



Dear Friends,

Joel Kiekintveld, Street Psalms Senior Fellow, and Jessica Louwerse are embarking on a new endeavor in 2019: piloting a cohort for social service providers in Anchorage, Alaska, to engage in theological training and spiritual formation toward sustainability in their vocational calling. This endeavor is fueled by their own experiences as ministry leaders at Parachutes Teen Club and Resource Center—an organization situated between the spheres of the church and of social service agencies in Anchorage—and is an outgrowth of their own theological training and spiritual formation over the years.

They, and others, have observed and experienced a high rate of turnover (and eventual burnout) among social service providers in agencies across Anchorage, which weakens impact amongst the vulnerable communities they collectively serve. They believe facilitating a space for direct line staff to find affinity with others in similar callings, to build a practical theological foundation for their calling, and to foster their spiritual growth will lead to increased vocational sustainability, and therefore, an increasingly cohesive network of support for Anchorage's most vulnerable people.

Their hope is that this pilot will culminate in a full launch of an Urban Training Collaborative (UTC) in Anchorage. The Anchorage UTC will be part of Street Psalms' global network of other city-serving organizations.

Joel and Jessica have been invited to participate in the Academy of Spiritual Formation—a training program in spiritual formation, group spiritual direction, and contextual ministry application offered by Soul Formation (www.soulformation.org). The Academy is a strategic way for them to hone the skills necessary to help others develop spiritual formative practices and other transformative and sustainable practices within their vocational calling. The Academy will be a valuable asset for their own leadership development and will provide specialized training to round out their expertise as they seek to serve and train other leaders in Anchorage.

The Academy of Spiritual Formation spans over 18 months, and will include four gatherings at Mount Angel Abbey, outside of Portland, Oregon. The first gathering begins in just a few months—June 24, 2019—and the last will conclude the Academy in January 2021. The Academy will cost \$3,700 per person (so \$7,400 total). They will also need to cover their airfare to Portland—eight round-trip tickets. As such, their goal is to raise \$10,000, and the first \$2,500 before the initial gathering in June.

They believe the development of the Anchorage UTC is a next step in their journeys as they each discern the specific callings God has been revealing to them as they have, in their own way and time, stepped out of ministry at Parachutes and into a somewhat unknown future. The Academy is an investment toward this future and they want to invite you to consider supporting them in this endeavor, either through a one-time financial donation or by donating Alaska Air airline miles to offset the cost. All monetary gifts are tax-deductible through Street Psalms.

Donations may be mailed to Street Psalms (1121 Tacoma Avenue S, Tacoma, WA, 98402) or may be made online at www.streetpsalms.org/give — please be sure to designate your donation to the Anchorage UTC or to select the Anchorage UTC when giving online. Please contact one of them directly if you are interested in donating airline miles (contact information below).

And of course, if you are interested in learning more about their individual journeys toward this calling, about the UTC pilot or the Academy, or about Street Psalms or Soul Formation, please don't hesitate to ask. They would love to connect with you to share and answer any questions that may arise.

Grace and peace to you.