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SHORT-TERM OVERSEAS MISSION TRIPS
AN OPPORTUNITY FOR TRAINING IN LOCAL OUTREACH

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10 MAY 2012

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CONCORDIA SEMINARY
SAINT LOUIS, MISSOURI

SHORT-TERM OVERSEAS MISSION TRIPS
AN OPPORTUNITY FOR TRAINING IN LOCAL OUTREACH

A MAJOR APPLIED PROJECT SUBMITTED TO
THE DEPARTMENT OF DOCTOR OF MINISTRY STUDIES
IN CANDIDACY FOR THE DEGREE OF
DOCTOR OF MINISTRY

BY
REV. PAUL R. BIBER

SAINT LOUIS, MISSOURI
10 MAY 2012

With loving gratitude to my wife Becky and children – Eli, Grace, and Hannah – who endured my 11 day absence when Hannah was just nine days old and countless late nights as I finished this project. I can't wait until you all get to see the work that God is doing in Brazil that your loving support has made possible.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

There are so many people who helped with this project that it is impossible to list them all. I am indebted to the six member of the St. Lucas Lutheran Church Brazil Mission Team who faithfully attended meetings, raised funds, and gave up two weeks of their time to assist the work of the Lord in Brazil. The Support Team members for the mission trip and all the members of St. Lucas who allowed the mission trip to become a major part of our ministry for a year.

I must also acknowledge Rev. Dr. Bill Thompson and his amazing wife Pat and their work with the Brazil Mission Society. God placed on their hearts a great love for His work among the people of Brazil. That passion for God's work in Brazil is contagious. The joyful tears that they have shared as they witness the grace of God in bringing people to Himself and to one another has instilled in me a far greater love for the work of the Lord than I could have ever imagined.

Finally, the people in Brazil with whom we worked (especially those at ABRASSE) have shown me and the Mission Team more about God's love and His work than we could possibly hope to show them. I am truly indebted to them for allowing us to come and be a part of the work of God among them.

I hope that this project to which so many have contributed will be a blessing to many others in their efforts to breathe new life into the mission of God in their congregations.

ABSTRACT

Acts 1:8 says that mission of the church is to be “witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.” Conventional wisdom would say to start in your Jerusalem – your immediate community – and go out from there. However, many congregations have forgotten how to connect with their own community. In order to learn how to reconnect with their immediate community, a congregation can participate in a short-term overseas mission trip as a catalyst and training for their local outreach efforts.

CHAPTER 1

THE PROJECT INTRODUCED

Background

Congregations throughout the United States have increasingly included short-term overseas mission trips as part of their ministry strategy over the last forty or fifty years. Teams of various sizes and with varying frequency are brought together to raise funds for a trip to another country where they work to spread the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Typically lasting one to two weeks (though sometimes up to a year), short-term overseas mission trips have the potential to greatly enhance the work of the Lord in other places by lending additional financial support, encouragement, and workers to the efforts in these other countries. In addition, those who participate in the mission trip get the experience of serving the Lord by serving others and get a larger picture of the Church throughout the world. According to the *Protestant Mission Handbook*, there were more than 300,000 short-term missionaries (serving between 2 weeks and 1 year) working through 690 protestant mission agencies in 2009.¹ In fact, “there is good reason to believe that more than one and a half million U.S. Christians travel abroad each year on ‘short-term mission trips,’ with an additional unknown number traveling on similar trips within the United States.”²

Within the LCMS, there are multiple organizations which coordinate short-term overseas mission trips, including LCMS World Missions and Lutheran Hour Ministries

¹ Robert J. Priest, Terry Dischinger, Steve Rasmussen, and C.M. Brown, “Researching the Short-Term Mission Movement,” *Missiology: An International Review*, Vol. XXXIV, no. 4 (October 2006): 431-450.

² Ibid.

(LHM). In 2009, LCMS World Missions sent 473 individuals on short-term mission trips³. LHM sent 146 individuals on short-term mission trips in 2009⁴. And these figures do not include the many mission societies within the LCMS that focus their efforts on a specific country (e.g. The Brazil Mission Society).

The Problem of the Project

In July of 2009, as part of the Pastoral Leadership Institute program, I traveled to Brazil with 6 other pastors and their wives on an 11 day short-term overseas mission trip with the Brazil Mission Society (BMS). It was the first time I had personally participated in such a trip. Although our trip was mainly observational, we were able to give encouragement and support to those working full-time in Brazil. Personally, my own views of church work and outreach changed as a result of the experience. I saw the need of our congregation to be involved with our community and serve our neighbors more so that the love of God which we preach could be seen in our actions. “Proclaiming the Gospel” was more than just an activity – it was a life style. Upon returning home, I wanted to share the experiences and learnings with my congregation, St. Lucas Lutheran Church, St. Louis, MO. Although I made a presentation on the trip to the congregation and the congregation made commitments to continue building partnerships in Brazil (including committing to a congregational trip to Brazil in 2011), I had not succeeded in connecting the experience of and learning from the short-term mission trip to the congregation’s understanding of and attitude toward our local

³ LCMS World Mission web site, “FAQ Info-Sheet,” http://www.lcms.org/graphics/assets/media/World%20Mission/WM_Info%20Sheet_Mar10.pdf ,visited July 29, 2010

⁴ Lutheran Hour Ministries web site, “2009 Ministry Report,” http://www.lhm.org/about/annualreport/annualreport_current.pdf, visited July 29, 2010

outreach efforts. As I began to plan St. Lucas' first ever congregational short-term overseas mission trip, I wondered if this trip would directly affect how the congregation members understand the purpose of the church and how our congregation carries out the work of the Lord.

A considerable amount of time, effort and material resources are devoted to these trips. It cost approximately \$24,000 to send a team of 7 people to Brazil for 11 days. It was a significant investment to ask of this congregation. Therefore, the problem which this project will address is that it is uncertain whether St. Lucas Lutheran Church St. Louis, MO's support of and participation in a short-term overseas mission project will increase the members' understanding of and positive attitude toward local outreach efforts.

