

MLA: Missional Leadership Apprenticeship

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What will change a city? There is only one thing that can—Jesus made real in the lives of people. Only when people can see, touch, and feel Jesus incarnated in his people will they experience grace that can transform them. Come learn what it means to be Jesus in the greatest city on earth.

Some would say the incarnation is the most scandalous but redemptive concept in our faith. To think that God entered human flesh and lived among us is amazing, almost unbelievable. And it is powerful. It allows mankind, in our very finite state, to know and experience the infinite Creator. What's more, the incarnation, in some mysterious way, makes it possible for God to dwell in you and me -- and that can change the world.

Come join us for a year or two in NYC and be a part of the incarnational edge of the church -- the place where we make Jesus accessible by connecting with people who have never been close to him before. Are you asking missional questions: How can I participate in the life of God? What is He doing in the world? What's my part in His plan? Do you want to experience a spirituality that flows from a deep life with God, has real transformational impact on lives, and bravely engages culture?

MetroSoul is a group of urban simple church planters. We're using relational means to reveal "a Jesus with skin on." We use an organic approach: share Jesus, build a community of people around him, and raise up leaders to care for the group. We can't offer you a program-heavy institution. But we can offer you a chance to experience Jesus like you may never have before: in street-level, dirt-under-your-nails, person-to-person contact.

What we have to offer

Why apply for this apprenticeship? We'd like to give six reasons that distinguish MetroSoul from other opportunities. Not everyone will find these areas exciting, but if you do, it could be that this apprenticeship is just what you're looking for.

- A unique ministry: Simple/organic church is beginning to gain notice (see March 6, 2006 Time "There's No Pulpit Like Home"). MetroSoul is one of only a few teams in the leading edge of this movement that provides this type of training opportunity. Not only will you get to experience this innovative approach to church and mission -- similar to Church Planting Movements (CPMs) in other parts of the world -- but you will do so in a city of 22 million people.

- Integrated approach: Incarnational living is holistic living. Spiritual development, theological reflection, and missional action are all inseparable facets of a whole life. We will help you weave these elements together for health, durability, and productivity, no matter what your plans are after your apprenticeship.

- Emphasis on intentional growth: We're very serious about growth. Everyone from the uncommitted seeker to the planters of entire networks are encouraged and nurtured for continued maturity. To this end, we're interested in promoting your growth through hands-on training, weekly personal "sabbath" times, apprentice teams, city-wide apprentice gatherings, and local learning communities.

- Outreach to the unchurched: We place a priority on reaching the unchurched population of our city. This means our churches are good examples of what you get when you pull together people with little or no spiritual experience -- and a good place to learn how to build a Gospel community from the ground up.

- Portable, reproducible thinking: You will be trained as a missional leader who can work towards a God-movement almost anywhere. And you will be trained to do this in a way that can be multiplied again and again inexpensively and simply.

- Engagement with culture: If you want to engage postmodernism, emerging culture, ethnic diversity, and pluralism and in an intelligent, contextualized way, you belong in NYC. If you would like to do this in a experimental, relevant, cross-cultural and multi-cultural way, you belong with MetroSoul.

Who Can Apply?

All applicants must be at least age 20 and must complete their undergraduate degree program by the time they move to NYC. This means you should think about applying in your junior or senior year, although earlier applications will be accepted and placed on file. Female and male candidates are encouraged to apply, regardless of degree field. While ministry experience and formal theological/biblical training are a plus, they are not required to apply.

Applicants who meet basic requirements will be contacted by a MetroSoul representative for an interview either in person or by phone. One or more follow-up interviews may also be required. Applicants are welcome to make a "survey trip" to the city for both a big-picture of MetroSoul and a ground-level feel for the ministry.

