

MAC

Intentional Leadership by Pat MacPherson

Over the years, I have come to understand that, in many cases, a "leader" is defined by one's role or position, but "leadership" is defined by one's response. And as a follower of Christ, "leadership" is defined by one's response to the Lord.

This past Winter/Spring, I had the privilege of "rolling" out a new curriculum called **Intentional Leadership**, which evolved out of the **Intentional Discipleship** material that's been a focus for MAC Ministries over the past couple of years. This new twelve session class was hosted at Marietta First United Methodist Church, consisting of 15 lay men and women from the congregation.

News

MEN ABIDING IN CHRIST MINISTRIES
modeling + multiplying discipleship

SUMMER 2014

The curriculum is an extension in that as we become more intentional with discipleship, not just to "be" a disciple, but to "make" disciples, we find that intentionality with leadership becomes more of a reflection of one's obedience and trust in the Lord.

Using Hebrews 11 as a launching point, **Intentional Leadership** discusses the individuals of chapter 11 and how their faith and obedience to the Lord became a gateway for leadership for the Lord. Much of what we do is a response to something and I have

found that as we become more intentional with our responses to the Lord, leadership results.

Many of the men that I spend time with hear me say that we have to learn to "Sit" with Christ before we can "walk" with Christ. I was taught this many years ago by my, then current, mentor Wallace Francis, who constantly reminded me that we are called, in ministry, to work out of our relationship with Christ, for He is living in us. The challenge is my constant focus on "how" to do this when in reality, it starts with reckoning that through the Holy Spirit, He "is" doing this.

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My passion lies in helping others not just believe (acknowledge) Jesus in their lives, but to be transformed by Jesus Christ. One common revelation that occurs during this process is the understanding that the deliverance from sin is not to do something, but to rest on what God has done through His Son. This is a turning point that many times results in an intentionality to be obedient in responding to what the Lord is doing through you.

It's difficult to have a long term plan in place when you live your life as a response to the Gospel. For me, this is a challenge as I have learned over the years (especially when working through the ministry in Mexico) that we may have a vision, that is from God, but that vision is usually just the beginning and the not the end-goal. My hope with **Intentional Leadership** is to help one live and operate from a place of responding knowing that our faith is not so much about what we "do", but what has been "done"!

Thank you for your continued support. Please continue to pray for this ministry especially as we enter the second half of 2014. I am currently scheduled to facilitate **Intentional Discipleship** and **Intentional Leadership** at two different churches beginning after Labor Day as well as travel three more times to Monterrey. Your prayers are what I covet the most as I strive in "responding" to the Lord.

Another blessed trip to Renacimiento back in May with 17 folks from Marietta. As you see, we added a new activity, BASEBALL, with a large donation of baseball equipment courtesy of Adams Park of Kennesaw. Please continue to pray for this ministry!



Taking time to Listen, Participate, and Reflect by *Dr. Sarah L. Allred*

I am a teacher by vocation, and enjoy reflecting on the styles used by others who are led to teach. So it is with this brief note about my meaningful experiences as a member of Pat MacPherson's class called Intentional Leadership. Earlier this spring, my husband Bill invited me to take part in Pat's Wednesday evening course offered at our church. For a brief moment, I could not fathom why Bill would ask me to attend with him. Another "thing to do," right? But, at least three factors encouraged me to say "yes." I trust Bill's recommendations, he knows my obligations and therefore suggests additions sparingly, and I found the title of the class intriguing!

Early into this course, I noticed a few core features that comprise the smorgasbord of elements he consistently integrated into weekly sessions. Overall, they contributed greatly to my learning experience and are why I recommend this class for others. First, it was a Biblically based course. Weekly



Sarah Allred (middle) with husband, Bill (left) and their 3 children, John, Mary, and Andrew

lessons are fastened securely to verses, themes within selected New Testament chapters, or reflections on people in the Bible. And, every week involved making our own connections between God's word and our personal lives in the here-and-now.

Second, the teaching style was effective for this sort of group. It is structured, yet conversational and engaging. He used a range of facilitation techniques and Socratic questioning (e.g., "what would be an example of that?" "what would be another way to look at this?" "what is implied by the word "leader"?", "How does this devotion relate to being intentional with leadership,?" etc.), that taken together, encouraged me to think more deeply about weekly topics and to link them to things I thought I already knew! For example, in one weekly handout, Pat provided a listing of "questions about random people from the Bible" and used the questions to generate discussion. These were questions about a diverse group of well-known Biblical leaders perfectly equipped by God to respond to unique opportunities: Moses, John the Baptist, Noah, Joseph, etc. One question on the list was "what was 'it' about Joseph, son of Jacob, that allowed him to remain faithful to God while serving time in jail?" Through this handout and guided reflection, Pat created a framework for moving beyond the basic facts of their biography. Elements of the class like this have helped me to draw connections in ways that

I may not have done otherwise.