The Purpose of the Project

The purpose of the project is to develop guidelines for coordinating short-term overseas mission trips which will promote the use of such trips to increase the understanding of and positive attitude toward local outreach efforts among congregation members (both those who participate in the trip and those who support the trip)

The expected outcomes to this project are:

- To determine, through quantitative and qualitative research, how beneficial the support of and participation in a short-term overseas mission trip is in promoting the biblical understanding of and positive attitude toward outreach in the local congregation. The results of this goal will vary depending on the member's level of involvement (those participating in the trip, those supporting the trip, and the rest of the congregation).

- To discover what aspects of the short-term overseas mission trip (including preparation, participation, and post-trip debriefing) increase the members' understanding of and positive attitude toward outreach in the local congregation.
- To provide guidelines for future mission trips by St. Lucas Lutheran Church, St. Louis, MO [as well as other pastors and lay leaders] for the effective integration of short-term overseas mission trips into the local outreach training and outreach ministries of the congregation.

The Process

In the summer of 2011, St. Lucas Lutheran Church planned the first short-term overseas mission trip for the congregation in its 107 year history. Prior to the trip, the congregation members were surveyed to determine their understanding of local outreach and their attitude towards various outreach programs in the area. The planning, execution and debriefing for the trip [in addition to preparing for the actual trip] included general instruction in outreach in an effort to improve the congregation members' understanding of and attitude toward local outreach efforts.

1. A pre-trip test was administered to determine how well members understand the biblical foundations of outreach and to determine their attitudes towards various outreach programs in the St. Louis area.
2. A Mission Team of 7 people was formed. This team was comprised of the people who traveled to Brazil. In addition, a Support Team of 30-40 people was recruited

to participate alongside the Mission Team in the planning and debriefing of the trip.

3. Monthly planning meetings for the mission trip included instruction on the biblical understanding of mission. The entire congregation was invited to these meetings so that the learning could be shared by more than just those who are traveling to Brazil.
4. After the trip, the Mission Team and Support Team had a debriefing meeting and made a presentation of the trip to the congregation.
5. A post-trip test (identical to the pre-trip test) was administered to those who participated in the pre-trip test to determine any changes in understanding and attitude.
6. Group interview sessions involving those who completed both the pre-trip and post-trip tests were conducted to discuss what role the planning, execution and follow-up of the mission trip played in the changes (if any) that are indicated by comparing the pre-trip and post-trip tests.

Project Parameters

The purpose of this project is to determine the effects of a short-term overseas mission project on the understanding of and attitude towards local outreach. Although there are other questions that could be researched in relationship to short-term overseas mission trips (such as “How does a congregation’s involvement in local outreach change as a result of its members participating in a short-term mission trip” or “Are any new local outreach efforts started by a congregation as a result its members participating in a short-term mission trip”),

the scope of this project was limited, assuming that a positive result in these questions will lead to a positive result in other related questions as well. The following statements/beliefs are assumed for the purpose of this research project:

1. Short-term overseas mission trips are beneficial to the communities in which they take place, supplementing the ministries in those communities with additional finances and workers.
2. The effort to utilize a short-term overseas mission trip as a pedagogical tool for local outreach will not negatively affect the main purpose of the trip itself.
3. A lack of a biblical understanding of outreach and a negative attitude about local outreach efforts decrease the effectiveness of a congregation's local outreach efforts.
4. Increasing a congregation's understanding of biblical outreach principles and instilling a more positive attitude towards local outreach efforts will lead to greater congregational participation in local outreach and will increase the effectiveness of outreach.

The final presupposition will be tested in the months and years following the 2011 Brazil mission trip. It is my hope that members of the congregation will gain an increased understanding of the mission of the church and will have a more positive attitude towards that mission. It is also my hope that these changes will lead to more participation in local outreach by members of St. Lucas. However, it would take a number of years to properly gauge the increase in outreach participation and even longer to determine how much if any of that change was the result of the congregation's participation in short-term missions. The long-term impact is important, but it grows out of the short-term impact on understanding

and attitude. Therefore, this project will be limited to evaluating the effects of a short-term mission trip on a congregation's understanding of and positive attitude towards local outreach efforts.

CHAPTER 2

THE PROJECT IN THEOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE

The Biblical Foundation of Missions

Congregations invest a great deal of time (and sometimes money) to develop a strategic plan. The beginning point is usually to develop a mission statement – a clear, succinct statement that lays forth the mission of the congregation. Since every congregation is unique both in its membership and in the culture of the surrounding community, it is commonly asserted that every congregational mission statement should be unique and specific to the congregation's culture.

The problem that arises from this view of mission is that the mission of the congregation becomes contingent on the members. If the majority of the members view the church as a hospital for Christians where they can mend their wounds from the world, then the mission will be directed towards Christians. If the members have country club mentality, where those who have “paid their dues” determine what is done, then the mission is dictated by the majority and tradition. If the church is an outpost for reaching the lost, then the mission changes accordingly. Since Scripture clearly teaches that mankind is totally sinful apart from God, it hardly seems appropriate to let these same sinful people serve as the determining factor for the direction of the church apart from God.

In *The Mission of God*, Georg Vicedom suggests that not only is it inappropriate to determine the mission apart from God, but mission can and should be understood as being established completely by God himself. The church's mission is to continue in the mission of God Himself. Since God is the originator of the mission, “we cannot speak of ‘the mission of

the church,' even less 'our mission.'"⁵ This is not to say that the church has no mission, but that it has no mission apart from the mission of God and His call to mission. It is God's mission first, but he makes it the church's mission as well.

God's ownership of the mission goes even further than simply stating that God is the originator of the mission or the one who has commissioned the church. It is not as if God came up with the plan and designated the church for the task, without God participating in the plan. God is the original missionary. And God did more than just come and deliver His message. He was and is the message itself. In the first chapter of John's Gospel, we are told that "in the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ...The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us."⁶ In Jesus Christ, the message of God literally comes to life.

