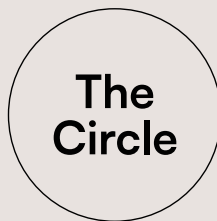




THE STORIES THAT SHAPE US

Friends who joined The Circle between April 1, 2025 and March 31, 2026

James, Doug, Tony, Mike, Amy, Tonya, Tony, Katie, Kevin, Laura, Travis, Gianna, David, Rachel, Daniel, Matt, Cheryl, Tony, Michael, Stephanie, Becky, Ethan, Pamela, Brook, Shelly, Leah, Nick, Karlee, Joy, Jonathan, Cash, Dalene, Joel, Ian, Caleb, Susan, Millie, Andrew, Jim, Rex, Nick, Lydia, Devan, Garrett, Kate, Neil, Matthew, Charissa, Amanda, WM, Richard, Helen, Julia, Adam, Sofia, Evan, Elias, Melinda, Christine, Steve, Jenny, Penny, Gail, Mary, Becky, John, Andy, Charis, Daniel, Kimberly, Toby, Isabelle, Hannah, Drew, Marta, Rebekah, Carrie, Jacob, Joshua, Luke, Noah, Steve, Anna, Sheila, Kristine, Phyllis, Joe, Luke, Julie, Jerry, Michael, Brienne, Jason, Hunter, Patrick, Heather, Rodolfo, Thompson, Jessica, Reuben, Jaimee, Melissa, Wendy, Christopher, Jachin, Nicole, Robert, Isaiah, Clifton, John, Tori, Bryceson, Melanie, Ken, Tara, Kelsey, Nick, Aaron, Vanessa, Barbara, Derek, Zachary, Robert, Paul, Ying, Luis, Jordan, Josh, Jan, Paul, Curtis, Michael, Morgan, Teresa, Nate, Julie, Graham, David, Rachel, Andrea, Tom, Seth, Sammy, Catherine, Kris, Prissy, Hunter, Lucy, Charles, Hannah, Christine, Logan, Joel, Abe, John, Jared, Cynthia, Michelle, Emilie, Jasper, Lauren, Timothy, Daniel, Kyle, Christie, Mark, Laura, Bethany, Kevin, Danae, Eric, Nate, Sherin, Beau, Allen, Maral, Kelsey, Julie, Laura, Katie, Dan, Robert, Valerie, Nolan, Abby, Ana, Timothy, Ben, Brogan, Susie, Cristina, Rosemary, Chase, Roshni, Olivia, Samantha, Steve, Corrie, Geraldine, Luke, Dillon, Marcelle, Marisa, Josh, Jessie, Sandy, Joel, Garret, Garrett, Kayla, Josh, Ashley, Amber, Crystal, Kyle, Brandon, Streeter, Sara, Billy, Yeira, Marketa, John, Josh, Andrew, Emilie, Tori, Chris, Jennifer, Willie, Aidan, John, Amy, Brittany, Shelby, Kevin, Kelly, Misty, Maddie, Chip, Davie, Jared, Savannah, Meghan, Rebekah, Vanessa, Andō, James, Andrea, Erik, Caleb, Miriam, Faith, Andrea, Megan, Elias, Courtney, Rick, Daniel, Ashley, Brad, Whitney, Katelyn, Keith, Harrison, Jon, Reginald, Justin, Pam, John, Hunter, Maria, Eric, Lilian, Gabriella, Jeannine, Cooper, Maggie, Magdalena, Dayshawn, Melinda, Hannah, Pennie, Sojourn, Kellen, Samantha, Kelsey, Morgan, Kevin, Caitlin, Gethin, Luke, Min, Tor, Kevin, Mark, Julia, Amy, Katie, Nick, Adriana, Heather, Samuel, Sarah, Melissa, Sara, Jessica, Phil, Popi, Jeremiah, Kelsey, Savannah, Nicole, Leah, Dan, Amanda, Shana, Lee, Allison, Marianne, Carolin, Joey, Casey, Diane, James, Carrie, Mark, Randall, Deborah, Amy, Caleb, Brittney, Brooke, Lorie, David, Christian, David, Isaac, Greg, Sheryl, Amy, Wes, Matthew, Christopher, Laura, Joshua, Becca, Rebekah, Scott, Kyle, Kiden, Andy, Thomas, Ronny, Grace, Hannah, Timothy, Steve, Ana, Justin, Gerardo, Twila, Guy, Ronnie, Dawn, Natalie, Jake, Ty, Jenny, Alex, Rudy, Josiah, Taylor, Kirsten, John, McKenzie, Annie, Peter, Chris, Karin, Michael, Marc, Nathaniel, Debbie, Emma, Michelle, Hye, Kelley, Alex, Landon, Cole, Rick, Debra, Natalie, Em, Holly, Heather, Darby, Alexander, Rachel, Elise, Phillip, Gary, Heather, Jeremy, Ramie, Life, Andrea, Daniel, Jenny, Kristine, Troy, Beka, Eric, Jeremy, Brendan, Andrea, Patty, Christopher, Rebecca, Amanda, Shane, Tyler, Tom, Chad, Hunter, Johannes, Melissa, Endel, Christine, Kurt, Lauren, Jennifer, Marsha, Andrew, Gracie, Gina, Hannah, Julia, Elyse, Arthur, Ralph, Natalie, Connor, Tracie, Sean, Janine, Bethany, Bobby, Tina, Adrianna, Caroline, Ross, Meena, Nikita, Gary, Trevor, Karen, Janean, Chris, Jenn, Rachel, Gary, Delaney, Melissa, Sean, Josh, Amy, Nicole, Chris, Katie, Donovan, Heather, Timera, Mallory, Meghan, Sarah, Nancy, Maya, Gabriel, Michael, Tanner, Taylor, Danny, Amy, Donald, Taigen, Kaytlynn, Forrest, Susan, Derek, Sue, Amy, Chelsea, Michelle, Samantha, Aaron, Jeff, Anca, Jacob, Tyler, Danielle, Mendy, Linda, Logan, Win, Cori, Stephanie, Russ, Derek, Meghan, Rachael, Lizzy, Michelle, Matt, Ben, Mary, Joanna, Ryan, Lydia, Jacob, Amanda, Pam, Eric, Michelle, Christian, Kelli, LJ, Rosemary, Natalie, Jason, Kevy, Dustin, Lara, Tom, Michelle, Aaron, Erica, Ben, Mark, Aaron, Larry, Nate, Patricia, Angeline, John, Matt, Andrew, Christine, Sharon, Rick, Brett, Elizabeth, Gary, Krystal, Nicholas, Michelle, David, Matthew, Ryan, Honor, Vesna, Christa, Drew, Jordan, Sheila, Arthur, Deb, Alan, Evan, Gabe, Colleen, Scott, Benjamin, John, Emily, Michelle, Jason, Mary, Jana, Henrike, Hudson, Zach, Anna, Shawna, Eric, Cindy, Robert, Alicia, Alexa, Carrie, Jennifer, Kristiana, Stephen, Barbara, Eric, Iris, Lillian, Theresa, Anna, Denise, Anne, Coit, Benjamin, Margaret, Salli, Easton, Paul, Sydney, Mark, Karen, Justin, Andrew, Matt, Dawn, Kathryn, Hannah, Yashira, Karen, Starr, Susan, Casey, Johannes, Cindy, Ketsia, Gary, Tyson, Michael, Caroline, Keisha, Gwynn, Nic, Anthony, Jennifer, Nina, Richard, Roy, Carolyn, Kayla, Raffaella, Jeffrey, Hannah, Todd, Ezio, Chris, Andrew, Lynn, JP, Carly, Jonathan, Joan, Denise, Stephanie, Jay, Lauren, Graeme, Roslyn, Cindi, Rachel, Beth, Sheryl, Christian, Heather, Nick, Liz, Micah, Marianne, Sarah, Drew, Corey, Jonathan, Sarah, Laddie, Joe, Mark, Grayson, Tara, Richard, Maria, Mary, Sasha, Kayle, Jeff, Noelle, Jeff, Steve, Austin, Scott, Jim, Matt, Catherine, Tom, Scott, Jake, Udo, Kevin, Adriana, Kai, Lindsey, Kathy, Don, Francis, Le-Toyja, Lauren, Jaden, Chelsea, Paul, Leah, Preston, Wojciech, Chris, David, Chad, Karen, Michelle, Kenneth, Clay, Caleb, Andrew, Greg, Kelsey, Annie, Natalie, Jennifer, John, Sere, Christine, Anthony, Fiona, Jefferson, Stacy, Danelle, Samuel, Joni, Jody, Andy, Albert, Jeremy, Debra, Nanette, Andre, Rike, Joe, Kenton, Heidi, Blake, Rhonda, Melissa, Molly, Dennis, Garrett, Cindy, Christy, Andrea, Aric, Lisa, Barb, Yu-chen, Jess, Emma, Astrid, Kiumbiro, Tricia, Jonathan, Jason, Harry, Caroline, Yvonne, Nicole, Kendall, John, Briana, Eric, Esther, Levi, Emilee, Aggie, Gina, Donald, Chris, Carola, Rebekka, Jill, Tarrah, Drew, Bryan, Chris, Amy, Delain, Christen, Angela, Adele, Michael, Phoebe, James, Christian, Angela, Debbie, Rachel, Megan, Josh, Drew, Christian, Jason, Bob, Lee, Chris, Lori, Will, Janice, Tabea, Kristen, Charlotte, Anders, T.P., James, Keith, John, Mitchell, Emma, Jessica, Brittany, Kellen, Kuleni, Jessica, Anna, Lonnie, Danielle, Sarah, Lizzie, Brian, Christina, Tina, Patrick, Kelly, Lucas, Lucas, Alie, Quinterrall, Tiffany, Claire, Doug, Juni, Wes, Alyssa, Alex, Luke, Tegan, Crystal, Brianna, Tyler, Jason, Laura, Bernice, Cole, Beat, Becca, Tamara, Charlene, Leslie, Kate, Steve, Sarah, Noah, Jane, Debbie, Lynda, Terry, Karli, Gregory, Teresa, Elizabeth, Sarah, Rich, Nick, Talea.



