



Forge America

Pastor's Cohort Group

Overview

The Forge Pastor's Cohort is a training hub in partnership with Forge America that strives to train and equip missional leaders. The primary way that we do this is through our Missionary Formation Cohort groups. The group is a 6-month discipleship coaching/training experience that will enable church leaders to develop a missionary posture and lifestyle for where they live, work, and play.

Forge Pastor's Cohort group will provide the following for each participant and, potentially, their local congregation or community:

- It will help you and your people (congregation or community that you lead) develop a common language and passion for mission aimed for where you live, work, and play.
- It will help you – pastor or layperson, young and old – to discover and respond to God's unique call on your life as a "sent" people into the world.
- It will help you and your people discern and clarify your call to a specific missional context – either a geographic "place" or a demographic people group.
- It will help you and your people develop common core practices for an effective mission. You will learn to engage neighbors intentionally, creatively, respectfully, and prayerfully.

The Curriculum combines video and print content with large and smaller group reflection, personal coaching, and practice.

It is designed to help the participant:

- Gain a greater understanding of the Bible as God's story of the mission.
- Gain a deeper appreciation for the Church as God's ordained community, shaped and organized by His mission.
- Experience discipleship as a complete surrender to God and engagement in His mission.
- Grow to "see" and love people far from God as "neighbors" as people who are cherished and loved by God.
- Gain a clearer sense of God's unique call on you and to know and love a specific place and/or people group as the focus of that call.
- Become a practitioner of God's mission by the fruitfulness of your life and example; you will be able to influence others to do the same.

The Training and Formation Components

Church

Residents are required to remain faithful to their local church by continuing to gather and fellowship with other believers. Forge is not a church-planting network but exists to help you follow and serve Jesus in your current setting.

Monthly Cohort Training. Residents will meet monthly in a larger intensive for training and group discussion. Training will come through assigned readings, podcasts, videos, and live seminars featuring established and accredited scholars, missional leaders, pastors, and practitioners.

Monthly Coaching. In addition to the monthly cohort, you will be paired with a coach throughout the Cohort experience. You will meet once a month with 2-3 others and a coach in a smaller huddle for mentoring, group reflection, and encouragement.

Reflection and Practice Within Your Unique Context. The heart of transformational learning takes place within your unique context for the place and the people to which God has uniquely called you. If you are currently serving in vocational ministry, this is not necessarily the same thing. Your missional context is outside the walls of the church. You will discover where you have already been sent to live on mission. You will learn to discern and appreciate the unique culture, narratives, obstacles, and opportunities that come with that context in order to effectively help people find their life in Jesus.

Time

The Cohort Group is a 6-month learning community.

Cost

\$249.00 per Participant, Spouses, are free. For Wabash-appointed pastors, a \$150 scholarship will be granted to those who attend regularly.

Dates:

The next residency will start on September 30, 2021, and conclude on April 28, 2022. Groups will meet on the second and fourth Thursdays of the month. The second week of the month will be a three-hour teaching and interactive discussion session. The fourth Thursday of the month is a ninety-minute small group coaching session via Zoom. This session will focus on implementation, support, and coaching.

To Register: <https://wabashconf.wufoo.com/forms/z14l5753153bl9t/>

For more information, contact Dwight Weber dwight.weber@missionigniter.org, 574-575-8857

The Missionary Formation Curriculum

Module 1: Mission

SESSION 1 Introduction to Forge America and our philosophy. The group will spend time getting to know one another as well as overviewing the season and outlining expectations and materials.

SECTION 1-1: THE CRISIS OF OUR TIME

Introduction: Forge was birthed out of a cultural crisis. What has happened in Europe and Australia is now happening in America. More and more individuals are disconnected and disinterested in church as we know it. There are many significant cultural barriers to effectively communicating the gospel, and we must rethink whether or not our current methods are as effective as they once were. Understanding the cultural crisis is essential if we hope to have a lasting paradigm shift and a new lens for living out our faith.

SECTION 1-2: IDENTITY CRISIS; UNDERSTANDING A MISSIONARY GOD & A MISSIONARY CHURCH

Introduction: Not only has there been a cultural crisis in the West but there has also been an identity crisis. The identity crisis we have is with how we see God and with how we see the church. If we desire to faithfully live out God's call on our lives, we must understand and recognize that God and His church are intrinsically missionary in nature. Who we are and what we do as the church is derived from the very nature of a sending, missionary God, who in turn compels it to be sent as a missionary-people.

