

Learning Mission, Living Mission

Churches That Work



GLYNIS LaBARRE

J. DWIGHT STINNETT, SERIES EDITOR



Missional Church Learning Experience

Facilitator Guide

For Congregational Use





***“Congratulations! You have been chosen to serve God
during the most accelerated rate of change in human experience!”***

The Missional Church movement is one way Christians are responding to the rapid changes: the church engaged with the community to demonstrate the gospel of Jesus Christ outside the walls of the church building. The **MCLE - Missional Church Learning Experience** - is designed to introduce your church to the missional movement through a learning-by-doing process. It is a uniquely crafted ministry experiment, created by your church and conducted with your own community.

You are joining a great group of Christians who are on mission with the God of the future, as well as the present and the past. Hundreds of churches have used this process to experiment with discipleship through community involvement. Enjoy the adventure known as the MCLE – Missional Church Learning Experience.

How to use this resource...

This MCLE Facilitator Guide is designed to be used with the MCLE book, *Learning Mission, Living Mission, Churches that Work*, (Judson Press 2012) to create a missional experience for an individual congregation. If you have not already done so, you will need to purchase at least one copy of the book, which is available at www.judsonpress.com.

The MCLE Facilitator Guide is composed of a Start-Up Section with instructions for the local Facilitator and Coordinator to help them establish a Learning Community with members of their church, as well as sections for each of the monthly meetings. Included are instructions with annotated schedules and handouts for each session, plus sample communications, all designed to follow the book's content.

A monthly on-line Learning Community is also available to help Facilitators and Coordinators learn from one another by sharing their experiences, receiving encouragement and gaining more information about the MCLE process. To participate, send an email to glynis.labarre@abhms.org to register your church. You will then receive an invitation to join the next virtual Learning Community.

With you in Christ's adventure,
Rev. Glynis LaBarre
Author of *Learning Mission, Living Mission, Churches that Work*
Transformation Strategist
American Baptist Home Mission Societies





The *Missional Church Learning Experience* (MCLE) materials are made possible by the faithful gifts to the America for Christ and United Mission offerings of the American Baptist Churches USA.

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For other resources, contact
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American Baptist Home Mission Societies
800.222.3872 x 2412, glynis.labarre@abhms.org



MCLE – Missional Church Learning Experience Facilitator Guide

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Missional Church Learning Experience

“Before you Begin...”

Instructions for Starting an MCLE Learning Community



MCLE - Missional Church Learning Experience **INSTRUCTIONS: “Starting an MCLE Learning Community”**

You’ve decided to accept the invitation to begin a missional church experience in your local congregation. Excellent! Here’s how to get started.

2-3 months BEFORE Session 1:

1. Read, *Learning Mission, Living Mission – Churches That Work* (www.judsonpress.org)
2. Determine who will serve in the key roles of Facilitator and Coordinator.

Facilitator – leads the group through each session of the MCLE process, facilitating discussion and ensuring that the group works together in the sessions, keeping to the timeline and agenda for each meeting.
(See MCLE book, Introduction, page xvi)

Important qualities:

- Committed to the gospel of Jesus Christ and the effectiveness of the church
- Conscientious about learning the material and preparing for the sessions
- Coaching style of leadership - good at asking key, open-ended questions
- Clear communicator
- Constant encourager

Coordinator – serves as representative of the Learning Community, overseeing arrangements for the sessions (including worship), and working with the facilitator to support the group throughout the process.
(See MCLE book, Introduction, page xvi)

Important qualities:

- Committed to the gospel of Jesus Christ and the effectiveness of the church
- Careful attention to details
- Consistent communicator
- Caring supporter

3. Facilitator and Coordinator, together
 - Review MCLE Guidelines (Start-up Section),
 - Use the Facilitator and Coordinator Learning Agreement (in the Guidelines), to aid in discussion of responsibilities
 - Select dates for all sessions, being mindful of other church calendar commitments
 - Create a prayer partnership that will undergird the entire process
4. At least 6-8 weeks before Session 1, Coordinator extends invitations to groups within the congregation to participate in forming an MCLE Learning Community.
 - Give each group copies of the MCLE Participant Agreement to help explain the invitation. (See - MCLE Guidelines)
 - Ask groups who are interested to select representative team members and return completed MCLE Participant Agreements to Coordinator.
 - Start a file for the MCLE Learning Community with MCLE Participant Agreements, and copies of all communications with participants.



Missional Church Learning Experience Guidelines

Thank you for your interest in the *Missional Church Learning Experience* (MCLE). These guidelines are to help you determine whether this opportunity would benefit your efforts in effective church ministry. If these introductory guidelines interest you, you will also need to read *Learning Mission, Living Mission: Churches That Work*, (www.judsonpress.com), the book that provides the content for this learning-by-doing process.

Overview

Many churches throughout the United States are seeking ways to bring renewed vitality to their ministries. Currently there is a great deal of talk about the Missional Church Movement, but ideas need to be practiced to become effective. The MCLE is designed to introduce churches to the Missional Church Movement through a practical, hands-on learning experience with a group of church members who form a Learning Community. (You may also form a Learning Community by partnering with interested groups from other churches in your neighborhood or town.)

The church was created by God to be the delivery system for the good news of Jesus Christ through communities of faith that display God's love among themselves as they work to deliver Christ's message of God's love to the world. When a church is "on mission" with God, it is demonstrating the gospel as Christ did, through word and deed, delivered in loving relationships empowered by God's Spirit. Christians strengthen each other for this work by forming Christian communities (local churches) that inspire through worship, train for effective mission and support disciples to serve as God's life-giving agents.

When a church forgets God's purpose, it can become an introverted and self-serving entity. Refocusing outward on God's mission in a community helps Christians regain purpose, bringing life and vitality to the church. As Christians become engaged with people in the community in caring ways, their own discipleship improves and the community sees *Christianity that works—faith that makes a difference—to everyone's advantage.*

You are invited...

To form an MCLE - Missional Church Learning Experience that will work to accomplish the following:

- create a Learning Community with church members from a variety of church groups (ie. deacons, Sunday school classes, choir, youth ministry); or with small groups from other local churches;
- introduce basic missional principles in 7 sessions, over a 6 month period;
- use the MCLE 4 Step Process to design and implement a small, interactive community involvement that practices missional principles;
- equip members with healthy repeatable patterns to multiply missional efforts; and
- share what is learned within the Learning Community and with others in the church (and other churches of your area) for continued growth in missional effectiveness.

If this sounds like something your church (or association of churches) might be interested in, please read on.



Missional Church Learning Experience ***Guidelines*** **Roles and Responsibilities**

Church responsibilities:

- Select a Facilitator, to lead the group through the MCLE process.
 - Name _____;
 - Contact information, e-mail _____ phone _____.
- Provide a Coordinator (volunteer, lay or clergy) as a support to the Facilitator and representative of the group to the church.
 - Name _____;
 - Contact information, e-mail _____ phone _____.
- Support the MCLE Learning Community through prayer, and by allowing regular updates to the church and other encouragements.

Facilitator and Coordinator responsibilities:

- **Together:** read these MCLE Guidelines and use the Facilitator and Coordinator Learning Agreement to help establish and nurture an MCLE Learning Community;
- **Together:** implement the MCLE process, through the seven sessions over the 6 month period;
- **Facilitator:** prepare for facilitating sessions in the MCLE process using, *Learning Mission, Living Mission: Churches That Work* (www.judsonpress.com); and MCLE Facilitator Guide;
- **Coordinator:** recruit members from various church groups to participate in a Learning Community (use MCLE Participant Agreement);
- **Coordinator:** make host and worship arrangements for the 7 MCLE sessions for the Learning Community, over a 6 month period;
- **Together:** support the learning community between sessions;
- **Coordinator:** share lessons learned by participants with others in the church and any association of churches related to the church for the good of all;
- **Coordinator (optional):** request an MCLE Certificate of Completion for Learning Communities that complete the MCLE process, from the American Baptist Home Mission Societies (ABHMS), Rev. Glynis LaBarre, glynis.labarre@abhms.org
- **Facilitator and Coordinator (optional):** help improve the MCLE process by participating in the MCLE Advisory Council composed of MCLE facilitators and coordinators throughout the country, available through monthly "virtual" communications and other opportunities. To participate, please contact the author, Rev. Glynis LaBarre, Transformation Strategist, American Baptist Home Mission Societies, 800-ABC-3USA x 2412, glynis.labarre@abhms.org.

Participant responsibilities:

- Accept the invitation to participate in an MCLE Learning Community by signing the MCLE Participant Agreement and returning it to your Coordinator;
- Participate in the monthly sessions of the MCLE Learning Community (7 sessions, over a 6 month period);
- Complete the MCLE 4-Step Process to design and implement a small-scale community involvement that practices healthy, repeatable patterns for community ministry;
- Share what is learned with others in the Learning Community, the church and any association of churches involved.



Missional Church Learning Experience
Guidelines
Proposed Timeline

Pre-launch (1-3 months)

- Church leaders expresses interest in forming an MCLE Learning Community
- Select Facilitator and Coordinator
- Review MCLE Guidelines with Facilitator and Coordinator
- Select dates, times and location for all sessions
- Prepare MCLE Participant Agreement to be used for inviting participants
- Coordinator invites church members' participation using MCLE Participant Agreement
- Participating church groups select participants, and return MCLE Participant Agreements to Coordinator
- Facilitator and Coordinator plan Session 1
- Coordinator makes hosting arrangements, and sends out reminders to participants for Session 1

Monthly Sessions (6 months)

Session 1 — "Getting Started on the Future" (2.5 hours)

- Understanding Accelerating Change
- Introduction to the Missional Church Movement
- Overview of MCLE process
- Learning Community Covenant

Session 2 — "First Steps Into Mission" (1.5 hours)

- Step 1 — "Building Our Mission Team — Discipleship Central"
- Step 2 — "Learning to Listen to Our Community"

Session 3 — "Steps for Growing More Missional" (1.5 hours)

- Step 3 — "Looking for Potential Mission Partners in Our Community"
- Step 4 — "Discerning Our Part in God's Mission"

Session 4 — "Building Healthy Repeatable Patterns" (2 hours)

- Review results of 4-Step Process for community ministry
- Present community project idea(s)
- Apply missional principles to refine community project plan(s)
- Learning Community's Commitment to Engagement

Session 5 — "Getting Beyond Beginning" (1.5 hours)

- Introduce the Change Process
- Methods of Multiplying Missional Efforts

Session 6 — "Change Skills and Dancing with Danger" (1.5 hours)

- Expect Change Turbulence
- Respect each Call
- Building Processes for Open Communication
- The Church's Role in Being Missional

Session 7 — "Telling God's Story" (2.5 hours)

- Teams present their Community Experience
- Discuss Lessons Learned
- Next Steps for the Learning Community
- Assessments
- Celebration of God's Mission

Beyond...

- Write 1-page story about experience and send to ABHMS (optional)
- Request "MCLE Certificate of Completion" for Learning Community (optional)
- Review participants' assessments of the experience
- Plan continuing education gathering for alumni
- Plan next MCLE Learning Community



Missional Church Learning Experience Guidelines

Facilitator and Coordinator Learning Agreement

1) What is your understanding of your responsibilities as Facilitator? What is your understanding of your responsibilities as Coordinator?

2) How many people will you recruit for the Learning Community? What groups of the church should you specifically try to have represented? When and how will the invitations for participation be given?

(recommend: 3 minimum – 20 maximum)

3) Select ALL dates for sessions: 1 month between sessions

Session 1 -	DATE _____	Time _____	Location _____
Session 2 -	DATE _____	Time _____	Location _____
Session 3 -	DATE _____	Time _____	Location _____
Session 4 -	DATE _____	Time _____	Location _____
Session 5 -	DATE _____	Time _____	Location _____
Session 6 -	DATE _____	Time _____	Location _____
Session 7 -	DATE _____	Time _____	Location _____

4) What are the hosting details for the sessions of the MCLE Learning Community? (i.e. - time, location, snacks, equipment, people involved, cost, worship)

- Location and time should remain consistent for every session to avoid miscommunication.
- Location should NOT be in the sanctuary where people are taught to be quiet.
- Best to have flexible seating, good light and ventilation.
- Check for any special needs of participants.