We are deeply grateful for each giver who makes this work possible. Thousands of you chose to live with less so that we could give more to churches.

This year 942 joined The Circle, giving monthly to nurture deep apprenticeship to Jesus in communities around the world.

Thank you.

Where do lifelong apprentices of Jesus come from?

The world longs for these kinds of men and women: a non-anxious presence, rooted in love, living from a deep well of joy.

Don't you need friends like that? Don't you hope your kids become people like that?

Then why don't we see more of them? Where do they come from?

Jesus said, "the gates of hell will not overcome *the Church*." At Practicing the Way, we believe that transformation happens in community — anchored in the local church.

It's great when one person catches a glimpse of a different life and starts to change. But without a community of fellow travelers, there's less power. We need community: a group of holy others who ask us to paint a picture of whom we want to become, and then help us resemble that picture.

The picture we see

This is what we're betting our lives on: innovative, Spirit-led churches, led by deeply formed contemplative pastors, armed with a beautiful curriculum for Christlikeness, replanting this Earth with seeds of an ancient spirituality. Millions of

people living the simple invitation — to be with Jesus, become like Jesus, and do as Jesus did. Together, joining God in letting his will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

That big picture is a composite of millions of small pictures — everyday churches in out-of-the-way places, pointing the way to Jesus.

A new kind of church

When we began, we knew that God did something special at Bridgetown in Portland. We wondered if he might do something similar elsewhere.

He is. And the stories we found this year represent a movement wider than we ever imagined.

In the mountains of Colorado, a Vineyard church takes a slowed-down day to reflect on the year behind and the year ahead.

By the shores of the Puget Sound, a non-denominational church creates personalized growth paths for its congregants.

In the hills of Kentucky, a Wesleyan house church is sowing discipleship bands full of

deep encouragement, transparency, and transformation.

Amid the maple forests of New England, a Baptist church's "Monday School" gives people a weekly path to the contemplative life.

Near the beach in LA, an Anglican church sees hundreds of people transformed through a year-long School of Discipleship.

Along the coast of Rhode Island, an Evangelical Covenant church equips parents to more deeply shape their children's formation.

As churches change, people change. And those changed people carve a trail for others in the congregation to follow on their journey of becoming like Jesus.

Evidence of change

As of today, Practicing the Way helps more than 22,000 churches around the world.

The Spiritual Health Reflection shows that when people experience the Course or Practices in community, they change at 3.2x the rate of others in our audience.

Every week, we hear from pastors and people telling us that Practicing the Way is bringing deep renewal to their lives, and to the lives of those around them. In Alabama, we heard: "I saw my friends changing — and I wanted to know what was going on."

When the wise men encountered Jesus, their response was to worship him and to offer him treasure.

Your story is like theirs. You've encountered Jesus in new ways. You're becoming someone who enjoys him and loves others. And you've generously offered precious gifts.

Your gifts are writing new stories in communities around the world. On behalf of those changed lives — each of those stories — who may never know your name ...

Thank you.



Cameron Doolittle,
Executive Director

THE YEAR OF STORY



VINTAGE CHURCH
LOS ANGELES, CA

SCHOOL OF DISCIPLESHIP



ARVADA VINEYARD
DENVER, CO

GUIDED CONTEMPLATIVE
RETREAT



CROSSWAY CHRISTIAN CHURCH
NASHUA, NH

MONDAY SCHOOL

Part of Practicing the Way’s contribution to the spiritual formation movement is capturing and sharing Church Formation Stories.

These inaugural case studies illuminate six churches who are going beyond Sunday services and doing creative, innovative things



ARISE CHURCH
LEXINGTON, KY

DISCIPLESHIP BANDS



KALOS CHURCH
BELLEVUE, WA

INDIVIDUALIZED
DISCIPLESHIP PLAN



SANCTUARY CHURCH
PROVIDENCE, RI

FAMILY FORMATION
SUNDAY

**in formation — sparking new imagination
for a growing community of pastors who are
integrating our resources in their context.**

Your generosity allowed these stories to debut
at Pastor Conference, followed by inspiring, live
Q+Rs with each church represented here.

