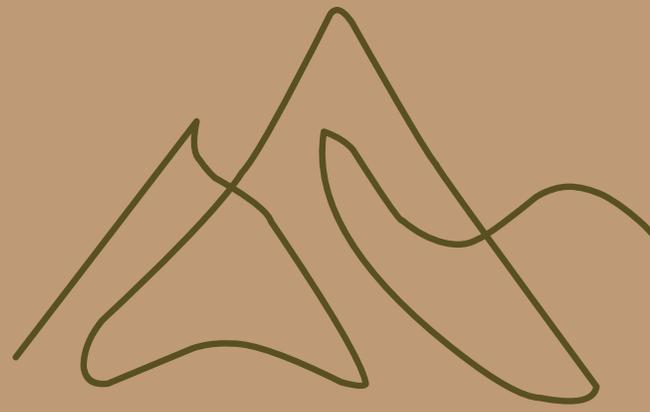




# elevate 2026



## BreakOut Session Guide

You will be able to attend two of the following sessions with registration to Elevate



**REIMAGINE**  
**How We Lead**



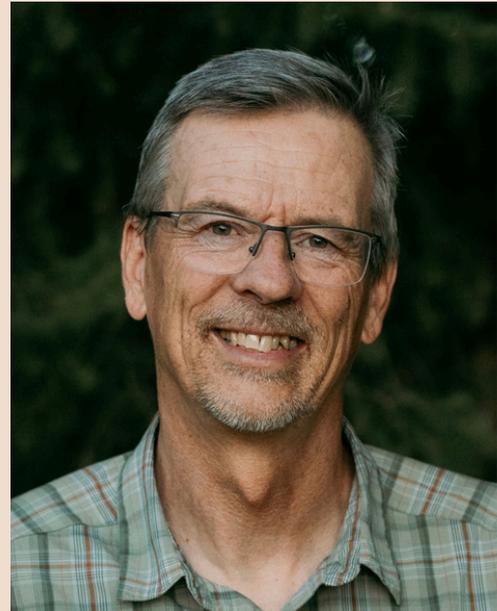


## **The Holy Spirit and Church Leadership: You Can't Give Away What You Have Not Received.**

**Ken Esau, National Faith and Life Director**

While it is common to talk about all kinds of essential skills needed for effective church leadership, the ongoing filling of the Holy Spirit is a prerequisite to all of these. This breakout session will explore the relationship between the daily and personal experience of the Holy Spirit and the resulting transformation of leaders.

Ken Esau serves as the National Faith and Life Director for the Canadian Conference of Churches. Prior to this, he spent 31 years teaching Bible and Theology at Columbia Bible College. He and Karen are members of The Life Centre (Abbotsford, BC) and enjoy being grandparents to three very young granddaughters.



## **Building Resilience in Ministry**



**Phil Collins, Lead Pastor at Willow Park Church**

Pastoral ministry is one of the most demanding callings, carrying spiritual, emotional, and organizational pressures that can lead to anxiety, stress, and burnout. Long-term sustainability depends on developing strong internal resilience and learning how to process stress in healthy ways.

Phil Collins holds two master's degrees in leadership and theology and a master's degree in counselling. He teaches resilience in ministry at Briercrest University to fourth-year ministry students and brings both research and real-world pastoral experience to this session. Participants will gain practical tools for navigating anxiety, strengthening resilience, and sustaining a healthy ministry over the long haul.





## Walk the Talk: Leading People to Practically Live out the Gospel of Jesus

**Karen Heidebrecht Thiessen, Church & Community Engagement and Wayne Bremner, Executive Director, MCC BC**

While we have a Christian faith and also a desire to help people in need, those two things are not always clearly connected to each other in our lives and leadership. The biblical gospel of Jesus necessarily and powerfully leads to a ministry of justice, compassion and mercy. This breakout session will explore the implication of Jesus' gospel for the way in which we cultivate a personal and congregational life poured out in both word and deeds of justice and compassion.

Karen currently provides leadership with MCC BC in Church and Community Engagement. Prior to this, she served in pastoral leadership for 30 years. Wayne has served in MCC BC for 29 years, and has been in the role of Executive Director for the past 18 years.



## Leading for Gospel Multiplication

**Cam Stuart, CCMBC National Director**



Good leaders will ask, “What metrics should determine how I lead?” The key metrics of Jesus’ Kingdom vision seem to be embedded within the Great Commission. These metrics, therefore, are: – “How many of those I lead are disciplined to go and make disciples?” – “How much of our church life, resources, and time are used to fulfill the Great Commission locally, provincially and globally?” – “What expectation does our church have of every follower of Jesus to be trained, empowered, and released for participation in the Great Commission?”

This brief session will explore how pastors and churches can reimagine their leadership by cultivating a multiplying mindset that creates missional momentum through their local church and every believer they lead.





## **Staying on the Line: A Guide for Faithful Leadership and Ministry**

**Lee Francois, Lead Pastor of Crossridge Church**

College admissions has the SAT, the fitness industry has the BMI, Major League Baseball has “The Mendoza Line,” but what is the standard of faithfulness for Christian ministry? In this session, we will work through a helpful principle that ensures faithfulness in leadership and ministry.

Lee Francois began his vocational ministry at Willingdon Church in 1998, and currently serves as the Lead Pastor at Crossridge Church in Surrey - a church he planted in 2011. Lee has been married to his wife, Ilona for 30 years and has 4 adult children. Lee also serves on the Canadian board for The Charles Simeon Trust. In his spare time, Lee enjoys all forms of sports and exercise and can often be found on the golf course on his days off.



## **A Flourishing Leader has a Constellation of Relationships**



**Rick Bayer, BCMB Director of Pastoral Ministries**

Harvard University’s Global Flourishing Study tracked 200,000 individuals in defining and measuring human well-being. One of the determining domains is one’s relationships. The Barna Group’s research in 2025 into the state of pastors, revealed pastors experiencing high spiritual growth and vocational fulfillment but lagging in relational well-being.

In this workshop we will examine this data and compare it to the constellation of relationships that both the apostle Paul and Frodo (from Lord of the Rings) experienced. We will then reflect upon our own constellation so we can avoid falling and instead experience flourishing.