If we follow Vicedom's assessment and look at the church as God's chosen instrument or mechanism for the continuation of His mission, then we must look to God to reveal His mission to us so that we might follow His lead. Therefore, it is necessary for us to develop a comprehensive understanding of God's mission work. "As we strive to carry out faithfully the mission mandate of our Lord, we are comforted, refreshed and strengthened by the assurance that the mission is *the Lord's*."⁷

It is tempting to reduce God's mission work to the work of Jesus Christ. In Christ, God comes to us to achieve His mission. And then, in the ascension, Christ returns to heaven and the church continues what He started. Some even make the assertion that missiology focuses on the work of the church after the ascension:

⁵ Georg Vicedom, *The Mission of God* (St. Louis, MO: Concordia Publishing House, 1965), 6.

⁶ Scripture quotations are from the Holy Bible, English Standard Version®, copyright © 2001 by Crossway Bibles, a publishing ministry of Good News Publishers. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

⁷ CTCR *A Theological Statement of Mission* (St. Louis, MO: The Lutheran Church Missouri Synod, 1991), 29.

“Missiology examines the expansion (or retraction) of the Christian faith as carried throughout the world by a self-consciously distinct community, beginning in Jerusalem around 30 AD and spreading throughout the inhabited world. Missiology engages in serious historical and theological reflection on all aspects of the church’s mission.”⁸

There are two problems with this approach to missiology. First, it does not have the *missio dei* as its foundation. It focuses on the mission of the church which cannot be understood apart from the mission of God. Second, as a result of focusing on mission as belonging to the church itself, this view erroneously asserts that the scriptural mission began after the ascension of Jesus, completely ignoring the missional nature of the life of Christ and not allowing for any missional work in the Old Testament.

In his work also titled *The Mission of God*, Christopher Wright suggests that the mission of God is established long before the ascension of Christ. In fact, Wright contends that all of Scripture can be read with a “missional hermeneutic.” There is a distinction between a “biblical basis of mission” and a “missional hermeneutic of the Bible.”⁹ Typically in the church today, we seek out the passages of Scripture that explicitly instruct us to share the message of God and use them to justify our missional approach. A missional hermeneutic approaches Scripture as one long narrative of God’s mission work in the world. “A missiologist begins with a general assumption: the Bible is ultimately one book about the *missio Dei*.”¹⁰ “The whole Bible, both Old and New Testament, is a missionary book, the revelation of God’s purpose and action in mission in human history.”¹¹ Justice Anderson, in setting forth different aspects of missional theology, states that “A *third concept in a theology*

⁸ J. Andrew Kirk, “How a Missiologist Utilizes the Bible” in *Bible and Mission: A Conversation Between Biblical Studies and Missiology*, ed. Rollin G. Grams, I. Howard Marshall, Peter F. Penner, and Robin Routledge (Germany: Neufeld Verlag Schwarzenfeld, 2008), 247.

⁹ Christopher J. H. Wright, *The Mission of God: Unlocking the Bible’s Grand Narrative* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2006), 51.

¹⁰ J. Andrew Kirk “How a Missiologist Utilizes the Bible,” 258.

¹¹ Arthur F. Glasser, *Announcing the Kingdom: The Story of God’s Mission in the Bible* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2003), 17.

of mission is the missionary nature of the Bible. ... The Bible is the record of the missionary activities of God. Could this missionary motif not be the key to its unity and wholeness?"¹² "From a missiologist's perspective this is especially important, since the basis for mission is not to be found in isolated texts."¹³ This is not to say that every passage needs to be reinterpreted as God's saving work in the world. However, the mission of God is integral to the entire movement of the Scriptural narrative. Wright states that "My major concern has been to develop an approach to biblical hermeneutics that sees the mission of God (and the participation in it of God's people) as a framework within which we can read the whole Bible."¹⁴ In an effort to apply this hermeneutic, we will walk through many sections of Scripture, both Old and New Testaments, to develop a comprehensive understanding of God's, and therefore the church's, mission.

Old Testament Mission

We begin our investigation into the mission of God appropriately "in the beginning" – Genesis 1 and 2. Here we see God create the entire world and continued to provide for His creation. If we look at the six days of creation, we see that in creation God proceeded with meticulous care. Genesis 1:2 says that the earth was "formless and empty." God, in order to provide for His creation, responds to these needs by giving it form and filling it. Days 1-3 show the formation of the earth as light is created (though without source, it was still empty), the waters are separated above and below, forming the sky, and the waters below are separated to form seas and give way to dry land where vegetation is made to grow. When we

¹² Justice Anderson, "An Overview of Missiology," in *Missiology*, ed. John Mark Terry, Ebbie Smith, and Justice Anderson (Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1998), 10.

¹³ J. Andrew Kirk "How a Missiologist Utilizes the Bible," 258.

¹⁴ Christopher Wright, *The Mission of God*, 17.

move to days 4-6, the places formed in days 1-3 are filled. The sun, moon and stars fill the light and darkness. The waters and the sky are filled with sea creatures and birds on day five. Day six sees the filling of the land with land animals and culminating in the creation of man, who is made uniquely in the image of God.

Mankind, having been created in the image of God, has a relationship with God that is unique, different from that of all the rest of creation. In Gen. 1:28, God invites, or commissions, man to participate in God's mission of caring for the rest of creation. Most translations state that man is to "subdue" the earth, implying that man should exercise authority over the earth for his own advantage. However, the sense of the word is not authoritarian.¹⁵ It is more of a caretaker than a master. "Mankind – male and female – is clearly distinguished from the animals, set apart for a function different from the one the Creator assigned to these lower creatures. Mankind was to manage the earth for God."¹⁶

This missional interpretation is supported by the expanded account of the sixth day of creation in Genesis chapter 2. V.15 states that "the Lord took the man and put him in the garden of Eden *to work it and take care of it.*" [emphasis added]. The word that is translated as "work" has the Hebrew root עבד, which can also be translated as "serve."^{17 18} The Hebrew word used for "take care of" (שמר) is the same word that is translated as "keep" in the

¹⁵ "Yet the blessing sounds hardly 'like a summons to the subjection of hostile powers.' The relation of the soul to the outer world... was not originally adverse, as is held by Bellarmin, or even by Zwingli." John Peter Lange, *Genesis, Commentary on the Holy Scriptures*, trans. Philip Schaff (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1950), 174.