Watch the stories at practicingtheway.org/pastor

From a deep inner life to a deeply formed church



Podcast



Journal



Church Formation Stories



Cohorts



Conference



Training + Coaching

not fast enough

Pastor is a new library of resources to help our community of over 10,000 pastors imagine and embody a “slowed-down spirituality” approach to church leadership. These resources are a catalyst for pastors to integrate spiritual formation more deeply into their church architecture, and into their own life.

The Contemplative Pastor podcast launched in service of helping shape these new, yet ancient, kinds of pastors — more unhurried, more prayerful, more peaceful — and to see the formational role of the local church flourish once again. Rather than making churches bigger, better, faster, we’re helping pastors stay faithful and surrendered to the deep, slow, mysterious work of God.



In January we hosted our fourth Pastor Conference — this time in sunny Santa Monica.

To kick it off, we introduced Pre-Conference Labs, which gave pastors a small-scale, hands-on, cohort experience to safely workshop ideas and build community. Our keynote sessions expanded imagination for emotionally healthy leadership, nurturing formational team cultures, leading contemplatively, equipping parents for family formation, and caring for our own souls.

Jon Guerra's devotional music set the tone for the week, creating space for pastors to behold beauty ... and simply rest.

**Over 1,400 pastors
attended the Conference**

**103 churches hosted a
remote Watch Gathering**

“One of the great gifts of Practicing the Way is that it transcends denominationalism. What we have in common in the practice of following Jesus matters so much more than the doctrines/thoughts/theologies that divide and create tribes. That was so apparent in the conference, that all were welcome and there was something for each of us to contribute and learn from one another. I am still carrying around a little ‘glow’ from it and continue to dream about what I heard there and how we might engage it in our context. Practicing the Way is a HUGE gift to the Church at large and I am deeply grateful for this work.”

—Amanda from Plymouth, MN



PASTOR CONFERENCE 2026

SPEAKERS + GUIDES

01 John Mark Comer

02 Drew Hyun

03 Gemma Ryan

04 John Ortberg

05 Tyler Staton

06 Sarah Cowan Johnson

07 Ken Shigematsu

08 Jay Kim + David Kim

A photograph of a narrow, sun-dappled path leading through a dense forest. The path is covered in grass and small plants, and the surrounding trees and foliage are lush and green. Sunlight filters through the canopy, creating a bright, glowing effect in the center of the path. The overall atmosphere is peaceful and serene.

Farmington Hills is a vibrant suburban community on the outskirts of Detroit, MI. Hill City Church is seeking to bring depth to what many would consider a comfortable place to live.

As go the leaders, so goes the church

Rick Barry spent 15 years as a student pastor before planting Hill City Church three years ago. But the road to planting didn't begin with excitement — it began with heartbreak.

In 2020, Rick watched his church fracture. Politics divided the congregation, and the founding pastor transitioned out.

He was left with a gut-check question: Is our current model of discipleship really working?

“I was witnessing all of our people really become better disciples of their news outlets than of what Jesus had to say. And I remember asking, ‘God, is there a better way?’”

Rick longed for a new kind of church to emerge, one devoted to helping his community become people of love in Jesus. And that was the start of Hill City — a church plant dedicated to building a shared way of life together. From the beginning, Rick has sought out community, inspiration, and support from Practicing the Way. He attended the Pastor Conference alone in the first year, with a friend the next, and his whole staff the year after. In 2026, he

brought 20 staff, elders, and spouses.

“Every year, it’s been a great opportunity for us to have full alignment and refresh vision as a team,” Rick says.

When Rick began Practicing the Way’s free 1:1 coaching, his coach challenged him to invest in staff formation first. As Eugene Peterson so aptly asked in his book *The Contemplative Pastor*, “How can I lead people into the quiet place beside the still waters if I am in perpetual motion?” A church community will only go as far as the staff that is leading them.

That insight became a turning point.

The result is a revamped formation pathway for both the staff and church community.

- Quarterly days of solitude and silence for staff.
- Sabbath Sundays twice a month with no in-person service, inviting the church to stop, rest, and delight.
- Using Practicing the Way’s resources as short-term on-ramps into deeper community.

“Practicing the Way coaching has given us clarity and refreshed vision. It’s going to lead towards a healthier staff culture and a more robust church formation plan.”

Thanks to the generosity of The Circle and other givers, pastors like Rick can receive free 1:1 coaching that helps refine and build their formation pathway.

Hill City praying through Matthew 5v14, where they got their name: "... a city on a hill that cannot be hidden."



Rick admits that the slow pace of transformation sometimes pulls his heart back toward wanting to draw a crowd with a big event. Practicing the Way helps remind him it's not about measured success — it's the fruit that lasts.



COACHING CHURCHES TOWARD DEEP FORMATION

**5 new part-time coaches
joined our team**

**322 pastors received
1:1 coaching**

Church leaders often love our vision, but long for help translating it into their context. We hire respected pastors as church coaches, enabling them to spend four days a week serving as pastors, and the fifth day spreading formation ideas and wisdom to others. Our coaches give pastors space to reflect, help discern a clear next step, and connect them to a tribe of fellow practitioners to collaborate with on the journey of formation. This year, we increased our capacity to coach 72 pastors per month.

