

## **Witness to a Better Place**

### Session 1: Witness in Exile: Longing for a Better Place

Focusing questions:

How can the life and message of the church address people's longing for a better place?

How can the church become a place where questions and doubts are welcomed and people are released to engage their neighbors in a ministry of hope?

Scripture Focus:

Mark 1:14-20

Colossians 3:12-15

Questions for Discussion, Part 1:

1. Do you experience the trends that Barna and Packard describe in your community - the Nones and the Dones?
2. To what extent is the critique of the dechurched fair? Unfair?
3. Talk about the interplay of belonging, believing and behaving. How does your church understand the relationship of believing and behaving to belonging?

Four Strategies for Developing a Relevant Witness:

1. Invite Participation...with limits
2. Undermine Bureaucracy
3. Be truly relational
4. Impact your community...and be impacted

Questions for Discussion, Part 2

1. What would it look like for your church to reallocate 20% of your resources (budget, staff, and facility) for innovation?
2. If you did an audit of the resources committed to preparing a single worship service in your congregation, what would it show?
3. In what ways can your church decrease judgment, foster belonging, and increase engagement with your neighborhood?
4. How might your congregation become a center that nurtures meaningful, soul searching conversations in your context?