

# Becoming a Flourishing Church Process

## Q & A as you begin



### Who should be involved in the *Becoming a Flourishing Church* course?

The material is designed for current elders on Session. However, other groups within the church such as deacons, staff, or ministry teams could benefit greatly from engaging in the process.

### What is covered in the six meetings?

The first meeting introduces the process and begins to get leaders thinking about what it means to be a flourishing church. The second and third meetings help leaders discover their own health as disciples of Jesus, and develop an individual plan for continued growth. These meetings also help normalize conversations about the vitality of our personal discipleship. The fourth meeting looks at the five-fold gifting in Ephesians 4. This scripture passage gives leaders a better understanding of the role that God has called each person to play in the church. The fifth and sixth meetings look at the vitality of the congregation in six areas. These meetings help churches to discern where to focus energy for growth in the coming year.

### How long will the process take?

It is assumed that your Session or leadership group will meet monthly; therefore the process would take six months to complete. Some groups might meet two times a month, so the material would be finished in three months. It is recommended that you do not move any faster than twice a month, as there is homework and reflection that needs to be completed in between meetings. Each meeting takes approximately one hour to complete. Before you begin, please appoint a group facilitator to help plan and prepare each meeting. A note to *Becoming a Flourishing Church* facilitators can be found on pages 5 and 6.

### How do we schedule time for *Becoming a Flourishing Church*?

Our experience is that in order to have personal and communal transformation as a group, you need to be prepared to devote a full hour to this material each time you meet. We would not recommend adding an additional hour to an already long Session meeting. Rather, devote an hour to this material first, and you will find that the rest of your business will get done quicker and with a better spirit of cooperation.

### What is the structure of each meeting?

Each meeting has six components. The first is to prepare our hearts and minds to focus on what God wants to do in our lives and leadership. The second is to listen to the material on the video. The third is to individually reflect on what we have just heard. The fourth is to share with one another what we have heard using some targeted questions. The fifth is to decide what we will do individually or as a group in response to what we have heard. And the sixth is to pray and commit ourselves and our actions to the Lord.



## What happens after we complete the six meetings?

At the end of the process, your leadership will talk about the strengths and weakness of your team or your church. This discussion will lead to developing an action plan for how your church can grow in the next year. Each church that is participating in the process will be assigned an ECO liaison. This liaison is very familiar with the available resources and how to coach your leaders in developing an action plan.

## How do we start the process as a church?

Each church should choose a person who will facilitate the course and keep the *Becoming a Flourishing Church* process moving forward. Usually this facilitator will be the pastor, however it might be someone else. We ask that only the facilitator register his or her church to avoid duplicates and confusion. Once you are registered, we can assign you your ECO liaison.

There are several ways to register:

1. Fill out and send back the registration form in the *Becoming a Flourishing Church* Welcome packet, that was mailed to your church after you joined ECO.
2. Download the registration form on the Flourish website under the *Becoming a Flourishing Church* course. Fill it out and email it to [info@flourishmovement.org](mailto:info@flourishmovement.org).
3. Email us at [info@flourishmovement.org](mailto:info@flourishmovement.org) with the following information:
  - Church Name
  - Address
  - Facilitator Name
  - Facilitator E-mail
  - Facilitator Preferred Phone Number

## What materials do we need?

The DVD and Guidebook sent to your church with your Welcome packet. Provide a copy of the Guidebook for each participant. If you are starting this course without learning about it from a *Becoming a Flourishing Church* Welcome packet, all materials can be found online.

To obtain online access, go to [www.flourishmovement.org](http://www.flourishmovement.org) and create a login. Enroll to take the *Becoming a Flourishing Church* class. The online class has an electronic copy of the Guidebook, which can be downloaded by each participant, or used online.

All of the videos associated with each meeting are online, as well as any supplemental or additional material that may be needed. For example, in Meeting 4 there is an additional video of Alan Hirsch explaining APEST at the National Gathering in 2014 for those who want a deeper explanation than is provided in the meeting.