"Probably what is designated here is settlement and agriculture; 'subdue the land' in ch. 1 is a semantic parallel to 'till and keep the land' in 2:5, 15." Victor P. Hamilton, *The Book of Genesis: Chapters 1-17*, The New International Commentary on the Old Testament. (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1990), 139-140.

¹⁶ John C. Jeske, *Genesis, The People's Bible*. (Milwaukee, WI: Northwestern Publishing House, 1991), 23.

¹⁷ R. Laird Harris, ed. *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament* Vol. 2 (Chicago, IL: Moody Press, 1980), s.v. "1553 – abad," by Walter C. Kaiser.

¹⁸ "The word is commonly used in a religious sense of serving God..." Gordon J. Wenham, *Genesis, Word Biblical Commentary*. (Waco, TX: Word Books, 1987-1994), 67.

Aaronic benediction of Numbers 6:24 – “The LORD bless you and keep you.” “The basic idea of the root is ‘to exercise great care over.’”¹⁹ So, as God cares for mankind and all creation, Adam is called on to care for the Garden of Eden, working cooperatively with God in His mission.²⁰

In Genesis chapter 3, the mission of God continues, but the approach changes in light of man’s fall into sin. God’s mission is still to provide for the needs of His creation, but those needs change drastically with the introduction of sin. Prior to the fall, man simply needed the sustaining of physical functions (air, food, etc.). Spiritually, man had the perfect relationship with God for which God had created man. Certainly God continues to provide for the basic needs of creations. However, after the fall, the focus of Scripture shifts to the spiritual need of mankind for forgiveness and a restored relationship with God. Creation and salvation are part of the same caring will of God. “The will to save, on the part of the God of Israel, is one with his will to create.”²¹

After the fall, many other needs came into play. There are four things that God does in response to their sin. As Lutherans, we see three of the responses as Gospel and one as Law. First, God seeks out man. With the introduction of sin, man no longer looks for God. Instead, he tries to hide himself and his shame from the presence of God. This makes it necessary for God to seek them out. “The Lord addresses a question rather than a command to the secluded man, for God ‘must draw rather than drive him out of hiding.’ He is the good shepherd who seeks the lost sheep. Such a context calls for a display of tenderness rather

¹⁹ Harris, *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament* Vol. 2, s.v. “2414 – shamar.”

²⁰ “Man is told to ‘subdue and rule’ the earth and its animal inhabitants, thereby fulfilling his role as God’s image-bearer on earth.” Wenham, *Genesis*, 33.

²¹ Johannes Blauw, “The Biblical View of Man in His Religion” in *The Theology of the Christian Mission*, ed. Gerald H. Anderson (New York, NY: McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 1961), 34.

than toughness.”²² It is a Gospel response because, in their sin, Adam and Eve have tarnished the image of God within them and relinquished the privilege of entering into God’s presence on their own. They are only in God’s presence because He brings them into His presence by His grace.

Second, God responds with a promise to man in the form of the curse of Satan. Referring to an offspring of Eve, God says to Satan, “he will crush your head, and you will strike his heel.”

“Clearly this verse is not simply about the origin of the conflict between humans and snakes, but about a conflict that will culminate with the defeat of the serpent by the One who will descend from the woman. This points to Christ and His defeat of Satan on the cross, and for this reason is often called the ‘protevangelium’ (the first promise of the Gospel).”²³

Through no merit of their own, God will bring about the destruction of Satan and, through Christ, will give the victory to mankind.

The third response of God is to pronounce judgment on Adam and Eve, indicating to them the consequences of their sin. They are still participants in God’s mission to care for his creation, but their role is no longer as comfortable as it was before the fall. They will still “be fruitful and multiply,” but giving birth will be accompanied by pain. Man will still “subdue [the earth] and have dominion” over creation, but it will now be a toilsome task. “Yes, there will be pain for Eve, but she is promised children. Sterility will not be one of her problems. Yes, there will be frustration for Adam because of intractable soil, but he will eat and not

²² Hamilton, *The Book of Genesis: Chapters 1-17*, 192-193.

²³ Edward A. Engelbrecht, ed., *The Lutheran Study Bible*, (St. Louis, MO: Concordia Publishing House, 2009), 20.

starve to death.”²⁴ Their sin has not only tarnished the image of God in mankind, but it has also affected their role in God’s missions.

This is followed up by another Gospel response – God provides them with clothes. With the introduction of sin, shame has also entered the world. God’s care for man now extends to addressing the temporal consequences of that sin by providing covering for their nakedness. Before the fall this was unnecessary, but now becomes a part of God’s loving provision in a fallen world.²⁵

So, we can see that God’s mission has not changed – it is still to care for His creation, and mankind in particular. However, what is needed to provide that care has changed drastically. Prior to the fall of mankind, the care of creation simply entailed sustaining what had been put in place both directly by God and through the reproductive mechanisms God had established. When mankind brought sin into creation, the care for creation now included addressing the consequences for that sin. That need has not changed since and, as we will see

²⁴ Hamilton, *The Book of Genesis: Chapters 1-17*, 200.

²⁵ “According to Hofmann, Drechsler, Delitzsch, this clothing would appear to be a sacramental sign of grace, a type of the death of Christ, and of the being clothed with the holy righteousness of the God-man (Delitzsch, p. 192).” Lange, *Genesis*, 240.