What will I be doing?-- from Lindy, doing the MLA in the Bronx:

"I just received a call from a lady who I had a bible study with earlier this week. She has visited one of our home churches off and on the last 6 months, but was skeptical if God's love could come to her without having all her ducks in a row first. She called to just tell me that she has felt the presence of peace this week, that she has never felt in her life. She saw life differently this week than any week previous. She couldn't share it with anyone around her because they wouldn't understand and would think she was crazy. She called to let me know that God is answering the prayers of me and my co-workers. She is experiencing the peace of God. My joy is inexpressible. Why do I doubt? Why do I doubt that God really wants to give Grace, unmerited, undeserved grace, without us doing a thing.

Praise God for this peace she felt. Please pray for her as she continues to seek the truth of Christ, and Satan fights to claim her as his own."

- You will be praying. We will ask you to join us in prayer long before you join us on the ground in the city. You will be praying for the city, for God to raise up harvest workers, for him to identify people of peace (see Luke 10:1-7), for your growth before and during this work, and for the workers already in the field. We will also ask for you to find partners who will support you by joining this prayer (friends, family members, fellow students, etc).

- When you arrive, you will be given time to get to know the people you'll be working with. You will be partnered with a network catalyst (someone who plants multiple churches) or a church planter and other apprentices in your area. During this time there will also be concentrated orientation on living in the urban context, incarnational/missional ministry, and MetroSoul's methodology.

- You'll be assisting local leaders in evangelism and teaching efforts. This will happen mostly in small groups, informal conversations, and one-on-one meetings. Some street ministry, prayer stations, or service events may also be included. The emphasis will be on dialogue (not monologue) and developing listening skills as well as new ways to communicate Kingdom realities in relevant ways.

- You will be working with local leaders to develop new simple churches. As people come to faith, we often establish a new church in their context instead of removing them so they can attend one of our already established churches. This usually helps them reach the people they are connect to and grow a faith that is natural to their environment. In these cases, a church grows up from the seed of the Gospel at the same time that the new converts are growing into their faith. Perhaps the most important task of your apprenticeship will be partnering with and caring for these people of peace -- new believers or leaders-in-training who open up circles of people for Kingdom access. As a harvest nurturer, you will be spending the majority of your time with this person and their contacts in order to build up these people and an organic church among them. During this time, you will be learning about discipling, leadership by coaching, group dynamics, and the community building process.

We emphasize sensitivity to God's providential work and grace manifested in personal gifting, so your exact role may differ according to your gifting and according to the situation that develops in your ministry. We will ask you to stretch yourself and do things that are occasionally difficult and out of your comfort zone, but we do value flexibility and will attempt to come along side God's work already in progress in you.

Give me the logistics: finances, residence, transportation, etc.

Finances. MetroSoul plants churches mostly in the working poor and working class populations of the New York metro. With some of the highest living costs of any US city, the generosity of our churches can't support much more than day-to-day bills. Because of this, most full-time workers with MetroSoul come to the city as missionaries -- raising support from individuals and churches. If you would like to come fully supported, MetroSoul will assist you in raising funds with the churches and individuals you know.

MetroSoul will also accept applications for workers who will support themselves bi-vocationally, working part-time and serving as an apprentice part-time. Arrangements will be made on an individual basis in these cases.

Residence. In most cases, apprentices will be paired as roommates and will be staying in apartments with easy access to the areas where they will be working. This is the single greatest cost of living in most cases. Rental rates vary from area to area and seasonally, so MetroSoul will assist apprentices with estimating costs after the interview process is completed, but before the fund raising phase.

Transportation. Metro NYC is famous for its public transit system. Combining buses and trains, it is possible to arrive anywhere in the metro in reasonable time (though "reasonable" is a matter of opinion). Because of this, apprentices are not required to have their own transportation. In fact, for many places in the city, it is more convenient not to have a car (due to challenges of finding parking, etc). If you may be bringing a car to the city, please inform your MetroSoul representative during the interview process. This may influence placement, since cars are assets in certain areas. Apprentices should plan to raise funds for transportation costs, whether for their own car, public transit, or a combination of both. MetroSoul will assist in estimating these costs. To Learn more, visit the MetroSoul MLA Website !

For more information about logistics or to address any other questions you might have, please contact Jared Looney:

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