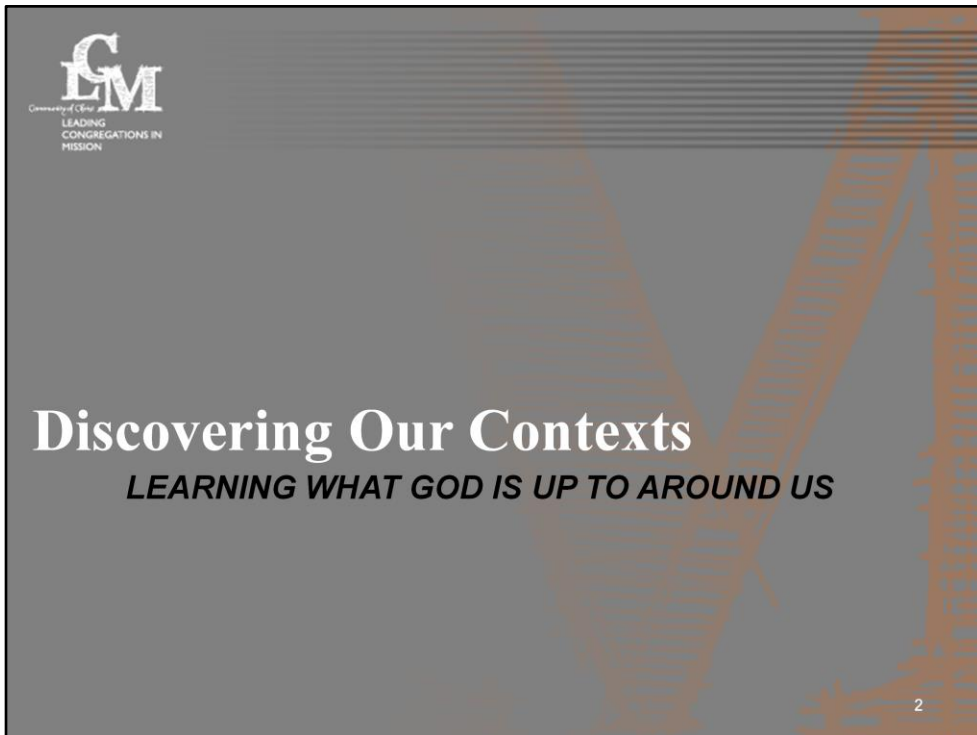




Pastor Leadership Team Retreat 2


Discovering our Context through Story




Welcome, with time for “connecting,” and Introduce Key Concepts: (20 minutes this and next four slides)

Participants need not sit with their PLT.

Start this session with a “connecting” activity by asking participants to take a moment to visit with the participants at their table.


LCM and Four Compass Points

- **Missional (Shared) Leadership** – *how are we leading together?*
- **Missional Practices** – *how are we living into new ways of being and doing together?*
- **Missional Context** – *how are we discovering what God is up to around us?*
- **Missional Process** – *how are we becoming adaptable to the disruptive promptings of the Holy Spirit?*



3

Share the following key points: (15 Minutes this and next 3 slides)

Note to Facilitator: These introductory concepts are very important to the weekend! Become very familiar with them. Consider sharing a personal story to bring them to life.

LCM and the Four Compass Points: Missional Context is one of the four compass points that helps us navigate the changing terrain of mission. With this compass point we are asking the following question:

How are we discovering what God is up to around us?

What is context? According to the New Oxford Dictionary, context is the circumstances that form the setting for an event, statement, or idea, and in terms which it can be fully understood and assessed.

- When I receive an email from someone I read it through a specific context. The context includes everything I know about the person and our relationship as it has evolved over time. Without an understanding of context I could seriously misread a particular communication.
- When we talk about context for mission we are talking about everything we know about a particular setting. If we are focusing on a particular relationship then we focus on everything we know about the individuals involved. If we are focusing on a neighborhood then we focus on everything we know about the neighborhood in terms of the residents, their needs, concerns, and hopes.

Why is Context So Important?

- Discover ways Christ's message and mission connects with the real lives of people.
- Discover how to make the message and mission tangible so they can experience it in relationship with us.



Understanding context is critically important. For the following reasons:

Today Christianity and specifically Community of Christ find itself in unfamiliar territory. Church is no longer at the center of community life, we live in a very diverse religious society, and people no longer equate matters of faith or spirituality with any form of organized religion.

What does it mean to be God's gathered and sent people – the church - in a rapidly changing world?

Or put another way – *How are we discovering what God is up to around us?*

This is the challenging but necessary work of discovering our context for mission!

When we learn to step back and critically evaluate our context we begin to discover how we might convey and live the message and mission of Christ in ways that are relevant to that specific setting. **The language we use when sharing our story, how we form relationships, where we form relationships, and the investment time required to establish open and safe space for sharing all depend on context.**

When we become students of our contexts (i.e. work, church, neighborhood, etc.) we begin to discover more fully how the message and mission of Christ can be shared and lived out **in ways that will make it real in the lives of people** based on their struggles and hopes. **This goes much deeper than techniques to get people in the sanctuary. This is about investing the time to enter the life experience of another person.**

Why is Context So Important?

- We encounter God in the stories of others.
- Listening to the stories of others is a key way we understand our context.
- We also must step back and examine how our *personal context* has shaped our understanding about Christ's message and mission.



Why is Context Important?

One of the primary ways we can learn about our contexts is by listening to the stories of those who live in these contexts. These stories not only help us enter into their life experiences but also under the influence of the Holy Spirit help us see how God is moving in the lives of others. **We can encounter God in the stories of others in ways that totally change our perspective.**

Before we turn our attention outward toward others, we need to be aware of how our personal context (i.e. our life experience) has impacted how we see the world and more specifically how we then interpret and live the message and mission of Christ as a disciple. Sometimes when we step back and look at our own life experience we discover blinders that may obscure new understandings of the message and mission of Christ. We will explore this more later.

Why is Context So Important?

- It is also helpful to understand how our congregational experience or context has contributed to our understanding and expression of discipleship and mission.
- What we feel we can do or the limitations we place on ourselves can also be a function of our congregational experience.



6

Why is context so important?

It is also helpful to understand how our congregational experience or context has contributed to our understanding and expression of discipleship and mission. What we feel we can do or the limitations we place on ourselves can also be a function of our congregational experience or context.



Refer participants to “Dwelling in the Word - 1 Corinthians 9:19-23 (The Message)” in the handouts Tab on page 50. (20 Minutes)

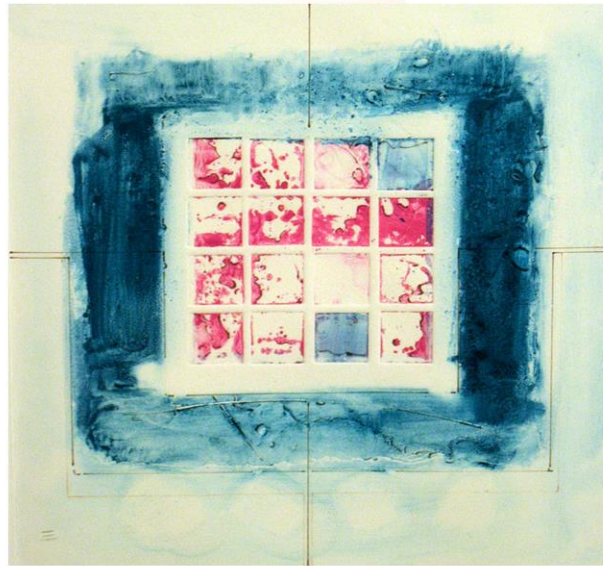
Facilitate Dwelling in the Word and have the table groups discuss this question:

How does this passage challenge us to discover our context for ministry and mission?

After the sharing in table groups and with the large group share the following statement:

1 Corinthians 9:19-23 (The Message) challenges us to enter the world of those we see seek to minister. This is about a willingness to enter their lives and be changed as a result of the encounter. Remember from retreat #1 we discussed the difference between “mission with” vs. “mission to”.

Window Panes Video



Show video, table discussion and key points. (20 Minutes this and next 3 slides)

First, show “Window Panes” video. (approx.. 5 of 20 minutes)

Second, provide table discussion: After seeing video ask the table groups to reflect on the video and discuss the key messages they received. Also do some large group processing. (approximately 10 of 20 minutes)

Window Panes of Experience

- The panes represent our personal, family, congregation, and neighborhood experiences.
- Together they tell a story.
- When we encounter each others stories we can't help but be changed.



9

Third, review **the following key points:** (approximately 5 of 20 minutes)

- Like the panes of a window we see and are seen through multiple panes or lenses. These panes make up the world around us or our context(s). These panes represent the various dimensions of our experience including our personal/family experience, our congregational experience, and our experience with our neighbors locally and globally. **Together these panes tell a story that impacts how we see and relate to the world around us.**
- We have talked about the challenge for each generation of disciples to make the Word flesh or the message and mission of Christ real and relevant to the lives of people. As we more intentionally experience and learn about our contexts we begin to see new ways to live and convey the gospel.
- Stated another way, when we truly encounter each other's living stories and enter into their world we can't help but be changed.

A Change in Perspective . . .

- This change occurs as we see ourselves and others from a changed perspective (D&C 164:5). This is very important.
- This is not just about telling stories but ***being open to the Spirit's witness that draws us together in relationships and helps us see new ways*** how to live and convey the message and mission of Christ.



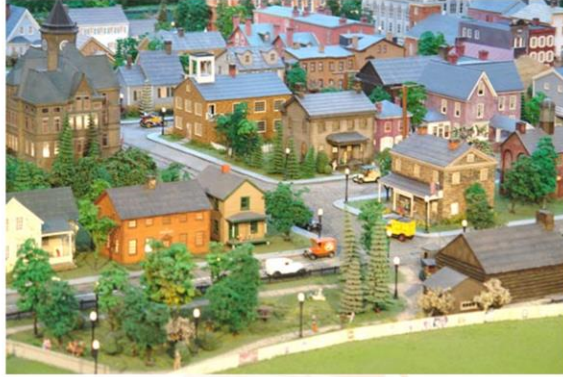
10

A Change in Perspective: This change occurs as we see ourselves and others from a changed perspective (D&C 164:5). This is very important! This is not just about telling stories but being open to the Spirit's witness that draws us together in relationships and helps us see new ways to live and convey the message and mission of Christ.

Note to Facilitator: *It would be helpful to share a brief example or story relating to how the Holy Spirit opens up new understanding when we share and receive one another's stories.*

How We Discover Our Context

- Demographic Information and Analysis
- Study of Societal Trends
- Listening to the Stories of Our Neighbors Locally and Globally



11

How We Discover Our Context?

We can learn about our context in several ways including demographic data and listening to the real stories of people who live in specific contexts. We will provide each congregation with an initial Percept study that includes some basic demographic information of the neighborhoods around your congregation. **This weekend we explore the power of story.**

Discovering Context is Relational!

"This is about getting outside the walls of the church and leaving behind our assumptions about what people need to attend to what is really happening among the people in the neighborhood. To be very blunt, this is not a matter of buying demographics and studies that tell you about people; *it's about entering their lives, sitting at their tables, and listening to the way the Spirit is inviting a new imagination about being the church in that context.*"

Alan J. Roxburgh

12

Discovering Context is Relational (5 Minutes this and next slide)

Review the following key point:

- In LCM a key foundational principle is – mission is relational. We carry this principle into how we learn about our context. **In LCM understanding our context for mission is not something studied as much as it is something experienced.**

Read this **KEY quote** on the slide.

"This is about getting outside the walls of the church and leaving behind our assumptions about what people need to attend to what is really happening among the people in the neighborhood. To be very blunt, this is not a matter of buying demographics and studies that tell you about people; it's about entering their lives, sitting at their tables, and listening to the way the Spirit is inviting a new imagination about being the church in that context." - Alan J. Roxburgh

Lead large group discussion after pausing for personal reflection by use of this question:

What are your reflections about Roxburgh's quote?

Make the following point:

- Throughout this weekend we will be exploring how we discover our contexts primarily through creating open and safe places to share our stories and listen to the stories of others.

When We Listen to One Another's Stories

Two things will emerge as we carefully listen:



New Questions Will Emerge:

- How is God calling me/us to give and receive Christ's peace in life circumstances different from my/our own?

New Insights Will Emerge:

- What does God's future of hope and healing look like in these relationships?

13

Two things will emerge as we carefully listen to each others stories: (1 Minute)

New Questions Will Emerge: How is God calling me/us to give and receive Christ's peace in life circumstances different from my/our own?

New Insights Will Emerge: What does God's future of hope and healing look like in these relationships?

Facilitator's note: Inform participants that in the next session "Discovering, Sharing and Living into God's Unfolding Story" there will be opportunity to carefully listen to one another's stories.

Looking at Trends



Being "spiritual but not religious" means you do not need a church or a community, some say. A beach will do.

“If what people mean when they say they are spiritual but not religious is that they are generally concerned with spiritual matters (whatever that means) but they are not interested in organized religion, then this trend indicates a growing minority of the population whose spiritual inclinations do not lead them to become involved in churches, synagogues, or mosques.”

14

Introduce “Looking at Trends” (5 Minutes)

Refer participants to the article titled “13 Trends and Forces Affecting the Future of Faith Formation in a Changing Church and World” pages 51-57 in the Handout Tab.

Facilitate discussion. (5 Minutes this and next slide)

Make this point:

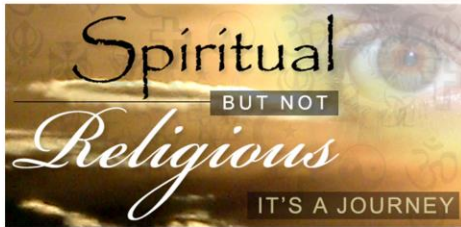
- There are a number of good articles that also help provide us with a big picture of what has been occurring in western nations regarding church participation and perspectives on spirituality and religion. Refer people to the article “Trends and Forces Affecting the Future of Faith Formation in a Changing Church and World” behind their Handouts Tab Pages 51-57.

Read the following quote:

“If what people mean when they say they are spiritual but not religious is that they are generally concerned with spiritual matters (whatever that means) but they are not interested in organized religion, then this trend indicates a growing minority of the population whose spiritual inclinations do not lead them to become involved in churches, synagogues, or mosques.”



Looking at Trends



What does this trend suggest about traditional methods of trying to get people to come to church?

15

Spend a few moments reflecting with the group on the following question:

What does this trend suggest about traditional methods of trying to get people to come to church? (See next slide)

Encourage PLT's to review the article as a team and with their congregation.



Other Tools of Discovery

- Percept Report
- Review of Trends
- Panes of Perspective
- Most Important – Your willingness to slow down and listen to the stories of others!



16

Present Other Tools of Discovery (7 Minute)

Present following points:

- Percept Report - A Percept Report has been prepared for every congregation. We will provide Percept Reports tomorrow for each congregation when we discuss next steps.
- Panes of Perspective Exercise - Refer to the “Panels of Perspective” Exercise behind the Handout Tab pages 58-59. **Facilitator: please refer to question “e.” on page 58, “How does this event or ministry cultivate genuine opportunity for meaningful relationships to develop?”** “Panels of Perspective” is also located on pages 17 and 18 of the Pastor and Leaders Field Guide and is a helpful exercise for PLT’s as they begin to consider how specific trends might impact the congregation’s approach to ministry and mission.
- **Most Important – Your willingness to slow down and listen to the stories of others! It would be easy to get overwhelmed with demographic data and trends.**
- **Remember mission is relational! The most important way we discover our context is in relationship with people as we enter their worlds and discover what God is up to in their lives.**



Questions: (8 Minutes)



Please Invite Participants to Meet in PLT Table Groups

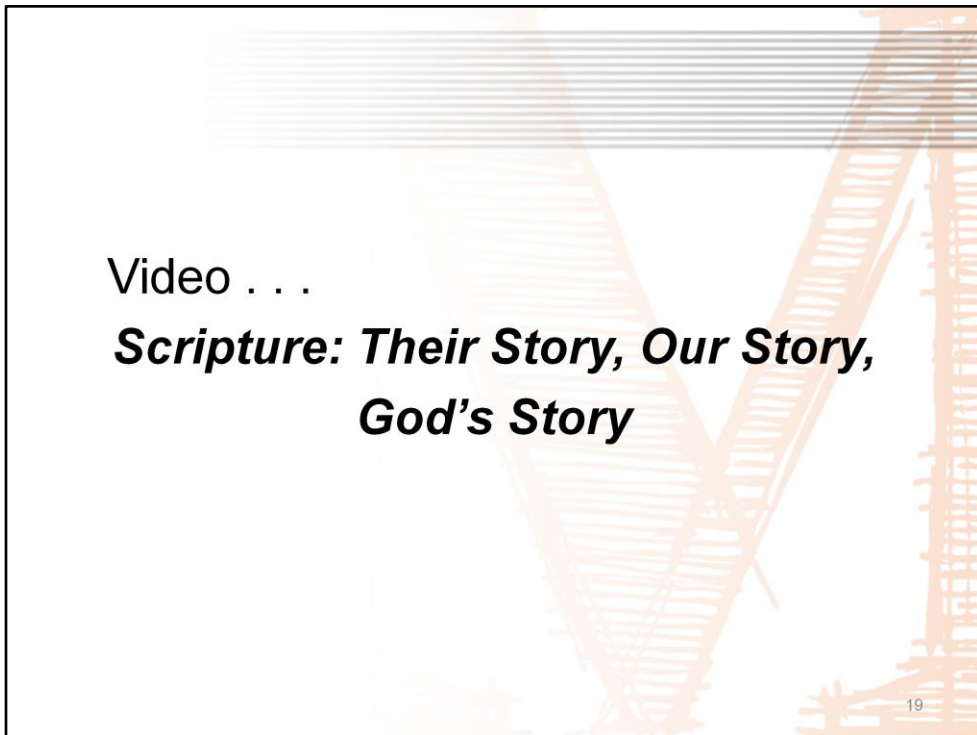
Welcome, refer to handouts and present a key point: (2 Minutes)

Refer participants to two resources in the Handouts Tab: *Listening to Our Story* (pages 60 – 63) and *Living into God's Story* (pages 64 – 65).

Present key point:

- Scripture reveals God's unfolding story, and we have the opportunity to "write the story not heard before" as we partner with God in this moment. We, however, are not equal partners, and it is important for us to give priority attention to God's story...God's agenda. The purpose of this session is to invite people to lay aside their personal agendas for mission, and allow themselves to be captured by God's story...God's agenda. We can do this by connecting with God's story in scripture and rediscovering what God has been up to through the ages. This is foundational for engaging in mission that is aligned with God's intent for humanity and creation.

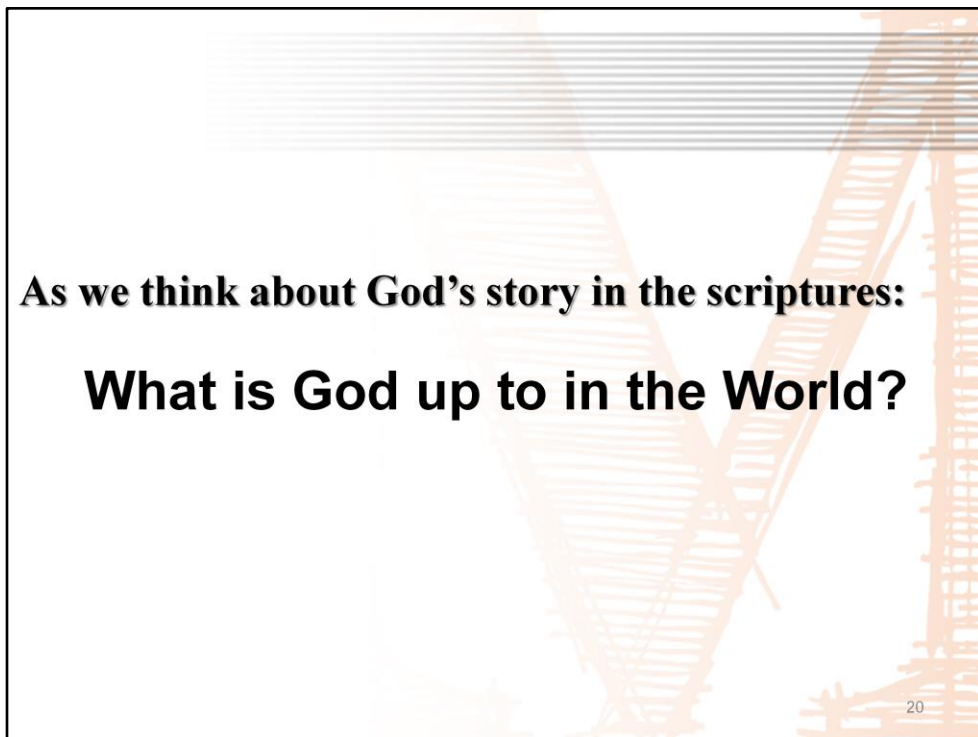
Affirm that few things are more basic to understanding our identity and mission as the scriptures. So how we relate to the scriptures and understand their purpose is extremely important.



Introduce and show 1st half of the video and facilitate discussion: (25 Minutes)

Show 1st half of the video (7 of the 25 minutes)

Note to facilitator: Be alert to the fact that almost 7 minutes into the video, the roundtable discussion in the video will pause (screen will fade). At this point, pause the video playback.



Facilitate table discussion on “**What is God up to in the world?**” (13 of 25 minutes)

Share this: In the video, the moderator was talking about the scriptures when she asked the group this question:

“What is God up to in the world?”

This is an important question for us, because knowing what God has been up to over time is essential if we’re going to discern what God is doing in our neighborhoods, **today.**

Give these instructions:

- **Ask everyone to look at *Listening to Our Story*, found in Handout Tab pages 61-63** which is a sampling of God’s concern and activity through the years.
- Explain that we will not have time to read this resource in detail; but take 10 minutes and peruse this overview of God’s great activity. Request silence during this period.
- After 10 minutes, call everyone out of the silence

What has God been up to?

God has been pursuing God's vision for creation: reconciliation, salvation, wholeness, justice and peace.

How does this begin to shape our congregational mission?

21

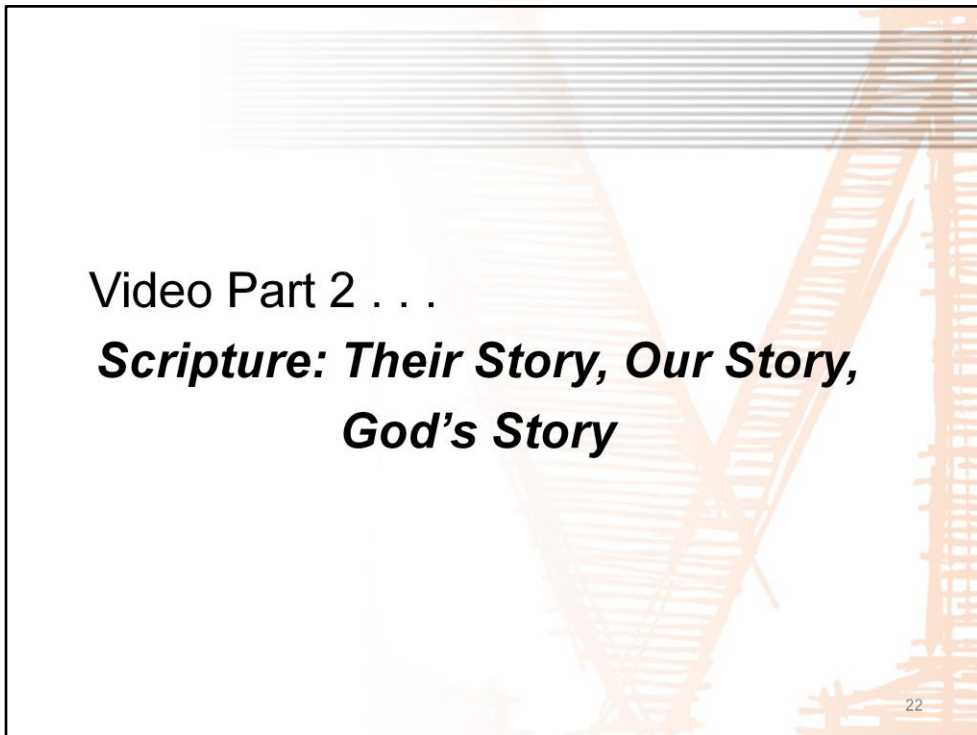
Read quote on slide: *God has been pursuing God's vision for creation: reconciliation, salvation, wholeness, justice and peace.* (1 Minute)

Share this point:

- It appears that what God has been up to is: *pursuing God's vision for creation: reconciliation, salvation, wholeness, justice and peace.*

Ask:

So, how does this begin to shape our congregational mission?



Show 2nd Half of video and facilitate discussion: (35 Minutes)

Show 2nd Half of video: (15 of 35 Minutes)

Note: When the video ends, pause the playback, leaving the following quote on the screen: *“How can placing ourselves in the unfolding story of scripture help us discover the next faithful step in mission for our congregation?”*

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Table Discussion

next faithful step
truth and grace in real life

How does the story of scripture reveal the nature of the “next faithful step” in our mission together?