“As God’s final kindness toward man in the garden, his provision of clothing is obviously of great significance. . . . Whereas the human couple could only produce inadequate loincloths (3:7), God provided them with a proper outfit.” Wenham, *Genesis*, 84.

“God now proceeded to show his love for his children in another way. . . . By providing more adequate clothing for them God strengthened their sense of shame, to aid them in their struggle against temptation.” Jeske, *Genesis*, 57.

“There may also be a hint of the sacrificial slaying of animals in making these garments of skin.” Tremper Longman III and David E. Garland, eds., *The Expositor’s Bible Commentary*, Vol. 1, (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2006), 94. This would tend to support the interpretation of the clothing of Adam and Eve by God as a reference to the sacrifice of Christ that would cover the sin of mankind. However, much more would have to be said about sacrificial practices that go beyond the scope of this paper.

“It serves as a contrast with v. 7, the covering of fig leaves versus the covering with tunics of animal skins. The first is an attempt to cover oneself, the second is accepting a cover from another. The first is manmade and the second is God made. Adam and Eve are in need of a salvation that comes from without. God needs to do for them what they are unable to do for themselves.” Hamilton, *The Book of Genesis: Chapters 1-17*, 207.

from further investigation into Scripture, neither has God's mission to respond with grace and salvation to fallen mankind.

There is a pattern that is established in God's response to the sin of Adam and Eve. In Genesis 3-11, with each instance of sin that is recorded, God responds with both justice in the form of an expulsion and with grace – God's continued care for mankind and His mission to restore them. For Adam and Eve, the expulsion is from the Garden of Eden, but the grace is seen in the promise of victory over Satan.

This pattern is repeated in the next chapter when Cain murders his brother Abel. Like his parents, Cain is expelled, but not just from the Garden. Cain is cast out from the presence of God and is cursed to wander the earth, never having a place to call home. However, God does show grace to Cain when he complains that he will be murdered. God makes a promise to Cain that if anyone should murder him, the murderer's punishment would be seven times greater. Despite Cain's sin, God still graciously preserves Cain's life.

When we get to the account of Noah, we see that it is not a single sin that is addressed, but the overwhelming sinfulness of all mankind. God brings His judgment on the earth in the form of the flood, expelling mankind from creation itself. But God's gracious care and provision is seen in His saving Noah and his family.

Finally, in Chapter 11, the arrogance and disobedience of the people at Babel is recounted. They arrogantly think they can establish themselves and reach to the heavens with their tower. They are also disobedient to God's initial command to Adam and Eve (reiterated to Noah) to "fill the earth" as they make plans to remain together and "not be scattered over the face of the whole earth." "It didn't matter to them that God had said: 'fill the earth!' They

answered: ‘Why should we? It doesn’t get any better than this!’”²⁶ God’s expelling judgment is the confusing of languages that forces them to scatter and God’s grace follows in His promise to Abram (later renamed Abraham) and later in Pentecost as God continues to draw people to Himself from every culture with the gospel in their own languages.

It is in this response of grace that the mission of God takes on a more specific aim. In the first 11 chapters of Genesis, God’s mission appears to be the general care and preservation of mankind on the earth – taking care of the physical needs and demonstrating forbearance with their sin. However, with Abraham, God’s mission of salvation for mankind begins to unfold and take shape.

Many people (including many Christians) assume that God’s plan in the Old Testament was the establishment of the nation of Israel, the descendants of Abraham, as His people. This assertion seems to be supported by the many times that the people of Israel are led into captivity yet God preserves for Himself a remnant that would re-establish the nation of Israel. When the Israelites as a nation rejected Jesus as the Messiah, God presumably changed His approach and began to reach out to the Gentile nations. In fact, some dispensationalists would argue that it is only because the Israelites, by and large, rejected Jesus that the Gentiles were included in God’s plan. However, as we will see, God’s plan of salvation as revealed in the Old Testament is identical to the New Testament plan of salvation.

Many Christians believe the beginning of God’s worldwide mission occurs in Matthew 28 (see previous quote from J. Andrew Kirk, “How a Missiologist Utilizes the Bible,” 247). As Jesus is about to ascend into heaven, He commands His followers to, “go

²⁶ Jeske, *Genesis*, 108.

and make disciples of all nations...” (Matthew 28:18). It is assumed that this is something new. The truth is that there is a great deal of evidence in the Old Testament for the same mission of God.

We now go back to God’s calling of Abram as a Gospel response to the sins at Babel. God makes this promise to Abram: “I will make you a great nation and I will bless you; I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you and whoever curses you I will curse; and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you.” (Genesis 12:2-3) God makes two main promises here: first, to bless Abram, making him into a great nation, and second, to bless all people through Abram. If the general assumption that God’s original mission was to establish the people of Israel as a goal unto itself, then the blessing should have stopped with the first promise: “I will make you a great nation.”

However, God did not choose Abram just so that Abram and his descendants could be blessed. The purpose of their being blessed was to become the instruments through which God would bless all nations. “God assured Abram: *‘I will bless you.’* God would not only pour blessings into Abram’s personal life; he would use him to bless countless other people. *‘You will be a blessing.’*”²⁷ The blessing had to begin somewhere. Abram was simply the one who was chosen to be the starting point.

If we look at this blessing as a first setting forth of God’s plan of salvation, reading it with a missional hermeneutic, we get three important aspects of that mission. First, God is the initiator. “It’s important to note that if contact is to be established between God and the sinner, *the initiative must start on God’s end*, not on ours.”²⁸ Before Abram had done

²⁷ Ibid, 119.

²⁸ Ibid, 119.

anything, God makes the promise to bless him and make him into a great nation. It is God's mission and God is the one who brings about the blessing of election (see also Romans 4).

Second, the mission of God changes one's identity. In chapter 17, this is done symbolically as Abram's name is changed to Abraham. However, even in the initial promise made in chapter 12, God tells Abram, "you will be a blessing." Whatever else he might be, by virtue of God's covenantal blessing, Abram is now a blessing himself.