5) How will the Learning Community be supported between sessions? By emails? Coach calls? How often? By whom?

6) How will you share your MCLE Learning Community's experiences and lessons learned within your church? Within your association of churches?

7) What follow-up plans need to be in place to keep the church learning missional skills when the MCLE is over?

8) What other items would be helpful to include in this agreement?



MCLE - Missional Church Learning Experience
Participant Agreement

You are invited to participate in a 6 month experience designed to introduce your church to the Missional Church Movement, to help them become more effective in demonstrating Christ’s love with your community. You will be part of a Learning Community of church members that receive 7 sessions of training in basic missional principles. You will practice the missional principles using the MCLE 4-Step Process to help you design and implement a small-scale community involvement to practice healthy repeatable patterns for further community engagement. You will share your experience with others in the MCLE Learning Community and the church for the increased discipleship of all.

This agreement represents mutual commitments by you, as a participant,

Your name _____,

Your church _____,

Your Facilitator _____ and

Your Coordinator _____

toward an increased understanding of the missional church ministry emphasis. Together, with God’s leading, we can attain the goal of increasingly effective ministry.

The Church agrees to:

1. Select a Facilitator and Coordinator to work with the Learning Community, toward an effective MCLE – Missional Church Learning Experience.
2. Convene an MCLE Learning Community of church members, representing various groups within the church, for a 6 month period.
2. Support the group’s participation in the MCLE through prayer and regular church communication.
3. Provide host arrangements during the session dates:

Session 1 - “Getting Started on the Future” (2.5 hours) DATE _____

Session 2 - “First Steps Into Mission” (1.5 hours) DATE _____

Session 3 - “Steps for Growing More Missional” (1.5 hours) DATE _____

Session 4 - “Healthy Repeatable Patterns” (2 hours) DATE _____

Session 5 - “Getting Beyond Beginning” (1.5 hours) DATE _____

Session 6 - “Change Skills and Dancing with Danger” (1.5 hours) DATE _____

Session 7 - “Telling God’s Story” (2.5 hours) DATE _____



MCLE Participant Agreement, continued...

Participant agrees to:

1. Learn on behalf of the church group you represent and the congregation.
2. Provide a signed copy of this agreement to the Coordinator, designating your willingness to make a 6 month commitment to the MCLE process.
3. Attend all 7 sessions, (please make note of the dates included in this agreement).
4. Complete the MCLE 4-Step Process with the Learning Community, to practice healthy repeatable patterns for community ministry.
5. Use the results of the MCLE 4-Step Process to design and implement (with the Learning Community) a small, interactive community engagement to practice missional principles; investing appropriate church resources.
6. Share the lessons learned from this experience with the MCLE Learning Community, your church, and any association of churches to which you belong.

NAME OF CHURCH _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY/TOWN _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

Participant name (please print) _____

Signed _____ Date _____

Email _____ Phone _____

Please return to your MCLE Coordinator;

Name _____

Email _____ **Phone** _____

Date received by Coordinator _____



Missional Church Learning Experience

Session 1: *“Getting Started on the Future”*



MCLE – Missional Church Learning Experience
INSTRUCTIONS: Session 1 – “Getting Started on the Future”

1 month before Session 1:

Facilitator and Coordinator

- review MCLE book, Chapters 1-3
- discuss plans for Session 1
- pray for Learning Community and each other

Coordinator

- order MCLE materials for Session 1:
 - Christian Citizen magazine, “Small Church, BIG Mission,” 2010, vol. 1
 - MCLE books, *Learning Mission, Living Mission, Churches that Work* (See NOTE: Ordering Supplies, end of these instructions...)
- prepare an email distribution list from MCLE Participant Agreement forms, share list with Facilitator

2 weeks before Session 1:

Facilitator

- start preparations of Chapter 3 materials for Session 1
- review Annotated Schedule for Session 1 (see next page)
- review Change Game instructions
(See NOTE: “Change Game Instructions,” end of these instructions...)
- send Learning Community “welcome” email with bio and contact information
Attach MCLE 1 page explanation. (See sample, this section)

Coordinator

- follow-up the Facilitator’s “welcome” email to Learning Community, encouraging participation and giving any needed details about arrangements, plus bio and contact information – **good time to check on any participant’s special needs**
- reserve space for a creative learning environment with flexible seating, good natural light and ventilation, not in sanctuary

1 week before Session 1:

Coordinator preparations:

- prepare host arrangements with these considerations:
 - name badges and markers
 - snacks / beverages (consider any special needs)
- check on equipment needs – need a mic? anything for worship? Facilitator?



MCLE Session 1, *Instructions continued...*

Coordinator preparations (continued...)

- photocopy handouts for each participant:
 - Session Schedule
 - Understanding Accelerating Change (blank version)
 - Main Missional Ideas
 - Main Missional Ideas Survey (1 per pair)
 - MCLE Covenant (print front/back)
 - Contact Information Sheet of all participants; including Facilitator and Coordinator
 - Step 1 – “Building Our Mission Team – Discipleship Central”
- prepare opening devotion – 10-15 min. maximum, either Coordinator or designee

Facilitator preparations:

- reread MCLE book – Chapters 1,2,3
- prepare discussion materials for Session 1, (MCLE book, Chapter 3)
- review Annotated Schedule for Session 1
- prepare Power Points and laptop (if using), confirm equipment with Coordinator
- have samples of ALL handouts (both participant and facilitator version)
- any additional resources you wish to share (i.e. recent book, articles)

Day of Session 1:

Facilitator and Coordinator

- arrive at least 30 minutes early;
- spend a few minutes in preparation of room and materials;
- pray for the participants and each other

Coordinator bring –

- Learning Community file with MCLE Participant Agreements and copies of correspondence
- handouts
- Christian Citizen magazines, MCLE edition
- MCLE books, *Learning Mission*, *Living Mission*, *Churches that Work*

Facilitator bring –

- annotated schedule
- samples of handouts
- own copy of the MCLE book
- any other materials chosen

Suggestion:

- Avoid introductions or typical ice breakers at beginning of session. The Change Game will serve as the ice breaker, and introductions will be done later in Session 1 as part of the covenanting process.



MCLE – Missional Church Learning Experience Session 1 - “Getting Started on the Future”

Annotated Schedule (2.5 hours)

Session purpose: To explore the rate of accelerating change and its effect upon the church and its mission; to introduce the main ideas of the missional church movement and explain the MCLE process.

15 minutes **Welcome and Worship** (Coordinator or designee)

Facilitator responsible for next sections:

15 minutes **Change Game**
(See MCLE book, pp. 22, and Appendix B for game results.)
(See NOTE: “Change Game Instructions,” end of these instructions.)

30 minutes **Examining Our Current Reality**
Handout – “Understanding Accelerating Change”
(See MCLE book, pp. 23-30)

30 minutes **Introduction to the Missional Movement**
Discuss historical highlights (See MCLE book, pp.16-20)
Handout – “Main Missional Ideas” (Facilitator)

- Review the 4 ideas (See MCLE book, pp. 30-35)

Handout – “Main Missional Ideas” **Survey**

- Ask pairs or teams to complete the survey
(Allow 10 minutes)
- Collect surveys for work in final session

15 minutes **BREAK**

20 minutes **Overview of MCLE process**
Briefly tell the story of how MCLE got started
(See MCLE book, Introduction)
Handout – Learning Community Covenant (print front/back)

- Explain “covenant” (see book, pp. 35-36)
- Review handout contents with participants, have participants write in the session dates as you review. This reinforces their memory of these dates and their commitment.

Handout – Step 1, “Building Our Mission Team: Discipleship Central”

- Explain Step 1, as their first assignment
(See NOTE: Step 1, end of these instructions)
- Give each person 1 copy of the Christian Citizen magazine, MCLE edition, vol. 1, and encourage its use as part of the Step 1 assignment to communicate what is being learned to the church.
(See NOTE – Ordering Supplies, end of these instructions)

20 minutes **Learning Community Covenant**

- Gather participants in a circle
- Invite people to volunteer to answer the question, “What would you like God to accomplish during this process for you, our church and our community?”

10 minutes **Closing and Sending** (Facilitator or Coordinator)

- Prayer and benediction



MCLE Session 1, *Instructions continued...*

Session 1 – Follow-up

2 days after Session 1:

Facilitator - send a follow-up email to Learning Community
(See sample email, end of this section)

- ATTACH, Step 1 – “Building Our Mission Team – Discipleship Central”

Coordinator – follow-up the Facilitator’s email with a note of encouragement and thanksgiving.

Facilitator and Coordinator - take good care of each other, plan an after session celebration.



NOTE: Ordering Supplies, MCLE Session 1...

Suggest one of each item, for each participant:

1. Christian Citizen – MCLE edition, *Small Church, BIG Mission*, 2010, Volume 1
 - Can be ordered by contacting the Communications Department of the American Baptist Home Mission Societies, 800-ABC-3USA x 2394, email: Susan.Peterman@abhms.org **a small donation per issue is requested.**

2. MCLE book – *Learning Mission, Living Mission – Churches that Work*, published by Judson Press, October 2012
 - Can be ordered on line from www.judsonpress.com
 - [Be sure to ask about discount for ordering 10 books or more.](#)



NOTE: CHANGE GAME! Facilitator's Instructions...

Pick a partner: give the group 10 seconds for everyone to pick a partner - preferably someone you do not know well.

Tell the group to think about what the world was like in 1960.

(For those too young to remember 1960 – have them think of an old TV show like; “Leave It to Beaver,” “I Love Lucy,” or “The Andy Griffith Show – Mayberry.”)

Give Instructions: You and your partner will have 1 minute to name as many changes as you can in each topic since 1960.

Have the partners report their answers to the gathering after each category for 1 minute (or less).

Entertainment/Sports (1 minute)

Medicine/Health Care (1 minute)

Science/Technology (1 minute)

Culture (1 minute)

Together answer the question, “How has the church changed since 1960?”

Major Change: In 1958, the overwhelming majority of Americans attended church on a regular basis. In 2008, less than two out of ten Americans attended worship regularly – defined as two times a month or more. More than 2/3 of Americans live their life in a completely secular world – with no thought of God at all during an average week. And nearly 70% of Americans say they are not attracted to attend either traditional or contemporary worship.
(Source – “The Forgotten Ways,” by Alan Hirsch)



NOTE: MCLE Step 1 - “Building Your Mission Team: Discipleship Central”

You can adapt the 4 Step Process for your congregation by either:

- 1) break your Learning Community into small teams of 3-4 participants,
- OR
- 2) have the entire Learning Community work on the steps together as one team.

If you decide to use the small team approach – send the participants home with Step 1, for the small teams to work on the assignment at a time and place of their choosing, within the next 2 weeks.

If you decide to use the whole Learning Community approach – take time during Session 1 to introduce Step 1, then set a time and place to do further work on the assignment, within the next 2 weeks.

Others steps in the process should be sent out by email. The schedule allows for:

- 2 weeks – to work on Step 1
- 4 weeks – to work on Step 2
- 4 weeks – to work on Step 3
- 2 weeks – to work on Step 4

ALL 4 Steps are brought together at Session 4 – *“Building Healthy, Repeatable Patterns”*

If a face-to-face gathering is difficult, this work can also be done by phone using the Conference Call feature available on many phones, or other connection technologies.



MCLE Session 1

Sample “Welcome” e-mail for new Learning Community

Subject line: Welcome to our Learning Community

ATTACHMENTS:

- MCLE - 1 page explanation (see Sample, next page)
- Personal bio & contact information

Greetings, dear friends in the MCLE learning community,

Starting on **DAY, DATE**, we will begin the Missional Church Learning Experience, which will be hosted by **CHURCH NAME**, at **LOCATION**, from **START TIME** to **END TIME**. I am looking forward to sharing this adventure with you into the future of the Christian faith in the United States!

Thank you for loving and serving the Lord and for being willing to explore new ways to serve God in this time of accelerating change. You will be learning with and from others from your/our church, and together we will enrich each other’s ministries.

To help you prepare for this learning experience, please find ATTACHED, a one page introduction to the MCLE process and a brief sketch of my background as your facilitator.

I can’t wait to see what God has planned for us.

