and churches. Churches can often be structured for institutional survival and preservation rather than their multiplication. We know that every living thing multiplies. The church is a living organism and should be focused on the multiplication of disciples, groups and leaders. It should be organized to raise up leaders to not only serve the local church, but to be deployed in new contexts.



Healthy Church Competency Survey

Use the following brief evaluation to determine the health of your church in the six movement competencies. Keep in mind that most churches will score low on most or all the competencies. A high score on most would mean that your congregation would already be an exponentially multiplying church.

Scale

Strongly Disagree 1	Disagree 2	Agree 3	Strongly Agree 4
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Competency #1 - Knows Its Unique Identity & Calling

1. We have a mission and vision that is outward focused and owned by the majority of our covenant partners.	1	2	3	4
2. We allow Jesus' desire for our lives and congregation to win over our personal preferences.	1	2	3	4
3. Our covenant partners sacrificially serve for the cause of Christ in our surrounding community.	1	2	3	4
4. As a whole, our covenant partners would be identified as "imitators of Christ."	1	2	3	4

Total: _____

Competency #2 - Normalizes Risk Taking

1. We take risks as a church	1	2	3	4
2. We encourage and promote individuals and groups to be innovative for ministry.	1	2	3	4
3. We take on ministries that stretch us to rely on the Lord.	1	2	3	4
4. Our covenant partners spend as much, if not more, time serving outside the church structure as inside of it.	1	2	3	4

Total: _____



Healthy Church Competency Survey

Competency #5 - Generates Multiplying Leaders

1. Non-paid lay leaders lead most of the ministries of our church.	1	2	3	4
2. We allow those with diverse APEST roles to share in leadership so that we have a balanced church ministry.	1	2	3	4
3. The ministry of the church is not dependent upon the paid staff.	1	2	3	4
4. Our clergy and staff spend more of their time equipping people for ministry than doing ministry themselves.	1	2	3	4

Total: _____

Competency #6 - Prepares to Launch

1. We are committing time, energy, and finances to the planting of new churches.	1	2	3	4
2. We are successful at multiplying groups and leaders.	1	2	3	4
3. We actively identify potential leaders and cultivate them to be involved in new churches or micro-expressions of church.	1	2	3	4
4. We have a plan, even if basic, for how we will plant new churches.	1	2	3	4

Total: _____



Healthy Church Competency Survey

Competency #3 - Expects Disciple-Making

1. We have a clear, comprehensive, and agreed upon definition of a disciple.	1	2	3	4
2. Our leaders actively and intentionally engage in relationships to disciple other people.	1	2	3	4
3. We evaluate potential leaders based on their own personal discipleship.	1	2	3	4
4. We encourage and expect that all of our covenant partners will actively disciple other people.	1	2	3	4

Total: _____

Competency #4 - Nurtures Missional Living

1. Our covenant partners view evangelism as something they do outside the walls of the church.	1	2	3	4
2. The community would feel a deep loss if our congregation did not exist.	1	2	3	4
3. We know and respond to the needs of the community.	1	2	3	4
4. Our covenant partners have deep friendships with those who don't know Jesus.	1	2	3	4

Total: _____