Third, and most salient to our understanding of God's mission, is the promise that "all peoples on the earth will be blessed through you." It is important to note the appropriate translation of the preposition as "through" and not "by".²⁹ Abram is the instrument of blessing, not the source. The blessing that others would receive through Abram comes from someone else, namely God. God is still the one on the mission, but here He chooses to work that blessing through others.

In a sense, we could consider this to be the Great Commission, not Matthew 28. "Commission" implies that one person is being brought along side someone else on that second person's mission. It is a "co"-mission. And in Gen. 12, Abram is invited through God's promise to work with God on God's mission. It is not Abram's mission, because he is not the originator. But God chooses to work through Abram to accomplish His mission.

Now we need to look at a few more Old Testament accounts of God's mission to all nations to establish the pervasiveness of this mission throughout Scripture. Since the promise to Abram is reiterated to him and his son and grandson in Genesis, we turn our attention to

²⁹ "Traditionally, interpreters have understood the verb as passive, "will be blessed through you".... By this translation, Abram is the vehicle of divine gift for the nations. This suggests that a specific plan is envisioned for the blessing upon the nations. ... The passive translation probably suits the context of the passage best, since God is the source ('I will' [6x]) and Abram in our analysis is the channel ('you will be a blessing,' v.2d)." Kenneth A. Mathews, *Genesis 11:27-50:26*, The New American Commentary. (Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holmes Publishers, 2005), 117.

the book of Exodus. After the 10 plagues have been visited upon the Egyptians and Pharaoh has sent the Israelites out of Egypt, we are told that “many other people went up with them...” (12:38). “Thus the promise to Abraham in Genesis 12:3, of being a blessing to ‘all peoples on earth,’ receives another fulfillment in this swarm of foreigners who are impressed enough by God’s power to leave Egypt with Israel after all the plagues have been performed.”³⁰ Although we might pass over this as nothing more than others in Egypt who were impressed with what the God of Israel had done, we can look to other places where foreigners are specifically included with God’s people.³¹

For example, in Isaiah, as the northern Kingdom of Israel is in captivity, referring to foreigners and eunuchs (who were considered rejected because they had been castrated) God says, “these I will bring to my holy mountain and give them joy in my house of prayer. ... My house will be called a house of prayer for all nations” (Isaiah 56:7).

“Not only will they be permitted to come, but the Holy God himself will conduct them, just as he brought his own people back from the land of exile. There he will treat them as he would any believing Israelite. They will have the privileges of having their sins atoned for... and of having instant access to God in prayer. ... God had not chosen Israel and given them all that he did in order to shut out the world, but to bring in the world.”³²

So, when the people of Israel would be much more concerned about their own plight than that of other nations, God takes the time to make it clear that His mission is not just to save them, but to include all nations among His people.

³⁰ Longman and Garland, *The Expositor’s Bible Commentary*, Vol. 1, 433.

³¹ “This points to the fact that Israel then and later never was a pure ethnic entity defined by bloodlines. Others could and did join Israel at various stages of its history and were then also considered children of Jacob/Israel.” Waldemar Janzen, *Genesis*, Believers Church Bible Commentary. (Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, 2000), 163.

³² John N. Oswalt, *the Book of Isaiah, Chapters 40-66*, The New International Commentary on the Old Testament. (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1998), 460-461.

With this in mind, the “other people” coming out of Egypt with the Israelites bears more significance. This is not just people who are fleeing the destruction that has been brought on Egypt. These are people who, having seen the power of God and witnessed His grace to the people of Israel, put their trust in God. They are now included in the exodus of God’s people. But is this God’s mission – to reach out to all people – or just an unintended consequence of His mission to the people of Israel?

Staying in Exodus, but moving on to Sinai in chapter 19, God tells the people of Israel His purpose for them: “Although the whole earth is mine, you will be for me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.” So the question arises, if the entire nation of Israel is a kingdom of priests for God, who are the people to whom they minister? Later on God would designate the tribe of Levi to be the priests for the nation of Israel. In the microcosm that was Israel, not everyone served as a priest, but some acted on behalf of the whole. So, if Israel is to be God’s kingdom of priests, there is a group that is larger than Israel whom they are to serve as priests. Given what we have already seen of God’s mission, it is not unreasonable to assert that they are to be God’s priests to all mankind. God’s mission is still to all nations, and here Israel is commissioned by God to be a part that mission.³³

Moving on to the reign of Solomon in 1 Kings, we again see a time when we might assume that Israel would be inwardly focused. Under Saul and David, Israel had to fight to establish itself apart from foreign rule. In fact, during the time of the judges prior to Saul, Israel had repeatedly fallen under foreign rule. So, with Solomon now seated on the throne

³³ “This is (partially) fulfilled in the Sinaitic covenant – which includes the call to Israel to be a priestly intermediary between God and the world, revealing his glorious presence in their life together.” Robin Routledge, “Mission and Covenant in the Old Testament” in *Bible and Mission: A Conversation Between Biblical Studies and Missiology*, ed. Rollin G. Grams, I. Howard Marshall, Peter F. Penner, and Robin Routledge (Germany: Neufeld Verlag Schwarzenfeld, 2008), 9.

and the construction of the temple of the Lord completed, the people of Israel may have been thinking that it was time to rejoice and enjoy the land they had been given. They have now been clearly established as the people of God and the promise of God is complete.

However, in 1 Kings 8, as Solomon is lifting up a prayer of dedication for the temple of the Lord, this is what he asks of God:

“As for the foreigner who does not belong to your people Israel but has come from a distant land because of your name . . . when he comes and prays towards this temple, then hear from heaven, your dwelling place, and do whatever the foreigner asks of you, so that all the people of the earth may know your name and fear you, as do your own people Israel, and may know that this place I have built bears your Name.” 1 Kings 8:41-43

Note that the word for “fear” may also be translated as “worship.”³⁴ So Solomon is acknowledging that the foreigner will be drawn to the Lord and receive the same blessing through faith in God as the people of Israel.