With you in Christ’s adventure,
[FACILITATOR’S NAME]

P.S. Please share this e-mail with others of your team who may not have access to e-mail.



Missional Church Learning Experience **You're Invited...**

What is it?

Missional Church Learning Experience (MCLE) is a cluster of people representing various groups in your church that form a Learning Community to explore how we can best serve God's mission in our rapidly changing culture? The people involved in the Learning Community receive training in basic missional church principles, and practice those principles by designing and implementing a small, interactive community involvement. The Learning Community will meet once per month for 6 months to share what they are learning and receive further instruction. Their Lessons Learned will be shared with others in the church and local association of churches to encourage all churches to demonstrate the gospel of Jesus Christ with their communities.

Who can participate?

Any church large or small, country, city or suburban, who is interested in exploring the future of the Christian faith in America. Some guidelines for church involvement:

- Not satisfied with your church's current effectiveness in bringing the gospel to your community
- Willing to try new ideas; including involvement with your community

What are the participants expected to do?

- Commit to learn on behalf of your church during the 6 month *Missional Church Learning Experience* (MCLE).
- Attend the 7 session (once per month) over a 6 month period to receive encouragement and further instruction.
- Work with the Learning Community to complete the 4 Step Process to practice missional principles and design their small community engagement.
- Help implement the community involvement plan; using appropriate church resources of time, money, energy and community partnerships.
- Share what is learned from the experience with others in the Learning Community, the church and other churches in your local association that might benefit from your experience.

What are the contents of the Sessions?

- Session 1 – "Getting Started on the Future"
- Session 2 – "First Steps Into Mission"
- Session 3 – "Steps for Growing More Missional"
- Session 4 - "Building Healthy Repeatable Patterns"
- Session 5 – "Getting Beyond Beginning"
- Session 6 – "Change Skills and Dancing with Danger"
- Session 7 – "Telling God's Story"

For more information contact your MCLE

Facilitator: _____ **phone** _____ **e-mail** _____

Coordinator: _____ **phone** _____ **e-mail** _____



MCLE – Missional Church Learning Experience

Session 1: *“Getting Started on the Future”*

HANDOUTS



MCLE - Missional Church Learning Experience
Session 1 – “Getting Started on the Future”

(Suggested Schedule, 2.5 hours)

Session purpose: To understand the rate of accelerating change and its effect upon the church and its mission. To introduce the main ideas of the missional movement, and explain the MCLE process.

15 minutes	Welcome, Worship
15 minutes	Change Game
30 minutes	Examining Our Current Reality
30 minutes	Introduction to the Missional Movement (Use self-assessment survey)
15 minutes	BREAK
20 minutes	Overview MCLE Process
20 minutes	Learning Community Covenant
10 minutes	Closing and Sending

Please save the date for Session 2 – “First Steps Into Mission”

Date _____

Time _____

Location _____



MCLE - Missional Church Learning Experience
Session 1: "Getting Started on the Future"

Understanding Accelerating Change

2nd Most Important IDEA _____

_____ % church attendance in 1960 (U.S. population 178 million)

_____ % church attendance in 2010 (U.S. population 310 million)

2 Strengths for the future of the Christian faith in America:

The _____ of _____

AND our GREAT Christian heritage of adaptation –

Examples: _____, _____, _____

1st Most Important IDEA _____

Law of Acceleration

"CHANGE brings _____ change _____"

Changes coming quickly to a church near you within 10 years!

Average age of World War II generation (born before 1926) _____ (add 10 years) _____

Average age of 'Builder' generation (born between 1927-1944) _____ (add 10 years) _____

Last 2 generations with the habit of regular _____ and _____

Average age of 'Boomer' generation (1945-1963) _____ (add 10 years) _____

_____ % of Boomers' income given to the local church

_____ % of the 3 generations born since 1964 going to church regularly (ages 1-50)

Purpose of the church?

- Perpetuate an increasingly smaller sub-culture until Jesus returns.
- OR**
- ***Turn the world right side up with the gospel of Jesus Christ!***



MCLE - Missional Church Learning Experience
Session 1: "Getting Started on the Future"

Understanding Accelerating Change
(Facilitator's Version)

2nd Most Important IDEA _____ **Understanding the change that has happened** _____

- _____ **73** _____ % church attendance in 1960 (U.S. population 178 million)
- _____ **17.7** _____ % church attendance in 2010 (U.S. population 310 million)

2 Strengths for the future of the Christian faith in America:

- The _____ **gospel** _____ of _____ **Jesus** _____ _____ **Christ** _____

AND

- Our GREAT Christian heritage of adaptation –
 - Examples: _____ **Gentiles** _____, _____ **Sunday School** _____, _____ **(name some)** _____

1st Most Important IDEA _____ **Understanding the change that is coming** _____

Law of Acceleration

"CHANGE brings _____ **more _____ change _____ **faster** _____"**

Changes coming quickly to a church near you! (within 10 years)!

Average age of World War II generation (born before 1926) _____ **94** _____ (add 10 years) _____ **104** _____

Average age of 'Builder' generation (1927-1944) _____ **79** _____ (add 10 years) _____ **89** _____

Last 2 generations with the habit of regular _____ **church _____ **attendance** _____ and _____ **tithing** _____.**

Average age of 'Boomer' generation (1945-1963) _____ **62** _____ (add 10 years) _____ **72** _____

_____ **2** _____ % of Boomers' income given to the local church

_____ **?** _____ % of the 3 generations born since 1964 going to church regularly (ages 1-50)
(What % of your church is under age 50?)

Purpose of the church?

- Perpetuate an increasingly smaller sub-culture until Jesus returns.
OR
- **Turn the world right side up with the gospel of Jesus Christ!**



MCLE - Missional Church Learning Experience Session 1: "Getting Started on the Future"

Main Missional Ideas

1. God is on a mission to restore the world.

The Mission is God's from beginning to end. God initiates, sustains and completes.

John 3:17 "For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him."

Philippians 1:6 "Being confident of this, that HE who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus."

2. Everyone is invited to joyfully join God in the mission.

Matthew 5:16 "In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven."

Matthew 25:31 "The King will say to those on his right, 'Come, you who are blessed by my Father; take your inheritance, the kingdom prepared for you since the creation of the world. For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me...whatever you did for one of the least of these, you did for me.'"

Ephesians 2:10 "For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do."

3. Serving in God's mission follows The Way demonstrated by Jesus.

John 1:14 "The Word became flesh and dwelt among us."
In Christ we have the model for our ministry with God.

God came to us – not waiting for us to come to God

In human form - a form we could comprehend.

Message - about God and his values (The Word)

Made real – healing, feeding, touching (became flesh)

Delivered in loving relationship – personal connection (dwelt among us)

John 14:6 "I am the way, the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me."

4. Followers of Jesus are found in the world and formed through service.

Matthew 4:18-22 – fishermen, Peter, Andrew, James and John

Mark 2:13-17 – Levi the tax collector

Luke 10:1-9 – 72 sent to proclaim and heal

John 4:28-30 – Samaritan woman at the well



MCLE - Missional Church Learning Experience
Session 1: "Getting Started on the Future"

Main Missional Ideas SURVEY

Name _____ Church _____

1. God is on a mission to restore the world.

The Mission is God's from beginning to end. God initiates, sustains and completes.

Our Church:

0-----5-----10
Never participates in God's mission of restoration Fully participates of God's mission of restoration

2. Everyone is invited to joyfully join God in the mission of restoration.

Our Church:

0-----5-----10
Never invites people to serve God's mission Always invites people to serve God's mission

3. Serving in God's mission follows The Way demonstrated through Jesus – with both word and deed, delivered in loving relationships.

Our Church:

0-----5-----10
Never serves like Jesus Always serves like Jesus

4. Followers of Jesus are found in the world and formed through service.

Our Church:

0-----5-----10
Never finds and forms followers of Jesus in the world Constantly finds and forms followers of Jesus in the world



MCLE - Missional Church Learning Experience
Session 1: “Getting Started on the Future”

Learning Community Covenant

Expectations for the MCLE

The MCLE (Missional Church Learning Experience) is designed to introduce traditional churches to the missional church movement through a “learn by doing” process in a Learning Community of church members. The MCLE is not designed to transform the local church into a fully missional church. It does, however, introduce main missional ideas and healthy repeatable patterns that can assist the local church to continue developing a missional ministry if the church decides the missional path has value.

Session 1 – *Getting Started on the Future*

DATE _____ **Today** _____

- Understanding Accelerating Change
- Main Missional Ideas
- Overview of the MCLE process
- MCLE Learning Community Covenant

Session 2 – *First Steps Into Mission*

DATE _____

- Step 1 - *Building Our Mission Team – Discipleship Central*
- Step 2 – *Learning to Listen to Our Community*

Session 3 – *Steps for Growing More Missional*

DATE _____

- Step 3 – *Looking for Potential Ministry Partners in Our Community*
- Step 4 – *Discerning Our Part in God’s Mission*

Session 4 – *Building Healthy Repeatable Patterns*

DATE _____

- The 100 Team Challenge
- Team Building Plans
- Listening Outcomes
- Looking for Potential Partners Outcomes
- Discernment Outcomes
- Putting the Plan in Place
- Commitment Ceremony

Session 5 – *Getting Beyond Beginning*

DATE _____

- Introducing the Change Triangle
- Multiplying Missional Efforts

Session 6 – *Change Skills and Dancing with Danger*

DATE _____

- Positive Change Skills
- The Church’s Role in the Missional Movement

Session 7 – *Telling God’s Story*

DATE _____

- Team Presentations
- Lessons Learned
- Putting It All Together
- Next Steps
- Assessment
- Celebration Communion



MCLE Session 1: *Learning Community Covenant*, continued...

The Role of your Learning Community

Your Learning Community is agreeing to go through the MCLE process on behalf of your church. The participants will be involved in doing the process steps, inviting others (both inside and outside the church) to join the efforts, and reporting your experiences to your church. The goal is for your Learning Community to have a good experience being involved with God in your community, to learn healthy repeatable patterns for future missional efforts and to communicate your experience to the church.

The Role of your Facilitator and Coordinator

The Facilitator is responsible for guiding the Learning Community through the MCLE process. The Coordinator will make sure people stay connected, receive information, and send reminders. God bless those who step up to these important tasks for the group. Please remember to pray for your Facilitator and Coordinator regularly. They are not responsible for making the Learning Community function – that's everyone's job.

The Role of your Youth Team Member

Each Learning Community is encouraged to have at least one member younger than 30 years of age. The purpose of this member is to serve as the group's cultural guide to help the group understand today's social values. The Learning Community is encouraged to ask questions of the youth guide and make every effort to learn more about today's world view of younger people. Knowing that it is always a difficult position to be the solo representative in a group, encourage the youth member to bring a friend to Learning Community gatherings. The friend does not need to participate in the process, nor carry any responsibility. Their value is their personal support for the youth member.

Community Involvement Guidelines

- Remember that the project is to help you learn missional principles you can use again.
- Pick a small community involvement that will not overwhelm your resources.
- You can use a community engagement your church is already doing; learning how to make it more missional.
- You can become involved in another community group's project.

Share Your Story

After Session 7 – someone from the Learning Community is asked to write a 1 page story about your experience (600 words, 2 pages double spaced). You can share the story with your denomination, your local media, and with the author of the MCLE by sending it to: glynis.labarre@abhms.org. Your story may inspire other churches to follow Christ into God's mission with their community. It also helps your church qualify for an MCLE Certificate of Completion.

NOTE: You may want to take pictures or videos throughout your community involvement; they may be used with your story.

May God be honored by your efforts to bring the good news of Jesus Christ alive in partnership with your community.



MCLE - Missional Church Learning Experience

Step 1 – “Building Our Mission Team; Discipleship Central”

Preparation:

- gather your MCLE mission team to plan and implement this assignment
- ask someone to read aloud Matthew 28:16-20
- discuss in your group the following questions:
 - Verse 17 states, “they (the disciples) worshipped Jesus, but some doubted.” In what ways do we doubt Jesus today?
 - How does Jesus’ declaration of his authority (vs. 18) change our doubts into faith?
 - List the verbs used in vs. 19-20, what actions are required in making disciples?
 - Verse 19 states, “baptizing them in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.” What are some ways we can immerse new disciples into a relationship with the Father, Son and Holy Spirit?
 - Pray together, asking God to guide the creation and implementation of this assignment.