“The conversation centered on subtraction before addition — creating margin and focusing on foundational practices rather than launching new programs. My coach introduced the formation framework across six areas of church life, with early attention on developing a discipleship pathway.”

—**Jake from Hamilton, NZ**

CHURCH FORMATION INCUBATOR

**This year we graduated our
most diverse group of 12
churches**

**30 alumni churches joined
our new online community
for continued learning and
growth**

This year we wrapped our third annual, nine-month cohort of 24 pastors longing for a culture of discipleship in their churches. Each leadership team walked away with a clear plan centered around formation pathways, sermon plans, and role descriptions. In-person retreats and virtual monthly learning supported these pastors as they re-centered their churches around forming lifelong apprentices of Jesus.

“Our vision is to become ‘urban abiders’ — bringing monastic rhythms of prayer and formation into everyday life in the city. Our participation in the Church Formation Incubator is giving us a framework to turn that into a reality.”

—**Meiko from St. Petersburg, FL**



Church Formation is the process of
reimagining and re-architecting a
way of doing church around a vision,
intention, and plan for becoming a
people of Christlike love.

91 pastors are developing a
Church Formation Plan with
a Practicing the Way coach
or cohort

01



VINEYARD STREAM
QUEENSTOWN, NEW ZEALAND

02



NEO-CHARISMATIC STREAM
PORTLAND, OREGON

NOW STREAMING

**4 Streams cohorts launched
last year, representing 54
pastors from 27 churches**

Church Formation Streams is a new, two-year program for pastors who share the same denominational and cultural context.

In the church, new ideas — like deeper formation — tend to flow through denominational networks, or “streams” of the church. To spread formational ideas among leading pastors, we have begun gathering cohorts from particular streams. Each cohort is made up of 6-8 churches, led by our



ANGLICAN STREAM
LITCHFIELD BEACH, SOUTH CAROLINA

Church Formation team and one pastor who has faithfully ingetrated spiritual formation into their own life, and their church at large. These pastor-luminaries serve as local guides to others in their stream. Cohorts meet monthly on Zoom and gather twice yearly in person to develop a deeper life with God, while building community with other like-minded pastors who face similar challenges in ministry.

Last year, we began serving 27 churches across four streams-based cohorts.



COMMUNITY CHURCH STREAM
NORTH ANDOVER, MASSACHUSETTS

While the first year was largely focused on working through a Church Formation Plan and discerning a next best step, year two will focus on follow-through. These churches will then carry formational ideas to their networks, spreading resources from Practicing the Way into new pockets of the church.

Your generosity fuels slow, quiet movements such as these: churches linking arms as they integrate spiritual formation into their unique cultural contexts worldwide.



St. Petersburg is a city of beauty, resilience, and potential. Known for its spirit of unity and strength, St. Pete lives up to its motto: "We are St. Pete."

An uncommon way of life

When Meiko and Simone Seymour planted Uncommon City in St. Petersburg, Florida, they made a decision that set them apart from most church plants: everything would revolve around spiritual formation from day one.

“We’re not turning a ship,” Meiko says. “We’re starting with this.”

Now just over a year old, Uncommon City is an intentionally small community with a vision they describe as urban monasticism — a church rooted in the conviction that the city itself is the monastery, and that followers of Jesus can live like monks on every block.

When the Seymours entered the Church Formation Incubator, a 9-month cohort for pastors through Practicing the Way, they weren’t looking for a new direction. They had already spent years on the journey of personal formation — reading Dallas Willard, sitting with Scripture, learning to slow down.

What they needed was a trusted space to design what was next: a trellis to guide the early years of their church.

That’s exactly what the Incubator has given them.

“Practicing the Way has helped us think about formation in all aspects of our community — from what it looks like for us to be contemplative leaders, all the way through to how we gather, retreat, and hold space for formation in our city.”

The church has built a scaffolding out of our nine Practices, creating a three-year cycle of teaching and communal life that will reset and begin again season after season.

And the Incubator hasn't just shaped their programming.

Through coaching, Meiko has been gently challenged to slow down — to resist the pull of implementing every good idea at once and instead ask, What's the one thing we can do in the next year? That rhythm of discernment has become a gift to their leadership team of six, who together are mapping out a three-to-five year plan for formation across Uncommon City.

What excites Meiko most is how formation and mission aren't two competing impulses at Uncommon City. They're one and the same. “To be spiritually formed is to be missional,” he says. “To be missional is to be spiritually formed.”

It's a church built slowly, on purpose — and Practicing the Way's free resources and pastoral community has been part of the foundation from the start.



Uncommon City welcomes kids, noise and all. Meiko and Simone offer activities for little hands, and space for families to be present together.



