



**Opening the conversation about how leaders develop
Congregations to echo God's invitation to the world and live as a
sign and foretaste of the Kingdom of God**



CONTENT

	Page
INTRODUCTION	1.
• RENEW Missional Leadership	
• The Missional Development Pathway	
DEVOTIONS	
NUMBER ONE: RENEW MISSIONAL MINISTRY	5.
NUMBER TWO: RENEW CONGREGATIONAL EVANGELISM	7.
NUMBER THREE: RENEW MISSIONAL SHAPE	9.
NUMBER FOUR: RENEW CONGREGATIONAL HEALTH	12.
NUMBER FIVE: RENEW MISSIONAL LEADERS FOR THE 21ST CENTURY	14.
NUMBER SIX: RENEW CONGREGATIONAL PRIORITIES	16.
NUMBER SEVEN: RENEW MISSION DISCERNMENT	18.
NUMBER EIGHT: RENEW CONGREGATIONAL MULTIPLICATION	20.
NUMBER NINE: RENEW MISSION VISION	22.
NUMBER TEN: RENEW THE SONG OF THE LORD	24.

© The Lutheran Church of Australia Copyright 2015: The Lutheran Church of Australia gives permission for this resource to be used by anyone on the condition that the materials are attributed to their source and not sold, contracted or distributed to any third party without the permission of the Lutheran Church of Australia Board for Local Mission, 197 Archer Street, North Adelaide, South Australia, 5006. For more information contact: Dean.Eaton@lca.org.au.

RENEW Missional Leadership

Upon completing the Missional Leadership devotions it is expected that the participant will be introduced to,

- how leaders embody the change they want to see happen
- understand the differences between evangelism and mission
- set up a structure for making disciples who make disciples
- facilitate training and support for the church to reap and receive the harvest
- develop the skills to discern and plan the developmental steps God desires in your particular context.
- leverage the supportive resources of the Lutheran Church of Australia to Go and Grow

These devotions are designed to be used for the period of devotions already set aside in your scheduled leadership meetings during the year. Each person should read and reflect upon the devotion prior to the meeting to maximise the discussion opportunity. In this series we call the discussion questions 'conversation'. This is because this material aims to start a cycle of conversation that commences with the individual leader and God, develops with the leadership team, continued in the ministry setting, reflected upon together with God, leading to discernment and fruit bearing. This action-reflection cycle of conversation is the first step in developing your leadership team's capacity to improve your Congregations local mission.

How does this RENEW Mission Life season fit into the strategic directions of the Lutheran Church in Australia and New Zealand?

The **LCA Strategic Direction 2013 – 2018** contains three strategic priorities, two of which are foundational and a third which is supportive:

- **Grow** as God's people
- **Go** as God's people
- **Enable** us to Go and Grow through
 - Governance and Leadership
 - Communications and Engagement
 - Assets and Resources

The 2013 General Synod also formed the (interim) Board for Local Mission to support both the GO and GROW initiatives.



Grow and **Go** are ongoing tasks that intertwine. There is no linear sequence that says first we *grow* until we reach maturity, after which we begin to *go* into the world. If we wait until we feel ready, most of us will never *go*. Rather it is **as we go that we grow**. We don't seek to learn a whole lot of things just in case we need them, but as we *go* we discover what we need to study and how we need to be equipped and so we *grow*. As Paul says to Philemon, "I pray that you may be active in sharing your faith, so that you will have a full understanding of every good thing we have in Christ." [NIV v6]

The Missional Development Pathway

Mission describes everything the Church does in fulfilment of the Great Commission (Matt. 28. 18-20; Mark 16.16-19; Luke 24.44-49; John 20.19-23, and Acts 1.8). Evangelism is the preaching of the evangel, the good news, the Gospel in word and deed. "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. (Matt. 28:18-20 NRSV)." This can be expounded as involving the following elements.

- Evangelism (proclamation of the Gospel),
- Sacraments: Baptism and Communion
- Shepherding converts (discipleship and teaching)
- Structuring of churches
- Social concern
- Healing
- Giving the benefits of creation

So the church is concerned not only with evangelism but with what attends the results of evangelism; summed up by the ideas of going, growing and enabling.

The Board for Local Mission in conjunction Lutheran Media Ministries, Australian Lutheran College and GROW Ministries offers a clear missional development pathway to enable new Congregations to be planted and to GO and GROW as God's people.

GO

The Board for Local Mission in conjunction Lutheran Media Ministries provides the resources and training for every Congregation to sow and reap the Gospel in every community and to plant new Congregations.

How?

Lutheran Media Ministries provides radio, film and other web based opportunities for people to engage with the Gospel. Next stage engagement opportunities to learn more are then linked to the ministry of local Congregations and Church Planting teams for follow up.

The Board for Local Mission partners with LCA Mission Directors to provide training and mentoring to Congregations to sow God's Word and reap the harvest.

- RENEW Mission Life season – Includes sermons, Bible studies, leader's devotions and missional training. See more here: www.lca.org.au/renew
- RENEW Love Life Communities – Missional Community team formation training
- NEW Evangelism workshops – conducted regularly in various locations
- NEW Sending Church and Church Planting team training which aims to plant thirty new Congregations in the next decade.

GROW

The GO resources link with all departments of the LCA to assist disciples of Jesus to grow. In particular GROW Ministries offer specialised spiritual development training for children, youth and families.