23

Facilitate discussions in groups by asking the following questions : (15 Minutes)

- *“How can placing ourselves in the unfolding story of scripture help us discover the next faithful step in mission for our congregation?”*
- We’re not asking you to “plan” the next step of your mission together. Rather, how does God’s activity through the years shape how we think about our congregational mission?



Connecting with God's Mission

- **It's important that our congregational mission is aligned with God's mission as revealed in the story of scripture.**
- **Our experience this morning can easily be replicated back home in the congregation. Use: "Living Into God's Story"**

24

Bring participants back into the large group and affirm the following points and field any questions as time permits: (after the 15 minutes for discussion): (5 Minutes of the 35)

- The importance of making sure that our congregational mission is aligned with God's mission as revealed in the story of scripture.
- Our experience this morning can easily be replicated back home in the congregation.

Refer to the handout: "Living Into God's Story" pages 64-65 in the Handouts Tab.



Welcome and encourage participants to sit where they like, not with their PLT. (2 Minutes)

Refer participants to “Drawing out Sacred Story” found in Handout Tab page 66.

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Mission is Relational

God's story is unfolding in the lives and stories of people.

We are awoken to God's activity in relationships:

- With one another in congregation.
- With our neighbors in the community.

God is very busy outside the church.

Remember a person's "sacred story" is not always clothed in religious language.



Mission is relational. (3 Minutes)

Facilitators note: Mission is relational. God's story is always unfolding...unfolding in the lives and stories of people. Therefore, we can awaken to God's activity by deeply immersing ourselves in relationships with others. Meaningful conversation is essential for this to happen. This session is devoted to helping people practice ways to draw out the sacred story in one another and in our neighbors.

Make these points:

- Mission is relational
- God's story is always unfolding...unfolding in the lives and stories of people
- Therefore we can awaken to God's activity by immersing ourselves in relationships
 - With one another in the congregation
 - With our neighbors in the community, at work, etc.
- God is very busy outside the church. **So remember, a person's "sacred story" is not always clothed in religious language.**

Go to next slide to quote purpose of this session:



Discovering Our Individual and Congregational Stories

This session is devoted to helping people practice ways to draw out the sacred story in one another and in our neighbors.



Read quote:

This session is devoted to helping people practice ways to draw out the sacred story in one another and in our neighbors.

Drawing out Sacred Story

Drawing out” a person’s sacred story (*their journey toward God and God’s purposes*) is a helpful skill in discerning our context for ministry...



28

Introduce “Drawing out Sacred Story” exercise. (1 Minutes)

Affirm these two points:

- The ability to draw out a person’s sacred story (their journey towards God and God’s purposes) is a helpful skill in discerning our context for ministry. Therefore, we need to “practice” this ability.
- Questions help people discover and share their sacred story by helping them tell it.

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Drawing out Sacred Story

Review types of questions in handout:

Drawing out Sacred Story

Questions help people discover and share their sacred story by helping them tell it.

29

Refer participants to “Drawing out Sacred Story” in Handout Tab page 66.

Read each question in the handout “Drawing out Sacred Story.” They are listed here. Pause for a second or two between them:

- Where did you grow up as a child? How has growing up there shaped your life?
- Our journey through life is often accompanied by others. Who have been *some* of the key companions on your journey? How has your relationship with them shaped you?
- Life ebbs and flows. We sometimes sense we have a purpose or calling. Sometimes not. Where are you right now?
- Looking at the past 2 years, what events in your life have affected your story the most?
- When do you feel “in awe”?
- If you could do anything to help this community, what would it be?
- Think back when you were younger. What were your dreams for your life? What are your dreams for your life now?
- As you think about your life, what has your relationship with God been like?

Drawing out Sacred Story

The “*Drawing out Sacred Story*” questions use language that can be used with both your church friends and your neighbors in the community, at work, etc.

***Sacred* does not always mean *religious*.**

- Listen for moments that are rich in meaning or may reflect God’s purpose.

Note the following:

- The “Drawing out Sacred Story” questions use language that can be used with both your church friends and your neighbors in the community, at work, etc.

***Sacred** does not always mean **religious**. Listen for moments that are rich in meaning or may reflect God’s purposes.*

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Let's Practice

- Missional "practice" is **Real**... so let's receive each other's story with hospitality and care.
- Begin by saying something simple like, "Tell me your story." (Use the questions in the handout along the way).



31

Facilitate "Drawing out Sacred Story" exercise. (35 Minutes)

Give the following instructions to the participants:

- Select a partner. (wait until everyone is paired up before moving on)
- Encourage each pair of participants to:
 - Sit in chairs close together (or perhaps find private space with your partner).
 - Spend a moment connecting with each other and create comfortable space for sharing.
 - Help your partner share their sacred story (each person will have 15 minutes)
 - Use the questions in "Drawing out Sacred Story" see Handout Tab page 66. These questions can help each partner share their story.

Encourage participants to do this exercise by emphasizing:

- This may be "practice," but it is also *REAL*. Receive your partner's story with hospitality and care.
- Practice active and genuine listening.
- You can begin by saying something simple like "tell me your story" (using the questions in the handout along the way). **Or.....**
- You can begin with a question from the handout....then see where things go from there.

Start the exercise by asking the pairs to decide who will share their story first. Announce that they have 30 minutes and that you'll keep time for each person to have 15 minutes to share their stories and announce when it is time to reverse roles.

Note to facilitator:

- After 10 minutes, give a "5 minute warning."
- After the 5 minutes has passed, ask participants to reverse roles, allowing the other person to share their story.
- After 10 minutes, give a "5 minute warning"
- After the 5 minutes has passed, ask everyone to reassemble.

Large Group Discussion

What would be the impact on your congregation if “Drawing out Sacred Story” was experienced in your congregation?

32

Lead large group discussion on this question: (5 Minutes)

What would be the impact on your congregation if “Drawing out Sacred Story” was experienced in your congregation?

Remind PLT teams that Congregational Support Ministers are ready to help with this!

Congregations have stories too!

Listening to stories helps us understand where God may be calling us.

Have your congregation share its story: use “*Sharing and Discovering our Congregational Story*”. (Page 27-46, “Tools and Resources”) for two approaches:

- An all-day or weekend approach.
- A once-per-week approach for 8 weeks.

33

Congregations Have Stories, Too (5 minutes this slide and next one)

Share the following points:

Congregations have stories too.

- We need to deeply listen to those stories to understand ourselves and where God may be calling us.
- When you go back home, create an opportunity for the congregation to share and discover its story.

Refer participants, for when back in their congregations, to utilize the resource *Sharing and Discovering our Congregational Story* – Located on pages 27-46 in the “Tools and Resources” section of the LCM Field Guide (received at the 1st retreat). This resource offers 2 approaches:

- An all-day or weekend approach
- A once-per-week approach for 8 weeks

Remind PLT teams that Congregational Support Ministers are ready to help with this!

Remember . . .

We listen carefully to our stories because God asks us to...

Listen carefully to your own journey as a people, for it is a sacred journey and it has taught you many things you must know *for the **journey yet to come***. (Doctrine and Covenants 162:2)



34

Stress the following: We listen carefully to our stories because God asks us to...

Listen carefully to your own journey as a people, for it is a sacred journey and it has taught you many things you must know for the journey yet to come. – Doctrine and Covenants 162:2



Questions: (5 Minutes)



Welcome and ask participants to NOT sit with their PLT team in order to hear from a broad spectrum (6 of 13 Minute)s

Lead table groups in a fun “tennis ball game” activity:

1. Distribute tennis balls so each participant has one.
2. Ask table groups to stand and form a circle around their table with each one having a ball.
3. The object of this game is for each person at the same time to throw to someone furthest away on their team and then at the same time as others on the team to catch a ball. (i.e. all members throwing at the same time and then catching at the same.)
4. After success, invite participants to remove a shoe and massage their feet with the tennis ball on the floor.

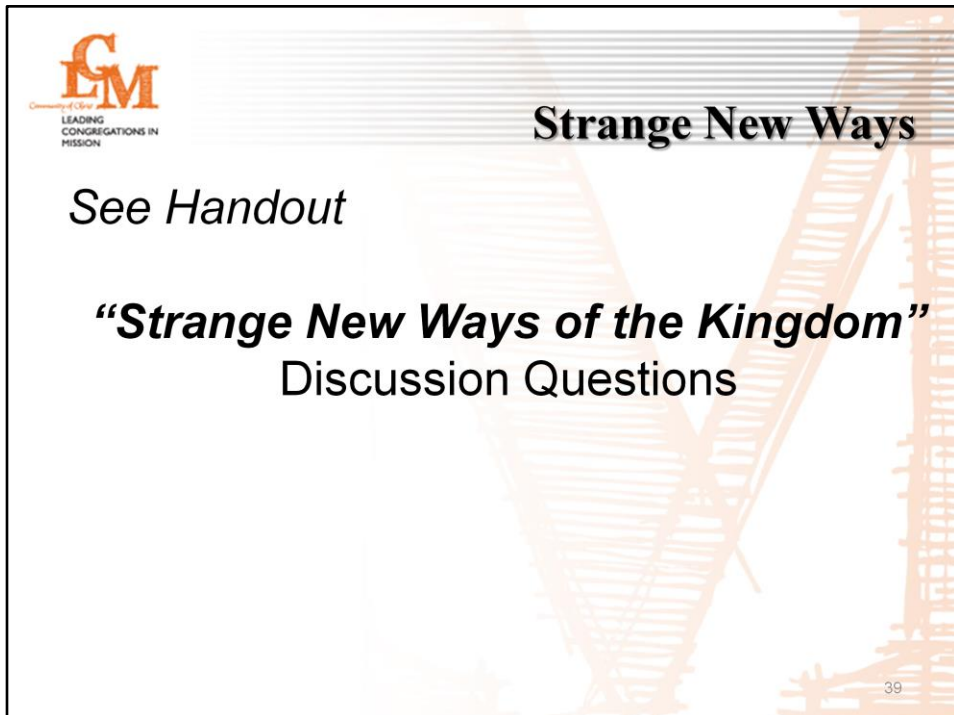


Show video: *The Strange New Ways of the Kingdom*. (5 of 13 minutes)



Share the following key points (2 of 13 minutes minutes):

- In LCM we are challenged to live into new behaviors by *slowing down, encountering God, and building caring community*.
- These new behaviors are to allow God to shape us as teams into something new. This happens when the PLT commits to monthly gatherings and *invests as much time in missional practices as in planning and problem-solving*.
- This is hard to do! It is not unusual for us to feel the **strangeness** of these new ways (and ancient ways) of the kingdom, especially when our culture tells us to *hurry up and get things done*.



Facilitate table discussion about how each one is doing in making the transition to this strange new way of being. (22 minutes)

Refer participants to “Strange New Ways of the Kingdom: Discussion Questions” on page 67 in Handouts Tab.

Encourage open, transparent, and honest conversation with one another to discuss four sets of questions in the handout “Strange New Ways of the Kingdom Discussion Questions.”

Provide 25 minutes for table discussion of the following questions:

1. How is it going for you? Are you investing as much time in missional practices as in planning and problem-solving? What is working and what is not?
2. If not working for you, what, if anything is preventing you? What questions or frustrations do you have? What can you do to move towards these new behaviors of leadership?
3. If working for you, what are you experiencing? What insights can you pass on to others?
4. What part of Jesus’ example do you have the hardest time following: the Jesus who was frequently taking time out for prayer and retreat, or the Jesus who was frequently engaged in work and ministry? Why is it so challenging to follow Jesus’ whole example? What can you do to have greater balance in your discipleship?



End with words of encouragement: (1 minute)

“Hang in there. We’re hanging in there with you and we’re praying for you and us!”

Remember these words of encouragement from Doctrine and Covenants 162: 8:

- See the power that is resident in your own story and fellowship.
- Look carefully, listen attentively, and sense the Spirit among you.
- Where two or three... form community, there will the Spirit be.
- Continue your journey... Go forth with confidence and live prophetically... (and) courageously choose to love others in the name of the One you serve. Amen.



