Executive Summary of Young Leaders Mentoring Task Force

May 10-12, 2016

Phoenix, Arizona

In the 2015 December meeting of the Global Wesleyan Alliance covenant members, a recommendation from one of the Young Leaders meeting in 2015 was presented regarding a trans-denominational mentoring program. It read,

*We affirm that mentoring is incredibly valuable and universally needed. After significant discussion we believe further research is needed to provide current data to draw on. This data can help determine necessary structural changes and programs for the future. Furthermore, we recognize that there are certain ministry contexts that lend itself to more organic and “informal” mentoring, including multiple staff ministry and college/university settings. However, because this represents a small minority of our pastors, and because the vast majority do not have the benefit of these mentoring contexts, the need for intentional mentoring is heightened. Many GWA pastors have expressed feelings of isolation and disconnectedness. Therefore, we recommend that the GWA consider an initiative on leadership mentoring with a task force that would design, recommend, and offer guidance to implement steps toward a formalized mentoring ministry across denominational lines. The task force may draw on current denominational resources and programs that are already in place. Finally, we want to express our deep appreciation to the GWA for providing a way for us to meet, and for trusting us with this important conversation.*

All of the previous attendees at the Young Leader’s Forums were invited to apply for participation with the Mentoring Task Force. Three were able to make the time commitment and possessed a strong passion for mentoring. A scope of work for the task force was sent to them early in the process along with a few assignments before the first face to face meeting which took place in Phoenix May 10-12.

The results of the meeting based on the scope of work agenda exceeded expectations. A model for mentoring within the GWA was designed along with a cohort beta testing module. The main components covered in the meeting were:

* Why do we need this?
* What is an appropriate definition of mentoring for our purposes?
* What are the characteristics of the model we will develop?
* What information do we still need?
* Who is the audience for this model?
* How do we organize the beta testing?
* What is the role of the GWA covenant members in beta testing?
* How will the first beta testing function?
* And, a host of other interesting questions…

The task is to respond to the felt needs of many groups to address the issues of burn out and brown out of initial entry leaders as well as second career leaders and to provide support and accountability where geography has been an isolating factor.

In terms of definition of mentoring, we liked three definitions from different persons:

* “Loving relationship where older or more experienced person makes their life available to a younger or less experienced protégé for the purpose of drawing out what God has put in.” – Keith Cowart
* “Bringing out the best of someone in three areas: roles, goals, and soul.” – Rick Warren
* “Relational experience where one person empowers another.”

Characteristics we wish to see in our model:

* Relational, safe, mutual respect, trust, confidentiality
* Attractive to others
* Defined beginning and period to assess
* Potential preference for proximity
* Shared purpose/commitment or learning covenant.

Characteristics we do not want to see:

* Coaching-based/Outcome-driven
* Fee-based,
* Peer to peer
* “Good ole boy” system
* Ambiguous
* Part of a credential model

After a bit of discussion, we envision the beta model including different geographical areas, being trans-denominational, and including the categories of persons in ministry. It became quickly apparent the leadership of the GWA would be critical in the selection of the beta group personnel. How would this work?

Our beta model would look like this:

* Three geographical cohorts-Portland, Oregon; Wichita, Kansas; and Indianapolis, Indiana. This corresponds with the location of the three participants on the task force. We would be looking for 12-24 persons to participate in the beta testing. The three members of the task force would also participate as well as oversee their geographical cohort.
* Each GWA leader would select and recommend 2-4 mentors or mentees for each geographical region[We realize each GWA member may not have leadership in all three cohort areas so they would recommend in the areas where they do. We would need these names by February 1, 2017 or before.
* The task force member would conduct a half day orientation and then make the assignments. The mentor/mentee would make a learning covenant with each other at the half day orientation meeting. A brief monthly electronic report would be submitted to the Task Force.

The time line for the beta testing would be from March of 2017 to November of 2017. The task force would provide the Mentor/Mentee pairings with expectations and desired outcomes prior to the initial meeting.

After the beta testing, we would assess our process, revise and refine, and present to all GWA members on how this could be implemented nation-wide.

Respectfully submitted,

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