

Convergence

OLD SCHOOL NEW LEADERS

2 Timothy 2:1-2

*...be strengthened by the grace that is in Christ Jesus,
and what you have heard from me in the presence of many
witnesses {Old School} entrust to faithful men who will be
able to teach others also {New Leaders}.*

Convergence Overview

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Why Convergence?

CB Northwest is committed to helping the local church identify and train the next generation of pastors and elders. Convergence is multi-dimensional pastoral training program designed to educate and equip developing leaders inside the local church context, so that they may reproduce healthy churches.

- *You then, my child, be strengthened by the grace that is in Christ Jesus, and what you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses entrust to faithful men who will be able to teach others also. 2 Timothy 2:1-2*
- *And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ... Ephesians 4:11-13*

The Convergence Alternative

Convergence has been designed as an alternative way to educate and equip aspiring pastors within the context of the local church. The academics of the training is coordinated and combined with active ministry within the local church, as well as relational influences of other pastors and mentors. In some respects, Convergence is “old school” in that it is designed to identify qualified men aspiring to pastoral ministry and then moving them through intentional steps of apprenticeship towards development into journeymen tradesmen. (This is why we use the term —apprentice” and not the term —student” to refer to those participating in the Convergence program.)

Why We Call It "Convergence"

Convergence is the process of intentionally bringing into alignment multiple aspects of pastoral training, so as to increase their combined impact on the men being trained and the local churches they serve.

There is a convergence of three interrelated purposes, of three learning processes, and of three levels of participation. In addition, there is an overarching convergence of purpose, process, and participation.

Convergence of Purpose

Within the Convergence program, there is an alignment and combining of three purposes:

Personal Transformation

We believe that healthy churches are led by healthy pastors and elders. Convergence is designed so that the men participating will be personally transformed through the power of the gospel, the application of biblical truth, and through vulnerable relationships. We expect there to be noticeable life change and character development in each apprentice over the three years of the Convergence program.

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Therefore, much of the training will be directed to press hard on the personal lives of the apprentices. Before they can lead others, they must first learn to lead themselves. Convergence will also provide the mentors with tools (questions, assessment forms, etc) to assist the mentor in evaluating and guiding the apprentice in personal and professional growth.

(Romans 12:1-2; 1 Timothy 3:1-13; Titus 2:11-14; Galatians 5:16-24)

Ministry Strategy and Skill Development

Ministry is not simply theoretical ideas of what might happen in a church. There are practical skills that require competency in order to be performed properly and fruitfully. These skills include relational skills, organizational skills, and communication skills.

Therefore, much of what will be studied and discussed will involve the development of understanding and application of various ministry strategies and necessary skills for an effective pastoral ministry. The application of these ministry strategies and skills will vary with each apprentice because of their particular ministry context and their vocational aspirations.

(Acts 20:28; Ephesians 4:11-16; 1 Peter 5:1-5)

Local Church Leadership Multiplication

The goal is not simply to train men, but to train men who function well as leaders in their local church. Also, healthy leadership is one that reproduces itself in the lives of others and proactively raises up next generation leaders within the local church.

Therefore, Convergence focuses on the development of leadership within and for the local church environment. It also orients, equips, and encourages the apprentices to determine how they will actively invest in other men in their local church.

(Acts 13:1-3; 2 Timothy 2:1-2; Hebrews 13:7)

Convergence of Process

Within the Convergence program, there is an alignment and combining of three learning processes:

Cognitive Learning

Christianity is not just a philosophical or moral system of thought. It is rooted in historical accounts and intentional proclamation of truth. There are facts, stories, truths, and principles that are to be understood and applied to our lives today.

Therefore, in this training, there is specific biblical —information” that is to be learned. It is expected that participants will do both broad and in-depth studies as necessary to become proficient teachers of biblical truth.