Pastor Leadership Team Retreat #2

*Taking the Table Everywhere:
Making the Word Flesh—Creating Safe Space for
Conversation*

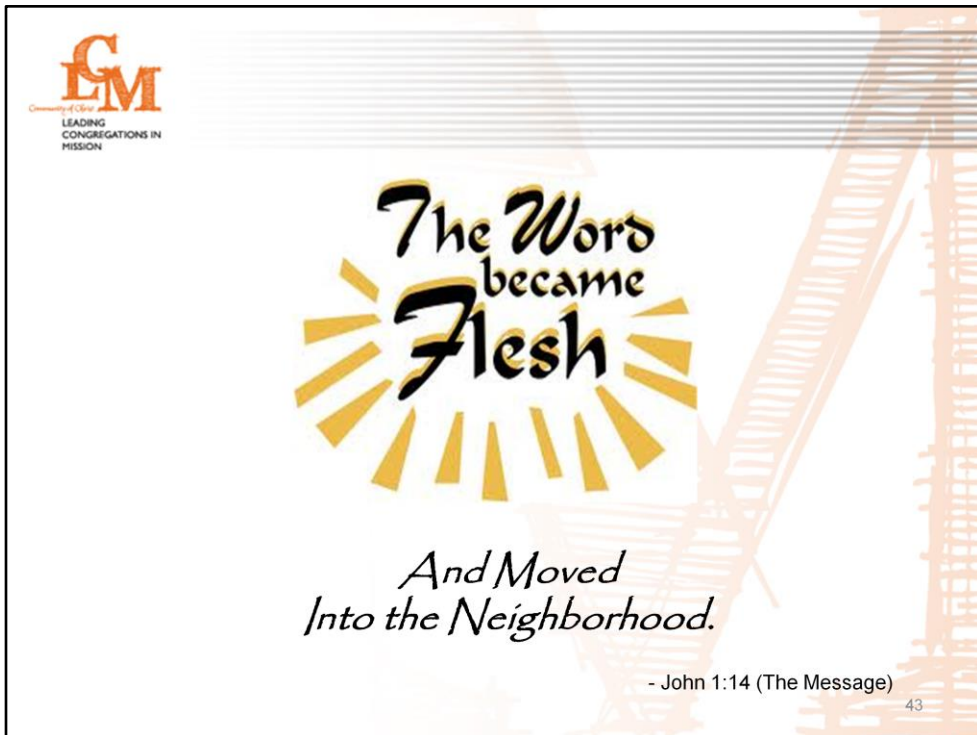
41

Please Invite Participants to Meet in PLT Table Groups

Welcome participants (ask that they sit with their PLT) and show video with discussion: (13 Minutes)



Introduce the title for this session - by showing this slide of the table with these phrases: Making the Word Flesh—Creating Safe Space for Conversation.



Read the following scripture:

*The Word became flesh and blood,
and moved into the neighborhood.*

- John 1:14 (The Message)

Invite participants to take just a few seconds for silent reflection on the scripture.



Show “Tables” video.

Invite participants to reflect silently for a moment after the video is presented.

Table discussion:

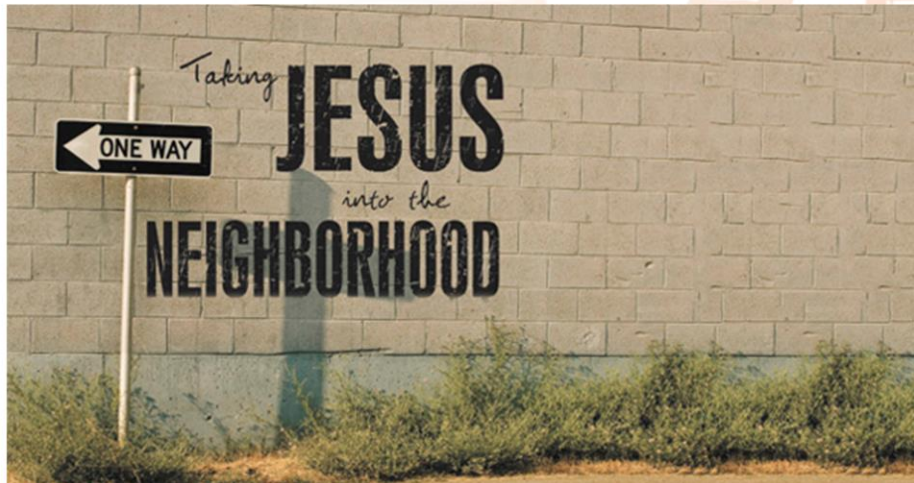
Where does your table need to go?

Provide approximately 10 minutes for table discussion around this question:

Where does your "table" need to go?

Imagine . . .

What do you imagine seeing Jesus do first and foremost in your neighborhood?



Invite participants to imagine that Jesus *moved into their neighborhood*. (10 Minutes this and next slide)

- Have participants take a quiet moment to imagine seeing Jesus in their neighborhood by asking:

What do you imagine seeing Jesus do first and foremost in your neighborhood?

- After a moment for reflection, facilitate table discussion to share reflections.
- Process discussion with the large group for a few moments.



Imagine Jesus Moving into Our Neighborhood

Jesus . . .

Being with people

Talking with people.

In everyday conversation Jesus extended the call to heal and end suffering, to sell possessions and feed the poor, and to trust the reign of God and share peace.

47

Note to facilitators: Hopefully. Participants in their table discussions have raised the following points, please make sure to affirm or to share these types of key points to lift up Jesus being with and having conversation with people:

- “If I was to imagine Jesus moving into my neighborhood I think the first thing I would see is Jesus with the people. He would be with the people of the neighborhood. People would want to be with him.
- I imagine Jesus talking with people. Jesus getting to know the people, eating and sharing around their kitchen tables, and understanding what their lives are like.
- Of course I see Jesus teaching, and healing the sick, and feeding the hungry, and eating with people, but first I see Jesus being with and talking with people.”



Conversation is Essential to Christ's Mission

Slow down: take time to deepen relationships in conversation with one another, our neighbors and God.

Conversation is how we hear and tell our stories when we do the missional practices.

Mission without conversation is inconceivable.

48

Present key points on conversation is essential to mission. (2 minutes)

- LCM encourages leaders in mission to slow down and take time to deepen relationships with God, one another and our neighbors.
- One way we deepen our relationships is conversation.
- Conversation is how we hear and tell our stories, including God's story and the story of Jesus.
- We always hear and tell our stories (have conversation) about God and ourselves when we share in the missional practices of Dwelling in the Word and Connecting, Centering and Dwelling in the Word. Sharing in the Round and Walking the Neighborhood are two other missional practices when we pray for opportunities for conversation and exchange stories.
- MISSION WITHOUT CONVERSATION IS INCONCEIVABLE.

A New Missional Practice

Sharing My Favorite Scripture and My Story



49

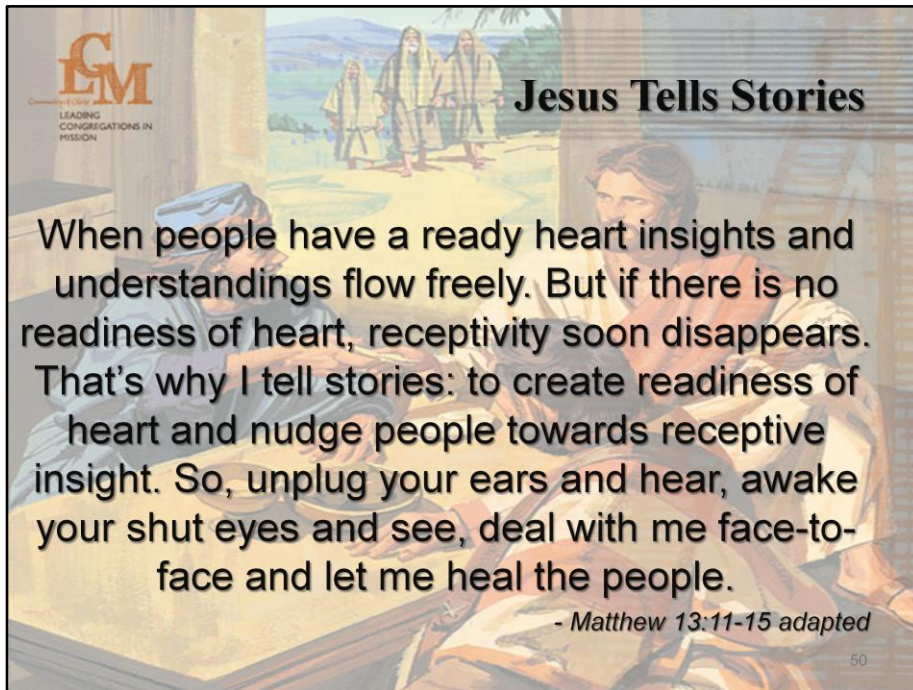
Introduce and facilitate missional practice – Sharing My Favorite Scripture and My Story. (18 Minutes)

Refer participants to the handout **Sharing My Favorite Scripture and My Story Practices**

Tab page 45 (1 page) and facilitate by reading Affirmation Eight, Scripture in the Community of Christ, reviewing the purpose of the missional practice and ask participants at each table to take turns to share their favorite text and why it is important to them and their life story.

Notes to facilitators:

- Ensure that there is at least 15 minutes for the sharing at the tables.
- In advance to the retreat, all participants were asked to come prepared for this practice.



Introduce why Jesus tells stories. (5 Minutes this and next slide)

Read Matthew 13:11-15 and make the following points:

When people have a ready heart insights and understandings flow freely. But if there is no readiness of heart, receptivity soon disappears. That's why I tell stories: to create readiness of heart and nudge people towards receptive insight. So, unplug your ears and hear, awake your shut eyes and see, deal with me face-to-face and let me heal the people. - Matthew 13:11-15, adapted

Convey these insights from the scripture: about the importance of story-telling and the kind of conversation we want when engaged in mission:

- When people have a ready heart insights and understandings flow freely. This is a quality we want in conversation.
- If there is no readiness of heart, receptivity soon disappears.
- Jesus tells stories and engages in conversation: to create readiness of heart and nudge people towards receptive insight.
- Jesus invites all of us... unplug your ears and hear, awake your shut eyes and see, deal with me face-to-face and let me heal the people.

Conversation: Story Telling and Story Listening

Nurtures relationships

Is about being face-to-face

Where healing occurs



*Conversation is for the advancement of
understanding and for the well-being of
humanity.*

51

Share these following key points:

- In LCM we understand conversation, in the same light as mission, not as a transaction or an exchange of “answers,” but as a missional practice for being relational and living the Great Commandment—love God, ourselves and our neighbors.
- Conversation—story telling/story listening—nurtures relationships with one another and with God. Conversation with a ready heart causes understanding. Conversation is about hearing and seeing and being face-to-face. Conversation after the example of Jesus is where healing occurs. It has something to do with living with compassion and being loyal in our relationships to one another.
- Conversation, understood as missional practice, is for insights, understanding and healing to occur. Conversation is to advance God’s unfolding vision.
- Conversation is for the advancement of understanding and for the well-being of humanity.



Creating Safe Space

Why create safe space for conversation?

In safe community people become free to share their stories and they become free to imagine and risk something new for their own lives, their congregation, and their local neighborhoods.



52

Present the following points on Creating Safe Space. (5 Minutes this and next slide)

- Leaders in Christ's mission have a sacred task to create safe space for conversation.
- Why is it important that leaders in mission create a safe space for conversation? We, as leaders and as congregations are to be *actively engaged in prayer, discussion, and discernment about important issues in the church's life...* and are called to have a *disciplined effort to open (our) lives more fully to God's Spirit...* (Doctrine and Covenants 164:1)
- Mission is relational. Without a safe community of trust, people will not feel safe to share their stories and have conversation. In safe community people become free to imagine and risk something new for their own lives, their congregation, and their local neighborhoods.
- Safe space is a matter of the heart. When people have a safe space they feel valued. They feel loved and compassion rather than critique and judgment. They begin to trust, share and become open to Christ's healing.

Creating Safe Space

Love allows understanding to dawn, and understanding is precious. Where you are understood, you are at home. Understanding nourishes belonging. When you really feel understood, you feel free to release yourself into the trust and shelter of the other person's soul.

John O'Donohue
Anam Cara: A Book of Celtic Wisdom

- Safe space is a shelter, built on the love of God where all are invited to experience trust and compassion for understanding, belonging and the peace of Christ.
- Read quote:

“Love allows understanding to dawn, and understanding is precious. Where you are understood, you are at home. Understanding nourishes belonging. When you really feel understood, you feel free to release yourself into the trust and shelter of the other person's soul.” — John O'Donohue, Anam Cara: A Book of Celtic Wisdom

Quote next slide: Safe space is essential to mission! Trusting in God and in one another is our anchor in a changing world.



Safe Space is Essential to Mission

Safe space is essential to mission!

***Trusting in God and in one another
is our anchor in a changing world.***

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Quote:

“Safe space is essential to mission!

Trusting in God and in one another is our anchor in a changing world.”



Introduce “Conversation: Essential to Christ’s Mission.” (5 Minutes)

Refer participants to “Conversation: Essential to Christ’s Mission” in the Handout Tab page 68.

