

Missional Church Initiative Frequently Ask Questions

What is the Missional Church Initiative?

The Missional Church Initiative (MCI) is a two-year experience designed to invest in the leadership of your congregation. The entire experience is designed to help your local leaders grow and develop the character and competencies necessary to lead effectively in the work God is asking your congregation to do for the sake of his kingdom. This experience was designed by Reggie McNeal, author of *A Work of Heart: Understanding how God Shapes Spiritual Leaders*, *Missional Renaissance: Changing the Scorecard for the Church*, and a host of other titles addressing leadership and missional ministry issues.

The Missional Church Initiative consists of four overnight retreats (Friday noon - 8pm and Saturday 8 - 1pm) over a two year period held in the Danville, IL area. A key component of the initiative will be the team based learning environment where each participant will be a member of a peer-based learning community. The end goal of the experience is to produce Christian leaders who are healthy, resilient, self-aware, and able to work from their God-given strengths in such a manner that they will be able to lead local congregations through the transition from an inward focus to an outward focused ministry. Simply put, we want healthier leaders who are helping lead God's people to live on mission more effectively in their day to day lives.

How is MCI different from MLI?

The Missional Leadership Initiative was first launched in 2010 by the Churches of God, General Conference (CGGC). It had the goal of investing in the lives of individual leaders throughout our denomination. The Missional Church Initiative plans to take that experience and broaden it to include the key leaders of congregations who can help inspire, encourage, and lead the charge to challenge their congregations to become more effective in representing Jesus and His Kingdom to their community. It will focus primarily on team based initiatives and goal setting to help have a greater impact.

What will I get as a leader from the MCI experience?

- 1) A better understanding of what it means for your congregation to be "missional." (Let's face it, "missional" is the latest evangelical buzzword that means something different to everyone – evangelism, outreach, trendy, relevant, skinny jeans – you get the idea). Get a clearer understanding of what it means to live into God's mission and how that impacts you and your ministry.
- 2) Help in figuring out how you (live on mission). It's one thing to understand the idea; it's another thing to live it out. How do you turn a congregation outward? How do you invest in the spiritual development of the congregation? How do you begin to help the local congregation "seek the peace and prosperity of the city"? What does this look like on the calendar, in the budget, on the staff schedule, etc.? How do you begin to develop a scorecard that helps you evaluate more than just who is showing up and how much they give?
- 3) A safe place. We all need a safe place to deal with the struggles and challenges we face in leadership - a place where you can dream as a team. We will provide a setting where you can work through real challenges and obstacles that face your congregation. There will be directed interaction that allows the freedom to express what could be, as well as the time and encouragement to take necessary steps to move your congregation into the future.

What does it cost?

\$500 tuition per person/seat (\$250 in July 2018 and \$250 in July 2019). We expect a minimum of 4 leaders including the pastor to participate in each retreat (maximum of 8). For simplicity, your registration reserves a table with a fixed number of seats around it. We know schedules can be challenging, so you have the freedom to switch out which of your church members attend each retreat. We ask that half of the seats are filled by the same people each retreat, but the other half is completely dependent on you and your team's availability.

What is covered by the tuition?

The cost of the four retreats (meals, lodging, programming, and special guests) is covered as well as the cost of several learning profiles and textbooks. Your tuition covers a portion of the total cost of this experience and the remainder is covered by the MRC. You are responsible for your own travel costs to and from the four retreats.

What does the schedule of the retreats look like?

All of the retreats will begin on Friday at noon with a meal. To make the most of our limited time together we will finish up our discussion on Friday evening at approximately 8pm after an evening meal. Saturday morning will begin at 8am and conclude approximately 1pm with a meal for the road. The retreat will consist of large group sessions, team based exercises, and a good deal of space to allow for team reflection and processing.

Are the dates for the retreats already set?

The dates for the retreats are as follows:

November	9-10, 2018
April	12-13, 2019
November	8-9, 2019
May	1-2, 2020

Where will the retreats be held?

All retreats will be held in the Danville, IL area. Specific locations and lodging will be communicated closer to each event.

Are there scholarships available?

The cost of tuition covers just a portion of the overall cost for the Missional Church Initiative. The MRC is underwriting the costs not covered through participants' tuition. As a result, there are very limited scholarships available.

When will we know whether our application has been accepted?

You will be notified no later than July 15, 2018 (those applying before the deadline should expect to receive confirmation within a month of their application submission). Upon acceptance, you will receive the personal covenant form consisting of your personal commitment to the program as well as a form for each member of your team participating in MCI. You will also receive further instructions regarding the November 2018 retreat and instructions for any preparatory work necessary for the retreat.

What will the cohort learning groups require?

Your cohort for this experience will be the leadership members that are included in the MCI experience. These groups will play a vital role in the MCI experience. The groups will meet at appointed times throughout the retreats for processing and reflection. The groups will also be expected to maintain interaction during the months between the MCI retreats.

The cohorts will be given assignments to assist each participant in the continuation of personal growth and development and provide accountability/coaching in that process. Some assignments will relate to missional efforts within the local community, but the cohort will provide accountability to one another as well as serve as peer coaches and mentors to one another in these efforts.

The cohort groups will require a high degree of confidentiality as they will become a “safe place” for leaders to work through the various challenges of their life and ministry.

What kind of work is expected of me between retreats?

There will typically be one or two required books that will need to be read before each retreat. These will serve to “frontload” some of the material that will be encountered during specific retreats. There will also be occasional profile or assessment tools that will need to be completed before the retreat in order to have that information available at the time of the retreat.

There will be assignments dealing with personal development and missional engagement. The cohorts will continue to meet outside of the retreat setting in order to encourage one another’s progress and work in these areas throughout the experience. All of the assignments will relate directly to the participant’s life and ministry as a part of the congregation, with the focus being continued growth and development as opposed to formal academic exercise.

Who will facilitate the retreats?

Training has been provided by Reggie McNeal to a handful of potential retreat facilitators. Brandon Kelly and Brian Miller will be the primary facilitators at the first retreat. There may also be other guest facilitators to address certain retreat topics.

How many people should make up our team?

We ask for a minimum team size of 4 and a maximum of 8, including the pastor, for your congregation.

How many people will be a part of this experience?

The Missional Church Initiative will be limited to roughly 40 participants.

What if I have other questions or concerns that are not addressed here?

Please contact Travis Bodden at director@midwestregion.org or 260-244-4042.