(Titus 1:9, 2:1; 2 Timothy 3:14-17)

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Participatory Learning

Knowing information ~~about~~ something is not enough. It is at best incomplete knowledge. For example, a person can know a lot ~~about~~ pianos but not be able to play even the simplest song. It is a recognized principle of education and training that personal experience gained by participation in something is a fundamental means of learning, whether it is sports, music, science, or theology.

Therefore, in this training, there are various assignments that require the participants to ~~do~~ something with the knowledge that they have gained via the cognitive learning. These assignments are not intended to be ~~busy work~~ but are intended to provide a means for the participant to gain experiential knowledge to add to the cognitive learning.

(Matthew 7:24-27; John 8:31-32; James 1:22-25, 2:14-26)

Interactive Learning

Learning new information and gaining personal experience are both essential, but by themselves they may only provide a limited insight or lack a broader perspective. Including other people in the learning experience provides the opportunity to gain deeper insight and greater perspective.

Therefore, in this training, there are various assignments that require participants to interact with other people. This may be through group discussion or may include performing tasks with others. A big part of the interactive learning takes place both in the cohort intensives and through the apprentice's participation in ministry within their local church. In addition, an important aspect of the training is the consistent input of a mentor in the life and ministry of the apprentice.

(Philippians 3:17; 2 Timothy 3:14; Colossians 3:16)

Convergence of Participation

Within the Convergence program, there is an alignment and combining of three levels of participation:

Personal Study

It is our goal to provide guidance and skills so that the apprentice's become disciplined learners and develop the lifelong habits conducive to personal study that has both depth and breadth.

Therefore, there is a substantial amount of reading and listening (podcasts) that the apprentice will be responsible to do on their own. Much of this personal study is assigned to be completed before the apprentice comes to a corresponding cohort intensive. In this way the ~~information~~ is front loaded into the apprentice and the time in the intensive is focused on digesting the material through directed questioning, discussion, evaluation, and presentations. The stress is not simply learning more facts but is on understanding the implications and applications of the material studied in both the apprentice's life and ministry.

(1 Timothy 4:11-16; 2 Timothy 2:15; Titus 2:7-8; Hebrews 5:11-14)

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Ministry Involvement and Mentoring in the Local Church

The overall objective of Convergence is that men be educated and equipped for effective ministry within the local church. This cannot be done if these men are isolated from active involvement in the local church. The ministry in the local church is the environment in which the ministry skills are developed and in which personal character is forged. Knowledge can be evaluated and clarified as it is applied to real life and ministry situations.

The mentoring component enables a more mature man to observe the apprentice in the context of ministry and life. The mentor can then speak into the apprentice so as to provide personal guidance, accountability, and encouragement.

(Romans 12:3-8; 1 Corinthians 4:16-17; Philippians 4:9)

Cohort Intensive

The cohort intensive is when all of the apprentices participating in Convergence meet together for three days. This is meant to be a time of “intense” interaction between the professor and the apprentices and between the apprentices themselves.

Another key element in the intensive’s learning experience is the diversity of the apprentices themselves. The apprentices participating in the cohort have diversity of personal experience, spiritual growth, and cultural context of the local church they are involved in. Often, apprentices come from urban, suburban, and rural areas. Some are part of recent church plants, while others are part of an established congregation with a long heritage. There may be lead pastors, associate pastors, youth pastors, worship pastors, and some who have not distinguished their pastoral calling yet.