Pose this question, “**What kind of conversation do we wish to cultivate as leaders of Christ’s mission?**”

Review the handout to stress the two sections: “Defining our conversation” **and** “Living our values to uphold the worth of persons:”

Defining our conversation: Conversation is a process for understanding one another, our stories and God’s story. Conversation is not so much to grasp or discover “something out there.” Conversation is about what happens between people.

- Understanding comes from the heart, including our interactions and being vulnerable or fully open to one another and what we are saying.
- Each person has a limited understanding. In order to expand our understanding, we need to hear with our hearts (compassion) other people’s stories.
- The purposes of conversation are to advance understanding and well-being*. Such conversation, by its very nature affirms the worth of all persons.

Living our values to uphold the worth of persons:

- Concern for one another: being in conversation and engaging one another there is more going on than an exchange of stories. There is loyalty to the sacredness, interest in the well-being, and a commitment to one another.
- Trust in one another and being vulnerable: sharing one’s self and receiving what others are saying is a risk.
- Respect for one another: regarding one another with mutual commitment to listen, to be equal to one another and not diminish one another as persons.
- Appreciation and affection for one another: valuing the unique qualities that others bring and feeling with and for one another.
- Hope: engaging in conversation in the belief that it holds possibility for understanding and well-being for all.



Facilitate “Exercise: Conversation is a Missional Practice to Create Safe Space within the Pastor Leadership Team and the Congregation.” (30 Minutes)

Refer participants to “Exercise: Conversation is a Missional Practice to Create Safe Space within the Pastor Leadership Team and the Congregation” in Handout Tab pages 69-71.

Pose this question:

“What kind of conversation do we wish to cultivate as leaders of Christ’s mission?”

Make this point clear as to why we are doing this exercise:

- **This exercise is an opportunity for members of the PLT to develop their own missional practice for conversation for creating safe space within their team and the congregation.**

Facilitate exercise.

Creating Safe Space

Two articles for suggested reading:

Creating safe Space: Conversation is Essential to Mission (Tools Tab)

Building a Pastor's Leadership Team by Stassi Cramm (Pastors and Leaders Field Guide)

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End session by referring to articles and tools and read final slide quote: (2 Minutes this and next 3 slides)

Present this introduction:

- We are providing several tools to help the PLT explore and cultivate meaningful conversation. We encourage you as congregational leaders to review these tools, practice using them in team meetings, and discuss how their use can be helpful to your congregation.

Refer participants to two articles slide:

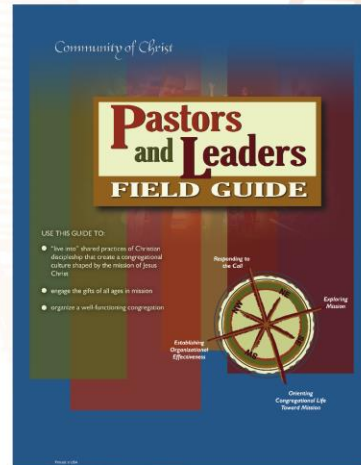
- *Creating safe Space: Conversation is essential to Mission in your Tools Tab pages 60-63.*
- *Building a Pastor's Leadership Team by Stassi Cramm in Pastors and Leaders Field Guide*

Creating Safe Space

Two tools from Pastors and Leaders Field Guide and in the Tools Tab:

Assessing Your Team Climate: Components for Establishing the Right Climate

Assessing Your Team's Communication: An Examination of Behaviors and Skills



Refer participants to two tools:

- *Assessing Your Team Climate: Components for Establishing the Right Climate Tools Tab pages 64-66*
- *Assessing Your Team's Communication: An Examination of Behaviors and Skills Tools Tab pages 67-68*



Creating Safe Space

In the Tools Tab:

Going Deeper in Discovering Our Unity and Diversity:
TRUE COLORS Personality Exploration

This is a great tool to understand and honor the personality differences in the PLT and Congregation!



Pastor Leadership Team
Retreat #1 of 6

"Journey in Trust"



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Refer participants to another tool - "Going Deeper in Discovering Our Unity and Diversity: TRUE COLORS Personality Exploration" Tools Tab pages 69-72

This is a great tool to understand and honor the personality differences in the PLT.

Creating Safe Space



Remember mission is relational.

Relationships are the doorway through which we discover how God is calling us to embody and live the concerns and passion of Christ in a suffering world. Let's create conversational space for advancing Christ's mission!

Read final slide,:

“Remember mission is relational. Relationships are the doorway through which we discover how God is calling us to embody and live the concerns and passion of Christ in a suffering world. Let's create conversational space for advancing Christ's mission!



Welcome and show 1st segment with discussion the “Worship as a Missional Practice” video. (10 Minutes)

Note: Participants do not need to sit with their PLT.

Refer people to the resource “*Worship as Community Missional Practice*” in the Tools Tab. Page 73-76

- Stress its purpose is to provide a basic understanding of missional worship.

Refer participants to “*Sample Missional Worship Outlines*” in the Tools Tab pages 77-79.

- This resource offers sample worship ideas and services for their experimentation.

Announce that the video titled *Worship as a Missional Practice* will be presented in 4 segments.



Show the first segment of *Worship as a Missional Practice* video. (3 minutes)

Note to facilitators: The 1st segment is 2:21 minutes and when the screen fades to a solid color, pause the video at 2:21 minutes.



Introduce these comments before table discussions begin:

- What does missional mean? Remember the words that were shared in the video:
 - Incarnational
 - Relationships
 - Being Sent

- In LCM missional means:

A sacred community that is shaped and sent by their ongoing encounter with the living Christ in relationship with one another and their neighbors, locally and globally.

Facilitate discussion for each table to discuss this question: (6 of 11 minutes)

How have the missional practices shaped you and your understanding of becoming missional?



Show with discussion the second segment of *Worship as a Missional Practice* video:
(22 Minutes)

Show segment two of the video: (8 of 22 minutes)

Note to facilitator: When the screen fades to a solid color, pause the video at 10:22 minutes.



Infusing Worship with Missional Intent

Share when an experience in worship moved you to action?



How have you found meaning in one or more of the three dimensions of missional worship? (Centered in Christ, grounded in scripture and leads us to a deeper relationship with God, one another and our neighbors.)

Form pairs at the table groups to process these questions: (10 of 22 minutes)

1. Share when an experience in worship moved you to action?
2. How have you found meaning in one or more of the three dimensions of missional worship? (Centered in Christ, grounded in scripture and leads us to a deeper relationship with God, one another and our neighbors.)


Facilitator note: Remind participants, as they discuss the 2nd question, the three dimensions of missional worship are: First, centered in Christ, Second, grounded in scripture, and Third, it leads us into deeper relationships with God, one another, and our neighbors.

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Missional Worship

**Missional Worship Focus:
From “me” to “we.”**

Re-defines our focus to provide space for us to have encounter.



Our worship experiences are centered in Christ, grounded in scripture and lead us to deeper relationships with God, one another and our neighbors.

Review these points about Missional Worship: (4 of 22 Minutes)

- In seeing the big picture, we help our worship experiences move us from an attitude of me to we.
- The Gospel is about re-defining our focus and missional worship is created to provide the space for us to have that encounter.
- Missional worship incorporates three very important dimensions:
 - **First, centered in Christ.** Through the Holy Spirit God is helping us become a new creation in Christ. It helps us address the question: Who is Jesus and what does it mean to become a new creation as individuals and sacred community?
 - **Second, grounded in scripture.** We are not simply rehearsing an old story. We are participants in the continuation of God’s living and unfolding story. It provides a foundation so we can ask: How do we reenter this story and explore its meaning for our lives today and in the future?
 - **Third, it leads us into deeper relationships with God, one another, and our neighbors.** By focusing on these relationships, we ask: How is worship leading us into relationships where we give and receive Christ’s invitation, hospitality, and healing?



Show with discussion the 3rd segment of *Worship as a Missional Practice* video: (17 Minutes)

Show 3rd segment of “Worship as a Missional Practice” Video: (7 of 17 minutes)

Note to facilitator: When the screen fades to a solid color, the video pauses again with the invitation to discuss the topic, pause the video playback at 16:43 minutes.



Infusing Worship with Missional Intent

There is no one way to worship!

What ideas do you have to help mine the gifts of all in worship?



Beyond the roles of presider, speaker, or assisting in the sacraments, how do you envision priesthood in missional worship?

Make these points regarding **There is No One Way to Worship!**

- There is no one way to worship
- Missional worship is about providing experiences of worship not formulas for worship.
- Just like mission will look different in every congregation based on its specific context so it is with worship.

Facilitate table discussion on two questions about missional worship in the congregation: (10 of 17 minutes)

1. What ideas do you have to help draw out and utilize the gifts of all in worship?
2. Beyond the traditional roles of speaking, presiding, assisting, or participating in sacraments, how do you envision priesthood as part of the practice of missional worship? (Remind folks of the three dimensions of missional worship)



Show with discussion the 4th segment of *Worship as a Missional Practice* video: (25 Minutes)

Show the 4th (final) segment of *Worship as a Missional Practice* video: (5 of 25 Minutes)



Infusing Worship with Missional Intent

What has been the most helpful insight you've received from this conversation?

How will these insights help guide your congregation to experience missional worship?



Facilitate table discussion two questions: (12 of 25 Minutes)

1. What has been the most helpful insight you've received from this conversation?
2. How will these insights help guide your congregation to experience missional worship?

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Infusing Worship with Missional Intent

What kinds of things would we do and say in worship if we really did believe that God was going to show up?

Provide or refer participants to 3x5 notecards and ask that they write their ideas down regarding the question below. During the closing worship participants will have opportunity to share their insights on this question:

What kinds of things would we do and say in worship

if we really did believe that God was going to show up?

Suggest that the PLTs can use the Worship as a Missional Practice video and its presentation in 4 parts with the process we have done this session in their congregations to help folks understand giftedness and abundance in worship.



Infusing Worship with Missional Intent

A Tool for the Pastor Leadership Team

“Planning for Encounter in Worship – Understanding Your Congregation’s Spiritual Type”

Understand personal and congregation’s spiritual type –
the way we encounter God.

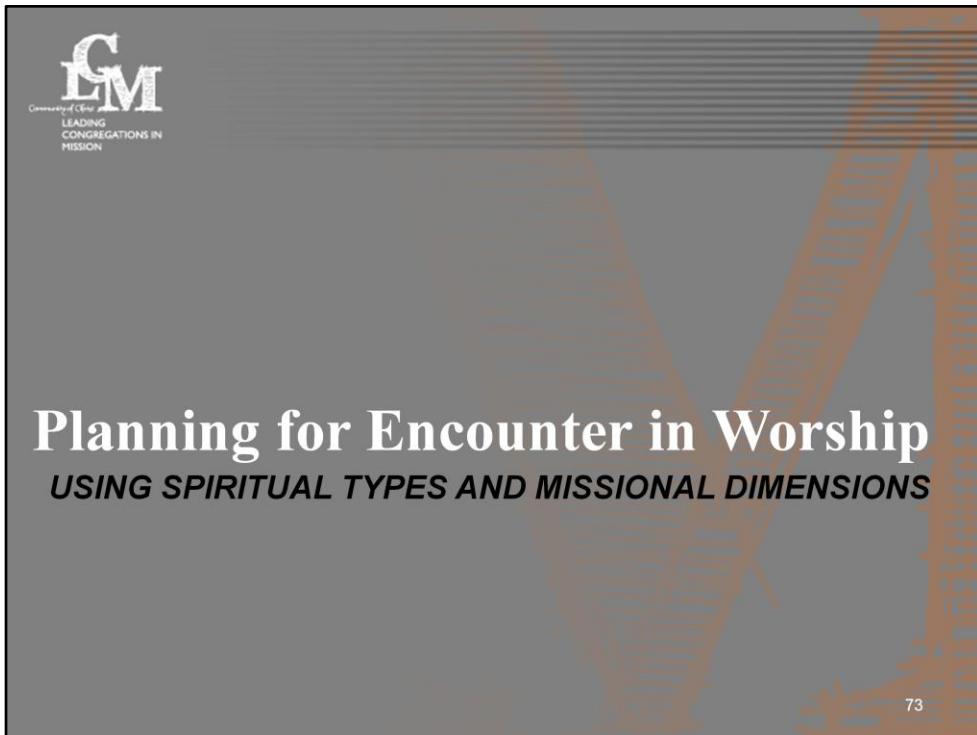
Plan services that better connect with the diversity
In your congregation.