Third, we were given homework and weekly opportunities to provide feedback. Even though the term "homework" may sound intimidating, I liked this course component (don't worry, never any quizzes!) because it kept me from lapsing into the role of passive listener or learner. Equally important, I benefited from hearing the feedback and reflections of my classmates. I looked forward to the opening of each class session, when Pat asked, "what resonated with you from last week's meeting." Through such opportunities to share and listen, I leave each week feeling more connected with both the topics and people in the class.

Last, our class was unique in couple of ways that I enjoyed. It was comprised of men and women, church staff and members, young adults and older adults, and so on. I wasn't sure how this would work out, but the mix was wonderful. Second, I was pleasantly surprised to find that the class did not involve a "to do list" on how to be an effective leader. Rather, we were lead to discuss, read about, and reflect upon the nature of leadership, using Hebrews 11 as a starting point. I anticipate using the lessons on leadership in many aspects of my life, personal and professional. It is amazing and exciting to understand that my leadership opportunities are literally everywhere, provided I continue to abide in Him and respond in obedience.

A Little Help From Their Friends ... by *Missy Miller*

My husband, Tod, has known Pat Mac a LONG time. In fact, a lot of the friends he has now he has known since elementary or middle school. All these Georgia boys, born and bred, who have always called Marietta their home, and if they have their way, probably always will. I have long admired the strength and duration of these friendships. See, I am from a small town in Florida where the median age is 57. Those of us who are smart escape to colleges far away, make new lives for ourselves, and return home just to visit family. This makes it very hard to maintain those friendships from our early innocent years...even with Facebook! So, for the twenty years that Tod and I have been together, I have gotten to know these men,

first as young twenty-somethings, most still looking for their place in the world. Then as newlyweds and first time parents, struggling with the growing changes of responsibility, duty, and family. Now, here they all are, with kids of various ages, juggling football and hockey and dance and college admissions and job transfers and losses, divorces, aging parents and financial hardships. But the one constant through all of this is that every time these guys get together they rehash the same ridiculous, partially imagined, completely exaggerated, embarrassing stories they have always told. They laugh until they cry and marvel that they are all still standing.



Missy Miller with her "Georgia Boys," husband Tod and sons Brady and Casey

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A Little Help From Their Friends,

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That is until last year...

Last year, Pat decided to take it to the next level. Pat decided to dig deeper with these guys. These guys, who had each other's backs in fourth grade, the ones who laughed at each other when they struck out with the ladies, who had sleepovers together and went to school formals together, who rode in carpools and did weird 80's things together...the same ones who stood beside each other when they buried family members and friends, graduated, married, moved, loved and lost. That makes perfect sense to me. He offered them the best gift he could give his longest-time friends...a better relationship with God.

So Pat starts meeting with these guys every week. It is a comfortable, safe place where

they share openly. Support and guidance are offered freely. God becomes a greater presence in their lives. Before long they decide they don't want to just talk, they want to DO. They approach the community pastor at Piedmont Church who gets with the school counselor at Bells Ferry Elementary School. Soon they have a few needy families who need Christmas presents for their kids. It was an honor and a pleasure to not only provide gifts for the families, but to also give them much needed gift cards to buy necessities like groceries. But the real honor came in January when I was sitting in church with my boys and the pastor read a letter from one of the grateful recipients who said she fell to her knees with gratitude and was reminded of God's love through their gifts. I know this is only the beginning of many projects for the group and I am so proud my kids get to be a witness to this.

The group still gathers every Friday morning. They have allowed a newcomer to the ranks, his name is Jesus Christ. And though the rest of the cast may vary slightly and the topics may change, the one thing that doesn't change is the fact that these guys still have each other's backs. They are still on this journey together, growing, learning, teaching each other, carrying and being carried.

I am so thankful my husband has made the choice to spend time with this group. My prayer is that these men, who have such a storied past, such a speckled and tangled up past with so many memories, good and bad, happy and sad, will work together to build each other up, to help make each other better, stronger, more faithful and dedicated not only to God, but to each other and their families. In so doing, the future will be a little better for all of us.