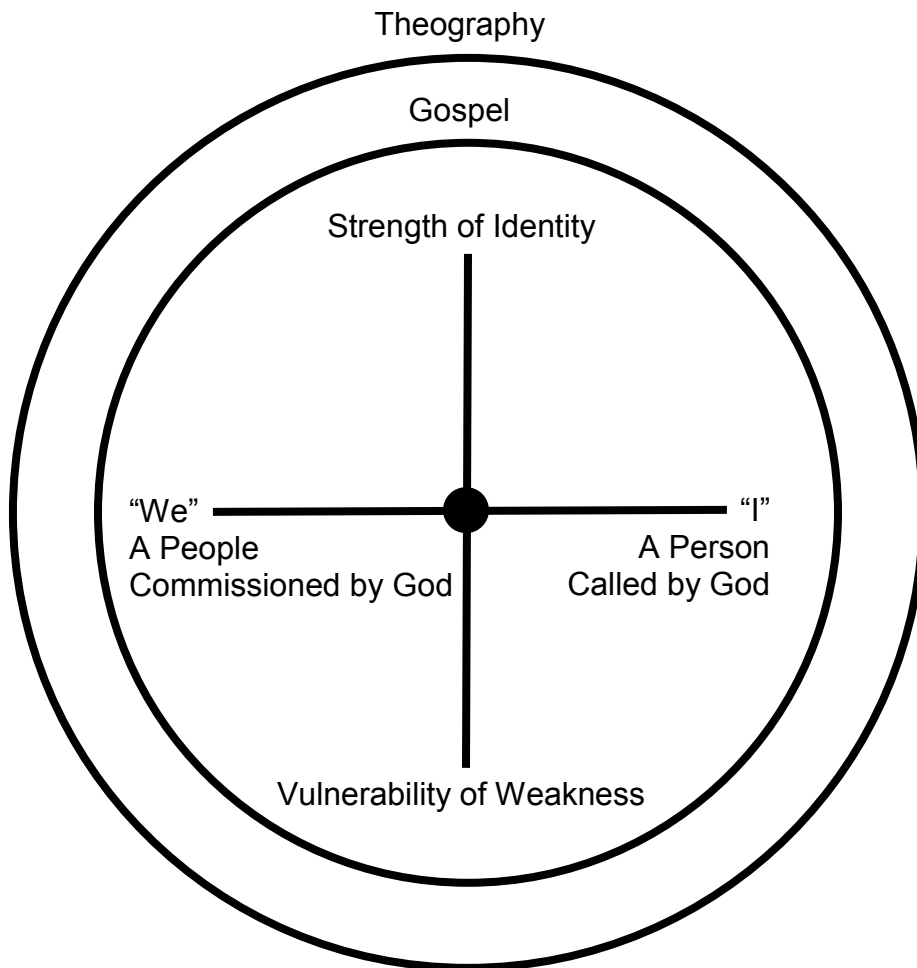
(Acts 11:25-26; 19:8-10; Proverbs 11:14; 15:22)

Theological Framework

The theological framework for the training for pastoral ministry through the Convergence program is intentional and balanced. It is deeply rooted in Biblical Theology and the realities of pastoral ministry.

The topics covered during the intensives will be developed and applied using this theological framework.

This theological framework is diagramed and described below.



Theography

The overarching storyline (theme) of the whole Bible can be summarized as —“The Story of God”. A theological term for this is Theography. This comes from the word —“Theo”, which means God, and the word —“graphy”, which means writing. Theography emphasizes that God Himself is the overarching story (theme) of the Biblical writings.

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The story of God encompasses all other stories. Not just the stories that are told in the Bible, but all stories of all peoples, nations, civilizations, and cultures that have ever been or will ever be. All these corporate stories are included in the flow of God's story. Nothing is outside the scope or power of what God is doing, whether they recognize this or not. (See Genesis 17:1-14; Psalm 33:10; Acts 14:15-17; 17:22-31; Philippians 2:9-11)

The story of God also encompasses the stories of each individual person. Everyone's life story is included in the flow of God's story. No one's life is outside the scope or power of what God is doing — whether or not he or she recognizes it. (See Job 12:10; Psalm 33:13-15; 139:13; Luke 12:7; 17:22-31; 2 Timothy 2:19)

Therefore, the foundation for all theology and ministry is who God is and what He has done, is doing, and will do. ~~F~~or from him and through him and to him are all things. To him be glory forever. Amen." (Romans 11:36)

Gospel

The ~~g~~ospel" is not just important, it is absolutely essential. If there is no gospel message of Jesus Christ, there is no Christianity. The gospel is the exclusive message of the person and work of Jesus Christ (John 1:1-18; 14:6; Acts 4:12; 1 Timothy 2:5). This gospel of Jesus Christ is —of first importance" (1 Corinthians 15:3-4), the power of God for salvation (Romans 1:16), and the only grounds for any boasting (Galatians 6:14).