In the Tools Tab

Share the following points regarding “**Planning for Encounter in Worship – Understanding Your Congregation’s Spiritual Type**” (3 Minute)

- Refer participants to “Planning for Encounter in Worship – Understanding Your Congregation’s Spiritual Type” in the Tools Tab pages 80-81.
- This planning tool will help you and your congregation plan missionally-focused worship with the following:
 - Understand personal and the congregation’s spiritual type based on a simple survey and discussion.
 - Identify questions based from the survey data to guide worship planning that will connect with a diversity of spiritual types.

This resource is designed to be self-explanatory. This resource will be mentioned during “Next Steps” tomorrow.



Please Invite Participants to Meet in PLT Table Groups

Welcome and introduce the purpose of this session: (2 Minutes)

Introduce that the purpose of this session is to provide the Pastor Leadership Team (PLT) an opportunity to actually plan a missional worship service for their congregation that honors the diversity of spiritual types resident in the congregation and is missionally focused.

Refer participants to the resource entitled "Planning for Encounter in Worship – Understanding Your Congregation's Spiritual Type" on page 80 in the Tools Tab.

The slide features the logo of the Community of Christ (CCM) in the top left corner, with the tagline "LEADING CONGREGATIONS IN MISSION". The main title is "Worship Objective". To the right of the text is a green, textured graphic with the word "WORSHIP" in large white letters and the subtitle "Helping People Experience The Love Of God That Changes Lives" in smaller white text. The background of the slide has faint, stylized orange and green patterns.

Worship Objective

- Objective:
Encounter God
- Radical reorientation toward God's Agenda
- Divine Disruption
- Becoming New Creation in Christ

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Present the following 3 points to restate what is meant by *Missional Worship*:
(3 Minutes) (This and next 2 slides)

- Our primary objective with worship is to create opportunities for individuals and the congregation to encounter God. This encounter leads to a **radical reorientation** of our agenda with God's agenda. Simply put, worship is about divine disruption that increasingly moves us toward becoming a new creation in Christ.



What is Missional Worship?

Moves us beyond ourselves to awaken us to the needs of others.

75

- Earlier in the day we discussed *missional worship*. What differentiates worship from missional worship? **Missional worship moves us beyond ourselves to awaken us to the needs of others.**

What is Missional Worship?

- Centered in Christ
- Grounded in
Unfolding Story of
Scripture
- Leads to Deeper
Relationships – God,
One Another,
Neighbors.



- Missional worship is centered in Christ, grounded in the unfolding story of scripture, and leads us into deeper relationships with God, one another, and our neighbor. **It is in these relationships that we discover how we are called to give and receive Christ's invitation, hospitality, and healing.**

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Spiritual Types and Worship That . . .

- Stirs hearts
- Inspires minds
- Unlocks
Imaginations
- Mobilizes hands
and feet for mission

Provide introduction to “Spiritual Types:” (3 Minutes) (This and next three slides)

- Since our worship is central to our congregational experience it is essential that we plan worship that stirs hearts, inspires minds, unlocks imagination, and mobilizes hands and feet for Christ’s mission. But how do we do this when we are all so different in how we like to worship?



Diversity in Worship

We Encounter God in Many Ways

Encounter = Worship = Mission

Important PLT Focus:
Various Ways People Encounter God in Worship

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- We encounter God in many different ways and yet our worship experiences often reflect only one style of worship. Just like we all have different music preferences (classical, country, rock, etc.) so it is with worship. If encounter is foundational to mission then an important focus of the Pastor Leadership Team (PLT) is to develop an understanding of the various ways people encounter God and the implications for worship.



Discovering Our Spiritual Type

- Spiritual Type = How we encounter God.
- We can discover individual and group spiritual types.
- Spiritual Types can help us plan missional worship.
- Spiritual Types help us honor our diversity.



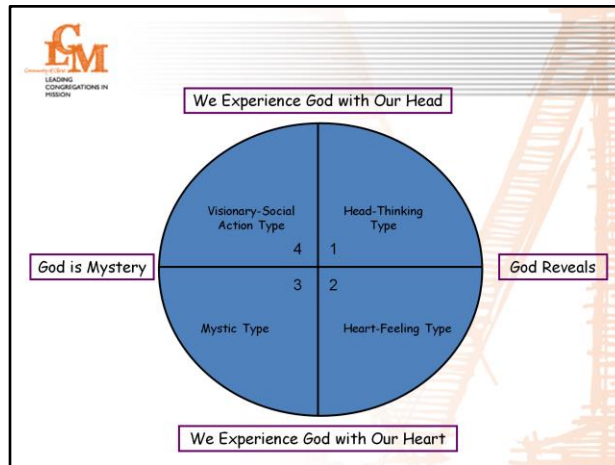
79

- Understanding **our individual spiritual type** and **our congregation's composite spiritual type** is critical in helping us plan missional worship that connects and honors the diversity of our people.



**We are unique in the blend of ways
we encounter God.**

- We each have a unique blend of ways we encounter God. Corinne Ware has provided a helpful tool to assist individuals and congregations identify their spiritual types for planning worship.



Introduce and provide discussion on the “Spirituality Wheel:” (10 Minutes)

Share the following description of the “Spirituality Wheel” that identifies four basic spiritual types:

- Social Action Spirituality – Visionary who is single minded, deeply focused. Tend to care less about organized religion. Courageous and sturdy idealism, take responsibility for change, have a passion for transforming the world. Prayer and theology must be coupled with action. Possible Dangers of this type include: tunnel vision, can only see their cause and relate to those who see their cause.
- Head Spirituality - Favors what we can see, touch, vividly imagine. Like study groups, focused on sermon content, planners. Daily life, after all, is the “real world”. Possible Dangers of this type include: may become too logical and dry. Everything must make sense and be rational.
- Heart Spirituality - All heart like witnessing, testimonials, especially music. God is real - in the here and now. Possible dangers of this type include: my walk with God is closer than yours
- Mystic Spirituality - Hearing from God is very important. Union with the Holy is all about the journey. Renewal of the inner life. God is infinite. “I am that I am” makes sense. Possible dangers of this type include: retreat from reality and interaction with the world.

Provide opportunity for questions to clarify or discuss the “Spirituality Wheel.”

Share this point at the end of discussion on the “Spirituality Wheel:”

What Type is Ideal?

- No type is ideal.
- We are all different.
- It is helpful to stretch ourselves to explore unfamiliar types.



Share this point at the end of discussion on the “Spirituality Wheel:”

- Is there an ideal spiritual type? The answer is of course no. We are all different. It is helpful to stretch ourselves a bit and explore ways of encountering God that may seem unfamiliar or even a bit uncomfortable. The Spirituality Wheel helps us understand our comfort zone and identifies where we may need to consider challenging ourselves a bit.

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**The Process –
Discovering Your Spiritual Type**

1. Identify Spiritual Types using survey and Spirituality Wheel.
2. Draw Spirituality Wheel on News Print.
3. Draw Spokes on Spirituality Wheel representing PLT
4. Discuss Questions:
 - What does this information suggest about the different ways we encounter God?
 - How do our current forms of worship honor our diversity?
 - What changes might be appropriate to honor our diversity?

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Exercise to plan Missional Worship honoring the Spiritual Types: (42 Minutes)

Refer participants to the process on page 81 in the Tools Tab on “Planning for Encounter in Worship – *Understanding Your Congregation’s Spiritual Type*”.

Walk participants through the process of completing the survey and having them draw spokes on their individual spirituality wheel using the process outlined below:

The Process

- First, walk individuals through the exercise so they can identify their spiritual type using the survey and spirituality wheel provided on pages 82 through 85.
- Second, Draw a Large Spirituality Wheel on newsprint for the PLT patterned after the graphic on page 85.
- Third, ask individuals of the PLT to take their results and draw their spokes as described below on a Large Spirituality Wheel. This will represent the PLT’s dominant and various spiritual types.
- Fourth, discuss the following questions in your table groups:
 - What does this information suggest about the different ways we encounter God?
 - How do our current forms of worship honor our diversity?
 - What changes might be appropriate to honor our diversity?

Provide large group time to discuss insights gained from the experience.

Note to Facilitator: Encourage the PLT’s to take this exercise home and walk through the same steps with their congregation.

Missional Worship Planning

- Plan Missional Worship Experience
- Utilize Three Dimensions
 - Christ Centered
 - Grounded in Scripture
 - Leads to Deeper Relationships
- Utilize PLT Spirituality Wheel

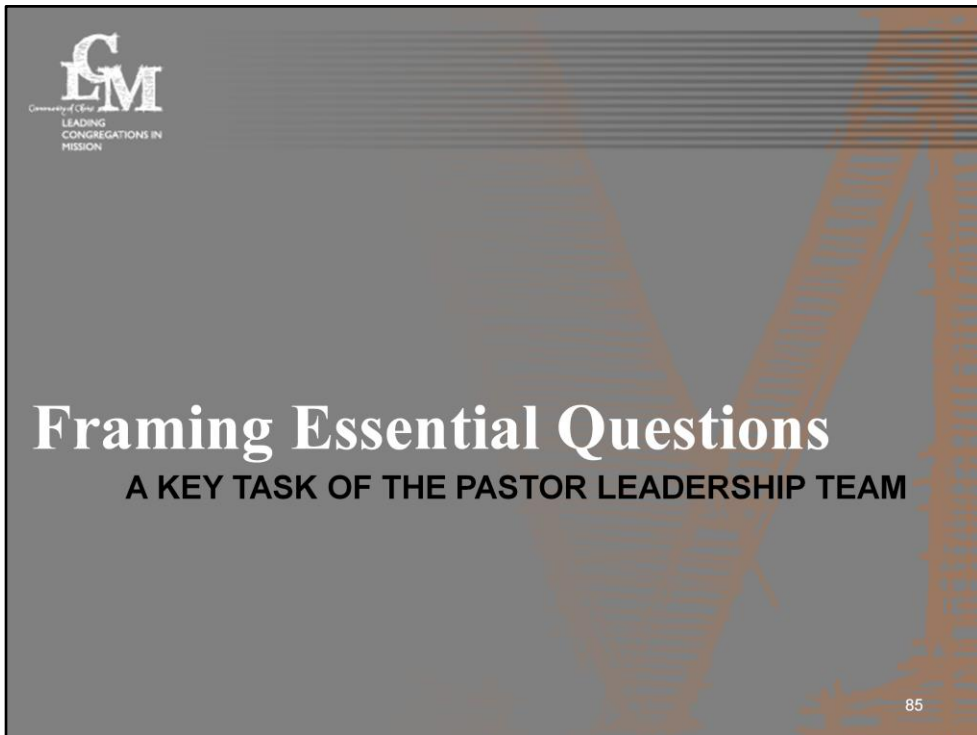


Ask the PLT's to take the information they learned about their spiritual types and plan a missional worship service incorporating the three dimensions of missional worship: (20 minutes)

1. Centered in Christ
2. Grounded in Unfolding Story of Scripture
3. Leads us into deeper relationships with God, one another, and our neighbors.

Ask a few tables to share their missional worship outline with the large group.

Announce snacks follows and that breakfast is at 7:30 – 8:30 a.m. at end of session.



Welcome and introduce - Framing Essential Questions: (5 Minutes)

Note: Participants do not need to sit with their PLT.

Share following two points:

- In our work as Pastor Leadership Teams learning to ask good questions is as important to leading the congregation in mission as determining the answers.
- In this session we will explore some basics of how to construct good questions and then review the role of questions in leading congregations in mission.

Questions or Answers?

- Society Focuses on Answers
- Conditioned For Decisiveness
- LCM Focus on Asking Essential Questions
- Questions Focus Conversation and Discernment



Share the following four points regarding **Questions or Answers:**

- In our western culture the tendency is to focus more on having the right answers than framing the right questions. This starts at an early age where we focus on memorization rather than the art of asking essential questions that can guide our exploration as learners.
- Much of our religious experience in the western world has focused on attaining the right answers. Christian denominations have largely differentiated themselves not on the questions they are pursuing but the rightness of their answers to questions they deem of significance.
- In LCM, a key task of leaders is to help articulate thoughtful questions that lead to new discovery and experimentation with new forms of ministry and mission.
- Identifying essential questions are critical to the quality of information we gather, insights we discern, actions we take, and outcomes we realize. The word “essential” signifies important, vital, or even urgent. Framing or developing essential questions takes practice but will result in more focused conversation and deeper levels of discernment.



Jesus and Questions

Jesus often responds with questions.

Jesus challenges current thinking with deeper questions.

Jesus questions reveal the deeper truths.

- Who do you say that I am? Matt. 16:15
- Why do you look at the speck of sawdust in your brother's eye and pay no attention to the plank in your own eye? Matt. 7:3-4
- Were our hearts not burning within us while he talked with us on the road? Luke 24:32
- Do you love me? John 21:15-17

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Share comments on “Jesus and Questions” with time for discussion: (10 Minutes for this and next 2 slides)

Share this point:

- Jesus did not feel compelled to provide answers when asked a question. He often responded with questions that probed beneath the surface of what was being asked of him.