Have someone read these instructions aloud:

According to the Matthew 28:16-20 passage, the purpose of The Church is to make disciples. Therefore, the first step in becoming a Missional Church is building mission teams that practice being authentically Christian while engaged with the community.

There are two reasons your mission team needs to practice being Christian with one another. First, ministry is hard work and each member of your team needs the support and discipline of the group to grow in their own discipleship. Second, it takes a disciple to make a disciple. As others join your team along the way, they need to experience an authentic Christian community; a place where disciples are formed and nurtured. To quote the Apostle Paul in I Corinthians 13: 3, “If I give all I possess to the poor and surrender my body to the flames, but have not love, I gain nothing.”

Your first assignment has two parts: 1) develop a simple plan for keeping your mission team Christ centered throughout the MCLE process, 2) develop a simple plan for communicating your MCLE team’s efforts to your church.

When you attend Session 2 of the *Missional Church Learning Experience*, your group will tell how your team is being Christian with one another, and how you are communicating your team’s efforts with your church.

Suggestions for mission team Christian practice:

Think back to the closing Covenant ceremony of Session 1 of the MCLE. A covenant was described as, “a promise to do what is right because it is right, regardless of another’s response.” What would you write as a team covenant? You may want to consider:

- How often will the team meet? What day/time? Where? Who will remind the team?
- What role will prayer play in your team gatherings? How can you build in prayer for one another, your church, the other churches in your area, and the new team mates that may join you?
- What other discipleship activities would be helpful to the team’s development? (e.g. Reading the Bible together and discussing ways it reflects missional values.)
- What are some ways the team members could support each other throughout the MCLE process?
- How will you make others feel welcomed into the team and model the Christian life to those who join the team throughout the process?

Suggestions for communicating with your church:

- List some advantages for your church if your MCLE team does a good job of communicating with the church throughout the MCLE process.
- List some disadvantages if your MCLE team does not communicate with your church.
- Brainstorm ways your team could communicate with the church throughout the MCLE process.
- Pick a couple of ideas and make plans to implement; decide who, what, where, when, and how?

CELEBRATE and REFLECT:

Congratulations, your team has just completed the first assignment! Celebrate your success. Reflect on some ways your team can regularly remind itself to continue practicing these two team building patterns: practicing being Christian with your team mates, and communicating with your church.



MCLE Session 1

Sample email: Follow-up

Subject line: MCLE Session 1 – follow up

ATTACHMENTS:

- Step 1 – “Building Our Mission Team – Discipleship Central”

Greetings dear MCLE friends,
“Congratulations...you've been chosen...” and with those words we start our adventure! For the next few months we will come together to worship God and learn from each other as we ask, "How can the Church stay in step with God's mission in this time of accelerating change?"

It was wonderful to meet each one of you as you reflect the same love and commitment of Christians throughout the country. I can't wait to know you better.

ATTACHED is Step 1 - "Building Our Mission Team; Discipleship Central," which you were given at Session 1.

We will meet for Session 2 – *First Steps Into Mission*, on DAY, DATE, TIME, LOCATION, to discuss your progress with Step 1.

We will also preview Step 2 - "Learning to Listen to Our Community" (It will be sent with the next e-mail.) It will help you learn to listen FIRST, before making decisions about your involvement with the community.

The 4 Steps in the MCLE process will help you design and implement your small, community involvement. AND, create "healthy repeatable patterns" for further missional efforts with your community.

Recommended books for the adventure:

The MCLE book – **Learning Mission, Living Mission – Churches that Work*, by Rev. Glynis LaBarre, is available through Judson Press, www.judsonpress.com

*"Physics of the Future" by Michio Kaku - an overview of the current scientific breakthroughs, and their potential effects on our culture

*"The New Conspirators" by Tom Sine - good for group study to comprehend the BIG picture of change in American Christianity

For pastors, *"Choosing The Kingdom" by John Dally - brief history of the missional movement and ideas for communicating Jesus' message today.

*books available on Amazon.com.

You might want to buy a book and share a chapter at your MCLE Team meetings or start a book study group in your church.

If your team would like additional copies of the Christian Citizen magazine about the MCLE, to share with your church (as part of your church communication plan) - just send an e-mail to Karen Drummond - karen.drummond@abhms.org - and request additional copies. There is a small donation requested to cover the cost.

With you in Christ's adventure, (name)

P.S. As always, please share this information with others on your team who may not have access to e-mail.

P.P.S. SAVE THESE DATES: (list all session dates, time)



Missional Church Learning Experience

Session 2: *“First Steps Into Mission”*



MCLE – Missional Church Learning Experience **INSTRUCTIONS: Session 2 – “First Steps Into Mission”**

2 weeks before Session 2:

Facilitator: your primary responsibility is preparation of the content of the session.

- send email, preparing the Learning Community for Session 2, (see sample email following these instructions)
 - ATTACH Step 1 and Step 2
- reread Chapter 4 in *Learning Mission, Living Mission*, and prepare for discussion of Step 1 & Step 2
- review Annotated Schedule for Session 2

Coordinator: your primary responsibility is the preparation of the physical space, session supplies and opening worship. Part of ensuring a comfortable and welcoming space is nurturing relationships with the participants before and during the session.

- follow-up the Facilitator's email with a message of your own, encouraging participants to attend and supplying details about Session 2 (e.g. time, location, and any requests for contributions to snacks and beverages).
- confirm space arrangements; flexible seating, good natural light and ventilation (not in sanctuary)
- obtain name badges and markers
- provide any equipment/technology needed
- arrange for refreshments
- photocopy Session 2 schedule and handouts for each participant
- prepare opening worship for session (yourself or designee)
 - 10 minutes **maximum**

Day of Session 2:

Facilitator and Coordinator

- arrive at least 30 minutes early
- spend a few minutes in preparation of room, materials and equipment
- pray for each other and the participants

Coordinator bring –

- Learning Community file with participants' contact information and correspondence
- photocopies of handouts.

Facilitator bring –

- annotated session schedule.
- samples of handouts
- own copy of MCLE book
- any other materials chosen



MCLE – Missional Church Learning Experience **Session 2 – “First Steps Into Mission”**

Annotated Schedule (1.5 hours)

Session purpose: To review the purpose of Step 1 and Step 2, and connect how implementation of these steps results in the benefits of becoming a more outwardly focused, mission-minded church.

10 minutes **Welcome and Devotion** – Coordinator (or designee)

Facilitator responsible for next sections:

10 minutes **Opening Question** – “What thought has stayed with you from Session 1?”

- Work in pairs for 4 minutes, then invite them to share their results.
- Explain Session purpose

30 minutes **Review Step 1** – “Building Our Mission Team – Discipleship Central”

- In pairs/teams discuss plans for staying Christ centered.
- Still in pairs/teams, identify one way to improve the plan to stay Christ centered.
- Invite sharing of ideas with group.
- In pairs/teams discuss plan for communicating with the church.
- Still in pairs/teams, identify one way to improve the church communication plan.
- Invite sharing of ideas with group.

Facilitator: In reviewing Step 1, consider asking one or more of the following questions:

- “According to Mathew 28:19, what is the purpose of the church?”
- “What is a ‘disciple?’”
- “What advantages may mission teams experience if they remain Christ-centered?”
- “What disadvantages may mission teams experience if they do NOT remain Christ-centered?”
- “What are the advantages if mission teams communicate well with the church?”
- “What are the disadvantages if mission teams do NOT communicate well with the church?”

30 minutes **Review Step 2** – “Learning to Listen to Our Community”

- In pairs/teams brainstorm ways to initiate conversations with people in the community.
- Invite each pair to share their ideas with the group.



MCLE Session 2, Annotated Schedule, *continued...*

Facilitator: In reviewing Step 2, consider asking the following questions:

- “What are the advantages to listening to our community BEFORE we decide how to get involved?”
- “What are the disadvantages if we do NOT listen to our community before deciding what to do?”

10 minutes **Closing:**

- In pairs/ teams spend 1 minute in silent prayer asking the Spirit to show them what God would like to do through them in their community.
- Invite pairs/teams to share with each other what they envisioned while praying.
- Ask one person from each pair/team to share their “vision” with the group.
- Pray the Lord’s Prayer together.

Remind NEXT Session: Date, Time, and Topic

Session 2 – Follow up

2 days after Session 2:

Facilitator – send follow-up email to Learning Community (See email sample)

- Thank them for continued participation
- ATTACH Step 1, Step 2 (again, for their convenience)
- Remind of Session 3: day, date, time, location and topic
- Remind them to share emails with members who may not have email
- Remind of remaining session dates

Coordinator – follow-up the Facilitator’s email with a note of encouragement



MCLE Session 2 – Sample email, Preparation

Subject Line: MCLE Session 2 - preparation

ATTACHEMENTS:

- Step 1 – “Building Our Mission Team – Discipleship Central”
- Step 2 – “Learning to Listen to Our Community”

Greetings dear MCLE Learning Community,

Looking forward to Session 2 – “First Steps Into Mission,” next (DAY), (Date), (Time), and (Location).

We will be discussing Step 1 and Step 2 in the MCLE process:

Step 1 – “Building Our Mission Team – Discipleship Central”

Step 2 – “Learning to Listen to Our Community”

Both steps are ATTACHED. Please review the steps before Session 2. Each step helps us learn an important skill for becoming a more effective church serving God's mission.

Looking forward to hearing your thoughts and continuing to share the adventure,
(facilitator name)

P.S. Save these dates...

Session 3, day, date, time

Session 4, day, date, time

Session 5, day, date, time

Session 6, day, date, time

FINAL Session – Celebration Day! day, date, time



MCLE – Missional Church Learning Experience

Session 2: “*First Steps Into Mission*”

HANDOUTS



MCLE - Missional Church Learning Experience
Session 2: “First Steps Into Mission”

(Suggested Schedule, 1.5 hours)

Session purpose: To review the purpose of Step 1 and Step 2, and connect how implementation of these steps results in the benefits of becoming a more outwardly focused, mission-minded church.

- 10 minutes Welcome and Devotion
- 10 minutes Opening Question: What thoughts have stayed with you from Session 1?
- 30 minutes Review Step 1: Building Our Mission Team – Discipleship Central
- 30 minutes Review Step 2: Learning to Listen to Our Community
- 10 minutes Closing and Sending

Please save the date for Session 3 – “Steps for Growing More Missional”

DATE: _____

TIME: _____

PLACE: _____



MCLE - Missional Church Learning Experience

Step 1 – “Building Our Mission Team; Discipleship Central”

Preparation:

- gather your MCLE mission team to plan and implement this assignment
- ask someone to read aloud Matthew 28:16-20
- discuss in your group the following questions:
 - vs. 17 states, “they (the eleven disciples) worshipped Jesus, but some doubted.” In what ways do we doubt Jesus today?
 - How does Jesus’ declaration of his authority (vs. 18) change our doubts into faith?
 - List the verbs used in vs. 19-20, what actions are required in making disciples?
 - vs. 19 states, “baptizing them in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.” What are some ways we can fully immerse new disciples into a relationship with the Father, Son and Holy Spirit?
 - Pray together, asking God to guide the creation and implementation of this assignment.

Have someone read these instructions aloud:

According to the Matthew 28:16-20 passage, the purpose of The Church is to make disciples. Therefore, the first step in becoming a Missional Church is building mission teams that practice being authentically Christian while engaged with the community.

There are two reasons your mission team needs to practice being Christian with one another. First, ministry is hard work and each member of your team needs the support and discipline of the group to grow in their own discipleship. Second, it takes a disciple to make a disciple. As others join your team along the way, they need to experience an authentic Christian community; a place where disciples are formed and nurtured. To quote the Apostle Paul in I Corinthians 13: 3, “If I give all I possess to the poor and surrender my body to the flames, but have not love, I gain nothing.”

Your first assignment has two parts: 1) develop a simple plan for keeping your mission team Christ centered throughout the MCLE process, 2) develop a simple plan for communicating your MCLE team’s efforts to your church.

When you attend Session 2 of the *Missional Church Learning Experience*, your group will tell how your team is being Christian with one another, and how you are communicating your team’s efforts with your church.