“In the law (Deut. xv. 14-16) it was provided that the stranger, sojourning among the Israelites, might sacrifice with them; Solomon goes further, and declares that the great deeds of God in Israel, the seal and the crown of which the temple as a fixed dwelling place of Jehovah, were to work out the salvation not only of Israel, but the conversion of the nations of the earth.”³⁵

Solomon’s building of the Temple was not for his own mission, but for the mission of God to draw all people to Himself. Solomon recognized and acknowledged this in his prayer of dedication.³⁶

³⁴ “...biblical usages . . . are divided into five general categories: 1) the emotion of fear, 2) the intellectual anticipation of evil without emphasis upon the emotional reaction, 3) reverence or awe, 4) righteous behavior or piety, and 5) formal religious worship.” R Laird Harris, ed., *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*, vol. 1, (Chicago, IL: Moody Press, 1980), s.v. “907 – yare,” by Andrew Bowling.

³⁵ John Peter Lange, *Kings*, Commentary on the Holy Scriptures, trans. Philip Schaff (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1950), 100.

³⁶ “Even Solomon bore witness that the house he had built could not encompass Him whom the heavens cannot contain, so likewise he testifies that the covenant made by God with Israel did not exclude all other nations from salvation, but rather aimed at leading all men to know the truth.” George Barlow, *Homiletical Commentary on the Books of Kings*, Preacher’s Complete Homiletical Commentary on the Old Testament (New York, NY: Funk & Wagnalls Company, 1892), 123.

One of the most powerful statements of God's mission beyond the nation of Israel comes in Isaiah 49. Again, with the nation of Israel in captivity, it would be tempting to focus on the short-term goal of re-establishing Israel. However, in His instructions to Isaiah, God says, "It is too small a thing for you to be my servant to restore the tribes of Jacob and bring back those of Israel I have kept. I will also make you a light for the Gentiles, that you may bring my salvation to the ends of the earth." (Isaiah 49:6). It is not good enough to just establish Israel. Although it is a step on the way to the mission of reaching all nations, it is only a means to an end. Saving Israel is not God's goal. From the beginning it has been bigger than that.³⁷ Isaiah was instructed to keep that in mind even in these difficult times for Israel.

Finally, we look at Jeremiah 29:7. Like Isaiah, Jeremiah was God's prophet in difficult times. Isaiah prophesied when the northern kingdom of Israel was led into captivity and now Jeremiah does so when the southern kingdom of Judah has been conquered and Jerusalem has been destroyed. During this time of mourning for the people of Israel, God speaks through Jeremiah and says, "seek the peace and prosperity of the city to which I have carried you into exile. Pray to the LORD for it, because if it prospers, you too will prosper." The word for prosper is the Hebrew word "shalom" which is often translated as peace.³⁸ The peace of Israel is intimately connected with the peace of the nations, including the nation that

³⁷ "God's original plan always was to use the seed of Abram to bring his blessing on all the nations of the earth (Gen. 12:3), and the earlier Servant poem already listed being a covenant to the nations as part of the Servant's purpose (42:6). Isaiah 2:1-5; 14:1-3; 19:18-25; and 45:18-25 already have confirmed that God desired to include the nations as eventual members of his kingdom, so this is not an adjustment in God's playbook to correct a defect in his strategic plan." Gary V. Smith, *Isaiah 40-66*, The New American Commentary. (Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holmes Publishers, 2009), 348.

³⁸ Harris, *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*, volume 2, s.v. "2401-shalem," by G. Lloyd Carr.

has conquered them. To put it into missional terms, the peace of Israel rests on their continuing in the mission of God to establish peace through salvation among the nations.³⁹

Although this is far from an exhaustive demonstration of God's plan of salvation for all nations in the Old Testament, it sufficiently shows that God's mission to all nations is not established in the New Testament.⁴⁰ From the beginning, God's mission is to provide for His creation and, since the fall into sin, that provision as recorded in Scripture has focused on the redemption of all mankind from sin.

New Testament Mission

Although God's mission to all nations in the New Testament is not disputed, it is still necessary for defining the mission to look at some of the passages in the New Testament that help establish this continuity.

We begin our investigation of the New Testament with the genealogies of Jesus in the gospels of Matthew and Luke. In the Matthean genealogy, there are two significant connections to the Old Testament mission of God. First, the two people who represent breaks in the genealogy (and who are set apart in the first verse: "The book of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, son of David, son of Abraham.") were instrumental in the covenantal promise

³⁹ See also Leslie C. Allen, *Jeremiah: A Commentary* (Louisville, Ky.: Westminster John Knox Press, 2008), 324.

⁴⁰ For more extensive listings of Old Testament texts that support a missional hermeneutic, see the following:
- W. Bryant Hicks, "Old Testament Foundations for Mission," in *Missiology: An Introduction to the Foundations, History, and Strategies of World Missions*, ed. Jon Mark Terry, Ebbie Smith, and Justice Anderson (Nashville, TN: Broadman and Holman Publishers, 1998), 51-62.

- Roger Peterson, Gordon Aeschliman, and R. Wayne Sneed, *Maximum Impact Short-Term Mission* (Minneapolis, MN: STEMPress, 2003), 35-51.

- H.H. Rowley, *The Missionary Message of the Old Testament* (London: The Carey Kingsgate Press Limited, 1944).

- C. Stuhlmüller, "The Foundations for Mission in the Old Testament" in C. Stuhlmüller, D. Senior, *The Biblical Foundations for Mission* (Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 1983).

- Christopher J. H. Wright, *The Mission of God: Unlocking the Bible's Grand Narrative* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2006)

of salvation. Abraham, the beginning of the genealogy, was the first man to receive God's covenant, which we discussed extensively earlier.

