Answering God’s Call to Mission In and Around Us
Why Mission Matters

The People:

Learners: This workshop is designed for small town/rural congregations locked in cycles of survival (meaning congregations facing enough decline in attendance and contributions that their sustainability is directly threatened). Most participants are:

- The core lay-leadership (both officially and unofficially) of the congregation.
- The core volunteer base of the congregation.
- The core financial contributors of the congregation.

Participants may or may not be:

- Living on retirement income
- Long term members of the congregation (even multi-generationally)
- Facing multiple time commitments.

Designer: This workshop is designed by Ken McClure (an Ordinand in the Diocese of Toronto), and will draw on material from both Diocesan and academic contributions to the larger Missional Church Movement.

Facilitator: This workshop will be facilitated by the Incumbent/Priest-in-charge/Assistant/Curate of the community where the course is taking place.

Please Note: This workshop will require a minimum of 5 participants

The Situation:

The Diocese of Toronto has recently begun to emphasize a missional approach to ministry and engagement in the broader community, as a more deliberate and Gospel-centered approach living out our commitment as the Body of Christ. However in many parishes across the Diocese (particularly in rural and small town communities) this emphasis has failed to resonate. Reasons for this failure in resonance include:

- A lack of clarity of what is meant by Mission and Missional
- A sense of disconnect between the Diocese and individual parishes
- Financial over-burdening within declining parishes
- A volunteer deficit within declining parishes
- A resistance to ministry “trends”
A comfort with doing things “the way they have always been done”

While it can be extremely difficult to see beyond the existential menace of decline, particularly for those who are most active in the life and work of a congregation, it is the belief of both the Diocese and the designer of this course that full participation within the Missio Dei, the Mission of God (as expressed in the Scripture), is the call and purpose of the Church, and that refocusing on this Mission and away from administrative tactics for survival can have an invigorating effect on a congregation, even if that congregation is in decline.

**The Anticipated Change:**

Participants in this course can expect to develop a personal understanding of what is meant by the word Missional, as well as a greater sense of the relationship between participation in the Mission of God and living out one’s faith in God. Participants can also expect to begin to discern where and how the Mission of God is unfolding in their own communities, as well as highlighting a specific focus for Missional engagement moving forward. Finally participants will leave the course with a greater sense of confidence in not only engaging in Missional activities, but with a newly established Missional Guild in place to engage in Missional Ministry, along with a liturgy and specific area of opportunity for Missional Ministry to present to their congregation.

**The Time/Timing:**

This course is ideally to be held on two consecutive Sundays following worship, in the post-Christmas pre-vestry season (January). This is ideal in that it avoids the hectic schedules of the Christmas rush while capitalizing on the sense of Christian purpose invoked within the season. Likewise it provides a context for the kind of future planning carried out during vestries, in a time frame that will allow participants to disseminate the knowledge gained among the broader congregation before the period when decisions are made, but close enough to the period for the material to still be fresh in the minds of members. Finally by connecting the course to the build up to vestry, the facilitator can help to draw the links between Mission and congregational administrative business which lay at the heart of the Missional movement. The course requires 5 hours (this total includes 20min for breaks), over two sessions broken up into 2 parts per session with each part divided by a 10 min break.

**The Place & Space:**

The course SHOULD NOT BE HELD IN A MEETING ROOM, BUT IN THE SANCTUARY OF THE CHURCH. This is crucial in connecting the idea of the Mission of God with Faith in God. The space of worship is where many fully express their faith, in some cases it is the ONLY place where people truly feel comfortable in expressing their faith. As such the worship space can allow assist in orienting participants in notion that what is being discussed is
rooted in the expression of faith. Please note however that when the group is working as a whole, the pews should not confine the seating arrangement to the Sunday morning Priest/congregation dynamic. Whenever possible the facilitator should some form of circular/half circular organization to help facilitate group discussion.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Objective Based Learning</th>
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<td>Part 1: The Mission of God in Scripture.</td>
<td>Participants will have:</td>
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<td>We will examine:</td>
<td>• Analysed passages of Scripture through the lens of the Missio Dei,</td>
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<td>• Mission in the Prophets</td>
<td>• Defined the Mission of God according to the discussions and discernments of the group</td>
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<td>• Mission in The Gospel</td>
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<td>• The Apostolic Mission</td>
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We will examine:
• The 5 Marks of Mission in The Anglican Church of Canada
• Mission in our Communities
• Mission in liturgy

Participants will have:
• Refined the definition of Mission created by the group in Part 1 to ensure that it reflects the 5 Marks of Mission in The Anglican Church of Canada.
• Identified 1 way (per Mark) in which the Marks of Mission are being carried out in their community
• Developed a liturgy for use in worship services, and as a spiritual resource for future Missional activity within the congregation.

