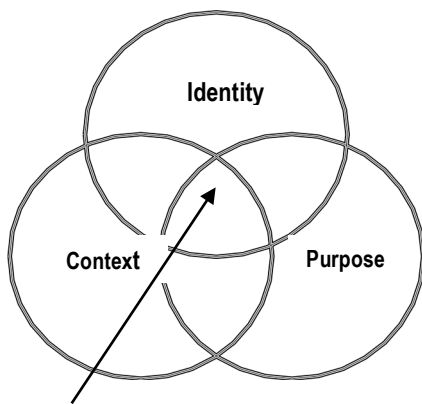


A MODEL FOR THINKING ABOUT MISSION:
Pursuing the Three Great Listenings

Discerning God's Mission for Us



Mission

Guided by and Rooted in the Spirit

To know your mission is to know your purpose and calling. But how do we discern what our true mission is? How does a congregation identify the “main thing” that God is asking of them? The diagram at left suggests a way to begin to zero in on an answer.

Discerning your congregation’s mission can be described as prayerfully pursuing three listenings. Each listening is essential: listening to God in scripture, prayer and discernment; listening to our neighbors in our communities; and listening to each other and our partners throughout the Church discerning the gifts and assets God has provided for us to be about mission.

Listening to God in scripture, prayer and discernment reveals our Identity (who and whose we are). Listening to our neighbors in our communities reveals our Context (the Holy Spirit helps us to hear both the challenges and goals of those around us). Listening to each other within our congregations – and our partners through the Church – reveals our Purpose in mission (how our gifts and assets might enable us to share the Gospel of Jesus Christ in word and action with our neighbors).

Then, grounding ourselves in prayer and reflection both privately and in the group, we can stay fixed on what God is saying to us. We can then ask the specific questions about our congregation’s mission and discover the specific steps to which we are being called to live out that mission in our community.