Australian Lutheran College provides high quality theology and ministry courses to develop all people in their ministry development. Australian Lutheran College's Grassroots offers two excellent courses in Missional Leadership and Church Planting for people wanting to dig deeper into these topics, as part of a Certificate VI in Christian Ministry and Theology.

ENABLE

Australian Lutheran College's (Grassroots) new on-line course *Congregational Leadership* provides general training for Church Councils. The first instalment of *Congregational Leadership* is called *Foundations*. Upon completing *Foundations*, it is expected that the participant will be able to,

- understand the differences between governance and management
- contribute to council and congregational planning
- undertake the roles and responsibilities of a council member
- implement council member responsibilities
- manage meetings
- comply with regulatory requirements
- analyse financial reports and budgets and oversee financial management
- identify risk and apply risk management processes
- work within the structure of the Lutheran Church of Australia.

Further course work to specifically train Chairpersons, Treasurers and Secretaries is also becoming available. See here for more information: www.grassroots.edu.au

Is Our Congregation Too Small To Develop Its Local Mission?

Most Congregations of the Lutheran Church of Australia are small (under 60 people). This pathway of mission development can easily be applied to Congregations of any size, however it may take a combined Parish approach to commence your first small group dedicated to reaping the harvest in the form of a Love. Life Community (Missional Community). Larger Congregations will scale up and commence several of these groups from the start.

The challenge? Committing 5% of your members to the task of local evangelism and discipleship is a challenge to many Congregations, even though this leaves 95% of your members to keep everything functioning in the Congregation. Some have suggested that the early Church grew so much because it had these figures around the other way.

The vision? Join us in the goal of establishing 500 new Love. Life Communities – small groups within a Parish dedicated to Evangelism and discipleship - in 2016-17 across all of our LCA Congregations in Australia and New Zealand.

NUMBER ONE: RENEW MISSIONAL MINISTRY

Readings: Ephesians 4.11-16; Hebrews 6.1-12; 1 Timothy 4.16

Enter the mission of God

Everything we do as the Church is a participation in the mission of God. Evangelism is the Church echoing Gods invitation to the world and living as a sign and foretaste of the Kingdom of God.

You are a missional leader because you are on mission with God. You lead a Congregation or Parish already engaged in God's mission in the world. The good news is that God wants to take you deeper into mission. To bear more fruit. To reap a greater harvest. To be awakened, renewed and engaged in the fullness of the blessing of Christ (Romans 15.29).

The most high impact change that can occur in the identity of a church leadership team is when they see themselves as no longer being 'elected officials' or nominated 'program directors', but rather as a gift of Jesus Christ to the church; equippers of Gods people to do the work of ministry, to enter the mission of God in the world (see Ephesians 4, I Corinthians 12-14; Romans 12.3-8). Therefore, the primary role of servant leaders entering the mission of God is to enable others to do so. This occurs when leaders:

- **EMBODY the change they want to see happen.** The relational health and spiritual vitality of the leadership of a Congregation or Parish can determine what gets perpetuated into the life of new converts and the next generation of church members. This is important because, how the leadership goes is how the church goes. How goes the church, is how goes the mission. But where does relational health and spiritual vitality of the leadership come from?

A man in the USA attempted to keep bees in the middle of one of the big American cities. In his early bee-keeping trials in the city this particular apiarist encountered a strange thing that initially stumped him. One morning, early in the active season he tasted some of the honey his bees were making, it had an unexpectedly stale and revolting taste unlike the honey his bees usually made. He could not figure the problem out, how could honey taste like that? Was it some illness in the bees themselves? Then one day he found the answer, he discovered that his bees were making visits to the local garbage dump. He observed them collecting sugar from the small amounts of coke and other soft drinks left in hundreds of discarded paper cups, from dozens of abandoned ice cream wrappers, in fact, from any residual sweetness that they could find anywhere on that vast dump left by a 'disposable consumer society'. When I read this, it entered my mind that what we produce, from the least word to the most important thing, is very much dependant on what we take in. Bees collect the sweet nectar from flowers and produce honey, both a preservative and a food. However, in this instance, they took in garbage left over from junk food and produced garbage-honey, a stale, unpleasant imitation of the real thing. To use biblical language, the honey was the 'fruit' of the bees work, the product of their labours. So it is for us, our fruit will come out of what we are taking in, the way we live comes from what we feed on, whether we collect true nectar (Christ) or waste

sugars (sin and idols). This is why Paul advised Timothy to “pay close attention to yourself and your teaching (1 Timothy 4.16).”

“Oh taste and see that the Lord is good.” (Psalm 34.8)

- **INSPIRE people to participate in the work of the ministry.** Good missional leaders believe in the Holy Spirit in people and remind them regularly that the seeds of God’s preferred future for the world reside in them. This is way beyond ‘permission giving’, this means pro-active encouragement.
- **FACILITATE ministry and leadership training.** You don’t always need to provide this yourself just curate great resources by pointing people in the right direction (e.g. Lutheran Church of Australia’s Board for Local Mission, GROW, Australian Lutheran College) Dann Spader contends that “...leadership training is necessary for multiplication to occur. Simply having a church-growth strategy is not sufficient. A church can grow without leaders in place (Titus 1:5). But a church committed to multiplication needs leaders to multiply. So a church’s leadership has to be committed not simply to growth but to the multiplication of leaders”.¹
- **DEVELOP structures that serve the mission.** As a body needs a functional skeleton, a mission needs a structure. In Churches that are reaping the harvest successfully today the structures always remain flexible and adaptable to serve the goal of mission - making disciples who make disciples. To paraphrase Anglican church planter Mike Breen, if you just aim to build the church you rarely get disciples, but if your aim is making disciples who make disciples, you always get a growing church.