We will examine:
• The 5 Steps of Discerning God’s call to Mission in our Local Neighborhoods

Participants will have:
• Applied the 5 Steps of Discerning God’s call to Mission in our Local Neighborhoods to their own community
• Painted a picture of their surrounding community to be used in discerning the Mission of God as it is unfolding.

We will explore:
• Seeing our Community through a Prophet’s eyes
• Describing our Community with a Prophet’s pen
• Answering God’s call with a Prophet’s heart

Participants will have:
• Written and Compiled a poetic/prophetic re-imagining of the picture painted in Part 3
• Identified a specific area to respond to where God is calling the Church into action in the local community (this area will serve as the primary focus for crafting future Missional ministries within the congregation)
Welcome (5 min)

Warm up Exercise: *This is a*… (10 min)

Part 1 Solo/Group Work (20 min)

Part 1 As a Whole (15 min)

Break (10 min)

Reconnect Exercise: *One Word Story*… (5 min)

Part 2 Solo/Group Work (20 min)

Part 2 As a Whole (20 min)

Bringing it All Together (10 min)

Next Time (5 min)
Facilitator Materials

The Following Materials are REQUIRED

- An easel with Paper (ideal), or a white board to record information from the “As a Whole” discussions.
- A bell/singing bowel/chimes to gently signal the wrap up of an activity and the transition to another (1 ring to signal 5 min, and 2 signal transition is a good pattern)
- Writing utensils

The Following Materials are Non-essential, but SUGGESTED

- An array of Spiritual aides (rosaries, prayer books, meditation crosses, etc.) to help participants to engage prayerfully with the activities.
- A CD player of some kind to play meditative music during activities (this is primarily for Solo work, and should be offered but, not insisted upon.)
Warm up/Reconnect Exercises

This Is A….

The Group comes together in a standing circle. The Facilitator shows the group an item (ideally a bizarre item that will have unclear use) and provide an account of what the item is and does (this is a fabricated account) beginning with This is a… then a member of the group takes a turn at describing what the item is and does, and so on.

The point of this game is to warm up the ‘imagination muscles’ required to look at something in a different way, be it an item, a text, or an entire community.

One Word Story…

The Group comes together in a standing circle. One person begins with a single word beginning the story, and the next person adds a word continuing the thought, sentence, etc. This continues around the circle until a story emerges.

The point of this game is to engage in collaborative spontaneous creation
**Solo/Group Work**

In pairs or on your own read one of the passages of scripture provided and think about the following questions:

- What does it say about God?
- What does it say about God wants for the People of God?
- What is an issue in the world today that this passage speaks to directly?

You may record the content of your analysis on the scripture study worksheet.

Share with the rest of the group.

**As a Whole:**

Form a definition of the Mission of God informed by the discussions and findings of each pair/small group.

The Mission of God is:

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**Part 1: The Mission of God in Scripture**

*In order to develop our personal/group understanding of what the Mission Of God is, we will examine the following passages of scripture to better understand the Biblical nature of Mission.*

**The Prophetic Mission:**

2 Kings 4:1-7, Isaiah 61

**The Gospel Mission:**


**The Apostolic Mission:**

Acts 4:32-37
We begin with Scripture in order to allow the group the opportunity to cultivate a theological connection with the concept of Mission and to discern amongst themselves where they are being called by the Spirit to act. As such it is important to allow participants space to interpret the texts **EVEN IF THOSE INTERPRETATIONS RUN CONTRARY TO THE INTERPRETATION HELD BY THE FACILITATOR.** This is not about getting scripture right, it is about approaching Mission authentically.

- When Solo/Group work is being done, allow the participants the freedom to spread out in the space.
- Provide notice 5min before reconvening to allow for discussions to wrap up (as much as possible)
- When the Group comes back together to share their work with one another, record key words that relate to Mission in order to help the Group form their definition (**Be sure to let them know you will be doing this**).
Missional Scripture Passages

2 Kings 4:1-7

Now the wife of a member of the company of prophets cried to Elisha, “Your servant my husband is dead; and you know that your servant feared the Lord, but a creditor has come to take my two children as slaves.” Elisha said to her, “What shall I do for you? Tell me, what do you have in the house?” She answered, “Your servant has nothing in the house, except a jar of oil.” He said, “Go outside, borrow vessels from all your neighbors, empty vessels and not just a few. Then go in, and shut the door behind you and your children, and start pouring into all these vessels; when each is full, set it aside.” So she left him and shut the door behind her and her children; they kept bringing vessels to her, and she kept pouring. When the vessels were full, she said to her son, “Bring me another vessel.” But he said to her, “There are no more.” Then the oil stopped flowing. She came and told the man of God, and he said, “Go sell the oil and pay your debts, and you and your children can live on the rest.”

