The MA in Transformational Urban Leadership cohort is now into full gear with classes in LA, with participants in Bangkok, Manila, Chennai, Chicago.  *Urban Spirituality, Building New Faith Communities* and *Writings, Reign and Reality* are the three courses based at the APU LA Regional centre in Wilshire.

We have encouraged each student to partner with a church that is engaged among the Urban Poor in some way, during these three months pre-field.  In the Building New Faith Communities course we require the students to develop a new small group, cell group, community ministry alongside a local church leader.  We presented several options to them including both urban poor churches and churches with an engagement with the urban poor, then have encouraged them to visit and choose a church they believe would enable them to grow in the areas of expanding the Kingdom among the urban poor.

I have been in touch with each of you personally, and really enjoy your friendships, and am writing to solidify the relationship of the students with one of your key leaders.  In the *Building Faith Communities* course, students are to lead or work with a leader in pioneering a new cell group, small group, community ministry week by week over 13 weeks.  This practical work is the basis of class discussions.  I identified 8 churches that either were poor peoples' churches (my preference) or middle class churches reaching out to the poor (their preference and the way the Lord has lead this year). They were then to contact you each, and work out which of your key leaders and groups that seemed mutually beneficial for them to work with.

I believe this should contribute to the growth of your church with either a new cell, group, ministry, or assistance to someone developing such, plus most of these are deeply spiritual and gifted emergent leaders so they should bring blessing to your wider fellowship.

The commitment I am asking you to make to them:

* Sign off on their one paragraph statement of what they hope to accomplish.
* Make sure they are connected to a leader who they can work with
* Meet with them (or have one of your key leaders meet with them 2-3 times during this semester to reflect on what they are learning, and impart your DNA to them.
* Have your leader fill in the affirmation form (attached) mid-sem and end of sem, and add your own comments. (Its affirmation not evaluation!!)
* Where feasible help with housing, ideally among your target people. (Currently they have found housing, but Abigail and Hamel have had to leave theirs because of hundreds of bedbugs. Paul Rollet arrives from Chicago early next week and will need a place.
* As you are able, encourage them in their move overseas in early January with your blessings and your peoples’ prayers.

The commitment of students to you

* Students should work an average of 4 hours per week for at least 13 weeks in the ministry or small group formation, above normal church attendance.
* Will be completing course assignments related to their practical work experience.
* Ideally form a new group of non-believers or the needy or work alongside a leader in forming one, and transition leadership to another member

The commitment of program director to you

* Review and advise students on progress and difficulties
* Connect with you and your leader at least once during the sem
* Review outcomes with you all

If you are good with all this, can you send me a reply with the name and email of leader below confirmed. If you have some queries, jot me a note.

Magingat (Tagalog for take care – lives of adventurous faith in a framework of cautious wisdom)

Viv Grigg