Conversations

1. Discuss the statement - *How goes the leadership is how the church goes. How goes the church, is how goes the mission.*
2. If we could make two changes in the next six months to create an environment more conducive to attracting and retaining leaders, what would we change?
3. In Romans 16, Paul writes out his greeting list of friends. How can we build friendship into our leadership development plans?
4. Discuss the statement - *If you just aim to build the church you rarely get disciples, but if your aim is making disciples who make disciples, you always get a growing church.*
5. As you commence another season of serving in leadership what have you considered as areas of growth,
 - a. In your own leadership development?
 - b. In the leadership development of the whole congregation?

¹ Dann Spader, from an interview in Building Church Leaders, *Leadership Environment*, article *Jesus Game Plan*. Published by Leadership Resources, 2000, Christianity Today Ltd.

NUMBER TWO: RENEW CONGREGATIONAL EVANGELISM

Reading: Luke 10.1-12

The harvest is ripe but are we mission ready?

In Luke 10 Jesus sets out how a congregation becomes mission ready. Jesus trained and sent his disciples to be a community of people who know how to both reap the harvest and plant new communities of faith. What can we learn from his approach?

- **Send Teams:** Jesus never sent out individuals but pairs, who were part of a greater community of practice (70 or 72 depending upon which Gospel you read). This team approach to local evangelism was continued by the Apostles in Acts as they evangelised and planted new congregations. According to George Barna only one in three Congregations today engage their members in intentional evangelism training and 'sending'. Have we consciously 'sent' teams to do evangelism or only exhorted individuals? Could the development of such a team be realised in this Parish through inspiring people to do the Love. Life Communities training?
- **Believe God is at work in your neighbourhood or social network:** Jesus sent his disciples to reap the harvest as a participation in something God is already up to in every human life. Today this fact has not changed. This means you have to discern as you go rather than have a predetermined plan. In Luke 10 Jesus did not commence with a joint strategic planning day but rather he introduced a cyclical process often referred to today as reflective practice. The training involved on the job learning and discerning as a community of practice. In going they would grow; reflecting on action and discovering who and what they needed to know to reap the harvest. Perhaps the first best question to ask in any local mission venture is, what was God doing before I arrived?
- **A person of peace is ready:** Jesus told his disciples to go and share the Good News and that in the midst of this they would discover the 'person of peace'; a person responsive to the invitation to enter God's Kingdom of peace right now. From such a person the disciples were to receive (not offer) hospitality. Apparently it was not about setting up a program based upon a felt needs analysis but rather making room for relationships. From within the relationships of such a person the Gospel would be spread into that persons 'household' (approximately 35 people in those days) and into that town or region. Jesus simple contextualisation strategy was that the best people to reach the locals are the locals!
- **Why strategic planning is only half the answer:** It's not that we shouldn't plan or that we can't have regular opportunities to serve our community in a structured program that meets a legitimate need. As long as we offer people the Bread of Life (Jesus Christ) as well as a meal, the Living Water (Holy Spirit) as well as the cup of water to drink.

Overall we learn from Jesus' training method that 'doing mission' is not a program we implement but rather a series of transformative relationships we enter. Figuring out who you and your congregation are sent to invite into God's Kingdom is not a mystery to be solved

but an opportunity to be discerned. Drawing people into your congregation is not a question of how you attract them into your weekly events (e.g. Worship, Youth) but rather making space for them to be included in your everyday lives.

- Is it possible that our personal energy margin for relationships with not-yet-Christians may be used up because of a quiet obsession with running programs?
- Could it be that we need less 'outreach programs' and more training and sending of people in teams to reap the harvest in the way that Jesus taught us to?
- How does Jesus approach to local outreach change the complexion of the Parish? Could it mean that the Parish looks more like a dynamic worshipping, training and sending community, rather than a single geographically located program in which ministry is centred upon one main event (Sunday Worship) and one or two paid professionals (Pastors)?

Conversations

1. What do you think about Jesus approach to evangelism that he taught his disciples in Luke 10?
2. What implications might it have for the way we approach the development of our local outreach?
3. If we were successful in reaping the harvest Jesus infers is always there to reap, do we have the people and support structures in place to receive the harvest?
4. What is the Lord saying to you today as you reflect upon the scriptures and questions included in this devotion?



NUMBER THREE: RENEW MISSIONAL SHAPE

Readings: John 15.1-17; Ephesians 4.11-16

The harvest is ripe but is the Parish structure and planning “mission ready”?

A primary calling of leaders in the Parish is to facilitate, resource, pray for and encourage people to be involved in making disciples who make disciples? This is an important priority because conversion is more than giving mental assent to a set of doctrines. It involves a process of turning from a self-oriented life to a God-centred, other people focused life. Through indwelling God’s Word we experience a renewing of our minds; a re-orientation over time in every aspect of our lives, including the social, economic and political dimensions (see Romans 12.1-3 Message). Therefore new disciples of Jesus need mature disciples to engage in mutually transformative relationships of co-learning and co-serving. How does this effect the shape of our structure and planning priorities?

Structure: The core purpose of the Parish structure is to make disciples that make disciples. But what does this look like? At its foundation it means the establishing of three teams.

- GO: a team focused upon seeing people come to Christ (Evangelism)
- GROW: a team focused upon growing people in Christ (Pastoral Care)

Love. Life Communities are designed to be the core team for focusing completely upon these two areas of Evangelism and Pastoral Care; making disciples who make disciples.

