

Rhythm 1 Syllabus

North Texas Conference Genesis Cohort Rhythm 1: Apostolic

Project Coach

Name: Matt Temple

Bio: I am a wounded healer! Husband to the most courageous woman I know...father to a creative girl who I am pretty sure teaches me more than I teach her! Prior to my role with the NTC UMC I served as an urban missionary/church planter in the great city of Chicago and directed a multi-site urban church planting network that focused on developing church planters / urban missionaries to plant the gospel and disciple people in cities throughout the Midwest. Prior to moving to Chicago I planted a Foursquare church in Bettendorf, Iowa. I have been serving in church leadership for over 20 years.

I am committed to lifelong learning. I received my BA in Ministry and Leadership from LIFE Pacific College in San Dimas, CA and my MA from Fuller Theological Seminary in Pasadena, CA. I have also completed training to become a Professional Life Coach through Lifeforming Leadership Coaching.

My passion is helping leaders engage God's mission in their context. I love helping people see their dreams become a reality! I like to inspire people to have a creative, innovative and entrepreneurial spirit. Finally, I value walking with others as they develop goals for personal transformation.

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North Texas Conference Vision for Church Planting

In the Center for Church Development we believe that it is churches that plant churches. Because of this, our vision for planting is simple: **we want to partner with every church in the North Texas Conference and provide support in order to see the majority of churches transforming communities through planting.** In the CCD we define planting as any endeavor that seeks to engage a neighborhood in discipleship and gospel renewal through the creation of new and/or innovative missional strategies that include; sacraments, regular worship times and discipleship. In short, the CCD will endeavor to create a discipleship movement by supporting churches in developing new spaces for new faces.

Rhythm Purpose

We have identified ten core competencies that fit into four distinct themes around which we have designed the Genesis Cohort. The 12 months of the Genesis Cohort have been divided into four separate rhythms with each rhythm devoted to one of the four themes. The theme of Rhythm 1 is looking at what it means to be an apostolic people leading apostolic churches. In the past our culture functioned with a Christendom mindset and as such the church was able to settle into the role of host. We planted our stake in the ground around the mantra of "If you build it they will come." However, the population of people who fit the Christendom narrative in the U.S. is shrinking and rather than seeking new expressions of being God's missionary people, we are busy competing for a "greater percentage of a shrinking religious market" (*Gibbs 2007, 163). The majority of our structures and strategies are still designed to reach a Christendom world and

most of our current leaders were trained within a system primarily informed by Christendom. If we are to be effective in this new world we will need to explore new ways of being the apostolic church. This will necessitate (among other things) a different posture towards culture, revamped expectations around success metrics and a new kind of apostolic leader disciplined into missionary engagement and given freedom to experiment as they seek to contextualize the gospel for their generation (Gibbs 2007, 165).

In Rhythm 1 of the Genesis cohort it is our goal to deconstruct the ecclesiocentric mindset that permeates much of our thinking around church structures and strategies and inspire a missional imagination for how a planter can a) engage and listen to their context b) form connected relationships and c) organize a discipling faith community.

*Gibbs, Eddie. "Church Responses to Culture Since 1985." *Missiology: An International Review* XXXV, no. 2 (April 2007) : 157 – 168.

Rhythm 1 Outcomes

When participants complete Rhythm 1 of the Genesis Cohort they will have:

1. An understanding of their new faith communities growth through the lens of human development.
2. Developed a clear understanding of a mission centered ecclesiology complete with a set of metrics to measure growth and success in each stage of the faith communities development.
3. Identified 3-5 specific social mosaics and begun to live into those mosaics for the purpose of a) engaging with and listening to their context b) forming connected relationships and c) organizing a discipling faith community.
4. A database system for tracking contacts, potential partners and partners.

Learning Environment

The learning environment for the Genesis Cohort will take place both online and face-to-face. For the online portion of the cohort we will be using the online learning management system (LMS) known as Canvas. Over a 10 week time period participants will engage in discussions and learning activities that will help them understand the changing culture, will challenge and broaden the way they see the world and will help them begin to formulate a strategy for local missional engagement in light of what they are learning. Learning activities include:

1. Weekly reading - During Rhythm 1 we will read through the book *The Forgotten Ways* by Alan Hirsch as well as some selected readings from various articles.
2. Online Discussions – The true benefit of a learning environment like this is that you get to learn from each other. The discussions will give you the opportunity to clarify your thoughts and get feedback from one another in a safe space. This is a crucial part of the innovation and design process. Within each discussion you will be encouraged to respond to at least two other posts made by your fellow cohort participants. The sooner you do these the better as this will create more time for a conversation to develop. If you want to be notified when others in the cohort respond to your posts you can subscribe to get notifications within Canvas.
3. Video – Some weeks there will be a video for you to watch that will help bring greater clarity to the subject matter. Often times the video will be integrated into the discussion question or learning task.