The gospel provides our new identity (2 Corinthians 5:17-21; Ephesians 2:8-10), is the transforming power in our lives (Galatians 2:20; Titus 2:11-14), and enables us to live in a way that reflects the truth of God (Galatians 2:14; 1 Corinthians 6:12-20; 1 Timothy 1:8-11).

Therefore, the context of all theology and ministry is who Jesus Christ is and what He has done, is doing, and will do. (See Luke 24:44-49; 1 Corinthians 2:1-5)

The "I" / "We" Reality and Tension

Fruitful ministry is done with the understanding of the existence of two important and concurrent realities of our Christian lives; a) ~~w~~ho I am as a person called by God" and b) ~~w~~ho we are as a people commissioned by God". These realities can be considered two sides on a continuous reality of our lives. The different characteristics and dynamics of these realities coexist in ~~t~~ension" by providing alternative perspectives and forces influencing our lives and ministry. The horizontal line (X axis) in the diagram above depicts the tension between these two important realities.

"I" – A Person Called by God

One side in tension is who ~~I~~ am as an individual as ~~a~~ person called by God". This is a holy calling (1 Corinthians 1:2; 2 Timothy 1:9) to be conformed to the image of Christ (Romans 8:28-30). This calling is recognition of the gospel, its impact on my life, and the call on my life to live in step with the truth of the gospel (Galatians 2:14; Philippians 1:27). This calling includes the understanding that we should actively progress in our walk with Christ (Colossians 2:6-7). This call also includes the personal drawing and enablement of God towards specific roles and responsibilities within life and ministry (Romans 1:1; 1 Corinthians 7:17; Galatians 1:15-16; Ephesians 4:11-12).

“We” – A People Commissioned by God

The other side in tension is who “we” are as “people commissioned by God” to be a gospel community on mission. The calling we have as individuals is personal but it is not private. Together we have a joint calling (Ephesians 4:1-6) and are called out of darkness to be a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession (1 Peter 2:9). We are a people who have been given the great commission of making disciples of all nations (Matthew 28:18-20) in the power of God (Acts 1:8). We are the body of Christ and everyone is important and nobody is expendable (1 Corinthians 12:12-27; Ephesians 1:22-23; 4:11-16).

Living in the Radical Center

In order to live a healthy and effective life as a Christian and to function effectively as a leader, it is to be our goal to live in the “radical center” of the X Axis (indicated by the dot in the center). It is not a matter of focusing on the “I” or the “We” but focusing on the “I” and the “We.” A mature person does not stay on the right side, focusing on himself and isolated from others. A mature person also does not stay on the left side, completely dependent on others and taking no personal responsibility.

Therefore, theology and ministry must be developed within the reality and tension of “who I am as a person called by God” and “who we are as a people commissioned by God”.

The “Strength” / “Weakness” Reality and Tension

Fruitful ministry is also done with the understanding of an existence of two other important and concurrent realities of our Christian lives; a) that we function with “strength of character” and b) we live with a “vulnerability of weakness”. These realities can be considered two sides on a continuous reality of our lives. The different characteristics and dynamics of these realities coexist in “tension” by providing alternative perspectives and forces influencing our lives and ministry. The vertical line (Y axis) in the diagram above depicts the tension between these two important realities.

