



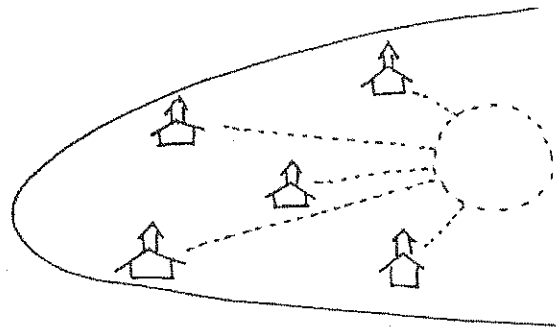
Welcome  
to  
Partnership  
for Missional  
Church<sup>TM</sup>



# What is Partnership for Missional Church™?

A network of local churches sharing this vision:

*To listen to God's specific call to us, to let God send us and, through the Holy Spirit, empower us to participate in God's mission in the world, so that both our outreach and our life together as a church are a witness to Jesus Christ.*



It sounds ambitious. It is!

This is a partnership of congregations on a shared journey. It takes time—even years. On this journey, congregations are changing, taking reasonable risks, trying something different, and giving long-term commitment (three to five years) to the challenges of becoming a missional church.

We have a vision:

*Congregations will reach across boundaries as they live into God's preferred future for the whole world.*

We have a plan of action to get there:

*Partnership for Missional Church™.*

Ask yourself: "How will (*your congregation*) be a sign and an instrument of God's future?"

And then read on.

Perhaps you would like some partners who are wrestling with the same question, each in their own unique setting. Is God calling you to become part of Partnership for Missional Church™?



# Why the name *Partnership for Missional Church*<sup>TM</sup>?

## PARTNERSHIP:

- You, your congregation, and others in this project work as partners with staff and consultants from Church Innovations.
- We learn through sharing our stories and experience.
- We support each other, gathering in worship, learning events, prayer, and keeping in touch along a Phone Loop.
- Together we seek to become more missional.
- Sometimes we're out on a limb, but we're never alone.

## MISSIONAL:

- We want to participate in God's mission of reconciling, restoring, and redeeming a world in need of God's grace.
- We engage in spiritual discernment to discover specifically how God is sending us so that we may be better partners for one another in God's work.
- The mission field is not only in foreign countries but also among us; local churches are the mission centers for the Christian church today.

## CHURCH:

- We are not making a "brand new church" from nothing. We are building upon the traditions of our congregation as we grow forward toward a missional church.
- This project grows from the dedication of people in the pew (or folding chair), in partnership with their pastors or ministers.
- Partner congregations are pioneers, led by lay and ordained people along the new mission frontier often referred to as "after Christendom." In other words, we prepare for a new age of mission in a time when the society around us doesn't look very Christian.



## How does Partnership for Missional Church™ work?

In Partnership for Missional Church™ (PMC), your local church is invited into a journey of spiritual discernment that both engages cultural change and transforms mission. Theologically speaking, you are being invited into a journey within *the life of the living God*. This is a process of spiritual formation where you will focus on both personal and corporate attentiveness to and participation in the initiatives of God. For many of you, this seems obvious because, of course, you know that you are already in that life. However, you might be surprised how seldom members of your local church consciously imagine and describe their lives as local church, both gathered and sent, as a journey within the life of the triune God.

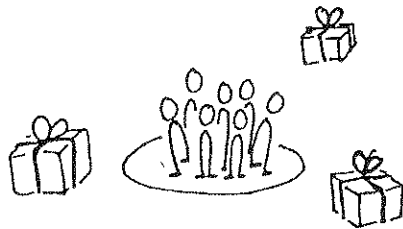
Partnership for Missional Church™ is not a program with clear steps and outcomes that are the same for every congregation. PMC is a process, or a journey, in which there is a fixed point on the horizon toward which you are continually moving, just as a sailboat moves across the open sea.

Your course isn't mapped out along a straight line. Your journey involves turns as you pass by markers, or phases, just as a sailboat tacks along its way, yet is always moving closer to the point on the horizon. Your congregation won't be riding solo in the boat; there are multiple partners on this journey you will discover along the way. Your ship for this journey will not be powered by your own doing, but by the Holy Gust that fills your sail and keeps you moving as your congregation seeks to live out its calling as participants in the mission of God.



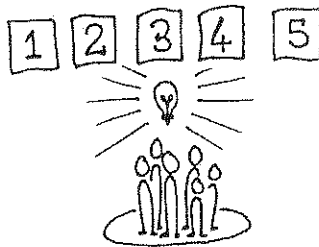
In PMC local churches seek to embody their missional vocation. Through a process of spiritual discernment and theological reflection you will seek to walk into God's preferred and promised future for your congregation. Such seeking requires asking, "What is God's preferred and promised future for our local church? What is our missional vocation?"

The four phases of PMC divide that basic seeking of a missional vocation in component parts.

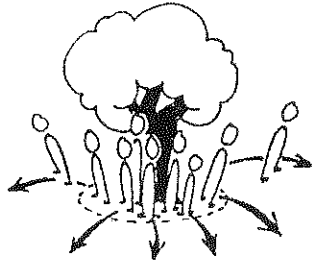


The first phase, **Discovering**, helps the local church and its leaders to listen for and find partners for the missional journey.

The second phase, **Experimenting**, guides congregations through experiments that address challenges to God's preferred future.

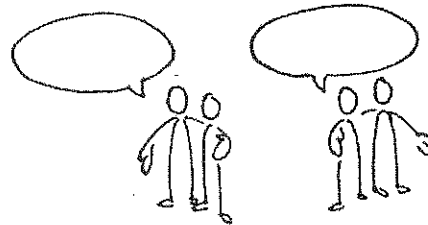


The third phase, **Visioning for Embodiment**, enables congregations to develop a plan of action that puts "flesh" on what they have learned through listening and experimenting.



The fourth phase, **Learning and Growing**, helps the local church embody the larger sense of missional vocation.

Throughout these four phases local churches discover (discern) mentors and teachers. These mentors and teachers are coached and trained so they can pass on the good habits and capacities for innovating a missional church. This important part of the journey is called **Sharing and Mentoring**.



During each phase of the partnership you will gather with the partners from other churches in your cluster for three two-day events. In Day 1 of each cluster event, ministers/pastors gather for specialized training in spiritual practices and leadership development. A summary of their time together can be found in this notebook in the Day 1 narrative for each cluster event. From the evening of Day 1 through the end of Day 2, the Steering Teams of each congregation in the cluster join pastors and other local partners. The majority of your work as a Steering Team will take place between cluster events. Your time at the events will be spent engaging in spiritual practices, reflecting on the journey so far, and receiving training for the next stages of the journey.