4. Learning Tasks – The learning tasks are meant to help you integrate what you are learning into what you are doing. True transformative learning must work its way into our everyday life. The learning tasks are meant to help you as you move towards your final goal of designing a Missional Action Plan (MAP) for a new faith community. At times the discussion will be combined with the projects so that you can share with the cohort and get feedback on what you are doing and planning. The projects being developed each week are meant to build upon one another in helping develop and clarify your planting strategy.
5. What's Happening - Each week in the online cohort there is an overview of what is happening that week in the cohort. It would be ideal for participants to log into the online cohort early in each week to take a look at this section in order to schedule accordingly. The earlier you participate the more depth can emerge in discussion and feedback.
6. Optional Conferences - Within the Canvas LMS there is the ability to set up conference that allow you to do face to face video conferencing. Each Rhythm of the cohort we will offer 3-4 conferences/webinars that dig deeper into the content, provide feedback in what you are developing, and allow you to hear from other practitioners, etc. These conferences are not mandatory for participation in the cohort. They are simply available for you to dig deeper and interact with one another.
7. Retreat - Following the 10 week online portion of the cohort there will be a Friday - Saturday retreat. The Genesis Cohort retreat is designed for the lead planter and their team (spouses are encouraged to attend as well). The purpose of the retreat is to dig deep into the design process helping participants clarify their Missional Action Plan through creating a safe space for innovation and creativity while also thinking through the necessary components of a faith community. There are four essential aspects to each retreat:
 - o **Input** - Participants will be given new material in a workshop setting (often from practitioners from around the country). As participants hear stories and get ideas from others they will be invited to engage in dialogue centered presentations.
 - o **Implement** - Participants will have the opportunity to bring their own stories/experiences/learnings into the dialogue.
 - o **Integrate** - Participants will have the opportunity to integrate new learnings into the development of their own unique MAP
 - o **Introduce** - Participants (and their teams) will have the opportunity to present elements of their strategy to peers for the purpose of getting critical review, feedback, and encouragement.

Don't be a perfectionist. Learning and design are more than just retaining information. There is a process of transformation that takes place in learning that happens below the surface as we participate in the different learning activities. Trying to prove you have all the answers or have absorbed all the information actually hinders the transformational learning process. This means we must welcome the challenges along the way and the disagreements we have with one another that give us the opportunity to think through what we believe and how to embody that belief into our vision. There is a right way and a wrong way to engage in constructive dialogue in an online environment. Stay away from making personal attacks or assuming someone's motive. Also, remember that it is God who is at work in us to will and do according to God's good purposes. We do not need to strong arm or bully anyone into thinking the way we think or believing what we believe. The purpose for dialogue and even disagreement is not to convince someone else that you are right but rather to stir up an opportunity for thought and reflection within both the people participating in

the conversation

Course Schedule

Prior to Rhythm 1

- Log into the course on Canvas and make sure you are familiar with how to navigate the online learning environment.
- Purchase *The Forgotten Ways* by Alan Hirsch (there is a link to both the English and Spanish translation on the home page in Canvas).
- Schedule the time you are going to be on the orientation conference call. To get onto the call dial - 302.202.1110. The conference code for our call is - 972614:
 - Monday, July 2nd @ 2 PM
 - Thursday, July 5th @ 6 PM
 - Saturday, July 7th @ 10 AM
- Complete the pre-cohort assessment found at: <https://goo.gl/forms/dRiq1dz0JO2mMQg83>. **This assessment will serve as your registration for the cohort so please make sure that if you plan on participating you submit the assessment.**
- **Participate in the orientation conference call**

Week 1 (July 8 - July 14)

- **Reading** - Read the Preface and Introduction to *The Forgotten Ways* by Alan Hirsch
- **Discussion** - Log into the cohort on Canvas and Introduce yourself to the rest of the cohort under the introduction tab found under Week 1 Module.