Strength of Character

One side in tension is our “strength of character”. As Christians, we have been born again to be new creations in Christ (2 Corinthians 5:17). Our new identity is “in Christ” so that we are accepted (2 Corinthians 5:21; Romans 3:24), secure (Romans 8:31-39; John 10:28-29), and significant (Ephesians 2:10; 2 Corinthians 5:20). We have “strength of character” because we are being transformed by the gospel to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in the present age (Titus 2:11-14; Romans 8:26-30; 2 Peter 1:3-11). Also, the Spirit of God actively lives in us and is producing His fruit in our lives (Galatians 5:16-26). This strength of character is both personal (1 Timothy 4:7) and corporate (1 Peter 2:9).

Vulnerability of Weakness

The other side in tension is that we continue to struggle with a “vulnerability of weakness.” We must recognize our struggles with the ongoing battle of sin (Romans

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7:13-25; Galatians 5:17; 1 John 1:8-9). Christians who are not honest with God, themselves, and others about the sin in their lives are deceiving themselves and denying God's word (1 John 1:8-10). Understanding the depth of our own sin against God and the immense value of his forgiveness significantly impacts our ability to forgive others (Matthew 18:21-35; Colossians 3:12-13) and enables us to be instruments of reconciliation with others (Matthew 18:15-20; 2 Corinthians 5:16-21). This vulnerability of weakness is both personal (1 Peter 2:11; 1 Timothy 6:3-5) and corporate (1 Corinthians 1:10-12; 3:1-4; Romans 13:13-14).

Living in the Radical Center

In order to live a healthy and effective life as a Christian and to function effectively as a leader, it is to be our goal to live in the "radical center" of the Y Axis (indicated by the dot in the center). We need to learn to function in the reality of our strength and our weakness. We are getting stronger with God's help, yet, at the same time, we will gain a greater understanding of the weakness we have from the extent and depth of our sin. Both are true. Both impact our lives.

A paradox of the Christian faith is that in our honesty about our brokenness and weakness we actually gain God's strength. Paul shared with the Corinthians his struggles and how God gave him the strength to endure (2 Corinthians 12:1-10). Although he does not identify his struggles as specific sin, Paul formulates a principle of Christ, who told Paul; "My (Christ's) grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness. Therefore I (Paul) will boast all the more gladly of my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may rest upon me." (2 Corinthians 12:9) Our brokenness is a conduit for the grace and strength of God in us and through us to others. (The relationship between weakness and power / strength is a theme in 1 and 2 Corinthians. See 1 Corinthians 1:15, 1:27, 2:3,5, 15:43; 2 Corinthians 12:9, 13:3, 13:4, 13:9)

Applying the Theological Framework

As each topic in the scope and sequence of the Convergence program is covered, it will be developed within the context of this theological framework. This framework will guide not only content but also the way the content is applied to life and ministry.

Five Spheres of Leadership

In addition to the Theological Framework, the apprentices will be routinely asked to think through and apply the topics covered using a grid of the “Five Spheres of Leadership” (© 2010 Royce Curtis).

- **Lead Yourself**
(1 Timothy 4:7, 16; 2 Timothy 1:6-7, 2:15; Titus 2:7-8)
- **Lead People Close to You** (family, friends, neighbors, etc)
(Ephesians 5:25-33, 6:4; 1 Timothy 3:4-5; Titus 1:6; 1 Peter 3:7; Luke 10:25-37; Deuteronomy 6)
- **Lead People Combined with You** (ministry teams, staff, small groups, etc)
(Ephesians 4:11-12; 1 Corinthians 12:4-7; 1 Peter 4:10-11)
- **Lead the Crowds Around You**
(Philippians 3:17; Hebrews 13:7, 17; 1 Peter 2:12, 5:3; 1 Timothy 4:12)
- **Lead Leaders**
(2 Timothy 2:1-2; 1 Peter 5:1-4; Acts 20:17-38; Titus 2:7)

Local Church Involvement

The local churches have an important part in the Convergence program.

The local church should not sit back and passively wait for good leadership to come its way. We believe that the local church is biblically responsible to proactively raise up next generation leaders within and for their local church context. Convergence is intended to assist them in this process.

