



When the apostle Paul stood atop Mars Hill, he engaged the culture of a diverse people steeped in philosophy, mysticism, social and economic oppression. Kingswell seeks to continue that legacy of engaging the prevailing culture. Southwestern Ohio is a place much like first-century Athens: a marketplace of ideas, an arts community, and a metropolitan hub faced with economic challenges and broken lives.

As some describe it, our culture is at war with itself, and has been for a number of years. We know more about what the culture has been—what it is that is being rejected—than we do about what it will become. The social realities that persist among us – racial divides, poverty, economic greed, anger against immigrants and refugees, rapid technological advances, and the decline of Christian influence in culture – has brought challenges of a moral and spiritual nature that seem insoluble. With this purpose, Kingswell seeks to breathe life into a difficult situation today. The statistics are alarming: in the last fifty years the church has experienced a position of trended decline right across the Western world. Statistics show that 80-85% of churches are plateauing or in decline, and it is estimated that with the prevailing model of most churches, they can at best reach 40 percent of the American population. But probably 90 percent of these churches spend the majority of their time and resources improving these models of church and competing for the same 40 percent. There is a great need to develop a new way of mission and church “in the 60%.”¹ This is precisely what Kingswell exists to do. We focus our energy on developing leadership that can understand the missional challenge and proactively develop strategies, approaches, and teams to be able to take the church onto new and uncharted ground.

We view our learning community to be like a "well" where the refreshing presence of the King is experienced and where people are sent forward in mission as a result. This imagery of the King's well offers our learning community a promising identity that conveys a vision of our servant-leaders being conditioned by God's presence for the purpose of quenching the thirst of the broken and marginalized in our society. We believe entrepreneurial, vibrant, Spirit-empowered and missional-type leaders – people who cultivate marketplace communities on mission - is the answer to this discontent of the 60%.

Kingswell aims to equip emerging leaders, both men and women, to take on leadership roles in cultivating communities on mission. We do this through a rigorous program of academic study and with a great emphasis on immersion experiences, leveraging local partnerships and mentoring experiences with practitioners in the field. Our methods intend to shift paradigms for the purpose of retooling church leadership, and finally, harnessing entrepreneur skills with a missional imagination. Thus, we endeavor to send leaders into urban centers, community organizations, churches and the marketplace to engage the 60%.

¹ Alan Hirsch and Dave Ferguson, *On The Verge: A Journey into the Apostolic Future of the Church* (Zondervan, 2011), 27-29.

Our Mission Statement: To cultivate missional leaders and community in areas between Cincinnati and Dayton.

Our training experiences: Kingswell uses five pathways to achieve its goals: 1) We enroll a cohort of 7-12 individuals for a year-long (part-time) immersive experience in missional leadership; 2) We provide weekend-long “intensive” workshop experiences on topics relating to community revitalization and renewal, 2) to provide open-enrollment opportunities for anyone interested in missional leadership and community engagement; 3) We provide coaching and consulting for churches and leaders who want to cultivate missional community in their context, 4) We are launching a graduate program in 2020 to equip missional leaders through a Master of Arts degree, and 5) We cultivate 3rd space opportunities for community building and neighboring to occur (e.g., Family Movie Nights, Ladies Night Out, Sherman Park Missional Community).

We are located in the heart of Southwestern, Ohio, residing in a newly revived historical-art/entertainment district and nestled near several charities aimed at providing jobs, meals and assistance to people in need. As we grow into this neighborhood, we long for ears to hear and eyes to see all that has gone on before us here. We are actively looking for ways to allow the ethos of Middletown to impact our growth as individuals, as a school, and as neighbors. Our social-cultural environment allows us to not only reflect theologically, but to engage the realities that persist among us: racial division, poverty, human trafficking, joblessness, and the broken. Our city's ethos is the perfect environment for incubating emerging leaders with a missional imagination.

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