Week 2 (July 15 - July 21)

- **Reading** - Read chapter 1 in *The Forgotten Ways* by Alan Hirsch
- **Discussion** - Complete the discussion question on why we should create new spaces for new faces

Week 3 (July 22 - July 28)

- **Reading** - Read chapter 2 in *The Forgotten Ways* by Alan Hirsch
- **Video** - Watch the video "What is the Gospel" by Lisa Sharon Harper and answer the discussion prompt

Week 4 (July 29 - Aug. 4)

- **Reading** - Read chapter 3-4 in *The Forgotten Ways* by Alan Hirsch
- **Learning Task** - Read through the documents that explain the stages of development in a church plant, the Genesis stage timeline goals, as well as how to set SMART goals. Fill out the goals section in the Genesis Timeline spreadsheet.
- **Optional Webinar/Conference** - Theme: Planting Stages of Development. Conference will take place on Thursday, July 26 from 7 - 8 PM.

Week 5 (Aug. 5 - Aug. 11)

- **Reading** - Read chapter 5 in *The Forgotten Ways* by Alan Hirsch
- **Learning Task** - This learning task covers week 5 and 6 (so you have two weeks to work on it and think about it). You can find the task under the week 6 tab. The theme of the task is developing metrics for success.
- **Optional Genesis Cohort Introduction BBQ**: this is a time for the participants in the cohort to meet each other face to face (families are welcome). We will provide all the food and drinks. Bring swim trunks.
 - **When**: Saturday, August 4th from 1 - 6 PM
 - **Where**: 609 Water Oak Dr. Plano

Week 6 (Aug. 12 - Aug. 18)

- **Reading** - Read chapter 6 in *The Forgotten Ways* by Alan Hirsch
- **Video** - Watch the video by Reggie McNeal and then complete the learning task.
- **Learning Task** - This learning task continues from week 5 (so you have two weeks to work on it and think about it). The theme of the task is: Developing metrics for success.
- **Optional Webinar/Conference** - Theme: Mission Centered Church. Conference will take place on Thursday, August 9 from 7 - 8 PM.

Week 7 (Aug. 19 - Aug. 25)

- **Reading** - Read chapter 7 in *The Forgotten Ways* by Alan Hirsch
- **Learning Task** - This learning task covers week 7 and 8 (so you have two weeks to work on it and think about it). You can find the task under the week 8 tab. The theme of the task is: Identifying mosaics for engaging and listening to your context.

Week 8 (Aug. 26 - Sept. 1)

- **Reading** - Read chapter 8 in *The Forgotten Ways* by Alan Hirsch
- **Learning Task** - This learning task continues from week 7 (so you have two weeks to work on it and think about it). The theme of the task is: Identifying mosaics for engaging and listening to your context.
- **Optional Webinar/Conference** - Theme: Mosaics: Developing a theology and practice of Guesting. Conference will take place on Thursday, August 23 from 7 - 8 PM.

Week 9 (Sept. 2 - Sept. 8)

- **Reading** - Read chapter 9 in *The Forgotten Ways* by Alan Hirsch
- **Learning Task** - This learning task covers week 9 and 10 (so you have two weeks to work on it and think about it). The task can be found under the week 10 tab. The theme of the task is: Developing a database for tracking connections.

Week 10 (Sept. 9 - Sept. 15)

- **Reading** - Read appendix 1-5 in *The Forgotten Ways* by Alan Hirsch
- **Learning Task** - This learning task continues from week 9 (so you have two weeks to work on it and think about it). The theme of the task is: Developing a database for tracking connections.
- **Optional Webinar/Conference** - Theme: Making Connections and Growing your Database. Conference will take place on Thursday, September 6 from 7 - 8 PM.
- **Assessment** - Complete a follow up survey assessment to help us make the Cohort better

Rhythm 1 Retreat

- **When:** Friday, September 21 @ 10 AM - Saturday, September 22 @ 6 PM
- **Where:** North Texas Conference Ministry Center (500 Maplelawn Dr, Plano, TX)
 - We are doing the retreat at the Conference Ministry Center so that most people will be able to travel home on Friday evening. If you are coming in from out of town and need a place to stay overnight let us know and we will arrange a host home for you and your team.