In addition, healthy leaders reproduce healthy leaders and healthy churches reproduce healthy churches. Local churches are biblically responsible to proactively plant new churches in their community or in other communities. Convergence is intended to assist them in this process.

In partnership with the Convergence program, the local church is responsible to:

- Identify qualified men who aspire to pastoral / elder level leadership
- Provide the opportunities for active involvement in ministry
- Provide proactive mentoring relationships and oversight
- Contribute significant financial support to the apprentice throughout his participation in the Convergence program
- Commit to enfold or send trained pastors to reproduce healthy churches

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Schedule of Intensives

Below are the anticipated dates over the next three years of the intensives for the cohort beginning in January 2012. This schedule may change due to presently unforeseen circumstances, such as availability of professors and event conflicts. Any changes to the schedule will be announced as soon as possible.

The intensives begin at 8 AM Thursday and conclude by 12 PM (noon) on Saturday.

	2012 (Year 1)	2013 (Year 2)	2014 (Year 3)
January	12-14	10-12	9-11
February	9-11	14-16	6-8
April	12-14	11-13	10-12
May	10-12	9-11	8-10
September	13-15	12-14	11-13
October	11-13	10-12	9-11
November	8-10	14-16	13-15

Graduation Requirements

There are specific requirements that an apprentice must complete in order to “graduate” from the Convergence program at the end of three years.

These requirements include the following:

1. **Maintain active involvement in ministry within a local church throughout the three years of Convergence.** Roles and responsibilities may change but the fact of active involvement cannot.
2. **Maintain active relationship with the mentor throughout the three years of Convergence.** It is preferable that the same mentor work with the apprentice throughout the Convergence training. However, if circumstances force a change in mentors, this is allowed.
3. **Attendance and active participation of all Convergence intensives.** There are presently 21 intensives planned over the course of three years (seven per year). These intensives are not optional. If circumstances force an apprentice to miss an intensive, then the apprentice is still responsible for the material covered in the intensive. How the apprentice makes up for missed intensives will be determined by the Director of Convergence.
4. **Satisfactory completion of all “assignments” for each intensive.** Each intensive will have pre-intensive and post-intensive assignments to be completed by the apprentice.
5. **Satisfactory completion and submission of “Ministry Portfolio”.** Over the course of the three year Convergence program, each apprentice will develop and put together a “ministry portfolio” that is rooted in his studies and ministry experiences and is tailored to his unique ministry needs and aspirations. This portfolio will contain three sections.
 - a) **Statement of Faith (Doctrinal Statement).** What you believe and the biblical reasons for your belief.
 - b) **Philosophy of Ministry.** A detailed description of the principles and strategies for how you “do” ministry in the local church.
 - c) **Personal Development Plan.** A tested strategy and working plan for proactive growth in areas such as character, physical health, finances, and family relationships.

Ministry Portfolio Presentation and Interview. Each apprentice must turn in his completed Ministry Portfolio to be reviewed by Convergence personnel, their mentor, and the pastor and elders of his local church. The apprentice will then be interviewed about the content, reasoning, and applicableness of his Ministry Portfolio.

Recommendation by the Convergence personnel. The Director of Convergence and the Professors of the intensives must acknowledge that the apprentice has adequately engaged in the Convergence program and has demonstrated growth in knowledge, ministry skill, and character. The Convergence personnel will seek the input from the apprentice’s mentor and from the apprentice’s pastor and elders of his local church.

Requirements for Admission

To be admitted into the Convergence program, the following ten requirements must be met by and for the person applying.

1. **Current involvement in ministry within the local church providing endorsement.**

A key component of the Convergence program is the apprentice's active involvement in a local church, preferably at a "leadership" level. The apprentice does not have to be a vocational pastor, but he does have to be actively participating in ministry in the local church and have regular input by the leadership within that local church. During the three years of Convergence, it is expected that he will have opportunity to lead and oversee a specific area of ministry within a local church.

