



pastoral leadership INSTITUTE

Fall 2009

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Pondering Ponds

The Kingdom of heaven can be compared to a once-vibrant pond whose landowner allowed it to grow stagnant, scum-covered, and ugly. So in a moment of purposeful resolve, the landowner devised a plan and then set to work. He dredged built-up sedimentation, freed water inlets and outlets, cleared unwanted debris, replanted desirable foliage, and reintroduced beneficial fish and fowl. Physically and financially the landowner felt taxed beyond his ability, yet he persevered. Today the pond is alive with unanticipated wildflowers and wildlife being drawn to this revived oasis, now a serenely beautiful vista for all who cross its path.

Like the landowner in this modern-day parable, we sometimes allow the ponds of our minds to become stagnant. Ingesting fresh new ideas and also passing on to others what we've learned keeps us mentally healthy and vibrant. No matter what your age or calling, the give and take of "iron sharpening iron" keeps you spiritually sharp. When three different people approached me within a two-week period about offering "side" courses through PLI, I decided that perhaps God wanted to expand PLI's course offerings beyond the basics. The result? **xPLI** ... "x" as in extracurricular or extraordinary!. **xPLI** courses will be open to all adults—pastors, students, lay leaders, new Christians, and seasoned saints—with an interest in stretching and growing.

xPLI debuts this winter with three courses (see page 3), and a few others are already in the planning stages. I hope you'll not only consider enrolling in these new courses as they become available, but also tell others about **xPLI**. While taking an **xPLI** course will provide an inlet for the pond of your mind, teaching an **xPLI** course could be a great outlet (and both are necessary to stave off stagnation). If you or someone you know would like to author and teach an online **xPLI** class, contact me with your ideas.

—Diana Boyer, PLI Administrator, PLIadmin@mcusa.org

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Winter Quarter Dates to Remember

October 5
Enrollment Begins

November 1
Tuition Deposit Deadline

November 30
Tuition Balance Pymt Deadline

Week of December 1
Classes Begin

Especially for Cherry-Pickers

Cherry-pickers, people who want to take just the courses that interest them without enrolling in PLI's entire program of study, may be especially interested in the following winter-quarter classes as well as the new xPLI courses detailed on page 3.

PL451: Church Multiplication & Planting Tuition: \$400

Every disciple would benefit from learning the value of making disciples (multiplying) through organic or conventional church planting. This course will ground students in projects that force cultural engagement and practice balanced with reading to stimulate the grasp of challenging theory. Weekly chat discussions will then integrate theory and practice. Not an easy course, but well worth the investment for intentional Kingdom players!

mPL611: Organic Discipleship Movements 1 Tuition: \$400

In a nutshell, Keystone training is obedience to the Great Commission, following the Holy Spirit's lead to make disciples who make disciples using principles that can be reproduced in any setting, any culture. And Keystone training is what this course is all about. With training sessions on DVD, supplemental reading, live online chats, and practical assignments, this course lays a foundation for multiplying disciples and challenges every participant to personally embrace the vision of taking the Gospel to lost people in their communities.

PL315: Fundamentals of Christian Counseling Tuition: \$400

Is God calling you to bind up the broken hearted? If so, this is a great place to begin. Students who successfully complete this course will experience life-change in their own hearts, understand the basic foundation necessary for effective counseling, grasp a picture of the role of the church as a healing community, and envision how impacting the heart changes everything in ministry. (It's also a great companion class for either "The Wounded Heart" or "Walking with a Wounded Heart" — xPLI courses detailed on the next page.)

[PLI students can choose any of these courses for credit toward the 8 Level Two courses required in PLI's Pastoral Foundations Certificate program.]

Weather Forecast ... Showers?

Are you feeling the effects of the current economic drought? Our pool has almost dried up due to the steady draw from PLI's scholarship reservoir to make continuing classes possible for financially challenged students. Please pray with us that the Lord will provide the showers of blessing we need. If you sense God wants to channel His blessing to PLI students through you or your church, cheerfully mail checks to: PLI Scholarship, PO Box 9127, Fort Wayne, IN 46899-9127.

Winter Schedule

(12/01/09 thru 02/28/10)

PL111

Biblical Interpretation
eProf: Steve Ganger
Time: Tuesdays, 8:00 pm*

PL121

Old Testament Survey
eProf: Allen Tyndall
Time: Mondays, 8:00 pm*

PL531

Biblical Theology
eProf: Jim Carder
Time: Thursdays, 8:15 pm*

PL451

Church Multiplication
& Planting
eProf: Jared Looney
Time: Thursdays, 8:00 pm*

PL315

Fundamentals of
Christian Counseling
eProf: John Oelze
Time: Thursdays, 8:00 pm*

PL611

Organic Discipleship
Movements 1
eProf: Don Snell
Time: Thursdays, 8:00 pm*

xPL911

Creating Parables to
Communicate Truth
eProf: Dominic Francese
Time: Mondays, 8:30-10pm*

xPL921

The Wounded Heart
eProf: Linda Oelze
Time: Mondays, 8:00 pm*

xPL922

Walking with
a Wounded Heart
eProf: John Oelze
Time: Tuesdays, 8:00 pm*

* **Eastern Daylight Time**
(adjust for other zones)

xPLI Debut

xPLI courses are open to past, current, and future PLI students, grads, coaches, pastors, spouses — any adult with an interest in spiritual growth and better equipping for Kingdom service.

xPL911: Creating Parables to Communicate Truth Tuition: \$200

A parable is a simple earthly story with heavenly meaning. What if Jesus taught using parables, not just to give us the parables themselves, but also to show us the best way to communicate God's truth? Even in the 21st century people learn best—and remember the lessons taught—when truth is encapsulated in a story. So why aren't more Christians learning to tell stories?