Provide at least 5 minutes for table discussion on “Who do you say that I am?” (Matthew 16:15) by asking:

What was Jesus really asking here?



Importance of Essential Questions

“Rather than offer his disciples answers to life’s most perplexing problems, Jesus introduced them to deeper and deeper levels of ambiguity.

Clearly Jesus knew what mystics and the wisest of spiritual guides have known all along: that answers can provide a false sense of security and pride that can stand in the way of a deeper awareness of the Divine”

Felten, David; Procter-Murphy, Jeff (2012-08-07). Living the Questions: The Wisdom of Progressive Christianity (Kindle Locations 127-129). HarperOne. Kindle Edition.

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After discussion by table groups read the following quote:

Rather than offer his disciples answers to life’s most perplexing problems, Jesus introduced them to deeper and deeper levels of ambiguity.

Clearly Jesus knew what mystics and the wisest of spiritual guides have known all along: that answers can provide a false sense of security and pride that can stand in the way of a deeper awareness of the Divine. (Felten, David; Procter-Murphy, Jeff (2012-08-07). Living the Questions: The Wisdom of Progressive Christianity (Kindle Locations 127-129). HarperOne. Kindle Edition.)

Make this comment:

- Jesus once again reverses notions of leadership and mission as being willing to live with life’s deeper questions as we pursue mission. In other words we journey in trust as we remain open to God’s unfolding story.



Essential Question

- is thought provoking
- invites creative thinking
- stimulates reflective conversation
- generates positive energy and forward movement
- connects with deep meaning and purpose
- helps surface underlying assumptions
- focuses attention on what matters most

Review the following points regarding “**What Does an Essential Question Look Like?**”

- It is thought provoking
- invites creative thinking
- stimulates reflective conversation
- generates positive energy and forward movement
- connects with deep meaning and purpose
- helps surface underlying assumptions
- focuses attention on what matters most

Five Dimensions Of An Essential Question

1. Construction
2. Scope
3. Assumptions
4. Relevance to Mission
5. Shared Assets



Introduce and review “What Does an Essential Question Look Like?” (7 Minutes)

Refer participants to “Framing the Essential Questions: A Tool for Discerning and Planning Mission” I the Tools Tab. Pages 89-97 and specifically to page 91 where the five dimensions are listed.


First introduce each of the “Five Dimensions of an Essential Question:”

- According to Vogt, Brown, and Isaacs, there is architecture to essential questions that consist of three dimensions. Borrowing from the field of Appreciative Inquiry and our own faith journey we add two dimensions and suggest the following five dimensions to an essential question:
 1. Construction
 2. Scope
 3. Assumptions
 4. Relevance to Our Mission
 5. Shared Assets

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Five Dimensions Of An Essential Question

- 1. Construction** – How do we begin the question?
- 2. Scope** – Is the question within our sphere of influence?



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Review each dimension:

1. Construction – This is about how we develop the questions. Using words like “why, how, or what” to begin a question lead to more open-ended exploration. Words like “who, when, and where” lead to more specific answers. Words like “which” and yes/no questions lead to the most specific answers.

So what does this all mean? Generally when looking at broader strategic questions you want to begin the question in a way that will lead to open-ended exploration (i.e. why, how, or what). The questions we want to ask about living Christ’s mission and how we relate that mission to our contexts are broad strategic questions. We will continue conversation and prayer over these questions from meeting to meeting.

When we are working on planning events or other short-term decisions we generally want to begin our questions with words that lead to more specific-concrete answers (i.e. who, where, when, which or yes/no). In others words, we need to resolve an issue and need questions that get us to specific decisions within a particular time frame.

2. Scope –We want to be careful that our questions are addressing what we have the ability to influence. Questions can be either too narrow or too broad. If questions are too broad in scope people tend to lose interest because they don’t know how to connect or make an impact. If questions are too narrow in scope people can also become impatient with tedious discussions that may not require group decision making in the first place.

Note to Facilitator: It would be helpful to give an example like, what can we do to bring about world peace? This is an example of a question with such a broad scope that people may get lost in the question. Narrowing the scope of this question we might consider asking, what can we do to reduce youth violence in the neighborhood around our church?

3. Assumptions – What baseline understandings do we share?

4. Relevance to Mission – What is our primary purpose?



Review dimensions 3 and 4.

3. Assumptions – Most questions have assumptions built into them. We want to make sure our questions contain assumptions that would result in a high level of consent and not presuppose too much or too little. If we assume too much in a question people may challenge our question and suggest we need to step back discuss key assumptions before moving to the question at hand. If our questions do not take into account some base level of assumptions our questions can result in unnecessary conversation and cause frustration.

Note to Facilitator: Again an example might be helpful. If we ask the question, when are we going to start planning for the fall festival we are assuming everyone agrees we should have a fall festival. A more helpful question might be, as we look at our calendar in the fall do we feel there is value in having a fall festival for the neighborhood?

4. Relevance to Our Mission – In the context of LCM we continue to point back to our primary purpose on page 3 of the LCM Field Guide Overview:

- “If you would truly be Community of Christ, then embody and live the concerns and passion of Christ.” (Doctrine and Covenants 164:9d)
- Our questions whether short-term or longer-term need to always ground us in our mission. We never set aside mission to handle specific tasks but always view and construct questions through the lens of our mission.
- Every question and every decision should lead us to embody and live the concerns and passion of Christ in a hurting world.

5. Shared Assets –
How do we focus on the gifts, skills, and positive shared experiences and not deficiencies?



Review dimension 5.

5. Shared Assets: - Borrowing from Appreciative Inquiry, it is helpful to frame questions that build on the positive assets we have and not focus on what we don't have. Questions that focus on "the glass is half full" thinking often lead to negative energy and focus on why we can't move forward together. Questions that focus on "the glass is half full" thinking focus on the gifts, skills, and positive shared experiences of the group and how these assets can help us move forward together.

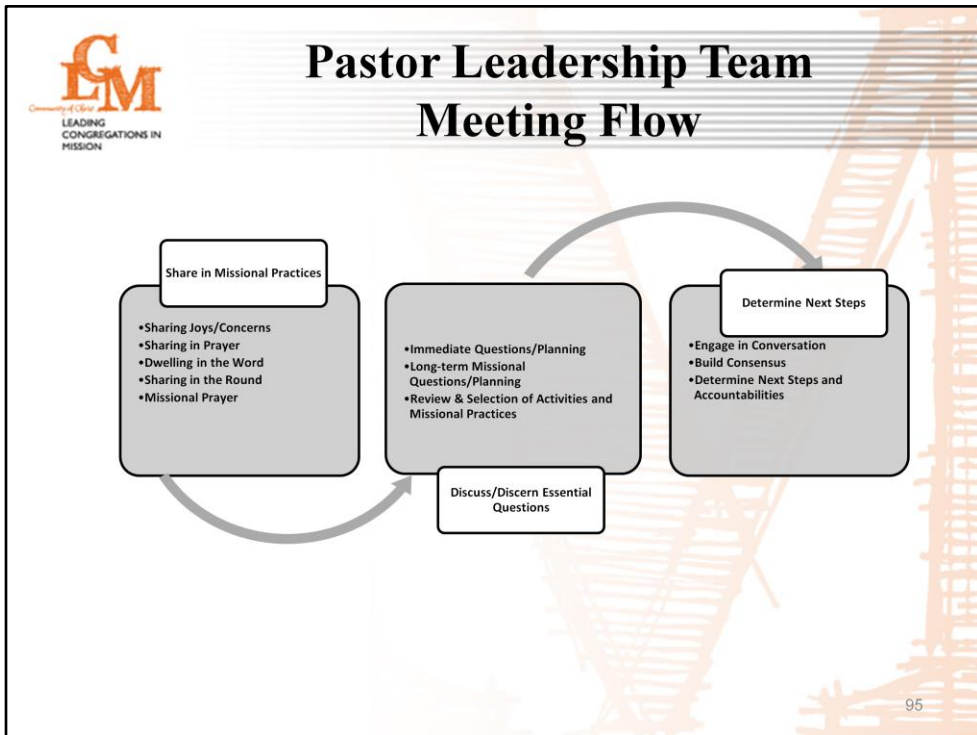
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It is imperative that the Pastor Leadership Team invest the time to construct questions that lead to meaningful conversation, discernment, and movement toward meaningful engagement in mission.

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Read at end of presentation of the Five Dimensions: (less than a minute)

It is imperative that the Pastor Leadership Team invest the time to construct questions that lead to meaningful conversation, discernment, and movement toward meaningful engagement in mission.



Connect the importance of ‘Essential Questions’ to LCM. (12 Minutes)

Review the Pastor Leadership Team Meeting Flow: (less than a minute) and read:

This investment of time is central to the LCM process as indicated in our meeting flow diagram in the second box.

LCM and Essential Questions

- **Missional (Shared) Leadership** – *how are we leading together?*
- **Missional Practices** – *how are we living into new ways of being and doing together?*
- **Missional Context** – *how are we discovering what God is up to around us?*
- **Missional Process** – *how are we becoming adaptable to the disruptive promptings of the Holy Spirit?*



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Share the following points regarding “LCM and Essential Questions”: (3-5 minutes):

- As you consider developing the longer-term missional questions that will guide your congregational journey consider the four compass points outlined on page 6 and explained on subsequent pages of the LCM Field Guide. The four compass points are:
 1. Missional (Shared) Leadership
 2. Missional Practices
 3. Missional Context
 4. Missional Process

Refer participants to “Framing Essential Questions – A Tool for Discerning and Planning Mission” specifically pages 95 in the Tools Tab for more in-depth questions These questions are designed to stimulate thinking and conversation about questions you feel are important to your journey as a congregation.

Share this comment:

Do not get too technical when applying these guidelines. The key is to identify a few essential questions based on your congregation’s needs and your leadership team’s prayer, conversations, and perspectives about how to best engage in leading your congregation in mission.



Sources of Our Questions

Some questions will naturally emerge as we engage in missional practices that lead us into relationship with God, one another, and our neighbors.

Our encounters with God in the midst of these relationships help us to see things we did not see before and begin to ask new questions.



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Share this comment regarding “Sources of Our Questions”: (1 Minute)

- Much of this session has focused on developing essential questions as an important role of the Pastor Leadership Team. Share the following points:
 - It is also important to recognize that questions can naturally emerge out of our experiences or encounter with God in relationship with others.
 - In the midst of these relationships we begin to see things we did not see before and begin to ask new questions.
 - We simply return to where we began in retreat #1 – mission begins with encounter. We encourage you to be open to the disruptive promptings of the Holy Spirit that will lead to new questions as we together discern and lead mission.



When should we replace the carpet in the sanctuary?

Through the five dimensions of construction, scope, assumptions, shared assets, and mission:

1. A “when question” will result in a specific response; may not be broad enough address the essential question.
2. In this case the scope is appropriate – the sanctuary.
3. The assumptions may be problematic. The question assumes that everyone agrees the carpet needs replaced. It may also assume the carpet does not need to be replaced in other areas of the building. This may or may not be true.
4. The question is neutral with respect to “Shared Assets”.
5. The question is neutral. It does not lead us to consider how replacing the carpet is linked to mission.

98

Introduce and review the following question as a simple example to illustrate a typical question all congregations face: (3-4 Minutes this and next slide)

“When should we replace the carpet in the sanctuary?”

Review the above question through the five dimensions of construction, scope, assumptions, shared assets, and mission.

- First, a “when question” will result in a specific response and may not be broad enough address the essential question.
- Second, in this case the scope is appropriate – the sanctuary.
- Third, the assumptions may be problematic here. The question assumes that everyone agrees the carpet needs replaced. It may also assume the carpet does not need to be replaced in other areas of the building. This may or may not be true.
- Fourth, the question is neutral with respect to “Assets”.
- Fifth, the question is neutral and does not lead us to consider how replacing the carpet is linked to mission.



Example – Alternative Question

Another way to frame the question:

What criteria would lead us to the conclusion it is time to replace the carpet in the sanctuary?

By asking “***what criteria***” leads ***conversation about how replacing the carpet does or does not contribute to our emerging missional focus.***

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Present “Alternative Question” slide and share these comments. (1 Minute)

- Instead of asking, “When should we replace the carpet in the sanctuary?” a much more open-ended question and does not assume any decision has been made is:

“What criteria” would lead us to the conclusion it is time to replace the carpet in the sanctuary?

- By asking “***what criteria***” should be considered we have an opportunity to enter into conversation about how replacing the carpet does or does not contribute to our emerging missional focus.