Suggestions for mission team Christian practice:

Think back to the closing Covenant ceremony of Session 1 of the MCLE. A covenant was described as, “a promise to do what is right because it is right, regardless of another’s response.” What would you write as a team covenant? You may want to consider:

- How often will the team meet? What day/time? Where? Who will remind the team?
- What role will prayer play in your team gatherings? How can you build in prayer for one another, your church, the other churches in your MCLE Learning Community, your MCLE Coordinator and Facilitator, and the new team mates that will join you along the way?
- What other discipleship activities would be helpful to the team’s development? i.e. Reading the Bible together and discussing ways it reflects missional values.
- What are some ways the team members could support each other throughout the MCLE process?
- How will you make others feel welcomed into the team and model the Christian life to those who join the team throughout the process?

Suggestions for communicating with your church:

- List some advantages for your church if your MCLE team does a good job of communicating with the church throughout the MCLE process.
- List some disadvantages if your MCLE team does not communicate with your church.
- Brainstorm ways your team could communicate with the church throughout the MCLE process.
- Pick a couple and make plans to implement; decide who, what, where, when, and how?

CELEBRATE and REFLECT:

Congratulations, your team has just completed the first assignment. Celebrate your success. Reflect on some ways your team can regularly remind itself to continue practicing these two team building patterns: practicing being Christian with your team mates, and communicating with your church.



Missional Church Learning Experience Step 2 – “Learning to Listen to Our Community”

Preparation:

- gather your Mission Team to plan and implement this assignment
- ask someone to read aloud Luke 10:25-37
- discuss in your group the following questions:
 - What effects did Jesus expect the gospel of God’s Kingdom to have on earth?
 - Did Jesus expect the disciples who followed him to have an effect upon the world? Name some of the disciples’ effects? How did they achieve these?
 - What effect could you as disciples of Jesus have on your world?
 - Pray together, asking for God to guide the creation and implementation of this assignment

Have someone read these instructions aloud:

The first priority in becoming a more missional church is to know your community. To help you design your community involvement, you need to have conversations with people outside your church to learn about your community and its needs.

Your first assignment is to talk with people outside the church and hear their thoughts about your community’s needs. You decide who, when, where, and how to do this. You have 4 weeks to complete Step 2.

When you attend Session 3 of the MCLE, your group will tell how you engaged people outside the church in conversation, what happened when you did, and what you learned.

The simplest way to have conversation is to ask questions. One way to complete Step 2 is to write 1-3 questions that you can ask people who do not attend your church about your community. The questions should be simple and require more than a ‘yes’ or ‘no’ answer. EXAMPLES: If you could fix one problem in our town, what do you think would make the biggest difference? What are some of the needs in our community that you would be willing to help change? When have you seen a good example of churches being involved in our community?

Think through –

HOW?

How will you distribute the questions? How will you record the responses? How will you collect the answers? How will you determine patterns in the answers that can help you pick a community involvement?

WHO?

Who is going to ask these questions? Just the members of your mission team, or will you invite others in your church (or community) to get involved? If you are going to get others involved, how will you do that? Will you go out to ask questions in pairs?

WHEN?

When you go out, will you all go out on the same day, same time? OR, will you tell people to go anytime they want and return the results by a specific date and place?

WHERE?

Where will you ask your questions? Will you ask people on the street, go door-to-door, or talk to people you know in places such as school, neighbor gatherings, clubs, etc.?

GATHER/ CELEBRATE/ DIAGNOSE:

After your answers are collected, set a time for the mission team (and others who are interested) to gather and talk about the experience. What did you learn? What patterns did you notice? What ideas for community involvement have you heard or seen?



MCLE Session 2 – Sample e-mail: Follow-up

Subject line: MCLE Session 2 – follow-up

ATTACHMENTS:

- Step 1, “Building Our Mission Team – Discipleship Central”
- Step 2, “Learning to Listen to Our Community”

Greetings dear MCLE friends,

Thank you for your wonderful participation in Session 2 – “First Steps Into Mission.”

ATTACHED again, for your convenience are:

- * Step 1 - "Building Your Mission Team - Discipleship Central"
- * Step 2 - "Learning to Listen to Our Community"

DO NOT FEEL intimidated by the process...there is plenty of grace & freedom built into the process for your Learning Community to do the steps YOUR way.

When we gather at Session 3 – “Steps for Growing More Missional,” DAY, DATE, TIME, we will share what we are learning along the way and preview Step 3 and Step 4 in the MCLE process.

PRAYER MATTERS! Let's remember to pray for one another. (List participants by name.)

If God be for (& before) us, who can be against us!

Looking forward to continuing to learn together.

With you in Christ's adventure, (name)

P.S. As always, please share this e-mail with team mates who do not have access to internet.

P.P.S. Mark your calendar for these remaining session dates:

Session 3 – DAY, DATE

Session 4 – DAY, DATE

Session 5 - DAY, DATE

Session 6 - DAY, DATE

FINAL Session – Celebration Day ! DAY, DATE



Missional Church Learning Experience

Session 3: *“Steps for Growing More Missional”*



MCLE – Missional Church Learning Experience
INSTRUCTIONS: Session 3 - “Steps for Growing More Missional”

2 weeks before Session 3:

Facilitator:

- send email, preparing the Learning Community for Session 3,
 - Remind of session day, date, time, location and topic
 - ATTACH Step 3 and Step 4
(see HANDOUTS, this section)
- reread MCLE book, Chapter 4 and prepare for discussion of Step 3 & Step 4
- review Annotated Schedule for Session 3

Coordinator:

- follow-up the Facilitator's email encouraging the participants and giving them essential details about Session 3: time, location, snacks, etc.
- confirm room arrangements
- arrange for refreshments
- secure any supplies including; name badges and markers, and technology equipment
- photocopy handouts for each participant: Schedule, Step 3 and Step 4
- prepare opening worship for session (or designee) – 10 minutes **maximum**

Day of Session 3:

Facilitator and Coordinator

- arrive at least 30 minutes early
- spend a few minutes in preparation of room, materials and equipment
- pray for each other and the participants

Coordinator bring –

- Learning Community file with participants' contact information and correspondence
- photocopies of the Session 3 schedule and handouts

Facilitator bring –

- annotated schedule
- samples of handouts
- own copy of MCLE book
- any other materials chosen



MCLE – Missional Church Learning Experience **Session 3 – “Steps for Growing More Missional”**

Annotated Schedule (1.5 hours)

Session purpose: To get updates on the group’s efforts with the first two steps, and preview Step 3 and Step 4. Connect these efforts with the benefits of becoming a more outwardly focused, mission-minded church, motivating them to continue with further efforts on all four steps until Session 4.

10 minutes **Welcome and Devotion** – Coordinator

Facilitator responsible for next sections:

10 minutes **Opening Question** – “If you could give a gift to every community in this country from their Christian churches, what gift would you give?”

- Work in pairs for 4 minutes, then share results with whole group
- Explain Session purpose

10 minutes **Review Step 1** – “Building Our Mission Team – Discipleship Central”

- report on progress in staying Christ-centered
- report on progress in communicating with the church

20 minutes **Review Step 2** – “Learning to Listen to Our Community”

- report on efforts to date,
(Ask, “Who has a story to share?”)
(Ask whole group, “What did you learn from their story?”)
- pairs/teams work on plans to improve Step 2 efforts

15 minutes **Preview Step 3** – “Looking for Potential Ministry Partners in Our Community”

- pairs brainstorm ways they could find who is doing what in their community
- invite sharing of ideas with the whole group

Facilitator: consider asking the following questions:

- “What are the advantages of looking for potential ministry partners BEFORE we decide how to get involved?”
- “What are the disadvantages if we do NOT look for potential ministry partners BEFORE we decide how to get involved?”

15 minutes **Preview Step 4** – “Discerning Our Part in God’s Mission – Making a Plan”

- discuss suggested questions, whole group
- pairs discuss ways to discern their community involvement
- pairs put their idea into a written plan using bottom section of Step 4; share with whole group

Facilitator: consider asking the following questions:

- “What is discernment?”
- “How do Christians discern God’s will?”
- “Why is discernment important BEFORE becoming involved with the community?”
- “Why is writing a plan important?”

10 minutes **Closing:**

- form a circle with the Learning Community
- pairs/teams step into the circle and share their current idea for community involvement.
- one person volunteer to pray a prayer of blessing upon the ideas, on behalf of the Learning Community

Remind NEXT Session: Date, Day, Time and Topic



MCLE Session 3, Instructions, *continued...*

Session 3 – Follow up

2 days after Session 3:

Facilitator – send follow-up email to Learning Community

- thank them for their continued participation
- ATTACH Step 3 & Step 4
- remind of Session 4: day, date, time, location and topic
- remind them to share emails with members who may not have email
- remind of remaining session dates

Coordinator – follow-up the Facilitator's email with a note of encouragement



MCLE – Missional Church Learning Experience

Session 3: *“Steps for Growing More Missional”*

HANDOUTS



MCLE – Missional Church Learning Experience
Session 3: “Steps for Growing More Missional”

(Suggested Schedule, 1.5 hours)

Session purpose: To get updates on the group’s efforts with the first two steps, and preview Step 3 and Step 4 of the process, to make connections between these efforts and the benefits of becoming a more outwardly focused, mission-minded church.

- 10 minutes Welcome and Worship
- 10 minutes Opening Question: *If you could give a gift to every community in this country from their Christian churches, what gift would you give?*
- 10 minutes Review Step 1: Building Our Mission Team – Discipleship Central
- 20 minutes Review Step 2: Learning to Listen to Our Community
- 15 minutes Preview Step 3: Looking for Potential Ministry Partners in Our Community
- 15 minutes Preview Step 4: Discerning Our Part in God’s Mission
- 10 minutes Closing and Sending

Please save the date for Session 4 – “Building Healthy, Repeatable Patterns”

DATE: _____

TIME: _____

PLACE: _____



Missional Church Learning Experience

Step 3 – Looking for Potential Mission Partners in Our Community

Preparation:

- Gather your MCLE team to plan and implement this assignment
- Ask someone to read aloud Mark 3:31-35
- Discuss in your group the following questions:
 - Jesus said, 'whoever does the will of God' is his brother, sister and mother. What is the 'will of God'?
 - Name some activities being done now that could be called 'the will of God'.
 - How does Jesus expect us to relate to those who do God's will?
 - Pray together, asking God to show you his agents in your community and how you might become involved in God's mission with them.

Have someone read these instructions aloud:

By now your team has had conversations with people outside your church, and listened to their ideas about what your community needs. (Step 2)

This next step will help you find out what God is already doing in response to those needs and discover potential partners in God's mission. Knowing who else is working in your community and what they are doing will help you determine your community involvement. God may be calling you to participate in actions initiated by others and in the process develop life-giving relationships.

You decide who, where, when and how to find God's partners in your town. You have 4 weeks to complete Step 3. When you attend Session 4 of the MCLE, your group will share what you discovered about God's missional actions in your town and possible partnerships.

HOW?

Brainstorm about where to find potential community partners – e.g. newspapers, yellow pages, community bulletin boards, government offices, chamber of commerce, civic clubs, other churches, web sites. How will you uncover patterns in the information you gather; connecting needs to resources? How will you keep focused on Christ during your investigative work?

WHO?

Decide who will explore each source. Are there others in the church (or community) that can help? Are there any networks you can contact in your community?

WHEN?

Set a deadline for when you want the information gathered. Set a date/time/place for your mission team (and others who may be interested) to meet again to review the findings.

GATHER/ CELEBRATE/ DIAGNOSE:

When your team gathers to share results, will you invite others to help you discuss/discern? Talk about your experiences, are there any common themes? Talk about your spiritual reaction to this information – do you see places where your church fits in naturally and would be good at getting involved?

Think back on the conversations you had with people about your community's needs while doing Step 2. Are there any gaps between what's being done, and what people need? Do you sense a call to any of these needs? Time to pray again!



