Appendix B: Case Study Scenarios

“How Would You Start Infusing FWE into This Church’s Culture?” For MTF Learning Communities

CASE SCENARIO #1
First Christian Church is a large, 60-year-old, predominantly white congregation located in the suburbs of a southeastern, mid-sized city. Mission: “Reaching the Whole World with the Whole Gospel.” The city sports two college campuses and is generally economically healthy (4% unemployment) but with several “pockets of poverty.” The church typically sees about 1300 people in Sunday worship services and some 1750 individuals are on the membership rolls. The church has an active and long-standing ministry to college students. Roughly 150 college students attend on any given Sunday. The church’s outreach ministries also include a jail ministry (Bible studies in a low-security prison just a few minutes outside of town); a mentoring program connected to the local Crisis Pregnancy Center; and a “friendship ministry” among international students. The pastoral staff includes a Senior Pastor (on staff the past 12 years); a Pastor of Discipleship (on staff the past 13 months); a Youth Pastor (on staff the past 4 years); and a College Ministries Pastor (on staff the past 9 years). Also on staff are a full-time Director of Foreign Missions; a half-time Director of Local Outreach, a half-time Coordinator of Children’s Ministries, two interns (recent college graduates who help support the children’s, youth, and college ministries), and two full-time administrative assistants. Staff relationships are healthy and the Senior Pastor is a strong preacher/teacher who is generally well-loved by the congregation. A 14-member Board of Trustees and 8 Deacons help provide leadership.

The church is composed of:
- 60% = college students; young professionals; couples in their 20s and 30s with kids
- 30% = singles and marrieds in their 40s-60s
- 10% = seniors (over 65)

It is predominantly “white collar” and well-educated (mostly college grads). Small groups used to be fairly vibrant, with about 50% of the congregation involved. But then the church went without a Discipleship Pastor for 18 months and small group involvement plummeted to 15%. Just over 1 year ago the church hired its new Discipleship Pastor. This individual oversees the Wednesday night adult education ministry, small groups, supervises the Director of Outreach and the Coordinator of Children’s Ministries, and also preaches about 1/3 of the time.

The college ministries pastor has been reading a lot on faith and work and joined Made to Flourish last year. He is very eager to see First Christian embrace vocational stewardship as part of the DNA of the church. The Sr. Pastor is open, but never preaches topically (always studies one book of the Bible at a time) and initially rejected the idea of doing a sermon series on work and calling. The Discipleship Pastor is open but also feeling overwhelmed by his new job. The Missions pastor wants to know if this faith and work thing is just a “fad.” The Director for Local Outreach is good friends with the college ministries pastor and agrees that the church should talk much more about “whole-life discipleship.”

CASE SCENARIO #2
Asheville Community Church (ACC) is a non-denominational, multi-ethnic church of 280 members (about 200 adults in worship on average) in an economically transitional neighborhood in a Midwestern city, population 500,000. It is co-pastored by two friends who attended the same seminary. One is Caucasian and one is African-American. Both are in their late 30s. ACC’s mission is “Simply Loving God and Loving Neighbors” and it is 6 years
The church is known for its high-quality, vibrant worship and its “family” feel, with a very strong emphasis on home groups. Demographically, singles in their 20s and 30s are probably the largest group, followed by middle-class and working-class families in their 30s and 40s. Staff includes the 2 co-pastors, a ½ time Children’s Ministries Director, a ½ time Worship Arts Director, and a volunteer full-time administrative assistant. Many congregants live within a few miles of the church, which is located in an urban neighborhood that has slowly begun to become an “artsy” district. Church finances are typically tight but they make their budget each year.

The congregation has many talented arts and music-oriented members as well as a high number of educators. The church’s main outreach ministry is to a local high school because (a) two church members (a mixed-race couple) are the Young Life directors for that side of the city, including that high school and (b) three teachers and the Associate Principal from that high school are also church members.

Engagement in neighborhood-based home groups is pushed hard by leadership as community is a central value of the church. Service is also a high value at ACC, though there is little organized church outreach beyond the high school ministry. Home groups are encouraged to “love their neighbors and neighborhood in practical ways” but some groups struggle to implement that vision. The congregation very intentionally seeks to pursue racial reconciliation and is composed of 45% whites, 30% African-Americans, many mixed-raced couples, and a small number of Hispanic families (English-speaking, 2nd & 3rd generation).

The pastors preach regularly on the Kingdom of God and emphasize what they call “an organic,” first-century Christianity that “majors on the majors” of love, community, prayer, relational ministry, and authentic communion with Jesus. Home groups typically meet on Sunday nights and either discuss the sermon or study a book together (usually one recommended by the pastors that coordinates to whatever sermon series they are teaching). There is children’s Sunday School and a youth group that meets during the Sunday School hour under volunteer leaders. These occur simultaneous to the worship service; there is no adult Sunday School program.

The seminary the two co-pastors attended recently held a conference on “Vocation and the Common Good”. Both attended and were deeply convicted that they need to integrate much more intentionally a focus on vocation and calling at ACC but are unsure of the steps to take. They do not expect much resistance, except in the sense that they’ve never emphasized work that much because their teaching has focused so heavily on building a healthy church community, cross-racial relationships, “friendship evangelism” with neighbors, and cultivating through the spiritual disciplines and rich worship a deep, “real” relationship with Jesus.