“Framing Essential Questions - A Scenario”

Review the scenario and respond to the question:

***What questions do you think
are essential in guiding the conversation
and discernment that needs to occur?***

100

Facilitate “Framing Essential Questions – a Scenario” Exercise (20 Minutes)

Refer participants to “Framing Essential Questions – a Scenario” page 73 in Handout Tab.

Facilitate table groups to review the scenario and then respond to the question:

What questions do you think are essential in guiding the conversation and discernment that needs to occur?



Carefully Constructed Short-Term Questions

Lead to clearer and more productive time than simply discussing a topic!

Example: Questions Related to Planning a Fellowship Night

- What should be the focus of our fellowship next week?
- How could we integrate *Sharing in the Round* or *Dwelling in the Word* or other missional practices?
- Who do we ask to coordinate the event?
- How will we communicate the event to the congregation?
- Who in the PLT will provide support to the event coordinator?

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Share comments to end this session with time for questions: (6 Minutes)

Present following points regarding “Careful Constructed Short-term Questions:”

- Careful construction of short-term questions can lead to clearer and more productive time together in addressing ongoing congregational activities and ministries.
- Well-crafted short-term questions are helpful in processing through an agenda.

Review “Example: Questions Related to Planning a Fellowship Night:”

- What should be the focus of our fellowship next week?
- How could we integrate *Sharing in the Round* or *Dwelling in the Word* or other missional practices?
- Who do we ask to coordinate the event?
- How will we communicate the event to the congregation?
- Who in the PLT will provide support to the event coordinator?

Share these points:

- In our example, a few well thought out questions can help a group make decisions more efficiently than simply throwing out a topic for conversation.
- Although the focus of this session has been on developing longer-term missional questions, good-short term questions help focus discussion so there is more time to discuss longer-term strategic questions.

Questions and Comments

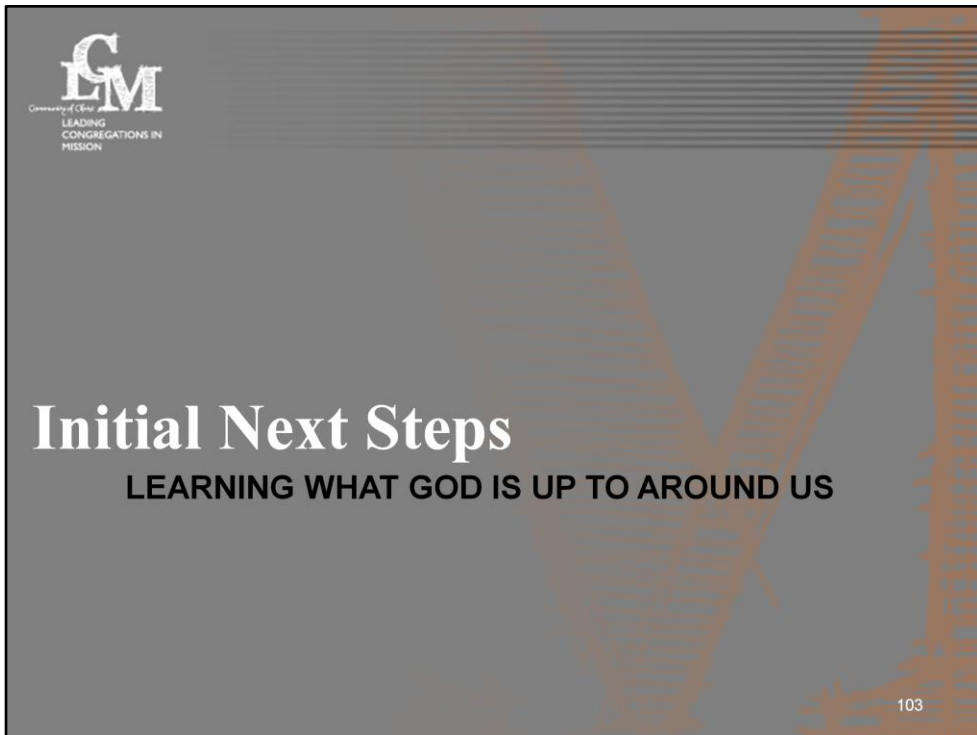
In Summary:

- Missional (Shared) Leadership – *how are we leading together?*
- Missional Practices – *how are we living into new ways of being and doing together?*
- Missional Context – *how are we discovering what God is up to around us?*
- Missional Process – *how are we becoming adaptable to the disruptive promptings of the Holy Spirit?*

102

Provide some time for questions (as time permits) and end the session by referring to the four compass points on the slide and reviewing the four questions related to each compass point.

- Missional (Shared) Leadership: how are we leading together?
- Missional Practices: how are we living into new ways of being and doing together?
- Missional Context: how are we discovering what God is up to around us?
- Missional Process: how are we becoming adaptable to the disruptive promptings of the Holy Spirit?



Welcome participants and introduce LCM and Four Compass Points: (10 Minutes)

Make this point:

This section helps connect the dots about why we have been spending so much time talking about context.

LCM and Four Compass Points

- **Missional (Shared) Leadership** – *how are we leading together?*
- **Missional Practices** – *how are we living into new ways of being and doing together?*
- **Missional Context** – *how are we discovering what God is up to around us?*
- **Missional Process** – *how are we becoming adaptable to the disruptive promptings of the Holy Spirit?*



Share these points, **very important**, regarding “LCM and the Four Compass Points” **AND** ask for Questions or Comments: (9 of 10 Minutes)

- Missional Context is one of the four compass points that help us navigate the changing terrain of mission. With this compass point we are asking the following question:
How are we discovering what God is up to around us?
- Why is context so critical to mission? Simply put, our context for mission has radically changed in western nations over the past several decades. In many ways we find ourselves in unfamiliar territory.
- Our journey today is not that unlike the Israelites as they came out of Egypt. As they entered the wilderness they found themselves in totally unfamiliar territory. They struggled with what it meant to be God’s people in the wilderness – a new unfamiliar place.
- Today, Christianity and specifically Community of Christ finds itself in unfamiliar territory. Church is no longer at the center of community life, we live in a very diverse religious society, and people no longer equate matters of faith or spirituality with any form of organized religion.
- What does it mean to be God’s gathered and sent people – the church - in a rapidly changing world?
- Or put another way – *How are we discovering what God is up to around us?*
- This is the challenging but necessary work of discovering our context for mission! We will not discover the answers over-night. Because our context for mission is constantly changing we need good navigational tools for the journey. These navigational tools are:
Missional Leadership, Missional Practices, Missional Process and Missional Context

Our next steps place their focus on discovering what God is up to around us through the use of activities, missional practices, and beginning to frame questions that will guide our exploration together.

Be sure to pause and ask if there are any comments or questions regarding LCM and the Four Compass points.



Next Steps – Some Assumptions

- Assume Pastor Leadership Teams (PLTs) are meeting monthly and utilizing the meeting process identified in retreat #1.
- Assume PLT's are engaging in three shared missional practices identified in retreat #1.
- Assume PLT's are utilizing their CSM's and including them in PLT meetings.
- Assume CSM's are visiting congregations once per month.

105

Introduce “**Next Steps – Some Assumptions**” and a reminder to “slow down.” (7 Minutes)

Share the following points regarding “Next Steps – Some Assumptions:”

- Review these four points:
 1. Assume Pastor Leadership Teams (PLTs) are meeting monthly and utilizing the meeting process identified in retreat #1.
 2. Assume PLT's are engaging in three shared missional practices identified in retreat #1.
 3. Assume PLT's are utilizing their CSM's and including them in PLT meetings.
 4. Assume CSM's are visiting congregations once per month.
- These assumptions are the baseline for LCM.
- It is very important that the PLT model by example. This will result in deeper relationships and new insights.
- If there are challenges with meeting once per month or any concerns about the relationship between CSM's and PLT's we assume you will let your mission center president, field apostle, Ron Harmon, or Rob Borkowski know as soon as possible.

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Next Steps

- Slow Down
- Begin meetings with relationships and missional practice.
- Remember this is your journey!
- New Tool – “Going Deeper in Discovering Our Unity in Diversity”



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Refer participants to “PLT Retreat #2 – Initial Steps” in the Next Steps Tab pages 21-23.

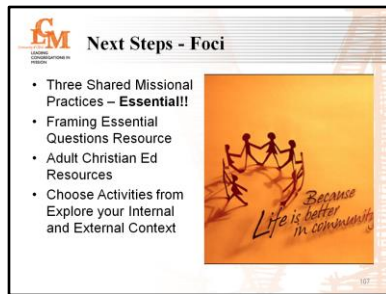
Share these points on the “Next Steps” slide:

- Continue to remember that LCM calls us to slow down, be present in our relationships with one another, engage in missional practices, and discern and plan for mission together.
- We have included an additional tool to help you develop deeper understanding of one another entitled “Going Deeper in Discovering Our Unity in Diversity” located on pages 69-72 in the Tools Tab. This simple tool will help you understand and appreciate your differences as you work together.

Note to Facilitator: Be sure to hold up the “PLT Retreat #2 – Initial Steps” resource and make sure everyone has seen it in the packet.

Building this foundation of appreciation for each one’s personality in the PLT is absolutely essential. Remember without a foundation of trust and meaningful communication it will be difficult to risk opening ourselves to new insights and experimenting with new forms of ministry.

ALTHOUGH WE PROVIDE RESOURCES AND SUGGESTED NEXT STEPS THIS IS YOUR JOURNEY. Use what makes sense, modify resources based on needs, and take ownership of the call to discern and lead mission as a team.



Review Next Steps Foci (7 Minutes)

Share these points:

- You are not expected to do all the steps in the “PLT Retreat #2 – Initial Steps” document. Evaluate as a PLT what steps make sense for your congregation. The foci of these steps are four fold:
 1. Continue to meet as a team, engage in missional practices, build relationships, plan, discern, and determine next steps.
 2. Begin to discover your internal and external context as a step toward discerning how you are being led into mission.
 3. Begin to develop or frame essential questions that will guide your journey.
 4. Go deeper in your understanding and practice of conversation as a PLT, congregation, and with your neighbors.
- What you choose to do is up to the PLT and congregation. Prayerfully and thoughtfully consider these next steps.
- We would strongly recommend at a minimum the following next steps:
 - Share Retreat Information with Other Congregational Leaders and your Congregation – It is very important at this juncture to begin inviting your congregation into the process.
 - Invite congregation into three shared missional practices – Dwelling in the Word, Missional Prayer, Sharing in the Round. Sharing in the Round can be used as a practice to discover the internal context of the congregation. It can also be used to discover external if it is expanded to include neighbors.
 - Review Framing Essential Questions. It is important to develop some ability to ask good questions.
 - Consider studying a resource for Adult Christian Ed that will help support the LCM journey – see the suggested list.
 - Choose some activities from Step 5 – Explore Your Internal and External Context. We strongly recommend “Walking the Neighborhood” as a new missional practice.
 - Review your Percept Report as one point of information. This is not a substitute for the suggested missional practices and activities. **Note to Facilitator: Make sure a Percept Reports is provided to each PLT. These are not in the folder and need to be distributed.**

Infusing Worship with Missional Intent



Three Helpful Resources:

“Planning for Encounter in Worship”

“Worship as Community Missional Practice”

“Sample Missional Worship Outlines”

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Reminder of the importance for Infusing Worship with Missional Intent (2 Minutes)

Share the following points:

- This weekend we have discussed the importance of infusing our worship experiences with missional intent. As we shared in Retreat #1 we want to use existing opportunities in congregational life to begin to go deeper in our exploration of mission.
- We are providing three resources to help you as you plan worship that is missional focused:
 1. “Planning for Encounter in Worship”
 2. “Worship as Community Missional Practice”
 3. “Sample Missional Worship Outlines”
- Remember you can also draw ideas from “Worship Resources 2012-2013” available from herald House.
- As you consider next steps we hope you will give attention to your worship experiences as an opportunity to explore mission in more depth.



Provide time for questions and answers. (5 Minutes)

When at end of time for this session, share the following statements:

Remember, Christianity and Community of Christ did not wake up one morning only to discover the world had radically changed around them. This has been a gradual process over many decades. It will also take time to discover together how God is calling us into some new expressions of ministry and mission.

We are being called to live with some important questions and develop some new navigational tools that will gradually help us become more aware of where God is leading us as we navigate the changing terrain of mission. Our anchor and most important tool going forward is our relationship with God and one another!

- Be patient and trust in the process and one another.
- LCM Design and Coordination Team Contact Numbers on next slide.

Share:

- In addition to your CSM, MCP, and Field Apostle, you can contact the LCM Design and Coordination Team at any time with question and concerns. **See next slide for contact information.**



LCM Design and Coordination Team Contact Numbers

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