2. **A commitment to be involved in ministry for the three years of Convergence.**

It is important that the apprentice stay actively engaged in the leadership of a local church throughout the entire Convergence program, ideally within the same local church. The apprentice's role and responsibilities may change during these three years, but his involvement at the same place should not.

3. **A Mentor within the local church environment**

A key component of the Convergence program is having a mentor working with the apprentice who can interact with the apprentice about his ministry involvement and character development. The mentor can be a pastor or an elder level leader in the local church.

4. **Completed *Apprentice Application for Admission***

This form enables us to get to know important information about the apprentice and his aspirations and expectations.

5. **Completed *Church Application for Admission***

Because the local church plays a vital role in the Convergence training process (providing the apprentice with a mentor and a ministry environment in which to serve), it is important that we confirm the church's commitment to be actively involved in its part of the Convergence program. Therefore, the church leadership, on behalf of the church, must "apply" to the Convergence program so that we can determine their readiness for their involvement alongside the apprentice.

6. **Completed *Church Affirmation of the Apprentice***

This is to make sure that the church leadership is convinced that the apprentice is ready for the demands of the Convergence program, as well as their determination of the apprentice's readiness to be trained for pastoral ministry.

7. **Completed Recommendation Forms**

To help determine your call and readiness for ministry and the Convergence program, it is important that we hear from people who know you well. Therefore, we have four recommendation forms that need to be completed.

- a) Pastor / Elder

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- b) Mentor
 - c) Wife
 - d) Fellow Ministry Worker
8. **Interviews of apprentice applicant, church leadership, and mentor by the Director of Convergence.**

After all of the required forms have been received, the Director of Convergence may contact the apprentice applicant, the church leadership (pastor), and the mentor for separate phone interviews. Royce may also contact any or all of the people who provided recommendations with follow up questions.

9. **Established finances for Convergence expenses.**

There is a financial cost to participating in the Convergence program (see Financial Summary for specific information). It is important that you think through these expenses and determine how these will be accounted for. We do expect the local church to contribute to the financial obligation and expenses of the apprentice throughout the Convergence program.

10. **Payment of non-refundable \$75 application fee.**

Make checks payable to CBNW and mail to Convergence / CBNW, PO Box 30029, Portland, OR 97294-3029. Make sure you indicate the person the application fee is for.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact the Director of Convergence, Royce Curtis at roycec[at]cbnw.org or 503.405.1553

NOTE – When all the above material has been received by Convergence, it will be reviewed and the apprentice applicant will be notified of his acceptance (or not). Sometimes, we may decide to ask for additional information or to have additional conversations with the apprentice or someone else involved in the application process.

Application Process

If you want to apply to be admitted to the Convergence program, do the following:

1. Make sure you read all of the content in this document (or on the Convergence website) to make sure you understand the key concepts, requirements, and expectations.
2. Read the Requirements for Admission, listed in the previous section of this document.
3. Download the required admission forms from the CBNW website. (**Note:** The forms are PDF fill-in forms that require the free Adobe Reader version 8 or above. Mac users: Do not use Preview to open these PDFs. In order to fill them out properly you must use Adobe Reader.)

The application forms include the following:

- Apprentice Application for Admission
 - Church Application for Admission
 - Church Affirmation of the Apprentice
 - Recommendation by Pastor / Elder
 - Recommendation by Mentor
 - Recommendation by Wife
 - Recommendation by Fellow Ministry Worker
4. Distribute the forms to the people who need to complete them. This person is identified in the instructions in each form.
 5. Make sure that all the required forms have been emailed directly to the Director of Convergence, Royce Curtis at roycec@cbnw.org
 6. Participate in phone interviews, if necessary.

You will be notified of admission to Convergence (or not) after all the forms have been received and reviewed.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact the Director of Convergence, Royce Curtis at roycec@cbnw.org or 503.405.1553

Financial Summary

We strongly encourage the local church to commit a sizable financial support for each apprentice participating in Convergence from their church.

Tuition

The tuition for Convergence varies according to the payment option selected. The payment option must be selected before attending the first intensive.