Called to Lead

...by David Chavez

Over the past couple of years I have had the joy of growing in friendship and sharing in Christ's mission with Pat. Pat has a heart for ministry that is intentional and shaped by a conviction that Jesus calls us to be engaged in the daily practice of sharing and demonstrating the Good News. Over the course of this past year, we met almost weekly for fellowship, prayer, and to discuss his emerging work on Intentional Leadership.

On most days we sat together to talk through a biblical vision and version of leadership, one rooted in and expressive of one very key idea: obedience to Jesus Christ. Obedience breeds capacity, it nurtures faithfulness, and it gives root to personal

and public integrity of character and action. No longer satisfied with a works-based leadership model that is marked by modern notions of effectiveness and efficiency, Pat's vision is to explore and tease out a foundation for leadership that will result in a life marked by faithfulness and fruitfulness. With the Bible in one hand and the works of many godly writers, Intentional Leadership began to ripen into the twelve week course that I believe will challenge many to reassess their understanding of what it means not just to lead within the walls of the church, but more importantly, to lead in the public square.

In a culture that continues to insist on the importance of self-centered goals, Intentional Leadership digs deep into the Scriptures to lift up the situations, personalities, lessons, and overriding truth, that

obedience to God places us on a road where we discover that in Christ we are more than we can ever imagine and that we are called to give our lives away without reserve to a watching and waiting world desperately seeking the "revealing of the children of God" (Romans 8:19, NRSV).

Again, it has been a true joy to labor alongside a fellow disciple committed to convening courageous conversations about what it means to grow in Christ, live in Christ, and serve in the name of the one who came not to be served but to serve (Mark 10:45).



David Chavez

Chairman's Update *by Scott McLain*

One of the lessons I have learned from coaching youth basketball is the importance of roles. A basketball team needs defenders, rebounders, passers, and scorers. Not one is more important than another. I often apply this principle to situations around me daily, seeing and appreciating the need for both leaders and followers in each group and situation. Leaders need followers and followers need leaders, and neither is more important than the other. What has been revealing to me is the need for leadership in

each role — leaders and followers both. The current state of American society today is a testimony to a dearth of such leadership, particularly leadership using a Biblical filter. That is why it excites me so much to see the development and demand for the curriculum Pat has developed and which he introduced in this newsletter. The response to this new offering is validation of the need for Biblical leadership in all believers, and the desire for more clear application of our faith — the gospel.

My hope and prayer is that churches and small groups will continue to recognize the importance of this principle and spread this message throughout our communities. I encourage each of you to learn more about this curriculum, either from someone that has experienced it or from Pat himself. The need for Biblical leadership in all facets of society is clear, and as usual God is sending Pat.

Scott McLain, Board of Directors, Chairman

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A Note From Bridget's Heart by Bridget MacPherson

But Jesus immediately said to them: "Take courage! It is I. Don't be afraid." "Lord, if it's you," Peter replied, "tell me to come to you on the water." "Come," he said. Then Peter got down out of the boat, walked on the water and came toward Jesus.

— Matthew 14:27-29

This past month, our family celebrated my mother-in-law's 80th birthday at Callaway Gardens. One of the fun and exciting things I did with the kids was a tree tops ropes course. It's an obstacle course where you cross from tree to tree on logs, swings, tightropes or zip lines. The entire time, you are attached to a safety rope above by a harness, ropes and carabineer clips. The thing about the clips is that you're responsible for attaching them, one at a time, by yourself. And nobody checks up on you to make sure you do it right.

My 8 year old son, Sean, was in line ahead of me. It gave me a sense of responsibility and lessened my own fear because I was supposed to be strong and encouraging for him. He took those obstacles like a champ. And I knew if he could do it, I could do it too. And then we hit the first zip line.

It was really high up in the trees. The bike path was down below. The hard, asphalt bike path. Our family was safe on the ground, shouting words of encouragement. My 22 year-old nephew was on the other side, waiting to break Sean's crash into the tree. I prayed with Sean, wiped his tears, built him up, and then, eventually, he let go. He zipped over to the other side and was caught by his cousin. He DID IT!

Now it was my turn. I was REALLY scared. But, eventually, I let go. I zipped to the other side. And it wasn't scary after all. I felt secured by the harness and the ropes. I felt encouraged by the love of my family. I trusted that God was not going to let me drop to my death. He equipped me with what I needed that day to go from tree to tree. The hardest part was just letting go.



God Bless America! Liam, Bridget, Pat, Sean, Mary Em, James and Rose

Isn't this true about the hard, scary things in our life? We pray, we have the love and encouragement of our brothers and sisters in faith, we have the security of knowing that God is not going to let us perish, and all we have to do is just let go. And it always feels better when you're standing on the other side.