

Sierra Leadership Network Curriculum: Month 9, Year 3

Participation in the Sierra Leadership Network (SLN) is a process of adult learning. It is the responsibility of the participant to do their assignments and seek out the necessary accountability. It is the responsibility of the participant to schedule time with their mentor, not the other way around. Here is a checklist of this month's exercises and space for comments. All useful generated materials should be placed in your Sierra Leadership Network binder. The mentor will look over the exercises and be given opportunity to add their own comments. Be sure you take your binder to the meetings at Granite Springs Church to also be available to the SLN directors.

Month 6, Year 3

Date Completed

____/____/____ Islam and the LDS Church [Estimated time: _____]

Mentor Comments:

____/____/____ Preventing Child Abuse [Estimated time: _____]

Mentor Comments

____/____/____ Life Transitions: [Estimated time: _____]

Mentor Comments

Participant Signature

Mentor Signature

I. The LDS Church and Islam:

Ideally you will take some time to learn about both religions. Both have significant communities in California and anyone working in the church should have some basic knowledge about both of them. If you have time, do both assignments. (Mike Fish is writing the assignment for the LDS Church. I'll append this document when I have it from him.)

Islam:

Read the chapter on Islam in Huston Smith's The World Religions and answer the following questions. I find Smith's treatments of World Religions accurate, fair, generous, and intelligible for those of us mostly familiar with Christianity. He often explains these religions in Christians terms we can readily understand. There are also a number of excellent websites published by Muslims who try to explain and represent their religion to Americans. Read some of them over to get a feel not only for how a fair minded scholar portrays them but also how they portray themselves.

1. How does the narrative of Muhammad's environment and life shape Islam?
2. There are commonalities between Christianity and Islam. Where do you see this? There are striking similarities between Christian Fundamentalism and Islam. How so?
3. What are the key differences between Christianity (especially in the Reformed tradition) and Islam. If asked by a Muslim to explain why you are a Christian rather than a Muslim what would you say?
4. Muslims claim that Jesus was a prophet but that the New Testament is a corrupt transmission of who he really was. Based on what you know, compare Jesus with Muhammad in terms of their claims and the goals.
5. Compare what Muslims believe regarding the Koran with what you believe regarding the Bible.

II. Preventing Child Abuse

1. Since the Roman Catholic scandals child abuse in the church has become a very public issue. Lawsuits have driven church liability insurance carriers to demand more restrictive policies on churches that they insure. Finger print scanning has become the standard for nearly every institution or organization that works with children: child care centers, little league, schools, etc.
2. Review your church's abuse prevention policy if they have one.
3. If your church has a child abuse prevention policy attach it to your assignment. Is it up to date? Is your church in compliance? What has been the impact of the policy on your congregation's operations?
4. If your church does not have a formal child abuse prevention policy find out why. Has one never been written? Has it been attempted? If there is an informal policy how does that work?
5. Check out the denomination's manual on Preventing Child Abuse published a few years ago. If your congregation does not have a copy ask permission to purchase one for the church.

III. Life Transitions

1. Most of us by middle age have learned that life seldom gives us exactly what we expect. Do some reflecting on the major transitions in your life: conversion, leaving home, marriage, job changes, calling changes, career moves etc. Make a list of these transitions.
2. Prayerfully meditate on this list of transitions and ask yourself what God is saying through this list. Were you forced to make these by external circumstances or were there internal motivations behind them? Where was God in these transitions? Do some reflecting on this and share your reflections with your mentor.
3. What can you learn from this exercise and how can that help you minister to others?