Missional Church Learning Experience

Step 4 – Discerning Our Part in God’s Mission – Making a Plan

Preparation:

- Gather your MCLE team to decide on your community involvement and write your Community Project Outline
- Ask someone to read aloud Matthew 25:31-46, as you all listen quietly, reflect on what word, phrase or thought stands out for you in this passage. Share what captured your attention with each other.
- Ask someone to read aloud Matthew 25:31-46 again, as you all listen quietly, reflect on what this passage may be saying to your mission team and your church at this time. Share your thoughts with one another.
- Pray together, asking God to show you what community project would best serve God’s purpose in your community and for your church. Ask God to show you the where, when and how to fit in with God’s will for this community project.

Step 3 – Discerning Our Part

Reflect on Step 2 – “Learning to Listen to Our Community” – what community needs or patterns did your conversations with people outside your church show you?

Reflect on Step 3 – “Looking for Potential Mission Partners in Our Community” – where and with whom is God already working in your community to bring God’s “will on earth as it is in heaven”?

Discussion: Where do you feel God is calling your team to fit in with God’s work in your community? Keep in mind:

- It doesn’t have to be BIG, even a small step toward community involvement will help you learn and prepare for more. Learn as you go, that’s discipleship.
- It’s good to work with another group who’s call matches yours – even a non-Christian group that holds values that reflect God’s kingdom on earth.
- You can and should involve people in the project who are not a part of your church, including people who will be served.
- If you have several ideas and can’t decide, pick one and save the others for later. Any action that blesses your community will add to God’s kingdom building work.

Community Project Outline – Answer the following questions in **WRITING**:

1. Name the project - Giving your project a name helps form a clear identity. Example: “Backpacks for Back to School Basics”
2. What community need does this project address? (Step 2)
3. What ministry partners could help you with this project? (Step 3)
4. What resources do you need?
5. Answer the Who, What, Where, When, How questions for your community project:
 - Who will be involved? Who will do what?
 - What exactly do you want people to do? What steps need to happen, in what order?
 - Where will you meet to do your community project?
 - When will each step happen, when will your community project be complete?
 - How will you invite people to get involved? How will you assess what you learned from your project? How will you support your “authentic faith community” during this community project? How will you celebrate when you are finished?

Bring your Community Project Outline to Session 4 – to share your plan with your Learning Community.



Missional Church Learning Experience

Session 4: “*Building Healthy, Repeatable Patterns*”



MCLE – Missional Church Learning Experience
INSTRUCTIONS: Session 4 - “Building Healthy, Repeatable Patterns”

2 weeks before Session 4:

Facilitator:

- send email, preparing the Learning Community for Session 4,
 - remind of day, date, time, location and topic
 - ATTACH Steps 1, 2, 3 and 4
- re-read MCLE book, Chapter 4 and prepare for discussion of all steps, and what would happen if the whole church adopted this pattern for community involvement
- review Annotated Schedule for this session

Coordinator:

- follow-up the Facilitator’s email encouraging participation, supplying the usual information about time, location, snacks, etc.
- confirm session arrangements
 - flexible seating, good natural light and ventilation (not in sanctuary)
 - name badges and markers
 - snacks and refreshments
- check equipment needs
- photocopy session schedule and handout for each participant
- prepare opening worship for session (or designee) – 10 minutes **maximum**

Day of Session 4:

Facilitator and Coordinator

- arrive at least 30 minutes early
- spend a few minutes in preparation of the room, materials and equipment
- pray for each other and the participants.

Coordinator bring –

- Learning Community file with participants’ contact information and correspondence
- photocopies of Session 4, schedule and handout

Facilitator bring –

- own copy of the MCLE book
- annotated schedule
- own copy of handout
- any other materials to be used



MCLE - Missional Church Learning Experience **Session 4 – “Building Healthy, Repeatable Patterns”**

Annotated Schedule (2 hours)

Session purpose: To put together the 4 Step Process and imagine how future teams would function by following the process. Also, to visualize the future of the church if many began participating in the missional movement.

10 minutes **Welcome and Devotion** – Coordinator

Facilitator responsible for next sections:

10 minutes **100 Team Exercise** - “Imagine 100 teams followed your MCLE team into demonstrating the gospel of Jesus Christ by partnering with your community to address local problems – what qualities do you need to demonstrate for those teams to follow?”

- Pairs (or teams) brainstorm qualities they need to demonstrate for others to follow
- Pairs (or teams) share ideas with group
- Explain Session purpose

20 minutes **Step 1 – Building Our Mission Team – Discipleship Central**

- Explain “Exploration Teams” (MCLE book, pg. 55-56)
- Ask advantage/disadvantage questions: if the whole church builds mission teams that are Christ-centered
- Have pairs brainstorm ways Exploration Teams could be used with the whole church
- Share ideas with group

20 minutes **Step 2 – Learning to Listen to Our Community**

- Ask advantage/disadvantage questions: if the whole church learns to listen to the community regularly
- Have pairs brainstorm ways the whole church could be involved in listening to the community
- Share ideas with group

10 minutes BREAK

20 minutes **Step 3 – Looking for Potential Ministry Partners in our Community**

- Ask advantage/disadvantage questions: if the whole church looks for potential ministry partners regularly
- Have pairs brainstorm ways the whole church could be involved in looking for potential ministry partners
- Share ideas with group

20 minutes **Step 4 – Discerning Our Part in God’s Mission**

- Ask advantages/disadvantages questions: if the whole church gathers information from the community and practices discernment of God’s will before acting
- Have pairs brainstorm ways the whole church could be involved in discerning God’s will for mission involvement
- Share ideas with group

10 minutes **Commitment and Closing**

- Learning Community forms circle
- Group representative (or each team, in turn) announces community involvement plan
- Learning Community celebrates group’s announcement (or each team’s announcement) with applause or similar enthusiasm
- Ask a volunteer to pray for group’s (or teams’) plan(s)

Remind NEXT Session: Date, Day, Time and Topic



MCLE Session 4, *Instructions continued...*

Session 4 – Follow up

2 days after Session 4:

Facilitator – send follow-up email to Learning Community

- thank them for continued participation
- ATTACH Community Project Outline
- remind of Session 5: day, date, time, location and topic
- remind them to share emails with members who may not have email
- remind of remaining session dates

Coordinator – follow-up the Facilitator's email with your own note of encouragement



MCLE – Missional Church Learning Experience

Session 4: “*Building Healthy, Repeatable Patterns*”

HANDOUTS



Missional Church Learning Experience
Session 4: “Building Healthy, Repeatable Patterns”

(Suggested Schedule, 2 hours)

SESSION PURPOSE: To put together the 4-Step Process and imagine how future teams might function by following the process. Also, to visualize the future of the church if many in the congregation began participating in the missional movement.

10 minutes	Welcome and Worship
10 minutes	100 Team Exercise
20 minutes	Step 1: Building Our Mission Team: Discipleship Central
20 minutes	Step 2: Learning to Listen to Our Community
10 minutes	BREAK
20 minutes	Step 3: Looking for Potential Ministry Partners in our Community
20 minutes	Step 4: Discerning Our Part in God’s Mission
10 minutes	Closing and Sending

Please save the date for Session 5 – “Getting Beyond Beginning”

DATE: _____

TIME: _____

PLACE: _____



Missional Church Learning Experience (MCLE)

Community Project Outline –

Answer the following questions in WRITING:

6. Name the project - Giving your project a name helps form a clear identity.
Example: “Backpacks for Back to School Basics”
7. What community need does this project address? (Step 2)
8. What ministry partners could help you with this project? (Step 3)
9. What resources do you need? (time, money, people, partners)
10. Answer the Who, What, Where, When, How questions for your community project:
 - Who will be involved? Who will do what?
 - What exactly do you want people to do? What steps need to happen, in what order?
 - Where will you meet to do your community project?
 - When will each step happen, when will your community project be complete?
 - How will you invite people to get involved? How will you assess what you learned from your project? How will you support your “authentic faith community” during this community project? How will you celebrate when you are finished?

Share your plan with your regional MCLE Learning Community, by e-mailing to your MCLE Facilitator and Coordinator.



Missional Church Learning Experience

Session 5: “*Getting Beyond Beginning*”



MCLE – Missional Church Learning Experience **INSTRUCTIONS: Session 5 - “Getting Beyond Beginning”**

2 weeks before Session 5:

Facilitator:

- send email, preparing the Learning Community for Session 5,
 - remind of day, date, time, location and topic
 - ATTACH: Community Project Outline, encouraging them to bring completed outline to session
 - encourage participants to pray for one another and the mission
- reread MCLE book, Chapter 5 and prepare discussion
- review Annotated Schedule for Session 5 (see this section)

Coordinator:

- follow-up Facilitator’s email with your own; encouraging participants and giving any needed information about time, location, snacks, etc.
- confirm session arrangements
 - flexible seating, good natural light and ventilation, not in sanctuary
 - name badges and markers
 - snacks, beverages
- check equipment needs
- photocopy handouts for each participant:
 - Session 5, schedule
 - Change Triangle
 - Multiplying Missional Efforts (front/back)
- prepare opening worship for session (or designee) – 10 minutes **maximum**

Day of Session 5:

Facilitator and Coordinator

- arrive at least 30 minutes early
- spend a few minutes in preparation of room, materials and equipment
- pray for each other and the participants

Coordinator bring –

- Learning Community file with participants’ contact information and correspondence
- session schedule and handouts

Facilitator bring –

- own copy of MCLE book
- annotated schedule
- own copies of handouts
- other materials chosen to use



MCLE – Missional Church Learning Experience **Session 5 – “Getting Beyond Beginning”**

Annotated Schedule (1.5 hours)

Session purpose: To understand how change occurs and what steps are necessary for the missional movement to grow in their church. To think of ways they can help that happen.

10 minutes **Welcome and Devotion** – Coordinator

Facilitator responsible for next sections:

10 minutes **Questions or Updates**

15 minutes **Opening question:** “Name 3 major trends you expect to see in the United States in the next 10 years.”

- Pairs brainstorm question
- Share ideas with group
- Explain Session purpose

15 minutes **Introduction of Change Process**

- Rubber band example (see MCLE book, pp. 49-50)
- Explain Change Triangle – focus on 1st and 2nd levels (see MCLE book, pp. 49-52)

Facilitator: consider asking these questions:

- “Name some examples of brand new ideas or products that have become common.”
- “Can you remember the first time you used (experienced) this product or idea?”
- “How did it catch-on to become common?”

15 minutes **Ways to Multiply Missional Efforts**

- Have pairs brainstorm ways they could multiply missional efforts in their church
- Share ideas with group

15 minutes **Review handout: Multiplying Missional Efforts**

- Give pairs time to think of ways they could use each suggestion
- Share ideas with group

10 minutes **Closing**

- Learning Community prayer: “Name one gift you would like God to give your community.”

Remind NEXT Session: Day, Date, Time and Topic



MCLE Session 5, *instructions continued...*

Session 5 – Follow up

2 days after Session 5:

Facilitator – send follow-up email to Learning Community

- Thank them for continued participation
- List Community Project for prayer
- Remind of Session 6: day, date, time, location and topic
- Encourage them to start thinking about their individual, pair or team presentations for Session 7
- Remind them to share emails with members who may not have email
- Remind of remaining session dates

Coordinator – follow-up Facilitator's email with a note of encouragement



MCLE – Missional Church Learning Experience

Session 5: “*Getting Beyond Beginning*”

HANDOUTS



Missional Church Learning Experience

Session 5: “Getting Beyond Beginning”

(Suggested Schedule, 1.5 hours)

SESSION PURPOSE: To understand how change occurs and what steps are necessary for the missional movement to grow in the church; to think of ways we can help make that happen.

