# Notes from Meeting of EVLC Leadership Development Team

## May 2 (evening) to May 3, (afternoon). Winona Lake Grace Brethren Church

## Participants: Keith Shearer, Mike Yoder, Dave Lawson, Tom Julien, Kurt Miller, Terry White, Matthew Wheelock, Ed Trenner, Tim Sprankle.

We greatly appreciated the number of people who participated, and the quality of the participation. Seven churches will be invited to become pilot churches this fall: Wooster, Worthington, Martinsburg, Myerstown, Winona Lake, Sebring, Orange.

The following notes are not necessarily in order. Further, other team members will be contributing other areas of discussion.

## *Friday evening*

In addition to praying together and getting acquainted, we began with a renewed emphasis on Ephesians 4:9-16, and an exhortation to allow this passage to burn into our souls. Though it is extremely rich in its portrayal of the church, is a neglected passage for the most part, partially because of the mention of apostles and prophets.

Some of have the conviction that the absence of equipping (the great prescription) is one of the two principal reasons for the decline of many of our churches. Without equipping, churches become dysfunctional.

The focus of our team is to infuse and equipping culture into the churches of the fellowship; for this reason our team must give full attention to the entire passage. The equipping churches will be known as the *Equipping Church Network (E-Net).* Their role is to equip the equippers.

We discussed both the concept and target group of equipping, a discussion that carried over on Tuesday. By equipping we do not simply mean adding training courses to the church, but involving people in ministry, training them while they are in ministry, and seeing every member rise to his potential for the Lord.

Equipping will target mid-level non vocational leadership of the churches, and will focus on equipping them as equippers of other. Much of the equipping will take place in ministry teams, supplemented by more structured training programs.

In addition to the equipping ministries within each church, and effort will be made to build collaboration with churches in proximity of the pilot churches. We greatly appreciated Tim Sprankle’s contributions as representative of a smaller area church.

## *Saturday*

Perhaps the richest part of our meeting was the sharing concerning the equipping ministries in the churches represented by the participants. Prayer was focused on each of these churches. It is evident that each church represented is already focused on equipping its members. The diversity represented by the churches is typical of what we will see as other church join in the team.

Though there will be a great deal of diversity in the implementation of equipping ministries in the churches, these four elements will be necessary for E-Net churches: 1) commitment of the church leadership to becoming a part of the team, 2) a coordinator responsible for the oversight of the equipping ministries, 3) an equipping culture, involving *intercession, involvement, identification, instruction and inspiration,* 4) collaboration with other E-Net churches, and other churches who wish this collaboration.

Quite a bit of time was spent seeking more precise definitions both of equipping and of the main target group for the focus of the ministry. In addition to Ephesians 4:9-16, we referred to the levels mentioned by Paul in 2 Timothy 2:2. Most of us would identify the target group as the “reliable men [and women]” trained by Timothy, men [and women] who would in turn train others.

We went over all the questions of the suggested agenda in detail, and agreed on the following:

1. We agree on identifying this ministry at *Equipping Church Network (E-Net),* using the entire designation until “E-Net” becomes known.

*(Note: Since there are a number of ministries emphasizing leadership training from a wide spectrum of approaches, we would suggest that the name of our team be changed to Equipping Church Network Team, if this is acceptable to the Moderator and Fellowship Coordinator).*

1. Our goal will be 60 E-Net churches by 2020.
2. The one-page summary statement is to be used, at least at present, as a description of our ministry. A great deal of discussion focused on the definition of an equipping church, but for the moment the present statement stands. The one change is to reverse the order of *involvement* and *identification.*
3. We will continue to try to identify more known equippers, both from vocational and non- vocational sources. Many involved in leadership training are not necessarily focused on equipping others for ministry.
4. The original E-Net team will be kept small, with a larger team of coordinators forming an additional team.
5. Promotion of E-Net churches must be a major emphasis in conference, incorporating testimonies, etc. Dave and Mike will work on this. Further, work will be done in developing a web-page or blog. Tom will speak with Tom Avey.
6. Every effort must be made to not allow the training to become simply cognitive. Elements of relational training will be emphasized, so that the training will be learner and ministry focused.
7. Tom and Mike will discuss the possibility of a workbook pulling together the basic elements of an equipping church and its implementation.
8. Each church will choose the areas of instruction that most effectively meet the need of those in ministry.
9. Tim Sprakle will give thought to effective ways of encouraging collaboration between pilot churches and other churches in proximity.
10. Tom will give thought to effective ways of developing teamwork and accountability between E-Net Coordinators.
11. A meeting of E-Net Coordinators should become a yearly event at conference.
12. The E-Net should keep in communication both with the Moderator and the FGBC Coordinator, who will advise concerning communication with the Fellowship Council.
13. Rather than a Newsletter, a great deal of conversation focused on using a web-page, or linking the web-page with the FGBC web page. This will require more discussion.

***Prayer***

Only through wide-spread commitment to prayer will this vision become a reality.

Assignment: read Sue Mallory *The Equipping Church,* Zondervan.

(Submitted by Tom Julien. To be completed by other notes taken by participants.)

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