Church gatherings are small, approachable, and embodied — anchored in a 3-year rotation of the nine practices from Practicing the Way.

Wisdom for AI

Over 81,000 people
watched the conversation

Over 300 pastors joined
an additional Q+R with
Andy Crouch



Modern technologies influence our daily lives as followers of Jesus.

The launch of the iPhone in 2007 — let alone the invention of the printing press or the nuclear reactor — transformed habits, relationships, and worship for billions of people.

We can't know the future, but there's good reason to think that AI will deepen these shifts in the way people create, consume, and communicate. So we asked luminaries Andy Crouch and Jay Kim to guide us through how we hold to the way of Jesus even as technology changes the rhythms of our lives.

The conversation struck a nerve with people, as it's already become our third most-viewed video on YouTube. We loved seeing comments from people whose work engages AI, as well as everyday Christians who had been seeking wisdom.

Zach, a viewer, commented: "Wow, this is probably the most thoughtful engagement with AI from a Christian perspective that I've come across — encouraging us to intentionally engage our formation without being passive and think about the things that truly make us who we are."





The Community Practice



A community of love and depth in a culture
of individualism and superficiality

“And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, not giving up meeting together ... encouraging one another ...”

—Hebrews 10v24-25

In a lonely, fractured culture, Jesus offers a new kind of family. Despite the unprecedented connectivity of the modern era, genuine community is vanishing. Isolation, transience, and superficiality can sabotage our formation into people of mature love.

But through Jesus, we enter a kinship that offers intimacy, joy, healing, and commitment.



The Community season explores how we can cultivate a deep spiritual family in the radically individualistic West. Hosted by Shelbi Shutt in conversation with John Mark Comer, this season integrates the stories of everyday apprentices and luminaries to uncover topics like Jesus’ vision for family, overcoming shame through community, and family systems theory.

Between April 29, 2025 and
March 31, 2026

3,328 groups ran the Practice

**26,060 people listened to the
Rule of Life podcast**

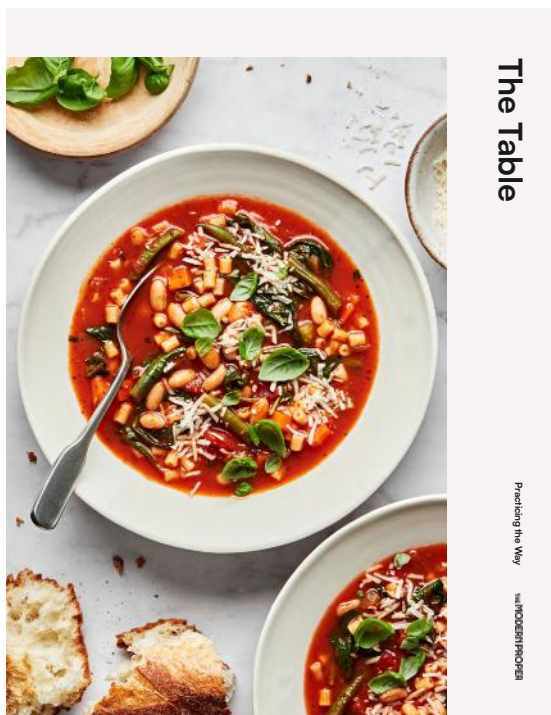
“Our group was of the mindset that community can be achieved by meeting twice a month for six months. We now realize community can only be achieved through a long-term commitment to one another. Community is the baseline for all Christian practices.”

—Ken from Camrose, AB

“Many of our group members came in with wounding and trauma either from their families or prior communities, so community had become a place of pain and anxiety for them. This practice reawakened hope for many and renewed a desire to commit and stay.”

—Stacey from Kirkland, WA

Life, to the full.



Church communities run on food. But hospitality for many people is challenging, especially for a weeknight small group. To help people gather around a great meal, we collaborated with The Modern Proper to create **The Table**, a collection of 10 delicious potluck-style recipes for small group gatherings. It reintroduced the beauty that is found in sharing a meal together — simply, and with ease.

Over 11,000 groups downloaded The Table

Table Conversations helped communities spark deeper conversation by going below the surface and connecting around life, faith, and formation in meaningful (and fun) ways.

Over 13,000 groups received Table Conversations



Finish the sentence: I am working on
accepting _____.



The Service Practice



A community of justice, mercy, and reconciliation
in a culture of injustice and division

“A tree is recognized by its fruit.”

—Matthew 12v33

Love is the hallmark of Jesus’ followers.

With practice, we increasingly respond to the unplanned and the unexpected needs of our community in the same way Jesus would: with loving presence and willingness to help.

As we allow ourselves to be interrupted, overlapping our lives with those on the margins, we become people of love.



The Service season explores how we can serve with genuine love in a time of self-interest and overwhelming need. Hosted by Shelbi Shutt in conversation with pastor and writer Tyler Staton, this season integrates the stories of everyday apprentices and luminaries to uncover the why, how, and where of service in the way of Jesus.