- ENABLE: a team that serves to enable us to Go and Grow through good Governance.

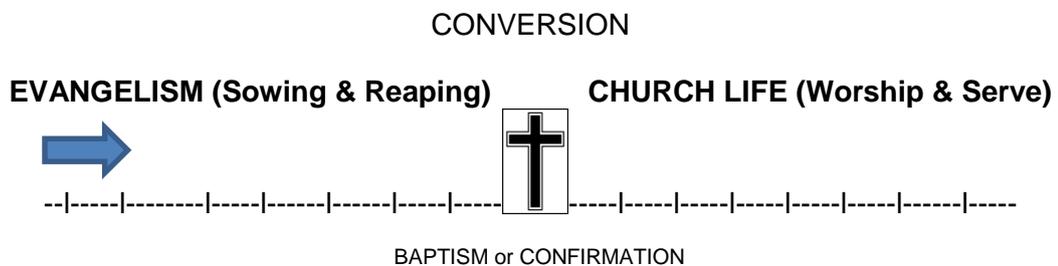
Pastor and people involved in enabling weekly Worship (e.g. Word & Sacrament, music, children, catering, cleaning, welcoming/ushering) create the framing event which gives definition and meaning to all three dimensions of service (see Romans 12.1-3 Message).

The first two (GO & GROW) are about growing what Jesus called the vine. He is the vine we are the branches (John 15). This vine image represents the people whom God is saving and renewing by His grace. An enabling parish governance, supplemented by District and National support facilities, are therefore like a trellis for the vine. Once the vine grows the trellis becomes invisible because all you can see is the vine bearing fruit. Take the trellis away and the vine cannot grow and reach its full potential for bearing fruit. Therefore developing all three inter-dependent teams (Go, Grow, Enable) are necessary for the foundation for making every congregation mission ready! All three are bound together by Gods love (John 15.17; 2 Cor. 5.14).²

² Some people in the ‘house church’ movement have experimented with an independent approach, doing away with the ‘trellis’ (institutional church) altogether. In Australia and New Zealand this approach has often lacked lasting fruit-bearing capacity compared to an interdependent church planting or multi-site movement approach.



Another helpful way of looking at Congregational structure is to see it from the perspective of someone coming *to* Christ and then growing *in* Christ.



This assumes that God desires all people to be saved (1 Timothy 2.3-4) and that all people are being drawn by our Heavenly Father to Himself (John 6.44).

Love. Life Communities (Missional Communities) work on the left hand side of the Cross doing Evangelism and people involved in Pastoral Care (discipleship) work on the right side of a person's pathway. Pastors and leaders teach and train in order to fulfil the Ephesians 4.11-16 mandate to equip the entire congregation to 'do the work of the ministry'. The Lutheran Church of Australia's Board for Local Mission NEW Evangelism workshops and RENEW Love Life Communities training explore this in more detail.

Planning Priorities

It is likely that you already have a Congregational or Parish Council taking care of the 'trellis', but what about the other two areas – Go and Grow?

What does it look like if we shift our paradigm from training people to run programs of evangelism and discipleship to resourcing people to live in relationships of evangelism and discipleship? It involves initially setting up initially at least one Love. Life Community (Missional Communities) with between 6-10 people who desire to see lost people coming to Christ. However, the challenge for Congregations of any size is that the people released to develop evangelism through establishing a missional community (Love. Life Community) are often already doing something crucial in ministry in the 'congregational space' (e.g. musician, Treasurer).

- Do you have all of your most committed people who may be fruitful if released to concentrate upon either evangelism or pastoral care tied up in governance or management responsibilities?
- What happens if we are successful in seeing people drawn into the Kingdom by our heavenly Father? Are we ready to receive the harvest or too busy running 'outreach programs'? Therefore are there ministries we need to close that are not bearing fruit?
- Could it be that God cares too much about new babes in Christ to deliver them into a Parish that is not ready and willing to invite them in to God's Kingdom (evangelism) and care for them as He would have them cared for?

Conversations

1. What happens to the complexion of Congregational life if you to shift your paradigm from training people to run programs of evangelism and discipleship, to resourcing people to live in relationships of evangelism and discipleship?
2. In light of this understanding of how to shape our congregational structures and priorities to become mission ready, what changes do we need to make to our programming, structures and planning priorities?
3. If through this RENEW Mission Life series people desire to leave their current ministry role to work in evangelism how will we support them to transition well? How will we provide a pathway to hand over responsibilities and how will we recruit a new people into those roles? Do we need to add more staff to make up the shortfall? Or will we give up now and say that we are too busy maintaining the trellis to do evangelism?

NUMBER FOUR: RENEW CONGREGATIONAL HEALTH

Reading: Hebrews 12:12-19

When mission potential is being strangled by the internal health issues of the Congregation how will the leaders react?

A Parish judged as healthy, perhaps due to size, facilities and budget may in reality still have internal health issues which later manifest and cripple mission development *if unchecked*. This can occur when a lack of self-awareness has led to the breakdown in one or more of the following internal health systems of the congregation, leading to systemic health problems that are difficult to heal.

