

# HIGH POINT

Coaching churches to overcome their biggest challenges

*“we will grow to become in every respect the mature body of him who is the head, that is Christ,” Eph. 4:15b NIV*



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## A Prescription for a Successful Discipleship Co-lab

- Two to six churches working at the same time, on the same discipleship content.
- Each applying the discipleship by stages concepts to its unique setting.
- Gaining learning and encouragement together.
- By learning together they reduce the cost of coaching per church.

**Length:** 20-24 months

**The ingredients of a co-lab are:**

- 1 An initial gathering of the churches' leadership to introduce the discipleship co-lab concept.
- 2 Formation of a discipleship team (D team) in each church. Teams meet monthly.
- 3 A scientifically valid "discipleship assessment" taken by each church near the beginning and again at the end of the co-lab.
- 4 Six 3-hour gatherings (once each quarter) of the D Teams of all participating churches with their AL co-leaders for learning, planning and encouragement. These often can occur virtually, via Zoom, or in person if the churches are in proximity.
- 5 Zoom coaching for the pastors and team leaders between gatherings by their assigned coach.

## COVID can't stop DISCIPLESHIP!

Pastors Jon Harrison and Nick Sterner have been delighted to see the shifts in their churches: First Baptist Church and Greensburg Christian Church. The shifts are due to the first steps each church took as a result of Ascending Leaders' Kansas Discipleship Co-Lab that began August of last year. Each church has seen significant progress since taking these first steps. Yes, stay-at-home orders did cause some havoc to the discipleship co-lab work, but the churches still saw fruit.

The Discipleship teams of both churches were able to gather with the AL leaders present mid-July. The week prior

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**Call us to find out about a Discipleship co-lab for your church!**



At the Greensburg quarterly gatherings, the discipleship teams of the churches learn, plan and share.

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to gathering, the teams each heard their own pastor share his faith story by the stages. Each team member then received the assignment to write out their own before the gathering. One team member said she wrote hers out three times before getting it just right, but it was a powerful and rewarding experience.

After months of social distancing, the teams were delighted to gather in person with their co-leaders. Together they celebrated the wins from their first steps. Each participant shared his/her faith story by the discipleship stages with another person there, and the teams worked on personalizing the discipleship stages specifically for each church.

Soon, the teams will brainstorm further action steps over the next year for their churches to fill more discipleship gaps in their congregations. The pastors will also get online coaching from the co-lab leaders.

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# greensburg

CHRISTIAN CHURCH

## Discipleship-Type at the Beginning: **Extroverted**

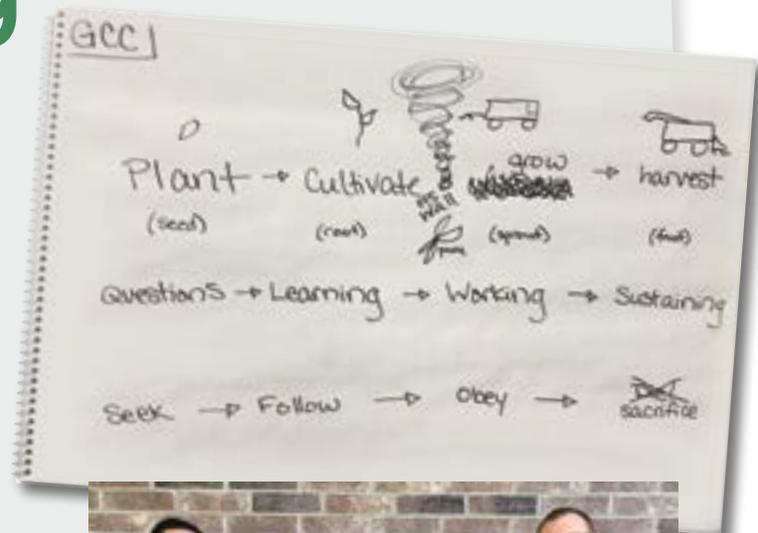
**Newly minted Definition of Discipleship:** Process of **growing in love for Jesus** & His Church **over** the course of **a lifetime**, demonstrated through obedience, perseverance & submission.

### First Win:

- A sermon series on Galatians, with children learning the same
- A mid-week evening deeper Bible Study also on Galatians
- A lighter study the following Sunday before the worship service, to engage the many who gather for coffee at that team

### Victorious over COVID frustrations by:

- Doing Bible Study with some participants in person and some joining via Zoom (hear more about this on Episode 31 of The Discipleship Podcast for Church Leaders)
- Never closing worship. Live streaming. One Sunday most all the congregation was online
- Meeting with the discipleship co-lab in person, postponed but not cancelled



Pastor Jon Harrison and coach Mike Johnson.