Not just for pastors in training, this course will analyze Jesus' parables, teach participants how to create their own original parables, and also provide a plethora of ready-made parables that can be adapted by any Christian and put to use in casual conversation ... word pictures that listeners of all ages can understand, remember, and apply.

xPL921: The Wounded Heart Tuition: \$300

(for women only—those who experienced childhood sexual abuse and also for women who want to help women who were abused)

You may think you don't know anyone who was sexually abused as a child, especially if your friends are Christians; but statistics show otherwise. Sexual abuse knows no religious or social boundaries. Linda Oelze, experienced leader of small groups on this topic, leads this study based on the book *The Wounded Heart*.

As participants take an intensely personal look at this most "soul deadening" form of abuse, they find hope, the burden of memories lifted, and heart healing through Christ. Psalm 51:17 says, "... a wounded heart, O God, you will not despise." As we lay our wounded hearts before Him, there may be weeping for the night, but joy is promised in the dawn.

xPL922: Walking with the Wounded Heart Tuition: \$300

(for men only—husbands of women who experienced childhood sexual abuse and also for pastors and other men who want to help—men helping men)

Did your wife experience some form of sexual abuse as a child? Do you even know? What does it look like to love your wife through the heart-wrenching agony of memories and wounds from the past? Taught by John Oelze (pastor, counselor, and PLI eProf), this study provides direction and hope for husbands facing this reality in their marriage. John is committed to "walking" with his wife through this lifelong journey. Are you?

Although not required, we strongly encourage couples to take these two "Wounded Heart" companion classes at the same time. (PLI's "Fundamentals of Christian Counseling" goes along with these classes as well.)

Enrollment Notes

It's time to register for the winter quarter. To do so, just go to www.PLIONline.org and use the links in the "Class Signups" box in the upper right corner.

A minimum deposit of \$100 is due no later than November 1 to secure your enrollment, and we reserve the right to cancel any course that does not meet the 8-student minimum enrollment by that date.

We accept tuition payments by personal check (mailed to: PLI Tuition, PO Box 9127, Fort Wayne, IN 46899) or credit card payments made online through PayPal (link provided in "Class Signups" box at www.PLIONline.org).

If you have any questions or would like to request scholarship assistance, please contact Diana at PLIadmin@mcusa.org.

Meet the Newest eProfs



Jared Looney, born in Ohio and transplanted to Texas as a child, earned a BS in Domestic Missions from Abilene Christian University. While still in school God ignited a passion in him for urban ministry, and he spent summer vacations working with various ministries such as Houston Impact Ministries, Memphis Urban Ministry, and Camp Shiloh in New York.

In 1996 Jared joined the staff of Impact Houston Church of Christ where he served as a youth minister and developed new ministry programs while completing his MA at Houston Graduate School of Theology. After 18 months as church planter-in-residence with Mission Church in Abilene, Texas, Jared relocated to New York City in 2001.

In 2003 Jared and his team planted Bronx Fellowship, an organic church network; and he continues to develop new disciples and new faith communities in the Bronx while serving to encourage church multiplication throughout the city and beyond. Jared has experience to varying degrees in large multi-service urban ministries, small ethnic churches, traditional congregations, cell-based churches, and organic church networks. While continuing to stay involved in making disciples, he is completing a doctor of missiology with Fuller Seminary in Pasadena, California, in 2010, and is researching organic church multiplication in a global city. He loves to see lives transformed due to ordinary people participating in the mission of God. Continuing to call New York City home, Jared lives with his wife, Hylma, and his daughter, Adalia.

Dominic Francese, the author and teacher of the first xPLI course, “Creating Parables to Communicate Truth,” is the lead pastor at River Oaks Community Church, a Missionary Church in the Indianapolis area. This veteran Bible teacher and former children and family pastor has specialized in communicating in-depth scriptural truth through storytelling since completing his Master’s degree in Biblical Studies at Regent University in 1984. Ordained in 1993, he composed a series of musical story-rhymes and plays that eventually led him to join the Keynote division of Campus Crusade for Christ in 1999 to reach a wider audience. More than 700 decisions for Christ were made as a result of his itinerant musical ministry to families.



Dominic resides in Noblesville, Indiana, with his wife and four daughters whose laughter, he says, encourages him to invent many stories.

PLI Dictionary

PLIers:

PLI students and eProfs committed to being tools in the Master Carpenter’s tool pouch, ready to be used as He sees fit.



PLIable:

characteristic of PLI students who allow the Lord to bend and shape them into whatever shape He chooses.



PLIé:

a PLI movement in which the knees are bent while the back remains straight and the feet remain firmly planted on the floor.



PLIInth:

a continuous course of PLI stones supporting a Kingdom wall.



PLIght:

a condition or situation of difficulty or adversity resulting from missing a scheduled PLI chat.

(Thanks to PLI student Ricky Hull for starting this PLI dictionary. Email additional definitions to PLIadmin@mcusa.org.)