Isaiah 61

The spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because the Lord has anointed me; he has sent me to bring good news to the oppressed, to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and release to the prisoners; to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all who mourn; to provide for those who mourn in Zion—to give them a garland instead of ashes, the oil of gladness instead of mourning, the mantle of praise instead of a faint spirit. They will be called oaks of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, to display his glory. They shall build up the ancient ruins, they shall raise up the former devastations; they shall repair the ruined cities, the devastations of many generations. Strangers shall stand and feed your flocks, foreigners shall till your land and dress your vines; but you shall be called priests of the Lord, you shall be named ministers of our God; you shall enjoy the wealth of the nations, and in their riches you shall glory. Because their[a] shame was double, and dishonor was proclaimed as their lot, therefore they shall possess a double portion; everlasting joy shall be theirs. For I the Lord love justice. I hate robbery and wrongdoing; I will faithfully give them their recompense, and I will make an everlasting covenant with them. Their descendants shall be known among the nations, and their offspring among the peoples; all who see them shall acknowledge that they are a people whom the Lord has blessed. I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my whole being shall exult in my God; for he has clothed me with the garments of salvation, he has covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decks himself with a garland, and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels. For as the earth brings forth its shoots, and as a garden causes what is sown in it to spring up, so the Lord God will cause righteousness and praise to spring up before all the nations.
Luke 10:29-37

Wanting to justify himself, he asked Jesus, “And who is my neighbor?” Jesus replied, “A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell into the hands of robbers, who stripped him, beat him, and went away, leaving him half dead. Now by chance a priest was going down that road; and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side. So likewise a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side. But a Samaritan while traveling came near him; and when he saw him, he was moved with pity. He went to him and bandaged his wounds, having poured oil and wine on them. Then he put him on his own animal, brought him to an inn, and took care of him. The next day he took out two denarii, gave them to the innkeeper, and said, ‘Take care of him; and when I come back, I will repay you whatever more you spend.’ Which of these three, do you think, was a neighbor to the man who fell into the hands of the robbers?” He said, “The one who showed him mercy.” Jesus said to him, “Go and do likewise.”

John 21:15-19

When they had finished breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, “Simon son of John, do you love me more than these?” He said to him, “Yes, Lord; you know that I love you.” Jesus said to him, “Feed my lambs.” A second time he said to him, “Simon son of John, do you love me?” He said to him, “Yes, Lord; you know that I love you.” Jesus said to him, “Tend my sheep.” He said to him the third time, “Simon son of John, do you love me?” Peter felt hurt because he said to him the third time, “Do you love me?” And he said to him, “Lord, you know everything; you know that I love you.” Jesus said to him, “Feed my sheep. Very truly, I tell you, when you were younger, you used to fasten your own belt and to go wherever you wished. But when you grow old, you will stretch out your hands, and someone else will fasten a belt around you and take you where you do not wish to go.” (He said this to indicate the kind of death by which he would glorify God.) After this he said to him, “Follow me.”

Acts 4:32-37

Now the whole group of those who believed were of one heart and soul, and no one claimed private ownership of any possessions, but everything they owned was held in common. With great power the apostles gave their testimony to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and great grace was upon them all. There was not a needy person among them, for as many as owned lands or houses sold them and brought the proceeds of what was sold. They laid it at the apostles’ feet, and it was distributed to each as any had need. There was a Levite, a native of Cyprus, Joseph, to whom the apostles gave the name Barnabas (which means “son of encouragement”). He sold a field that belonged to him, then brought the money, and laid it at the apostles’ feet.


**Scripture study Worksheet**

What does this passage say about God?

What does it say about God wants for the People of God?

What is an issue in the world today or in our community that this passage speaks to directly?
Solo/Group Work

First: In pairs or on your own think about how your Mark of Mission is reflected in the definition of Mission created by the group in Part 1.

Next: Name 1 way in which the specific Mark of Mission you’ve selected/received is being carried out in your community.