SECTION 1-3: OUR MISSION

Summary: We have been sent on mission to the places where we are already doing life. For many of us, missions has been something that happens across borders, while here at home, we do evangelism. For others, mission is feeding the poor or working with the homeless. While neither of these are bad things, they do not give a complete picture of what God's mission is and what it looks like for us to join Him in it. In this two-week section, we will learn about the mission of God and what it might look like to join Him in His redeeming work in this world.

SECTION 1-4: PARTICIPATING IN THE MISSION

Summary: As we begin to see God & His mission differently, it will deeply affect the way we live. We have been sent into the world by Jesus to join in His mission. We are no longer living under our rule but under the rule and reign of God. We are participants in His Kingdom.

SECTION 1-5: FOLLOWING JESUS INTO MISSION, PART 1

Summary: Jesus Christ is the centerpiece of our faith, and the way we view Him will impact the way we see life and mission. Often our view of Jesus gets distorted, and we end up making Jesus look more like us than us like Him. In our formation process as sent people, we must re-Jesus ourselves, and we must allow the Jesus of the Gospels to become the paradigm (or lens) through which we see our life and mission. He must be our guide as we engage the world in which we live.

Module 2: FOLLOWING JESUS INTO MISSION: Spiritual Formation

SECTION 2-1: PERSONAL DISCIPLESHIP

Summary: If "missional" refers to our "going out" or "sentness," then "incarnational" refers to our "embedding" or "going deep." This is the very thing that Jesus Christ did when He came to earth. For the first 30 years of His life, He shared life with those in His local community. He experienced the community's life, its rhythms, and its people from the inside and not as an outsider. The first 30 years, as well as His last three years, must be our example for how we carry out discipleship. 1 John 2:6 says, "Whoever claims to live in Him, must live as Jesus did." Jesus must be our example and our guide in faith, life, mission, and discipleship. Before we focus on our discipleship of others, we must spend time focusing on our own discipleship - - our transformation into the image of Christ. In this section, we will focus on the intentionality, space, & rhythms required for our own discipleship.

SECTION 2-2: MISSIONAL DISCIPLESHIP

Summary: If discipleship involves our life in Christ and His life in and through us, many problems in discipleship can be traced to the breakdowns in this connection. Our lives should be looking more and more like Jesus, and when this is not happening, it will affect our discipleship of others. In the next two two-week section, we will continue to discuss barriers to our own discipleship and how we then disciple those in the places we have been sent.

SECTION 2-3: DISCIPLESHIP PRACTICES

Summary: Discipleship is the process of becoming more like Jesus. As this transformation happens, the priorities of God's Kingdom become our priorities, and the hope is that they will, in fact, rub off on those we share life with. We are convinced that this transformation does not happen through information and information alone. For far too long, the church has had an abundance of information, yet it has missed the mark in discipleship.

When we look at the life of Jesus, we see that he consistently invited people to come alongside him and practice the Kingdom life far before their transformation happened. In our discipleship and in our discipleship of others, we must cultivate practices or habits that help aid in our own transformation and in the transformation of those we share life with. In this section, we will look at a set of practices that we can observe and invite others to practice alongside us.

SECTION 2-4: SUSTAINABILITY THROUGH SPIRITUALITY

Summary: Just as Jesus modeled radical discipleship, He also gave us a model for sustainability in discipleship. In the next few sections, we will learn from Jesus how we are to sustain through the means of spirituality and shared life. In this section, we will primarily focus on sustaining the mission through spirituality.

SECTION 2-5: SUSTAINABILITY THROUGH SHARED LIFE - THE NECESSITY OF OTHERS

Summary: Jesus did not just model sustainability through spirituality but also sustainability through shared life. The missionary life is not one that we do alone; we need others. In the next few sessions, we will focus on this need for others, shared life, family on mission, and missional community.

SECTION 2-6: SUSTAINABILITY THROUGH SHARED LIFE - MISSIONAL COMMUNITY

Summary: Jesus did not just model sustainability through spirituality but also sustainability through shared life. One of the best environments for shared life and community to happen is in missional communities. Think of a missional community, not as a form or a model but rather a group of people (small or large) who are committed to going on mission with one another. In this section, we are going to look at the thinking behind missional communities or microchurches and practical next steps to developing communities on mission.