10 minutes	Welcome and Worship
10 minutes	Questions or Updates on the Process
15 minutes	Opening Question: <i>What are three major trends you expect to see in the United States in the next 10 years?</i>
15 minutes	Introduction of the Change Process
15 minutes	Ways to Multiply Missional Efforts
15 minutes	Review the handout - Multiplying Missional Efforts
10 minutes	Closing and Sending

Please save the date: Session 6 – *Change Skills and Dancing with Danger*

DATE: _____

TIME: _____

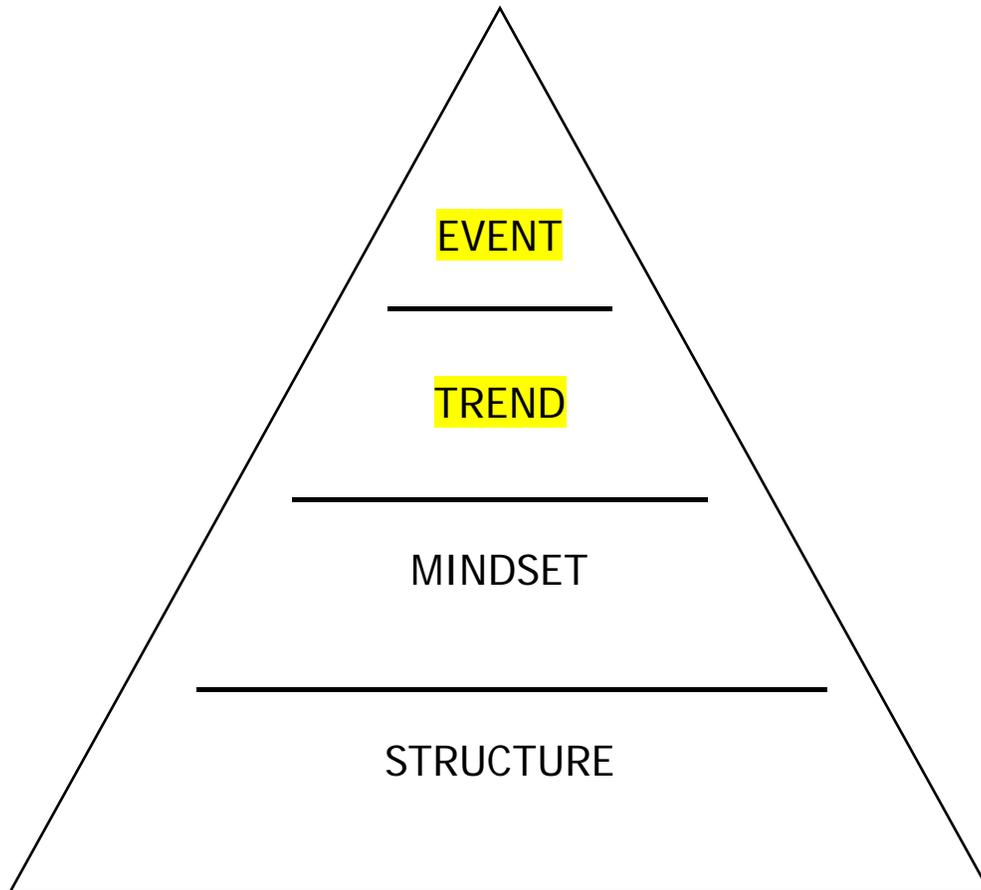
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Missional Church Learning Experience

Session 5 - Change Triangle

*Adapted from source material by Ron Carlson, American Baptist Home Mission Societies.



MCLE - Missional Church Learning Experience

Session 5 – “Getting Beyond Beginning”

How can your church encourage missional multiplication?

Count the ways...

1. **Create opportunities for the church to GO into the fields ripe for harvest** and as you go pray for God to help you see, hear and understand what God is doing in the hearts of the people in your community. Keep in mind: the best way to start a conversation is with a question.

Examples:

- **Create Listening Sundays** - Designate in the bulletin for church members to be intentional about going out to listen and learn about the community, with a gathering the following Sunday to exchange experiences and respond in prayer - places like nursing homes, PTO, city council meetings, civic clubs.
- **Hold biannual prayer walks** - Have teams of two sign up to walk a street to observe, listen and pray; then re-gather to share their experiences.
- **Take small gifts to locations and listen** to those present. One MCLE church took \$1 bottles of Joy detergent to the homes around the church and said, “We’ve come to give you a little joy, and ask how our church might be of service to you.” Another church gave away water bottles at community events such as farmers’ markets and engaged people in conversation about the community.
- **Hand deliver invitations** to important seasonal events like: Community Thanksgiving Service, Christmas Eve, or Mother’s Day. Create special worship services to honor community servants such as a 9/11 Service – honoring the community’s 1st responders, or a Teacher’s Dedication Service for community teachers at the beginning/ending of the school year.
- **Send volunteer teams to serve community events** – such as picking up litter at the local high school, while there observe and listen.

2. **Find your potential missional partners with an annual (or biannual) community resource hunt...what existing resources are already at work in your community?**

Example:

- Designate a Resource Hunt week in your church bulletin and invite everyone to bring in community information the next Sunday, share the information at a soup/sandwich lunch after church. Have the group pray and brainstorm missional ideas based on the resources found.

3. **Listen for the passionate interests...of people both inside and outside your church and see where they overlap.** Help people understand that they can make a difference, even with small steps.

Examples:

- Keep a current list of where members serve the community in your church newsletter or website. Ask those members to allow their name and phone number to be listed as a contact person for others who might want to serve in that way.



- Run ads in the local paper or local interest social media network inviting community residents to check with the church for ways to they can serve the community (not the church).

4. Build teams out of what individuals are already doing...help them move from individual efforts by asking how could they include others.

Example:

- Have “Mission Moments” during worship where a person shares their story about their places of service to the community and invites others to form a team to serve that location.

5. Pray, pray, pray...every need is not a call. Discernment is critical to being involved in God’s mission. Go where there is energy for involvement. Ministry in an accelerated changing culture is not judged by longevity. An opportunity may only last for one event, or it may last a lifetime. Avoid judging the outcome...every effort to demonstrate God’s passionate love for people is a step toward becoming more missional. God loves small beginnings.

Examples:

- Little boy’s loaves and fishes
- Widow’s two mites

6. Turn existing ministries outward...what would happen if every church ministry ‘tithed’ its efforts to an outside experience? (Gave 10% of its ministry toward an outside effort.)

Examples:

- What if the Trustees Work Day (at the church) included one hour cleaning up the neighborhood around the church? Have the Trustees sent out flyers a week in advance inviting the neighbors to join them in cleaning up the neighborhood on a certain day/time, with the church providing trash bags and some equipment; then host a light meal or dessert afterward for everyone who helped.
- What if the choir shared the cantata that they worked on for 3 months for Christmas (or Easter) with several other locations besides church – nursing homes, the mall, senior centers, schools, civic clubs, or fire or police stations?
- What if the seniors’ group offered a free night of babysitting one evening during December so parents in the community could go Christmas shopping for their kids?
- What if the youth dedicated one Saturday each spring or fall to help their neighbors with yard work?
- What if...

Let your church be known as a place where the “sky is the limit” for people to develop their heart’s desire to serve God!



Missional Church Learning Experience

Session 6: *“Change Skills and Dancing with Danger”*



MCLE – Missional Church Learning Experience
INSTRUCTIONS: Session 6 - “Change Skills and Dancing with Danger”

2 weeks before Session 6:

Facilitator:

- send email, preparing the Learning Community for Session 6,
 - remind of day, date, time, location and topic
- reread MCLE book, Chapter 6 and prepare discussion
- review Annotated Schedule for Session (see below)

Coordinator:

- follow-up on the Facilitator’s email with your own message, encouraging the participants and supplying pertinent information about time, location, snacks, etc.
- confirm space arrangements
- secure supplies: name badges, markers, technology/equipment
- arrange for refreshments
- prepare opening worship for session (or designee) – 10 minutes **maximum**
- photocopy handouts for each participant:
 - Session 6, schedule
 - “Change Triangle” handout (highlighting Level 3 and Level 4)
 - “Positive Change Skills” handout (blank version)
 - “The Church’s Role in the Missional Movement”

Day of Session 6:

Facilitator and Coordinator

- arrive at least 30 minutes early
- spend a few minutes making sure the room is prepared according to their needs, and that materials and equipment are in order
- take time to pray for one another and the participants.

Coordinator bring –

- Learning Community file with participants’ contact information and correspondence
- session schedule and handouts

Facilitator bring –

- own copy of the MCLE book
- annotated session schedule
- own copy of handouts
- any other materials to be used



MCLE – Missional Church Learning Experience Session 6 – “*Change Skills and Dancing with Danger*”

Annotated Schedule (1.5 hours)

SESSION PURPOSE: To understand the third and fourth levels of change process; to lay the groundwork for positive change with three basic skills; and to discuss how the church can create an environment that encourages missional development.

10 minutes **Welcome and Worship** (Coordinator)

Facilitator responsible for the next sections:

10 minutes **Questions and Updates on the Process**

15 minutes **Opening Question:** *Imagine what your church would be like if it became fully missional in the next 5 years, how would your church change?*

- In pairs, brainstorm responses to the question.
- Share these responses with the group.
- Ask: *That’s a lot of change. Would everyone be happy about those changes?*
- Explain Session purpose.

10 minutes **Review the Change Triangle** (focusing on Levels 3 and 4)

Facilitator: Consider asking these questions related to the Change Triangle:

- How does multiplication of missional events create a change in the mindset?
- What are some changes in thinking that may occur?
- Some churches rush to change the structure too early. What are some of the dangers of changing the structure before a change in the church’s mindset has occurred?

20 minutes **Review handout – “Positive Change Skills”** (see book pp. 62–66)

- As a large group, name ways that change can be managed.
- Review ideas on the handout.

20 minutes **Review handout – “Church’s Role in the Missional Movement”**
(facilitator; see book, pp. 66–69)

- In pairs, brainstorm ways the church can foster a missional spirit in the congregation.
- Share these ideas with the group.
- Review ideas on the handout.

5 minutes **Closing and Sending** (Facilitator or Coordinator)

- Offer a prayer, asking God to help the church to face change with courage and to see the opportunity for a blessing.
- Remind participants of the final session, highlighting that each individual or team is to prepare a 3-5 minute presentation about what they have learned about themselves, God, and the mission by becoming involved with their community.

Remind NEXT Session: Day, Date, Time and Topic



Session 6 – Follow up

2 days after Session 6:

Facilitator – send follow-up email to Learning Community

- Thank them for continued participation
- List participants for prayer
- Remind of Session 7: day, date, time, location and topic – encourage them to prepare their individual, pair or team presentations (3-5 minutes) for Session 7
- Remind them to share emails with members who may not have email

Coordinator – Follow-up the Facilitator’s email with a note of encouragement to all participants. Be sure to remind about the day, date, time and location for Session 7.



MCLE – Missional Church Learning Experience

Session 6: *“Change Skills and Dancing with Danger”*

HANDOUTS



Missional Church Learning Experience

Session 6: “Change Skills and Dancing with Danger”

(Suggested Schedule, 1.5 hours)

SESSION PURPOSE: To understand the third and fourth levels of change process; to lay the groundwork for positive change with three basic skills; and to discuss how the church can create an environment that encourages missional development.

