

Discipleship Through Mentoring at IPC

One of the IPC council goals for 2018-2019 is to build discipleship through intergenerational mentoring.

A working group was formed to achieve this goal. It is believed that the realization of this goal could be fostered through a specific coordination of support from the church focusing on mentoring and establishing mentor-mentee relationships depending on the initiative taken by individuals in the congregation.

The thoughts and discussions of the group are summarized in this document. The sections are as follows:

1. Definition and purpose - what are we proposing and why?
2. Establishing new relationships - which relationships are in focus and how could this work?
3. Considerations for the church - what would need to be thought about as this is set up and supported?
4. Considerations for mentors and mentees - what should participants keep in mind and adhere to?
5. Participants' Statement of Intent - why is it suggested to have such a form and what other information could be gathered as part of this?

Definition and Purpose

Definition

What is meant by “spiritual mentoring”? It is to be distinguished from business mentoring, which is performance oriented. Spiritual mentoring, in contrast, focuses on spiritual and personal growth and involves explicit reference to biblical principles and teachings.

Purpose

A coordinated effort by the church can make it easier for such relationships to be established. The basic premise would be to encourage discipleship through Scripture. In the context of spiritual mentoring:

- encouraging discipleship through biblical models and doctrine
- walking through life together
- approaching issues which arise primarily from Scripture and truths found in Scripture

Although the prominence of Scripture is stressed, affirmation is given to the use of books and/or other literature used in mentoring that are generally agreed to be in line with IPC’s and scriptural beliefs.

An end goal is to see God’s grace being multiplied in the congregation through Scripture and Spirit-led mentor-mentee relationships.

Purpose Statement

The following is a statement setting out the purpose of a coordinated effort of growing discipleship through spiritual mentoring at IPC:

In order to grow discipleship at IPC,

- 1. spiritual growth is facilitated through mentoring relationships,*
- 2. which in turn leads to a deeper faith and stronger community,*
- 3. which is ultimately discipleship in Christ.*

For this endeavor, mentoring relationships are understood to fall under the following categories:

- *a Paul: someone who is more mature in faith, leading us on.*
- *a Timothy: someone younger who can profit from our experience.*

In this endeavor, those interested at IPC are invited to participate in building one such discipling relationship.

Establishing New Relationships

Scope

The following scope is proposed for spiritual mentoring actively promoted by IPC:
Anyone willing to disciple or be disciplined by another member of the congregation is suitable as a mentor or mentee respectively. At IPC, women disciple women, and men disciple men.

Bringing mentors and mentees together

Although there are countless ways of bringing people together, the following two ways will be used for the initiative:

1. Through an event
 - A teaching workshop:
 - Saturday, March 30th from 9:00 to 12:00 in the French Hall
 - Pastors Andy Stager and Sam Gyorfi will lead
 - Goal: bring mentees and mentors together to define the purpose of the discipleship initiative and the expectations for both the mentees and the mentors.

2. Through individuals contacting the IPC office
 - Individuals looking for a mentor/mentee who cannot attend the workshop can provide their details to the IPC office who will then match them to another volunteer.

Considerations for the Church

Initial steps

1. A team has been formed to take ownership of the effort led by Jeff Anhut and Matt Kägi.
2. This team is planning communication to inform the congregation about the intent and goal of the endeavor which includes but is not limited to this paper made available on the IPC website, a flyer in the bulletin, Morning and Evening worship service announcements, presenting to different groups within the congregation (Men's Breakfast, Nexus, Home groups, etc.) and to the office staff.
3. A small "library" of resources will be collated by Andy and Sam and maintained on the IPC Website, to cover topics which may arise such as setting up ground rules for a mentor-mentee relationship (see the next section).
4. Those who come forward to join in a mentor-mentee relationship will be asked to sign a standard Statement of Intent for (see the section on that topic).

Resource library

A small physical and/or electronic library of resources will be collated and maintained by the church. The following items will form part of the library:

- Written information and documentation on discipleship and spiritual mentoring posted on the IPC website.
- A recording of the teaching workshop on discipleship as part of an initial kick-off will be made available electronically for those who could not attend or join IPC later.
- Resources on listening and other guidelines for mentors and mentees will be made available via the IPC website or through the office.
- Books and Bible studies to be suggested to mentors or mentees if needed.

Administration

It is likely that there will be some administrative duties associated with maintaining such a library. Additionally, the matching of persons and maintaining a database of information will add some office duties.

Considerations for Mentors and Mentees

Fruits of discipleship

As part of the discussion of purpose, some of the fruits which could result were considered. It is expected that teaching on spiritual discipleship will touch on and expand further on this thinking.

Just as Jesus mentored the twelve disciples or Paul mentored Timothy, as Christians we want to serve in Christ-centered relationships which seek to encourage, empower, grow and walk alongside one another. It is hoped those interested at IPC will have the opportunity to be encouraged, inspired and disciplined by a mature Christian, to benefit from their God-given wisdom and experience.

Growing discipleship is encouraged for some of the following reasons:

Mentees could expect

- to grow in their relationship with Christ,
- to have a person of maturity to walk alongside in times of difficulty,
- to have accountability for their actions, and
- to have a mature Christian friend in their life.

Mentors could expect

- to grow in their relationship with Christ,
- to have the joy of walking alongside a younger Christian on their walk towards God, and
- to boldly point or lead mentees to/in Christ. (Acts 20:18-21)

Ground rules

The following ground rules are proposed for the mentoring relationships.

- The mentor and the mentee must be of the same gender.
- In general, all things shared are confidential, unless self-harm or harm to others might result from one's actions.
- We encourage all participants to make a commitment through a Statement of Intent to IPC for this program (see the next page).

Further suggestions

It would be helpful and suggest a short set of considerations or contract which new mentors and mentees make when deciding how the relationship should work. For example:

- committing to meeting for at least 1 hour, at least monthly,
- for a period of 6 to 12 months,
- somewhere in everyday life i.e. not at church,
- setting out concrete goals for the relationship at the start, and
- committing to giving the relationship their best effort (but it is understood that the mentoring relationship can be ended earlier).

Participants' Statement of Intent

We suggest that mentors and mentees sign a Statement of Intent as part of joining the initiative.

Commitment made by the church

The church, as a body of believers, as well as an organization supports growing spiritual discipleship at IPC. The church makes a commitment to foster and grow such relationships, which will require time, resources and attention across the congregation. Additionally, the church as an organization is making a commitment to carry a degree of administrative burden and to provide guidance to mentors and mentees if required.

Reciprocal commitment by mentors and mentees

Given this commitment by the church towards growing spiritual discipleship, it makes sense to request a degree of commitment by mentors and mentees who want to join the umbrella of mentoring activities actively supported by IPC. Specifically, it is proposed that a reciprocal commitment to be towards the church in the form of a Statement of Intent.

The purpose of a Statement of Intent would be three-fold:

1. Adding a degree of formality is likely to raise the level of personal commitment participants bring as they join various mentoring activities.
2. Adding transparency will raise the level to which participants are willing to be held accountable for their commitment.
3. To enable the church to maintain a degree of oversight and alleviate the administrative burden by establishing a basic, repeatable process.

Form

We suggest a simple form which reiterates the purpose of the church's focus on mentoring, the commitment by the church towards mentors and mentees, and the commitment being asked for of the mentor/mentee.

Submitted by: Jeffrey Anhut, Sam Gyorf, Kobus Hattingh, Matt Kägi, Caleb Leung, Esther Nainar, and Nadia Ussene