Finally: From a list provided (or any other Hymn from the Book of Common Praise that you deem appropriate), choose a single Hymn that most reflects your understanding of the Mark of Mission.

Share with the rest of the group.

As a Whole

First: Re-examine the definition of the Mission of God from Part 1, and make changes (if necessary) to insure that the 5 marks are reflected.

Next: With this definition in mind use the and as a group form a congregational Missional Collect, Litany, and Thanksgiving Prayer.

Finally: Compile the hymns of each Mark into the group’s Missional Hymn List to be used in future services emphasizing Mission in the congregation.

The Mission of God is:
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<td>61</td>
<td>As We Gather at Your Table</td>
<td>585</td>
<td>Lord, whose love in humble service</td>
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<td>259</td>
<td>For the Fruit of All Creation</td>
<td>586</td>
<td>Rise up, O saints of God</td>
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<td>341</td>
<td>God of Mercy, God of Grace</td>
<td>587</td>
<td>Once to every man and nation</td>
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<td>430</td>
<td>Will You Come and Follow Me</td>
<td>588</td>
<td>Come now, O Prince of Peace</td>
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<td>433</td>
<td>Lord You gave the Great Commission</td>
<td>589</td>
<td>Come, O God of all the earth</td>
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<td>484</td>
<td>In Christ There is no East or West</td>
<td>590</td>
<td>All who love and serve your city</td>
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<td>572</td>
<td>Let there be light</td>
<td>591</td>
<td>Our cities cry to you, O God</td>
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<td>573</td>
<td>O day of peace that dimly shines</td>
<td>592</td>
<td>Where cross the crowded ways of life</td>
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<td>574</td>
<td>Father eternal, ruler of creation</td>
<td>593</td>
<td>O God of every nation</td>
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<td>575</td>
<td>Let streams of living justice flow down upon the earth</td>
<td>594</td>
<td>Judge eternal, throned in splendour</td>
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<td>576</td>
<td>For the healing of the Nations</td>
<td>595</td>
<td>And every one 'neath their vine and fig tree</td>
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<td>577</td>
<td>God of grace and God of glory</td>
<td>596</td>
<td>O holy city, seen of John</td>
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<td>578</td>
<td>O healing river, send down your waters</td>
<td>597</td>
<td>Lion and lamb lying together</td>
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<tr>
<td>579</td>
<td>Night and morning I make my prayer</td>
<td>598</td>
<td>Go to the world! Go into all the earth</td>
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<tr>
<td>580</td>
<td>In Bethlehem a newborn boy</td>
<td>599</td>
<td>Awake! Awake! Fling off the night</td>
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<tr>
<td>581</td>
<td>Lord, who left the highest heaven</td>
<td>600</td>
<td>You call us out to praise you</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>582</td>
<td>Weary of all trumpeting</td>
<td>601</td>
<td>God, whose giving knows no ending</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>583</td>
<td>When God restored our common life</td>
<td>602</td>
<td>Come, Christian people, sing your praises, shout!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>584</td>
<td>The church of Christ in every age</td>
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Facilitator’s Notes for Forming Liturgy

Forming a Collect:

How do we articulate the Missional God? (eg. God of Mission, God of Justice, God of Mercy...)

What are we thankful for within the context of a Missional Call? (eg. We are ever thankful of the opportunity to serve....)

What change do we want God to make? (eg. Give us ears to hear and eyes to see...)

Forming a Thanksgiving Prayer:

What are we most Thankful for within the context of Mission?

How does it relate to being in communion with God?

Forming a Litany:

Who are we praying for? (eg. The needy, the sick....)

How shall we frame the response to our prayers? (eg. Lord have mercy...)
Collect:

Thanksgiving Prayer:

Litany:

Hymns:
Bringing it Together:

Now that we have crafted our Missional liturgy let’s Pray the litany and Collect and sing 1 hymn (groups’ choice) together.

Next Time:

Before we meet again, with our definition of Mission in mind, take a walk (or drive) in your neighbourhood and community, thinking about:

- How and where you see the Mission of God happening?
- Where you feel the call of Mission within the neighbourhood and community?

And Remember:

“Do you love me...

Feed My Lambs!”
Welcome Back (5 min)

Warm up Exercise: *This is a...* (10 min)

Part 3 Solo/Group Work (20 min)

Part 3 All Together Work (15 min)

Break (10 min)

Reconnect Exercise: *One Word Story...* (5 min)

Part 4 Solo/Group Work (20 min)

Part 4 All Together Work (20 min)

Bringing it All Together (10 min)

Moving Forward From Here (5 min)
**Solo/Group Work**

In pairs or on your own, think about/answer the 3 questions for your step.