10 minutes	Welcome and Worship
10 minutes	Questions and Updates on the Process
15 minutes	Opening Question: <i>Imagine our church becoming fully missional in the next five years, how would our church change?</i>
10 minutes	Review the Change Triangle (focusing on Levels 3 and 4)
20 minutes	Review handout – Positive Change Skills
20 minutes	Review handout - Church’s Role in the Missional Movement
5 minutes	Closing and Sending

Please save the date for Session 7 – “Telling God’s Story” (Final Session)

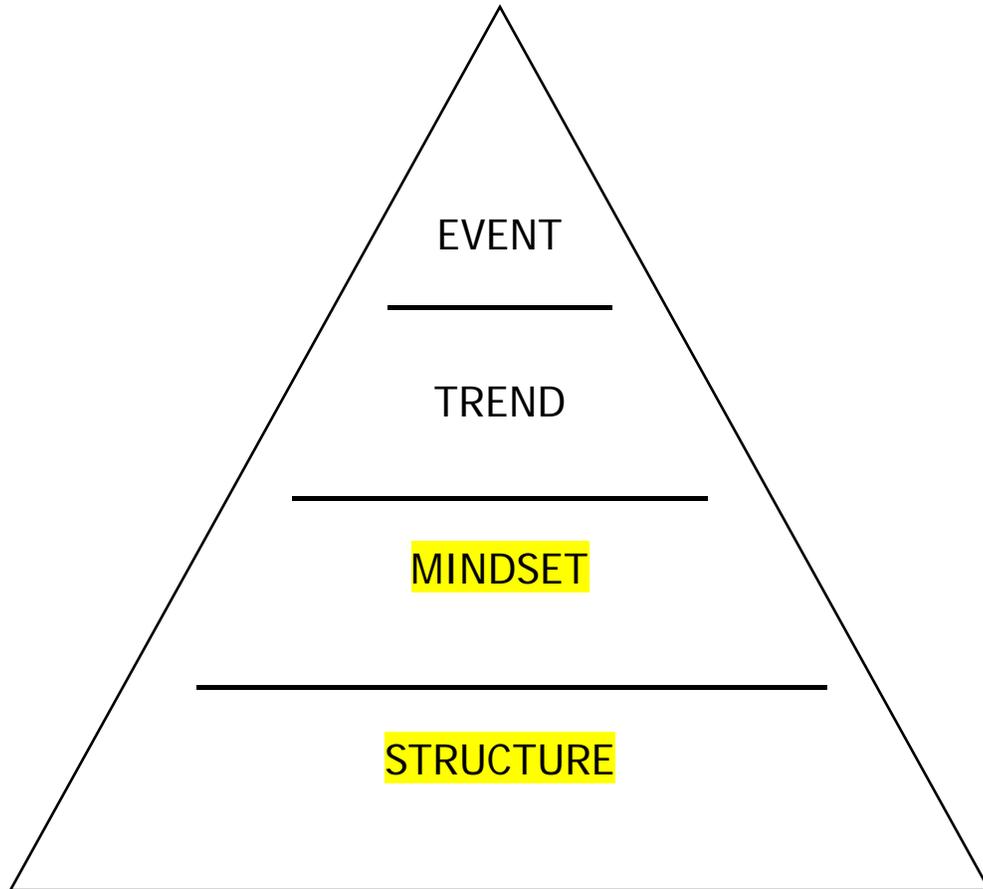
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TIME: _____

PLACE: _____



Change Triangle



Adapted from source material by Dr. Ron Carlson, American Baptist Home Mission Societies.



MCLE - Missional Church Learning Experience
Session 6 – “Change Skills and Dancing with Danger”

Positive Change Skills

Resistance to Change is _____

- **Do Not** _____

Key Word: _____

- **Respect each other’s** _____
 - Some Christians are called to serve the church inside the walls
 - Some Christians are called to serve the church in the world
- **Teach about “call” regularly**
 - Have church participants tell their story of chosen career paths
 - Recognize church participants important life decisions as call
 - Commission groups to service opportunities (i.e. Firefighters Sunday, School Teachers Sunday, mission teams – both local and away)

Create a _____ **community**

- **What is a covenant?** _____

- **Teach about “covenant” regularly**
- **Establish regular patterns of listening to one another**
 - Church leaders teach healthy conversation skills
 - Church leaders schedule listening sessions with individuals
 - Church leaders host group listening sessions frequently
 - Church leaders provide a clear path for conflict resolution
- **Develop a process to recommend reforms based upon listening sessions**
- **Provide opportunities to recommit to the church relationship**
 - Church holds annual Vision Sunday
 - Church participates in covenant ceremony with new members

Ways to incorporate Covenant into church life:

- Have a process for listening regularly to church participants thoughts/ideas
- Communicate the process clearly and often
- Celebrate the results
- Re-covenant regularly



MCLE - Missional Church Learning Experience
Session 6 – “Change Skills and Dancing with Danger”

Positive Change Skills
(Facilitator’s Version)

Resistance to Change is _____ **normal** _____

- Do Not _____ **PANIC!** _____

Key Word: _____ **Respect** _____

- **Respect each other’s** _____ **call** _____ **(some missional, some not)** _____
 - Some Christians are called to serve the church inside the walls
 - Some Christians are called to serve the church in the world
- **Teach about “call” regularly**
 - Have church participants tell their story of chosen career paths
 - Recognize church participants important life decisions as call
 - Commission groups to service opportunities (i.e. Firefighters Sunday, School Teachers Sunday, mission teams – both local and away)

Create a _____ **Covenant** _____ community

- **What is a covenant?** _____ **A promise to do what is right for the good of all, regardless of another’s response.** _____
- **Teach about “covenant” regularly**
- **Establish regular patterns of listening to one another**
 - Church leaders teach healthy conversation skills
 - Church leaders schedule listening sessions with individuals
 - Church leaders host group listening sessions frequently
 - Church leaders provide a clear path for conflict resolution
- **Develop a process to recommend reforms based upon listening sessions**
- **Provide opportunities to recommit to the church relationship**
 - Church holds annual Vision Sunday
 - Church participates in covenant ceremony with new members

Ways to incorporate Covenant into church life:

- Have a process for listening regularly to church participants thoughts/ideas
- Communicate the process clearly and often
- Celebrate the results
- Re-covenant regularly



MCLE - Missional Church Learning Experience **Session 6 - “Change Skills and Dancing with Danger”**

The Church’s Role in the Missional Movement”

Worship... that renews our vision of God’s restoration and the importance of our participation in God’s mission; for our own develop as well as that of others

Equip... people for ministry inside and outside the church; i.e. team leadership; conflict transformation, skills for building disciples in the field

Support... the Christians as they serve; e.g. personal devotion skills, respite and renewal opportunities, care and assistance groups, teaching healthy ministry patterns

Ways the church can stay on the missional path...

- **Call** – How does the church recognize people’s call to serve and invite people, both inside and outside the church, to follow Christ into God’s restorative mission?
- **Commission** – How does the church participate in the process of identifying, training, sending and supporting mission teams?
- **Covenant** – How does the church share responsibility in forming the group’s covenant that reflects the core missional values and purpose of the church? What needs to be included in a mission teams’ covenant agreement?
- **Communicate** – How and when can the mission teams share victories, challenges and defeats with the church?
- **Close** – How is the term of commitment determined for a mission team? How will it brought to a close?
- **Celebrate!** – What ways can the mission team celebrate their experience? What ways can the celebration be shared with the church?

Other ways...



Missional Church Learning Experience

Session 7: *“Telling God’s Story”*



MCLE – Missional Church Learning Experience **INSTRUCTIONS: Session 7 - “Telling God’s Story”**

2 weeks before Session 7:

Facilitator:

- send email, preparing the Learning Community for Session 7,
 - Remind of day, date, time, location and topic
 - Remind individuals, pairs or teams to prepare a 3-5 minute presentation of what they learned about themselves, their community and God from their experience
- reread MCLE book, Chapter 7 and prepare discussion
- review Annotated Schedule for Session 7

Coordinator:

- follow-up the Facilitator’s email, encouraging participants and providing any needed information about time, location, snacks, etc. Also, check for any special technology needs for team presentations
- confirm session arrangements
 - flexible seating, good natural light, good ventilation, not in sanctuary
 - name badges and markers
 - snacks, beverages (any special food for closing session?)
 - closing Communion preparations
 - equipment preparation for presentations
- prepare opening worship for session (or designee) – 10 minutes **maximum**
- Invite guests to attend Session 7; church leaders, participants’ family or friends, representatives of people from community involved in church’s missional efforts, representatives from other churches in community or local association who might gain from hearing about the experience

Day of Session 7:

Facilitator and Coordinator

- arrive at least 30 minutes early
- spend a few minutes in preparation of room, materials and equipment
- pray for the participants, visitors and one another

Coordinator bring –

- Learning Community file with participants’ contact information and correspondence
- Handouts: Session Schedule and Assessment
- Communion preparations
- Any other closing items (gifts?)

Facilitator bring –

- own copy of MCLE book
- annotated schedule
- preparations for Communion
- any other materials chosen to use



MCLE – Missional Church Learning Experience **Session 7 – “Telling God’s Story”**

Annotated Schedule (2.5 hours)

Session purpose: To discover the importance of telling our stories of mission involvement in order to build faith in the community. Also, to draw together the lessons learned through the process, to celebrate what has occurred and to look forward toward a missional future.

10 minutes **Welcome and Devotion** – Coordinator

Facilitator responsible for these sections:

5 minutes **Session purpose**

- Tell the Widow’s Mite story (Luke 21:1-4) as an example of the importance in telling our faith stories – imagine all that has been accomplished over the past 2,000 years by the telling of her story.

30-45 minutes **Presentations and follow-up**
(time for 2-3 presentations in this section)

- A. Facilitator asks for a volunteer to make their presentation: individual, pair or team
- B. Presentation (3-5 minutes)
- C. After each presentation the Facilitator directs 3 minutes of small group work -
 - * Presenter(s), among themselves, answer the question, “What is our #1 lesson learned about being missional from our experience?”
 - * Others form pairs or table groups, and ask among themselves, “What did we learn about being missional from this story?”
- D. Facilitator asks presenter(s) to share their #1 lesson learned.
- E. Facilitator asks others to share what they learned about being missional from the presenter(s)’ story.

15 minutes **BREAK**

15 minutes **Review “Main Missional Ideas”**

- Facilitator returns surveys from Session 1
- Pairs are asked to explain each idea in their own words
- Participants are asked to look at their original survey ratings of their church, and mark a “T” for where they would rank their personal understanding today.
- Have pairs write a statement at the bottom of their survey, “A missional church is _____(fill in the blank)_____.
- Pairs share statements with group

30-45 minutes **Presentations, continue...** (see pattern above)

10 minutes **FINAL Review of the MCLE 4 Step process**

- Facilitator guides group discussion, “What did you learn about...building a mission team, listening to the community, looking for partners, discerning God’s will and making a plan?”
- Suggestions for Learning Community future: alumni group with continuing education events, start a new MCLE (possibly with other churches)

5 minutes **MCLE Assessment** – pass out forms and give 5 minutes before collecting

15 minutes **Closing Communion and Worship** – Facilitator and Coordinator



Session 7 – Follow up

2 days after Session 7:

Facilitator -

Send follow-up email to Learning Community

- Thank them for their participation
- Remind of alumni options
- List prayers for further missional efforts
- Remind them to share emails with members who may not have email

Coordinator – Follow-up the Facilitator’s email with a note of thanks and encouragement

Facilitator/Coordinator plan a celebration event for themselves

AFTER Session 7:

Coordinator requests “MCLE Certificate of Completion” from American Baptist Home Mission Societies, by emailing Rev. Glynis LaBarre, Transformation Strategist, glynis.labarre@abhms.org.

Sending:

- Facilitator’s and Coordinator’s name and contact information
- Church name and address
- Copy of the Community Project Outline,
- Number of participants in attendance at each session
- 1 page story of their experience (600 words)

Facilitator and Coordinator – make plan to present “MCLE Certificate of Completion” to the Learning Community, possibly during a worship service.

2 weeks after Session 7:

Facilitator and Coordinator meet to debrief experience, share Lessons Learned with church leaders and prepare presentation for next MCLE Advisory Council.*

3 months after Session 7:

Facilitator and Coordinator meet to plan a continuing education gathering for Learning Community and consider forming a new Learning Community, possibly with other churches in their area or in their denominational association.

*The MCLE Advisory Council is a “virtual” Learning Community of MCLE Facilitators and Coordinators from across the country that confer monthly by technology to receive encouragement, training and help improve the MCLE process for all. MCLE Facilitators and Coordinators can join by sending an email to glynis.labarre@abhms.org to register their Learning Community.



MCLE – Missional Church Learning Experience

Session 7: *“Telling God’s Story”*

HANDOUTS



Missional Church Learning Experience

Session 7: Telling God's Story

(Suggested Schedule, 2.5 hours)

SESSION PURPOSE: To discover the importance of telling mission involvement stories in order to build faith in the community; also, to draw together the lessons learned through the process and to look forward toward a missional future.

10 minutes	Welcome and Worship
5 minutes	Session Purpose
30–45 minutes	Presentation of Mission Projects, part 1
15 minutes	BREAK
15 minutes	Final Review - Main Missional Ideas
30–45 minutes	Presentation of Mission Projects, part 2
10 minutes	Final Review - MCLE 4-Step Process
5 minutes	MCLE Assessment handout
15 minutes	Closing and Communion (Facilitator and Coordinator)



Missional Church Learning Experience

Session 7: “*Telling God’s Story*”

MCLE Assessment

Take a few moments to help us improve this experience for others.

1. What parts of the MCLE process were useful to you, and in what ways did they help you?

2. What parts of the MCLE process were not useful to you and why?

3. How would you improve the MCLE process for future efforts? .