- **Communication** – Communication is the medium for relationships, community and culture. Do we have a communication strategy? Does it feature opportunities for feedback, requests, open forums and listening to creative ideas for developing ministry from both existing members and newcomers? Do we negate the need to communicate to a digital generation in relevant ways?
- **Cultural** – Do we as a leadership have an ‘open door’ for people of all cultures? How many different cultures that are a part of our congregation are represented on the leadership team? Does our culture mix influence the way we communicate? As leaders do we pro-actively seek to gain cultural intelligence so as to ensure that the only thing that offends people is the Gospel itself? How well do we cater for various cultures and sub-cultures in our style of ministry? Is listening well to the ‘other’ a developing part of our congregational life?
- **Economic** – Do we share our wealth? How wealthy do you have to be to exist socially in our church programs? Are opportunities for receiving welfare matched by opportunities for contributing to the welfare of others in ways that don’t necessarily require money?
- **Social** – Do newcomers experience a warm welcome initially but find it hard to ‘break in’ socially? Is there a sharp division between generations in our programming limiting our capacity for intergenerational relationships to develop? Have we over programmed our church so that our members have no time left to socially engage with people who are not yet believers?
- **Political** – Do people of both sexes have an equal voice in decision making? How well does the leadership deal with complaints, relational problems and failure (actual or perceived)? Do people who require discipline have their dignity maintained? Do we respect people’s privacy? Is gossip deemed to be a sin or a tolerated pass-time?
- **Emotional** – From our relationships (past and present) we bring attitudes, anxiety, ongoing burdens, unfulfilled expectations, unspoken family of origin rules, pain, and positive strengths such as resilience, joy, hope, peace, gift’s with which to serve. How aware are we that everyone brings into the room a web of relationships which influence not only the person concerned but also the congregation’s life? How might such family systems thinking influence the way we view the depressed, the

compulsive, the anxious, the apathetic and even the 'troublemakers' in our midst? See 1 Peter 4.8.

All of these areas are a normal part of church life that require prayerful monitoring and conscious development. They only become *systemic* health issues when the leadership ignore them, thus creating the possibility of the development of a 'root of bitterness', or a lack of peace and holiness which may negatively affect the whole congregation.

Conversations

1. Hebrews 12.15 exhorts us to ensure that "no one fails to obtain the grace of God?" What does this mean in practice? How does anyone 'obtain' the grace of God?
2. Should these internal health issues referred to above be on the rolling agenda of the leadership team in the same way that budgets, buildings and programs are? If not why not?
3. What is the Lord saying to you today as you reflect upon the scriptures included in this devotion?

NUMBER FIVE: RENEW MISSIONAL LEADERS FOR THE 21ST CENTURY

Reading: 1 Chronicles 12.32 (NLT)

Pioneer leaders are finding new ways of doing leadership in the 21st Century context!

Based upon social researcher Rex Miller's³ suggestion that there have been four different eras defined by media, Table 1 summarises Church Planter J R Woodward's interpretation of Miller's ideas in regard to how the different eras influence approaches to leadership.

Table 1. Leadership Viewed Through the Millennium Matrix⁴

	Print Age 1500-1950	Broadcast Age 1950-2010	Digital Age 2010-
Kind of Leaders	Intellectual leaders	Motivational leaders	Impartational leaders
Kind of Structures	Functional units, division of labour, a hierarchical chain of command; view organisation as a living machine; maintain cohesion through structure and inertia	Purpose driven, empowerment, information driven, buildings and programs; maintain cohesion through psychological stimulation and sense of mission	Collaborative, grass roots oriented, roving leadership, open-source approach, dispersed authority; maintain cohesion through relationship and collaboration
Focus of Leadership	Like field generals, they seek achievement and efficiency, using tried and true methods; they teach by instruction	Like motivational speakers, they seek to harness the potential of the organisation around the mission; they teach by exhortation	Like gardeners they cultivate a collaborative approach to current conditions, opportunities and challenges; they teach by example
Nature of relationships with others	Hierarchical	Appointment oriented; relationships often become a functional way to complete objectives	Unscripted, personal, familial; people use organisations to fulfil their missions for mutual benefit
Approach to Discipleship	Takes place in the classroom; logical presentations	Takes place in the sanctuary; programmatic, seminar oriented	Takes place in the living room and streets; relational, interactive, mentorship
Qualities and skills needed	Intellectual expertise, maintaining predictability, achieving stability	Communication, persuasive, high profile image, innovative, interpersonal skills, novelty, ability to think on one's feet and utilise the big event	Approachable, agile, networker, touchable, accessible, missional, transparent, advocate, sustainability, resilient, collective achievement, storytelling

³ Rex M. Miller, *The Millennium Matrix: Reclaiming the Past, Reframing the Future of the Church*, San Francisco: Joey-Bass, 2004, p. 114

⁴ J.R.Woodward, *Creating a Missional Culture*, Downers Grove, IL, IVP, 2013

The fascinating thought is, today we have people who have been living through three of these eras, predominately shaped by three different forms of media. Pastors and church leaders all over the world are realising their need to pioneer new ways of doing leadership in the 21st Century context. Spirit-shaped leaders create missional culture, and *our approach* to leadership and structure is not neutral.

Conversations

1. As a leader have you lived through two or more of these eras? If so how has it caused you to evolve in your approach to doing leadership in the church and in the work place?
2. What qualities do you think are important about the approach to leadership in the digital age?
3. What might be the impact of this approach upon future staffing, volunteer leadership training, discipleship in general?

