

Some Marks of a Missional Congregation

(in no particular order of importance)

✠ *Word.* A missional congregation is a community of the Bible. It offers a variety of opportunities for members and the community to dwell in the Word.

✠ *Children.* A missional congregation has the children of church and community at the center of its attention, program, budget, priority.

✠ *Worship.* Excellence in liturgy, preaching and music anchor the life of a missional church. A missional congregation understands that Word and Sacrament is its missiology, its heart, its evangelizing power.

✠ *Solidarity.* A missional congregation is joined at the heart with its conference, synod and church wide partners. It is linked to ecumenical partners.

✠ *Infrastructure and money.* A missional congregation does its business well, relates truthfully and transparently to money issues.

✠ *Leadership.* A missional congregation invests in leaders, and has a plan for leadership development. The congregation sees everything it does as opportunity for leadership development.

✠ *Mercy and Justice.* A missional congregation invests in programs and is part of networks which work for both social service (mercy) and social change (justice). A congregation which turns its face, and the face of Jesus to the poor, the stranger, and those without the Gospel is always being renewed.

✠ *Community.* A missional congregation is connected to its community in two ways. First, the life and presence of the community is institutionalized in the congregation through programs in which neighbors walk through the doors every day (early childhood centers, 12-step programs, social ministry programs, the arts, etc.) Second the congregation is always present and listening and serving outside the doors, in the midst of its community (church-based community organizing and its arts of listening are critical to this).

✠ *Wider Worlds.* Mission and discipleship takes the church and its members into ever widening worlds. In its membership a congregation will reflect its immediate community. In its wider participation in ministry and networks it will relate to wider worlds (companion synods, church-based community organization, Bread for the World, etc.)

✠ *Communal Leadership.* Pastoral leadership will belong to the whole community and encourage active participation of the laity.

✠ *Story.* A missional congregation will be able to tell its ancestor and founding stories. Every member will be able to tell their faith story.

✠ *Spiritual Gifts.* A missional congregation will organize its life at the intersection of the spiritual gifts of its members and the mission of the congregation to its own members, its community and beyond.

✠ *Vocation.* A missional congregation will release leaders into the church and community, including rostered leaders, leaders on boards of colleges, social ministry organizations, and other church and community organizations.

✠ *Stewardship.* An ethos of abundance will saturate a missional church with grace and release generous stewards into the world.

✠ *Prayer and the Faith Practices of the Disciple* will permeate every meeting, decision and area of congregational life. The ethos of evangelizing discipleship creates the context for parish life.

✠ *Action/Reflection.* This pedagogy will guide study of scripture, leadership development and deepening communal and individual discipleship.

✠ *Resurrection.* A missional congregation lives in the power of the resurrection of Jesus from the dead. In the Risen Christ all things are possible.