Tuition Payment Options:

1. If paid in full annually, \$2750 per year
2. If paid at each intensive (7 times per year), \$415 per intensive (for a \$2905 total)
3. If paid monthly, \$250 per month (for a \$3000 total)

Other Expenses

There are other expenses for which the apprentice and / or their local church are responsible. These include:

- Travel to and from the intensives
- Meals at the intensives
- Lodging* at the intensives
- Books

* CBNW has a limited number of “suites” (small motel-like rooms) on the CBNW Portland property available to rent. The present rate is \$20 per night per person for double occupancy.

Payment

Tuition and expenses (such as suite rental) will be billed to the church and / or the apprentice by Convergence (CBNW).

Frequently Asked Questions

1. Who is the Convergence program intended for?

Convergence is intended to train men who aspire to the work of pastoral ministry within a local church. It is expected that these men are already involved in the ministry of a local church and that the church confirms their "call" to pastoral ministry.

2. Does the "apprentice" have to already be in vocational ministry (i.e. a paid pastoral position)?

No, although it would be beneficial to be. It should be the apprentice's aspiration to enter vocational pastoral ministry during Convergence or soon after completing the Convergence program.

3. Does Convergence award degrees?

No. Convergence is not accredited and therefore cannot award degrees. At the present time, we are not seeking accreditation.

4. Is there a grading system for the assignments?

The focus of Convergence is on developing competency, not simply the accumulation of information. Therefore, we do not use a typical testing or grading system (A, B, C, etc). The emphasis is on how well you can apply what you learn to your life and ministry situation. Competency is determined by observing your interaction within the intensive, by your mentor, and by the local church leadership.

In addition, over the course of the three year Convergence program, each apprentice will develop and put together a "ministry portfolio" that is rooted in their studies and ministry experiences and is tailored to their unique ministry needs and aspirations. This portfolio will contain three sections.

1. Statement of Faith (Doctrinal Statement). What you believe and the biblical reasons for your belief.
2. Philosophy of Ministry. A detailed description of the principles and strategies for how you "do" ministry in the local church.
3. Personal Development Plan. A tested strategy and working plan for the proactive growth in areas such as character, physical health, finances, and family relationships.

5. When are the intensives?

Intensives are typically scheduled in January, February, April, May, September, October and November. They begin at 8 AM Thursday and conclude by 12 PM (noon) on Saturday.

Glossary

Apprentice – We refer to the men being trained in the Convergence program —~~ap~~prentices”. Traditionally speaking, an apprentice is one who learns a trade by receiving on-the-job training from qualified tradesmen. We use the term apprentice instead of student because our emphasis is on learning by doing and being personally guided through the learning process by those already active in the ~~trade~~” of ministry. ~~Student~~” carries with it the cultural stigma of one who learns facts in a school setting.

Cohort – This is the term we use for the group of apprentices who work together as an intentional learning community through the three years of the Convergence program. The men in a cohort meet together for each intensive. Over the course of the three years, the men involved in a cohort get to know each other well, which enhances the learning experience and enables them to develop mutually encouraging relationships. There are usually 15 or less apprentices in each cohort.

Convergence – Convergence is the process of intentionally bringing together multiple aspects of pastoral training into alignment, so as to increase their combined impact on the men being trained and the local churches they serve.

There is a convergence of three interrelated purposes, of a three learning process, and of three levels of participation. In addition, there is an overarching convergence of purpose, process, and participation.

Intensive – We refer to the three day learning experiences as ~~in~~intensives”. This is because of the intentional concentration of involvement by the apprentices during this time. This is not a time of passive listening to lectures. It is designed to have a high level of interaction on the part of the apprentices.

Mentor – This is a key person in the Convergence learning process because it is a person who invests in a close relationship with the apprentice in order to provide personal feedback, counsel, accountability, and encouragement. The mentor is someone who knows (or gets to know) the apprentice well, especially in the apprentice’s church environment.