NUMBER SIX: RENEW CONGREGATIONAL PRIORITIES

Read: 1 Corinthians 9:19 – 23 (NLT)

The seeds of Gods preferred future for the church and the community reside in you

Our mission involves leading people *to* Christ and pastoring them *in* Christ. This is primarily why any Congregation exists. Good governance of the Parish honours God and brings integrity to a ministry, it is not however our central purpose. Missiologist David Hesselgrave asserts:

Paul considered the preaching of the gospel and the establishment of churches as his primary task. The biblical record leaves no room for thinking that either Paul or the members of his team were basically engaged in raising living standards, ameliorating social conditions, imparting secular knowledge, or dispensing aid from previously established churches. There can be no doubt that allegiance to Christ on the part of converts in the churches entailed these effects as by-products of faith even to the sending of needed aid back to the Jerusalem church (a kind of reverse flow). That the missionaries were concerned about social relationships, and about minds and bodies as well as souls, is patently true. But Paul's primary mission was established when the gospel was preached, people were converted, and churches were established (Hesselgrave 2000, p. 24).

In 1 Corinthians 9:19–23 Paul reflects upon the qualities of a leader that renews a congregations missional priorities.

Adaptable: Paul describes a willingness to adapt and change so as to meet new people who are coming to Christ where they are. How often do we expect people to adopt our culture, our taste in music, our timetable, attend our places and programs rather than us being willing to adapt and change, to find common ground with them in order to 'save some'.

Relational: Paul led by example as a church leader who was more interested in relationships in which he was willing to "...do everything to spread the Good News and share in its blessings (v23)". How does this influence our approach to congregational programming? Have we taken up all of our personal and congregation members' energy with church programs that leave no room for relationships in which we spread the Good News to the lost?

Sacrificial: Even if we created space in our lives for lost people what would inspire us to live the way Paul did? If we had more time would we do more 'reaping of the harvest' (Luke 10) or just end up watching more television or fishing? If we as leaders don't make sacrifices to live like Paul; a servant leader, seeking to be in Gospel sharing, Gospel centred relationships, how do we expect existing church members, new converts and the next generation to do so? What values around mission do people 'catch' from you as a person and from the leadership team as a whole? Beyond balancing the budget, keeping the buildings functional and generally supporting the ministry, do existing members hear and see the leadership as having a burning desire to be people who will "...do everything to spread the Good News and share in its blessings (v23)"?

Conversations

1. How does the leadership team keep the priority of people-centred evangelism alive in the Congregation?
2. Is it enough to seek 'converts' or is there much more to obeying Jesus command to "make disciples"?
3. What is the Lord saying to you today as you reflect upon the scriptures included in this devotion?

NUMBER SEVEN: RENEW MISSION DISCERNMENT

Reading: Psalm 32.8; John 10.27; Revelation 2.7

'Not called!' did you say? 'Not heard the call,' I think you should say. Put your ear down to the Bible, and hear him bid you go and pull sinners out of the fire of sin. Put your ear down to the burdened, agonized heart of humanity, and listen to its pitiful wail for help. Go stand by the gates of hell, and hear the damned entreat you to go to their father's house and bid their brothers and sisters, and servants and masters not to come there. And then look Christ in the face, whose mercy you have professed to obey, and tell him whether you will join heart and soul and body and circumstances in the march to publish his mercy to the world."⁵

William Booth – Salvation Army⁶

Being on mission with God means that the process of listening, discerning and acting is never really finished. Nor is it always cyclical. It's not as if there is a starting line where you can check off the listening box and forget about it (Sparks, Soerens, Friesen 2014, pp. 131-132).⁷ Therefore the need for strategic conversations about strategic intentions must become a habit of the leadership team and mission communities. As Moynagh asserts,

If church is a drama of four interlocking sets of relationships – with God, the living Christian tradition, the world and within the gathering – then conversations will be at the heart of the experience of church. Conversations about plans will occur in the context of these four sets of relationships as the mission community dialogues with God in prayer and study, consults prayer partners and appropriate ecclesial authorities, converses with other partners (especially the people it is called to serve) and discusses what is being learnt from all these interactions. Planning becomes strategic conversation about action-based learning. Planning as learning works with the unpredictable nature of the world; takes seriously the experimental, even playful nature of much human activity; allows conversations to modify existing 'plans'. This gives planning an experimental feel. Planners learn as they go. They try something. If it works they build on it. If it does not, they try something else (Moynagh 2012, p 142)⁸

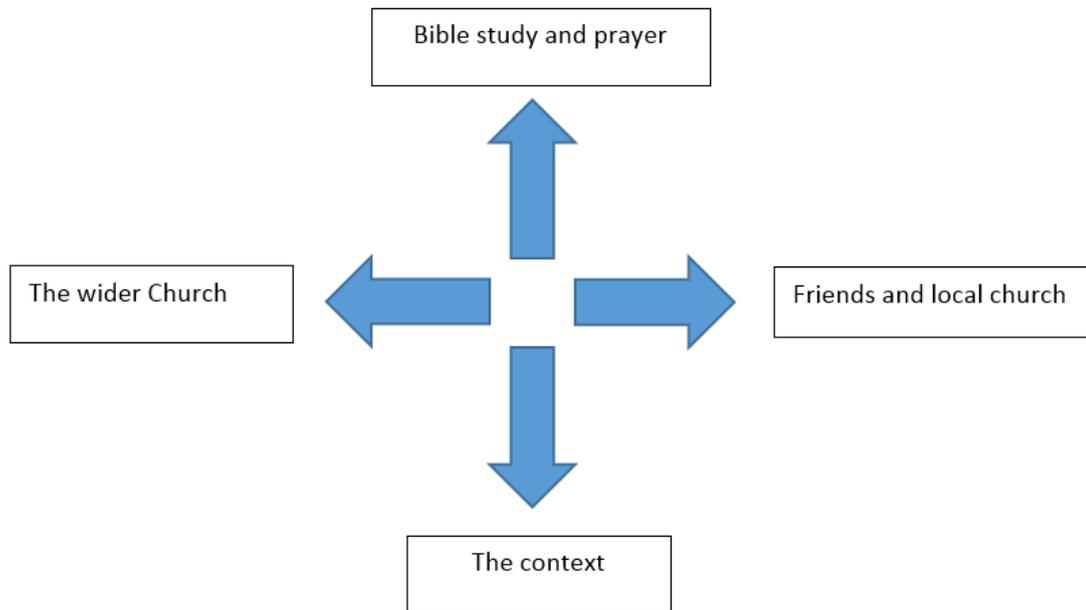
⁵ Sited at <http://christian-quotes.ochristian.com/William-Booth-Quotes>