Another valuable resource is the ECO liaison who will be assigned to your church and is available to answer your questions. Your liaison will be particularly beneficial in the last two meetings to help your church leadership determine a path forward.

## What if I want to go through the material but my church is not ready?

Obviously, the best way forward is for a whole church Session or wider leadership to engage the process. However, sometimes the church is not ready or is involved with something else. If that is the case, an individual can always create an account at [www.flourishmovement.org](http://www.flourishmovement.org) and enroll in the *Becoming a Flourishing Church* class. This allows access to all the videos, guidebook and materials. You will likely find some benefit by engaging in the material individually.

## What if I have other questions?

Your ECO liaison will contact your church facilitator shortly after you register, and can answer more questions. If you have questions prior to registering or receiving your liaison, please contact Lisa Johnson at [lisa@eco-pres.org](mailto:lisa@eco-pres.org). Questions can also be emailed to [info@flourishmovement.org](mailto:info@flourishmovement.org)



## Note to Facilitators:

Thank you for agreeing to lead your Session through the *Becoming a Flourishing Church* process over the next six months. Your leadership role is an important one, both in the technical sense and in the spiritual sense. You are welcome to share the responsibilities and have more than one facilitator for the course.

Technically, you will be in charge of details: scheduling, preparation, communication, staying on schedule, and encouraging each person to do the assigned homework.

Spiritually, you are helping to create an atmosphere where your team makes space for God. Your goal as a facilitator is to help your team listen to God and each other while working your way through the materials provided. In order to be an effective spiritual leader, we suggest that you spend some time in quiet preparation with the Lord. This resource has been intentionally designed to be transformational and not just informational, so the role of the Holy Spirit is vital in this endeavor.

## Before you begin *Becoming a Flourishing Church*:

1. Register as a church. See registration options on page 4.
2. Decide on the best time for your team to go through the course together. You will need one hour per meeting. You will need at least two weeks between meetings for homework assignments.
3. Calendar when you will start and finish your six meetings.
4. Introduce the resource to your team with an enthusiastic personal explanation. Give a photocopied guidebook to each participant, or share the Flourish movement web address and course enrollment process (described on page 4) with each participant to download and print their own guidebook.

## Before each meeting, you will need to get a few things ready:

1. Prepare yourself spiritually to be open to how the Holy Spirit wants to move among your team. Look over the agenda for each meeting.
2. Prepare the DVD/downloaded video and device for viewing. (Please note that Meeting #3 has no video).
3. Prepare a whiteboard or flip chart and pens to record discussions as needed.
4. Remind leaders to bring their guidebooks to each meeting.
5. Before Meeting #5, make copies of the Church Health Survey for each participant.



## During each meeting:

1. Set the tone and the rhythm of your time together. Provide transitional introductions for each part of the agenda. For example, after each video is completed, you might say, "We will now spend some time in silent reflection about what we have just heard before we discuss it together."
2. You will need to be a good timekeeper so that the meeting is completed within a one-hour timeframe. You might want to write down your target time for finishing each section so that you do not fall too far behind.
3. In most meetings you will need to break the group into triads or small groups. Please pre-plan how you want to do that in ways that will maximize the people in the group mixing with each other in a variety of groups.
4. Record, or ask someone to assist you in recording, any key discussion points on a whiteboard or flip chart. At the end of the meeting, use your phone to take a picture of any discussion points you want to keep for the future.

## After finishing *Becoming a Flourishing Church*:

1. Work with your team and your ECO liaison to plan your next steps in growth.
2. Share your "Flourishing Church" plan with ECO by emailing it to Kim Davis at [info@flourishmovement.org](mailto:info@flourishmovement.org).
3. Keep praying, listening, and growing!

Please know that you are not alone in this endeavor. Should any questions arise, please do not hesitate to contact Lisa Johnson, Director of Lay Leadership Development: [lisa@eco-pres.org](mailto:lisa@eco-pres.org).

Praying for you and your churches,  
**Lisa Johnson & Dana Allin**