Between September 30, 2025
and March 31, 2026

979 groups ran the Practice

**13,436 people listened to the
Rule of Life podcast**

“This practice has shown us how to intentionally reach out to those on the margins of society, and to be okay with unplanned and interruptible moments.”

—Grace from Eagle, ID

“I am a Youth Pastor and led our youth through the Service Practice. The students now intentionally do small acts of service and are picking people that have been on the outside, intentionally bringing them into their circle.”

—Christine from Palmer, AK



The Witness Practice



A community of hospitality in a culture of hostility

“Practice hospitality.”

—Romans 12v13

In a post-Christian culture, the idea of “sharing the gospel” seems intimidating — even offensive. But the Spirit in us is compassionate, drawing near those who are far from God.

Scripture outlines two essential components of being a witness: living a beautiful life in community and sharing the good news of Jesus. As we listen to the Spirit, he provides opportunities to tell people who Jesus is, what he’s done in human history, what he’s done in our life.



The Witness season explores how we can bear witness to the good news of Jesus in the secular, pluralistic culture of the West. Hosted by Shelbi Shutt in conversation with John Mark Comer, this season integrates the stories of everyday apprentices and luminaries to uncover topics like the starting with love, the unique role of hospitality in modern-day witness, and partnership with the Holy Spirit.

Between February 17, 2025
and March 31, 2026

419 groups ran the Practice

**7,518 people listened to the
Rule of Life podcast**

“While doing the Witness Practice, my friend and I went out for drinks and talked for a while about life and the uncertainty of our futures. Toward the end of the conversation, I asked him to tell me how he moved from Christian belief to atheism. Eventually he gave me the very raw and personal answer. I asked some follow-up questions, but didn’t correct him and try to make sure he understood the God I know. It was the first time I’ve expressed direct interest in his spiritual life. Explaining witness as companioning people through the five stages was a huge help to me in recovering a desire to share the good news of Jesus Christ with others.”

—Nolan from Tallahassee, FL



Eccles is a city rooted in church history, with over 77% of its residents reporting to be Christian. At Life Church, Practicing the Way challenges people to go beyond the Christian label and into a deeper life with God.

Is discipleship just a beautiful idea?

After more than 30 years helping people grow in faith, Derek Hughes had given up on discipleship.

In Manchester, UK, Life Church was doing what most churches do in their small groups: share refreshments, read a Bible passage, discuss what it means, and pray. People enjoyed their time together, but few seemed to change in ways that lasted. Genuine transformation was rare.

Over time, attendance faded, energy drained, and Derek found himself wondering whether real discipleship was just a beautiful idea that never quite worked in practice.

He had heard about Practicing the Way and decided to try it, unsure if anyone would come, and fearing it might be too challenging.

“We chose The Sabbath Practice to focus on for two months. One week we studied and discussed it. The next week we shared a meal and talked honestly about how we were doing. It wasn’t polished or perfect, but it felt human.”

A few weeks later, Derek was sipping coffee when he overheard three separate conversations:

“How’s Sabbath going for you?”

“I’m still wrestling with my phone — completely addicted!”

“I slowed down for the whole day. It felt incredible.”

No one had been told to discuss it. It just happened. People were talking about obedience, failure, progress, and desire: the real ingredients of discipleship. There was confession without shame, accountability without pressure, and joy in the struggle.

“For the first time in years, I thought: This is it. This is what we’d been trying to create all along.”

Their mantra became “high support, high challenge.” Everyone’s walking in the same direction towards Jesus but everyone’s pace is different. High support means acceptance and care; high challenge means honest questions and concrete next steps.

Derek celebrates both progress and perseverance. Someone who admits, “I tried and failed again this week,” receives as much encouragement as the one who had a breakthrough. That mix of grace and grit keeps the atmosphere hopeful and human.

In the Sabbath Practice, people started nervously: “What if I do it wrong?” But over time, they began to rest differently. One couple stopped grocery shopping on their day off. Another closed their laptops at 6pm on Friday. Another simply admitted they hadn’t managed it yet, but were learning to long for it.

After decades of trying to engineer discipleship, Derek realized it must be cultivated — patiently, relationally, prayerfully.

“Practicing the Way is quietly transforming us. People are talking differently, praying differently, living differently. And I am too. I’m learning to trust the slow work of God, and to believe again that ordinary people really can be formed into the likeness of Jesus.”



Food and conversation are central to Life Church. Derek gives space for people to share stories each week — not to compare, but to encourage — and let each practice sink in before moving on to the next.



Derek hopes to recover something the early church took for granted: formation through shared rhythms of life. Growing gradually, relationally, with a lot of stumbling along the way.