⁶ William Booth was a British Methodist preacher who founded The Salvation Army and became its first General.

⁷ Sparks P, Soerens T, Friesen DJ 2014, *The new Parish: How neighborhood churches are transforming mission, discipleship and community*, InterVarsity Press, Downers Grove IL, Kindle Edition.

⁸ Moynagh M 2012, *Church for every context: An introduction to theology and practice*, SCM Press, Norwich UK.

The UK *Fresh Expressions* team suggests a 360° (four way) listening scope.



Moynagh also suggests a possible framework for what he calls milestone reviews: PEDAL

Purposes: What are we trying to achieve? Are we shifting from our original goals?

Environment: Are we learning new things about the environment in which we are working?

Direction: What was our original vision? Are we still travelling in that direction? Are we getting the necessary support?

Actions: Have we taken the actions we agreed at our last milestone review? Why not? What have we done that we didn't expect?

Learning: What have we learnt as a result of this review? Should we modify our purpose and priorities in the light of this? So what? In the light of this review, what specific steps should we take between now and the next review? Does this require an updated Mission Action Plan? When shall we hold our next review?⁹

Conversations

1. Discuss what can happen when groups of Christians jump to action without deep listening and collective discernment?
2. What is valuable about the approach suggested by Moynagh that "...planning as learning...where planners learn as they go"? What skills do we need to develop to do mission planning in this way for? (e.g. P.E.D.A.L.)

⁹ Source: Adapted from Mulgan (2009, p. 76) in Moynagh 2012, Kindle Locations 7611-7612.

NUMBER EIGHT: RENEW CONGREGATIONAL MULTIPLICATION

Reading: 1 Corinthians 3:6; Matthew 28.19-20

When you think of church planting, don't think of another option in a shopping mall food court, think of a new farm in a starving country

The Apostle Paul used an agricultural image to portray the concept of starting new congregations. 'I planted the seed, Apollos watered it, but God made it grow' (1 Corinthians 3:6). This planting and watering of communities of disciples that God is growing is where we get the concept of 'planting churches'. The Lutheran Church in Australia and New Zealand has a long mission heritage of pioneering and church planting. Our pioneering heritage is rooted in the command of Jesus who called and formed his disciples into a community on mission and sent them into the whole world to do the same. This work of church planting continues today as people in Australia and New Zealand are still hearing Jesus call to 'make disciples' and plant new Congregations (mission communities).

Some people feel that the Church is dead or has become irrelevant to the mission of God. However, research by the Australian National Church Life Survey¹⁰ provides evidence that local churches remain the key instrument that God uses to bring in the harvest. The evidence reflects that people who come to faith in Australia do so primarily through attending a local church. Not house churches, boutique forms of mission or so called para-church groups, but local churches. The research also indicates that church plants (new congregations) are the most effective churches for reaching people with the Gospel and growing the Church through new converts. In the following 'newcomers' are defined as new converts.

- Church plants (new congregations) reach younger people: Not only are new churches reaching all newcomers more effectively they are reaching a younger demographic with more than 69% aged between 15-49 years, compared with only 48% in churches generally. There is also a slightly higher proportion of males in church plants.
- Church plants have greater average levels of newcomers than churches undertaking other mission strategies. 16.5% of attendees at church plants are newcomers whereas the average in established churches is only 9.6%. The very best newcomer attendance rate that an established church can achieve is 11.7% and that is with highly effective evangelism programs and follow-up in place! The difference between new congregations and established congregations becomes even more marked when Pentecostal churches are removed from the data. Mainstream church plants achieve 17% newcomers whereas established churches achieve only 7%. Clearly church plants are way out in front of established churches in reaching newcomers!

¹⁰ www.ncls.org.au

- Church plants will often involve the break-up of existing networks of relationships among attenders, making it easier for newcomers to be included. Church plants are not as bound to previous conventions of congregational life and are in a better position to experiment (Bellamy & Castle 2003, p. 17).¹¹

This research is telling us that you get more mission 'bang for your buck' if you invest in planting new Congregations. The Lutheran Church of Australia and New Zealand is therefore seeking to assist in the renewal of the local mission in all existing congregations as well as encourage Congregations to think about becoming a Sending Church (Mother Church) giving birth to new Congregations. If you don't have the capacity for becoming a Sending Church at this stage consider becoming a Partner Congregation who prays, finances and possibly even sends people to be involved in planting a new Congregation.

Find out more at the LCA Board for Local Mission web page: www.lca.org.au/local-mission

Conversations

1. What is the Lord saying to you today as you reflect upon the scriptures and research included in this devotion?
2. Why is it important for the Lutheran Church of Australia to plant new congregations in Australia and New Zealand? What is preventing your Parish or Congregation from becoming either a Sending Church or a Partner in a new church plant?