**COVID can't stop DISCIPLESHIP!**

# A SUPERSIZED Giving Tuesday for a SUPERSIZED Vision

End a year of SUPERSIZED PROBLEMS with SUPERSIZED GIVING

Worship Social-Distanced  
 On-a-Screen Masked Faces  
**COVID-19** social & racial unrest  
*Political* West-Coast Wind & Fire *Challenged Economies*  
*Turmoil* Hurricanes/Derechos

Let's SUPERSIZE this Giving Tuesday\* to fuel a SUPERSIZED Vision for 2021 and Beyond

Ascending Leaders' I542 (Isaiah 54:2) SUPERSIZED Vision from God  
 Enlarge Stretch Press-On Lengthen Strengthen  
 to Glorify God through Christ-Centered Disciples!

Your support gets Discipleship Co-Labs to churches of all sizes and stripes. Thank you!

\* A SUPERSIZING group of Ascending Leaders are pledging to SUPERSIZE GIVING TUESDAY (Dec. 1) donations.

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Between Gatherings Mike & Matt coach, by Zoom, Pastor's Jon and Nick

In October, the teams will gather again with their co-lab co-leaders to share what has transpired, receive more teaching, plan and encourage each other.

A year ago, at the beginning of the co-lab, the churches took the RENOVO Spiritual Life Inventory to see the discipleship strengths and gaps of their churches. Next year, when the co-lab culminates, the churches will take the

inventory again to see what progress they have made and what more progress they can make in the future.

While these two churches in rural Greensburg, Kansas are small (30-40 adults in attendance for worship each week), they committed to pay 5% of the costs of the co-lab. The Artevel Foundation, with its heart for Christian witness in rural America, is covering the other 95% of the costs.

Due to the strong success of this co-lab, AL is planning to launch others around the country, along with improvements for the co-labs to even better help churches help more members become Christ-Centered.



Go to <https://tinyurl.com/ALcolab> to see Pastor Jon and Pastor Nick each describe in under 2 minutes what is happening at their churches.

“We are glad to make it possible for Ascending Leaders to help even small rural churches in our home state get revival and hope!”

Margaret Houtsma  
 Director, The Artevel Foundation



## Pastors and Church Staff,

Learn in a socially-distanced, Zoom-friendly environment the concepts that are transforming church cultures!

- Proven success in helping church leaders flourish—our DiscipleOn! Cohorts-Basics
- A discipleship coach with individual attention for up to 4 people
- Meets over five 45-minute Zoom sessions
- Choose your coach to personally help you apply the concepts supporting the discipleship by the stages paradigm
- Don't miss this opportunity to be part of an exceptional group this fall

For more info e-mail [rhonda@ascendingleaders.org](mailto:rhonda@ascendingleaders.org)



FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH  
OF GREENSBURG, KS

### Discipleship-Type at the Beginning: *Self-Motivated*

### Newly minted Definition of Discipleship:

Process of **teaching** to continually **grow in Christ** by being **intentional in pursuit** of intimate obedience by yielding to the Holy

*Spirit, and then **commissioning** them to find **others** and do the same.*

#### First Win:

- Leaders sharing their personal testimonies during worship services
- Once a month church dinners to allow people in the church to get to know the leaders more informally
- Started groups of 3-4 which met to report their reading of Scripture, ask each other accountability questions and pray for friends who needed to begin growing in Christ

#### Victorious over COVID frustrations by:

- Women starting "Walk the Talk" several nights each week for exercise and fellowship
- Newcomers finding the church through the livestreamed sermon

**COVID can't stop DISCIPLESHIP!**



Coach Matt McClure and Pastor Nick Sterner.

**YOUR CHURCH  
can experience  
what these churches are  
experiencing.**

E-mail [rhonda@ascendingleaders.org](mailto:rhonda@ascendingleaders.org)



Despite COVID-19, the Ascending Leaders staff labor to serve churches and our AL extended family such as our coaches, donors, churches we serve and more.



Listen to part a & b of Episode 31 to hear an interview with Pastor Jon Harrison, Pastor of Greensburg Christian Church and his wife Katie-Lee.

<https://www.ascendingleaders.org/episode-31-a-promising-example-of-an-hybrid-small-group/>