340,200

253,370

83,537

8,550

3,190

Numbers are one way to express the extent to which communities are pursuing a deeper life of love in Jesus. May you share in God's joy, knowing that your generosity is woven into his beautiful work.

Podcasts

About **340,200** people have listened to our podcasts, streaming a total of **1,413,800** hours. We added **62,800** new subscribers across our three podcasts this year.

Spiritual Growth

253,370 people engaged with one of our online tools. **74,756** people took the Spiritual Health Reflection at least once, and **39,068** created a Rule of Life.

Small Groups

83,537 total groups from **26,492** churches in **137** countries have experienced a Practice or Course since we started.

Pastors

8,550 pastors now receive our quarterly Pastor Newsletter. Each month, we average **120** pastors on our Q+R calls — a space to ask questions and build community.

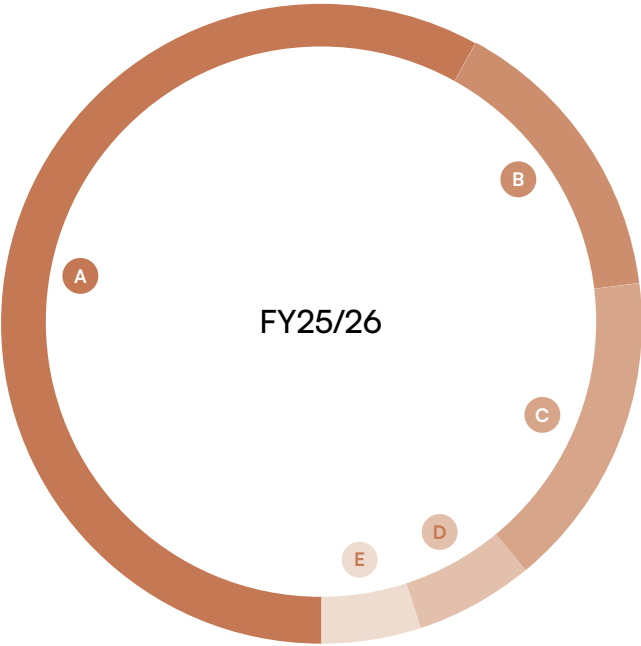
Prayer Team

3,190 intercessors subscribe to our prayer email list. We're honored that each month, some also gather online with us to pray for God to move through our work.

Thank you for your amazing generosity.

When we ask you, most of you are giving to say, “Thank you” to God and, “Keep going” to us. Paul tells the Galatians that “the one who receives instruction in the word” has the chance to “share all good things” (Galatians 6v6) with those who teach them. As our work has given you life, you have given life back to us through your gifts and prayers.

This year, it cost just \$25.37 per month to provide each church with the Course, Practices, online tools and coaching.



\$8.3M Total Received

\$4.02M Gifts over \$5k, including foundation grants

\$2.01M Gifts from The Circle

\$280K Gifts from churches

\$995K Earned income

\$995K Other wonderful gifts

\$6.7M Total Expenses

- A 58%** Producing Practices, books, online tools, and podcasts
- B 16%** Gathering our community (e.g., retreats, caring for givers, prayer team)
- C 15%** Serving churches (e.g., cohorts, conferences, coaching)
- D 6%** Forming team culture (e.g., staff development, team travel)
- E 5%** Keeping the lights on (e.g., insurance, bank fees, software)

A letter from a family and church you've changed

I grew up in a culture deeply committed to Jesus as Savior, but lacking in tangible language, practices, and frameworks for deepening lasting change and Christ-likeness.

Practicing the Way has breathed new life in unique ways that permeate the political, denominational, and cultural differences the Church faces today. My family has been significantly impacted by these resources as well.

My grandfather says, "The culture of evangelicalism in which I was reared emphasized a one-time conversion experience with little focus on spiritual growth (being an apprentice to Jesus). Practicing The Way has challenged me to be more intentional and committed to developing a life that reflects the person of Jesus Christ. Perhaps most meaningful to me at age 84 is the realization that while my physical body may deteriorate, my spirit can become stronger and stronger as I apprentice to Jesus."

Practicing the Way has gifted us a framework in which to continue and deepen our discipleship to Jesus beyond the initial decision to follow him. My family has started practicing Sabbath, fasting, and prayer in ways we had not before.

I am 23 years old, and I have been receiving coaching from the Church Formation team as I step out to start a Practicing the Way course at my church. I believe deeply in the work of spiritual formation, and cannot say thank you enough for your generosity that allows Practicing the Way to create these resources.

Thank you!

—Alec Bailiff and family from Lindale, TX

Join The Circle

We are humbled by your generosity that helped fuel the beautiful stories of transformation in this report.

If you would like to go even deeper with our community by becoming a monthly giver, visit **practicingtheway.org/give**.

Circle members receive early access to new resources, videos from John Mark, live quarterly update calls, monthly emails, and even occasional gifts in the mail.

We'd love to have you join us.



2025-26
Annual Report

