



Identity

The Flourishing Congregations Institute is an interdisciplinary and ecumenical research centre, embedded at Ambrose University and Seminary. It brings together both academics and practitioners in collaborative ways to produce cutting edge scholarship and best practices related to flourishing congregations/parishes in Canada.

Purpose

Our purpose is to conduct and share Canadian and tradition-specific research on congregations/parishes.

Mission

Our mission is to bring together academics and practitioners to research the factors surrounding flourishing congregations/parishes in Canada, develop tools and resources to help congregations/parishes to flourish, and share our research findings with congregations/parishes that wish to flourish.

Function

The Flourishing Congregations Institute has seven overlapping functions:

- To research Canadian congregations/parishes across the theological spectrum.
- To establish and strengthen strategic ecumenical networks and partnerships.
- To share our research findings with those who wish to see their congregation/parish/denomination flourish.
- To resource church/parish and denominational leaders with empirically-informed practical tools and insights toward their flourishing.
- To become a hub of research activity among scholars studying congregations/parishes in Canada.
- To train and develop students who seek to serve in various local church contexts, with research and practical skills that will help them in their local ministry.
- To increase the Ambrose "brand" awareness to external stakeholders – notably as an institution where original empirical research takes place that can inform local congregational/parish practices – alongside raising awareness of others who partner with the Institute.

Anticipated Outcomes

We anticipate the following outcomes from the Flourishing Congregations Institute:

- To develop a multi-faceted understanding of what constitutes a flourishing congregation/parish in a Canadian context, attentive to variation across distinct social contexts (e.g., theological tradition, church size, region).
- To identify the conditions and catalysts for congregational/parish flourishing.
- To generate an ecumenical network of collaborating congregations/parishes and church/denominational leaders.
- To provide meaningful dissemination of research findings to academic and professional audiences (e.g., denominations, districts, dioceses, congregations) in the form of (for instance) articles, books, social media.
- To develop and refine data-driven tools and processes for use by congregations/parishes in diverse environments (e.g., theological tradition, church size, region) to assess and enhance qualities associated with their vitality.
- To offer consultative services, symposiums, expert panels, and workshops to denominational and church leaders and congregations/parishes as it relates to church well-being.
- To help train and equip students who seek to serve in various local church contexts by including them in the research process and enhancing our teaching curriculum based on the knowledge acquired through this research.
- To host and facilitate conversations and research publications with other academics who are studying various aspects of congregational life in Canada.