

WESTWOOD IMMERSION GOALS

October 8–9, 2019

Description of the Immersion

This immersion will offer key leaders the opportunity to visit and learn from a congregation that has shaped its entire ministry around grace and vocation. Over the past five years, Westwood has undergone significant cultural and organizational change that has dramatically strengthened its ability to empower and equip the baptized to live out their faith in daily life. Participants will gain insight into the rationale for making the change, the challenges that can be expected along the way, and the congregational revitalization that will emerge.

- Theological foundations
 - i. Grace and vocation: These confessions push us deeply into real life.
 - ii. Theology of the Cross: This pushes us away from vague answers/statements into engagement with the specifics of real life (especially the questions, struggles, and ambiguities). Only then does faith come alive/matter/change worldviews.
- Clarity on the challenges and entry points
 - i. Moralistic, Therapeutic, Deism is the dominant worldview for our people. Being honest about that necessitates a long process of evaluation.
 - ii. The issue of “meaning making” is central to the majority of our people in society (as opposed to guilt from sin although that is also present).
 - iii. Assumptions about the role and purpose of the church stand in the way of deep engagement of real life.
- Leadership considerations
 - i. Systems thinking as the lens (self-definition, clarity, maturity).
 - ii. Catalyzing a paradigm shift needs to be leadership’s ultimate goal.
 - iii. Development of a shared leadership model.
 - iv. The critical nature of healthy relationships.
- Sharing the actual process and the commitments
 - i. Focus and depth need to define the journey (vocation is not a side thing, but all-encompassing in a way that is relevant to context).
 - ii. Vocation needs to define all congregational activity (worship, small groups, all ministry areas).
 - iii. The role of evaluation to both learn and raise new questions. This pushes the upcoming year’s engagement into real questions and experiences of life.
- Sharing the layperson’s experience
 - i. What has been most meaningful about this vocation theme?
 - ii. How has our work on vocation connected to your real life?
 - iii. What difference has it made in how you view the God/your life/the world?
- Transferability of the Westwood experience