Share with the rest of the group.

**As a Whole**

Using the content of each group’s/person’s step, form a whole picture of where and who we are as a community, and of who gets left behind in our community.

This is where and who we are:

This is who gets left behind:

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*The 5 Steps are based on practices laid out in Carl S. Dudley’s *Community Ministry*.*
The 6 Steps of Discernment:

1. Plotting the Territory

*Where do we live?* (Think about the physical boundaries of the community, neighbourhood distinctions and divisions)

*What are the institutions that for the established order within the community?* (Such as local governance, religious affiliations, financial/business sector, social/athletic clubs, etc.)

*Where do people gather together?* (Think about Churches, community centres, shopping centers, movie theatres, coffee shops, etc.)

2. Pointing out the People

*Who are we?* (Think about Religious/ethnic make-up of the community, economic distinctions, age, etc.)

*What are our existing hierarchies?* (Thinking about who we are, which groups among us have the greatest influence, and which have the least influence?)

*How has this changed/been changing over the course of time?* (Thinking about the collective amount of time we have been in the community.)

3. Surveying the Fringe

*Who are the marginalized people among us?* (Think about the vulnerable, the ignored, even the invisible, the undesirable, etc.)

*What contributes to the marginalization of people among us?* (Think about social and financial causes, existing prejudices, etc.)

*What is currently in place to reach out to the marginalized people among us?* (Think about social services, services and support provided by local religious groups, the services provided by businesses and volunteer organizations, etc.)

4. Identifying Power Structures

*Who are the leaders of our community?* (Think about political, religious, social, economic, cultural leaders, etc.)

*What are the intangible influences within our community?* (Think about values, political make-up, religious affiliation, prejudices, taboos, etc.)
What are the tangible influences within our community? (Think about the economic balance of the community, the degree to which economic interests are connected to the way community decisions are made, the influence of business, etc.)

5. Listening for the Local Narrative

How does the local leadership describe the community? (Think about the strengths they emphasize, the issues they emphasize, the weakness they emphasize, the values they emphasize, etc.)

How does local media present the issues of the community? (Think about the issues the local media emphasize and ignore, the issues they challenge leadership over, the issue they advocate on behalf of the leadership, etc.)

How do we as a community see ourselves? (Think about how we talk about the community with friends and neighbors, how they describe the strengths and weaknesses of the community, where they see the need ion the community, etc.)
Solo Work

Individually take the picture painted in Part 3, and focus on the single element that speaks most to your own understanding of God’s call to mission. Take that element and using your ‘mind’s eye’, write or draw what you ‘see’ in your community, starting with the phrase “I looked and I saw….”

Share with the rest of the group. As everyone shares, listen for the words that jump out at you.

As a Whole

Using the key words from each individual vision, form a collective prophetic vision, beginning with the phrase “We looked and we saw…”

Based on that vision identify a specific area to respond to where God is calling the Church into action in the local community,

This area will serve as the primary focus for crafting future Missional ministries within the congregation.

God is calling us to respond to…
Facilitator’s Notes for Crafting Vision

Just as we began with Scripture in order to allow the group the opportunity to cultivate a theological connection with the concept of Mission and to discern amongst themselves where they are being called by the Spirit to act, we end with cultivating personal and corporate visions of Mission to empower them to act on the call they are receiving.

- When Solo/Group work is being done, allow the participants the freedom to spread out in the space.
- Provide notice 5min before reconvening to allow for discussions to wrap up (as much as possible)
- When the Group comes back together to share their work with one another, ask them to share the key words they identified from each piece and record those key words (Be sure to let them know you will be doing this).
I looked and I saw...
Where to go from here?

Having:

- Crafted a *Vision of the Mission of God* in your Community
- Composed a complete *Missional Liturgy* for Worship
- Developed a *Definition of Mission* specific to your own community
- Focused in on an *Specific Call to Mission* for your congregation to engage in

We Will Now:

- Form a *Mission Guild* of at least 4 people from among members of the group who have completed the workshop
- Schedule the first meeting of the Guild to begin planning a *Mission Campaign* to answer the *Specific Call to Mission* you have discerned within your community.
- Schedule a *Missional Sunday* where your *Liturgy* and you can share your *Visions* and *Definition of Mission* and *Launch* your campaign during the Sermon

Before leaving let us join together in praying our collect for mission

And Remember:

“Do you love me...

Feed My Lambs!”