NUMBER NINE: RENEW MISSION VISION

¹¹ The more recent studies by National Church Life Survey (2014) confirm these previous findings.

Reading: Colossians 1.27-29

“Vision Leaks” (Anonymous)

As a missional leader it is important that you are continuously renewed in your vision for local mission and communicating that to those whom you serve. This is important because vision is all about keeping the main thing the main thing.

Have you ever gathered the Congregational members together and asked them what their values and dreams are for the future in a strategic planning session? The gathered thoughts then distilled into a vision and mission statement everyone must learn off by heart as a kind of mantra? Usually such statements are derivative of the Great Commission (Matthew 28. 19-20) but expressed in local lingo.

The efficacy of such an exercise carries the promise of delivering otherwise apathetic hearts and minds into vision alignment (unity), motivation and eventually greater fruit bearing. For a short time it seems to ‘work’ in gaining some momentum, however, from such experiences comes the cliché – vision leaks!

Is there an alternative approach to maintaining mission direction and momentum?

- 1. Maintain good governance:** Through the implementation of policies and procedures for maintaining treasury, facilities, information management, duty of care (Safe Place), rostering, training of volunteers and Synodical responsibilities you will set the stage for ministry to occur with integrity. This requires regular, consistent, structured activity.
- 2. Facilitate a community of Gospel learning:** Indwelling God’s Word together as a whole community of faith demonstrates that the Gospel carries its own cargo, inspiring people’s desire to worship and serve. We search the New Testament in vain to find anything equivalent to strategic planning retreats. What we see is a people compelled by the Word and the Spirit towards witness, worship and working for the restoration of the broken down walls of human society. Paul says, “The love of God compels us...” (2 Cor. 5.14). In this context planning becomes strategic conversation about action-based learning; a continuous cycle of discernment and ministry improvement. Revisit devotion seven.
- 3. Learn the skills of how to walk with people as they walk towards God.** How many of our Congregational leaders see this as their primary role? What would your missional effectiveness look like if when people in your Parish used the word ‘leader’ their first thought was someone engaged in making disciples who make disciples? To change the culture current leaders will need to show by example how to make disciples who in turn make disciples. How?
As you engage with people who are on their way into the Kingdom you aim to discover what they need as their next stepping stone to move them forward in their relationship with God. Mostly it’s about being a good friend, praying for them, listening to them and offering appropriate resources. Even after their conversion the same flexibility, adaptability and resourcefulness is required as you meet people where they are rather than simply running ‘one size fits all’ outreach and discipleship

programs. This means as a leader you have to learn the skills of how to walk with people as they walk towards God then how to help them grow up into maturity in Christ. The Pastor's job is to equip every leader and member to do this work (Ephesians 4.11). The Board for Local Missions NEW Evangelism training can equip you further in this area.

Throughout the Old and New Testaments above all people longed to see the Lord! Perhaps we need to get away from chanting 'Let's get the vision' to singing together again, *Lord, be thou my vision?*

Conversations

1. What is the Lord saying to you today as you reflect upon the scriptures and questions included in this devotion?
2. What do you find helpful in keeping your heart fresh and your mind aware of the mission of God?
3. Who are you currently discipling and who are you being disciple by?
4. What do you think about the suggested approach to visioning?

NUMBER TEN: RENEW THE SONG OF THE LORD

Read: 1 Corinthians 2.1-10; Isaiah 40.28-31; 43.19

Dependent on God, disciplined in our preparation for mission, listening for God's redemption song!

A musician and composer was at a low point in his life. His money was gone. His creditors had seized his belongings. He was facing the threat of debtor's prison. The stress in his life literally paralysed him—he couldn't walk or move or feel anything on his right side. For a brief time, he considered giving in and giving up. But, he decided to try one more time, returning to what he knew best: writing music. In the midst of despair, George Frederick Handel wrote *The Messiah*, an oratorio considered to be the greatest piece of sacred music ever written.

We often think of success in any area as the product of sheer human will and ingenuity; the resilience of human beings against all odds. However, it is often when we are at our greatest point of vulnerability that we witness the greatest miracles.

The invitation of the Gospel is not to ask God into our lives but to share in His eternal abundant life, discovering every day that we are not 'self-made' people but rather a people made and redeemed by a kind Creator.

The famous French Cellist Yo-Yo Ma (paraphrasing Achille-Claude Debussy) once said, "Music is what happens between the notes". Making an instrument worth playing takes a lot of time and energy. Learning to play an instrument well takes much more time and effort. As a musician moves hands across wood and strings or measured breath across a reed, in anticipation she assumes a posture that seeks one thing – *to hear the music*.

For the LORD your God is living among you. He is a mighty saviour. He will take delight in you with gladness. With his love, he will calm all your fears. He will rejoice over you with joyful songs." (Zephaniah 3.17)

As leaders called to play their part in the orchestra of God, perhaps our greatest gift to the people with whom we worship and serve is to be vulnerable, dependent on God for everything, disciplined in our preparation, always sitting forward in anticipation to hear the tune of the Spirit.

Conversations

1. What is the Lord saying to you today as you reflect upon the scriptures and reflections included in this devotion?
2. What have you considered as areas of growth for the year?
 - a. In your own leadership
 - b. In the missional life of the congregation?
3. Having completed the ten Missional Leadership devotions and as you anticipate another season of serving in leadership what areas of study or experience have you considered as requiring further study and reflection?