



Called to Lives of
Meaning & Purpose

News & Notes

August 2022



Coordination Calendar

Summer 2022: Field
research in congregations

December 5-7, 2022:
Annual meeting in
Indianapolis, IN

Resources from The inVocation Project of Hope College

By Beth Snyder, Project Director

In 2020, the spring and summer months brought many challenges for congregations navigating COVID-19 and the deep and painful race divisions in our country. One of our churches, Maple Ave Ministries, approached The inVocation Project with an idea.

Pastor Denise Kingdom-Grier heard from several middle school girls who felt isolated due to the virus and were trying to process recent troubling events, including the murder of George Floyd. Desiring to respond to this expressed need, Pastor Denise reached out to us with the idea of launching a virtual program she designed and named the Vocation of a Freedom Fighter.

Twelve middle school girls from the congregation looking to engage, listen and learn from one another signed up for this weekly virtual gathering. Pastor Denise said, “they are hungry and eager to become disciples and changemakers for the sake of their community and the Kingdom of God.”

To expand the reach of Freedom Fighter, Pastor Denise developed a toolkit to train and equip others in this work. This summer, Pastor Denise is training leaders to facilitate new groups launching in the fall.

[Click here for the Freedom Fighter Leaders Guide.](#)

[Click here for the Freedom Fighter Student Workbook.](#)

Congregations' Motivations for Participating in a Hub Program, Part 2

By Jennifer McClure

In 2021, the Called to Lives of Meaning and Purpose Initiative surveyed leadership team whose congregations are participating in one of the initiative's hubs. Leadership team members include ordained clergy, other congregational staff members, and lay leaders who are guiding the congregation's initiative related to calling, meaning, and purpose. Overall, 426 leadership team participated, representing 85 congregations and 11 hubs.

Congregational leadership team members were motivated by a variety of factors to participate in their hub's program. Common motivations include: focus on Christian calling, meaning, and purpose; opportunities to work with other churches; learning about innovation; looking for new programming material; financial support for a project; importance of calling, meaning, and purpose for our members; expanding outreach, community service, and social justice; building a communal sense of calling, meaning, and purpose for our congregation. In the 2021 CLMPI leadership team survey, we let leadership team members choose their top three motivations.

Below I explore how these motivations relate with how strong of impact leadership team members think this initiative has had on different groups within their congregation. There are three key results, which compare leadership team members who chose a particular motivation to leadership team members that did not choose that motivation:

- 1) Compared to leadership team members who did not choose this motivation, leadership team members who were motivated to participate in their hub program in order to learn about innovation think that middle adults have been more strongly impacted by their congregation's focus on calling, meaning, and purpose.

2) Compared to leadership team members who did not choose this motivation, leadership team members who were motivated to participate in their hub program because of the importance of calling, meaning, and purpose for their members think that ordained ministers have been more strongly impacted by their congregation's focus on calling, meaning, and purpose.

3) Compared to leadership team members who did not choose this motivation, leadership team members who were motivated to participate in their hub program in order to build a communal sense of calling, meaning, and purpose for their congregation think that their leadership team members, ordained ministers, and other ministerial staff have been more strongly impacted by their congregation's focus on calling, meaning, and purpose.

Conclusions

To me, some of the connections between the motivations and the impacted groups are unclear. For example, why is learning about innovation connected to an impact specifically on middle adults? Maybe you can help us to figure this out.

I'd also like to point out that, in the second and third results, motivations related to the entire congregation (an established interest in calling or a desire to build a communal sense of calling) were associated with impacts on leaders and not attenders. Are there some congregations in your hub's initiative where the impact on calling, meaning, and purpose is mainly impacting leaders and not the wider congregation? How can you encourage congregations to impact a wider range of attenders?

Based on these results, what surprises you, and what makes sense? What motivations for participating in your hub's program have you noticed among your congregations? Of the different groups in your congregations, where has your hub had the greatest impact?