“We see here already the first of a number of intriguing indications in Matthew's Gospel that this Jesus, who summarizes *Israel's* history and who fulfills *Israel's* Scripture and who embodies *Israel's* hope for end-time deliverance through One who is ‘Christ’ and royal ‘Son of David,’ has also come *for the salvation of the Gentiles.*”⁴¹

David was also given the promise of God that a descendant of his would be seated on the throne forever. “‘Son of David,’ however, specifically evokes what might be the dominant strain of messianic expectation in both the OT and in Second Temple Jewish literature.”⁴² “God's promises, though long delayed, had not been forgotten; Jesus and his ministry were perceived as God's fulfillment of the covenantal promises now centuries old.”⁴³

The second connection to the Old Testament mission comes with the inclusion of Tamar, Rahab, Ruth and Bathsheba (not named, but only referred to as the wife of Uriah). “According to the Bible, Rahab and (probably) Tamar were Canaanites, while Ruth was a Moabite. Bathsheba is not identified in the OT as a foreigner; but it is as the wife of Uriah (*the Hittite*) that Matthew identifies her...”⁴⁴ “That at least two of the four women early in the genealogy are also Gentiles... may also provide the second of many significant anticipations of this Gospel's final climactic sending of the Eleven to make disciples of all the nations (28:18-20).”⁴⁵

⁴¹ Jeffrey A. Gibbs, *Matthew 1:1-11:1*, Concordia Commentary. (St. Louis, MO: Concordia Publishing House, 2006), 77.

⁴² Ibid 75.

⁴³ D.A. Carson, *Matthew: Chapters 1 Through 12*, The Expositor's Bible Commentary. (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1995), 62.

⁴⁴ Raymond E. Brown, *The Birth of the Messiah: A commentary on the infancy narratives in Matthew and Luke* (London: Cassell & Collier Macmillan Publishers Ltd., 1977), 72.

⁴⁵ Gibbs, *Matthew 1:1-11:1*, 89.

“The most convincing argument of this sort has been advanced by Heffern: the author ‘has selected all four on account of their heathen origin or associations, and . . . means to utilize their incorporation into Israel and their direct connection with the Messianic hope in the solution of one of the most pressing practical problems of the Apostolic age – the admission of Gentiles into the Church’.”⁴⁶

The genealogy in Luke can add to the idea that the New Testament is to be a continuation of the salvation mission of God in the Old Testament. Like Matthew, Luke includes Abraham (and Isaac and Jacob) as well as David. However, Luke goes back further to include the very beginning of mankind with Adam. “By linking together the first and last figures of the genealogy, Luke shows how Jesus, at the head of the list, is the true Son of God who now begins the restoration of what Adam lost.”⁴⁷ The promises to Adam, Abraham, and David (and all that God was working to achieve in and through them) are brought to completion in the work of Jesus Christ.

In Luke, we also find a connection to the mission of God as seen in Isaiah 49:6. You will recall that in that passage, God told Isaiah that his mission was bigger than just Israel. He was to be a “light to the Gentiles.” In Luke 2, Simeon’s encounter with the Christ child is recounted. Simeon was devout and was “waiting for the consolation of Israel.” He had been told he would not die until he had seen the Christ. When Jesus is brought to the temple, it is revealed to Simeon (we assume by some special revelation of the Holy Spirit) that here is the Christ and he refers to Jesus as “a light for revelation to the Gentiles.” Though waiting for the consolation of *Israel*, Simeon first proclaims the salvation power to Gentiles.

⁴⁶ A.D. Heffern, “The Four Women in St Matthew’s Genealogy of Christ.” *Journal of Biblical Literature*, xxxi (1943):69-81 quote in Marshall D. Johnson, *The Purpose of the Biblical Genealogies with Special Reference to the Setting of the Genealogies of Jesus* (Cambridge: University Printing House, 1969), 155.

⁴⁷ Arthur A. Just Jr., *Luke 1:1-9:50*, Concordia Commentary. (St. Louis, MO: Concordia Publishing House, 1996), 168.

“Some have doubted whether the phrase ‘a light for revelation to the Gentiles’ implies that the Gentiles are included in God’s salvation.... However, the metaphor of ‘light’ is already familiar to us from Zechariah’s Song (1:78-79; cf. 2:8-9), where its salvific purpose is manifest....”⁴⁸

Much like in Isaiah, it would be too small a task for Jesus to have come just for the consolation of Israel – He was sent for all people as well.

Of course, we would be remiss if we did not revisit Matthew 28. Although I have argued that Genesis 12 can be seen as the Great Commission, Matthew 28 is no less important. In fact, in recognizing that in both Genesis 12 and Matthew 28 God commissions His followers on His mission to “all nations” is perhaps the strongest argument for the continuity of mission throughout Scripture. “This ‘all nations’ in no way contradicts the earlier teachings and practice of Jesus. The narrow path within Israel had to branch out into the wide world of all nations, and the inroad into the wide world had to begin as the narrow path within Israel.”⁴⁹ The promises to Abraham continue through the disciples.⁵⁰

The connection between Abraham and the New Testament believers is strengthened in the writings of Paul. In Romans 4, Paul goes to great lengths to emphasize that those who share in Abraham’s faith in God are the heirs of God’s promises to Abraham and not those who are merely biological descendants. “The promise comes by faith so that it may be by grace and may be guaranteed to all Abraham’s offspring – not only to those who are of the law but also to those who are of the faith of Abraham.” (Rom. 4:16) “Paul has shown

⁴⁸ Joel B. Green, *The Gospel of Luke*, The New International Commentary on the New Testament. (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1997), 148.

⁴⁹ Anderson, *The Theology of the Christian Mission*, 66.

⁵⁰ For more on the parallels between Genesis 12:2-3 and Matthew 28:18-20 see Mike Gibson, “Short-Term Missions Transform Congregations!,” *Missio Apostolica*, Volume XVIII, No 1 (Issue 35, May 2010): 23-29.

Abraham to be not simply the father of the Jews, but father of the Gentiles as well.”⁵¹ “There was, according to Paul, a still further purpose in God’s provision of the inheritance through faith: ‘that the promise might be confirmed to all the seed.’”⁵² Therefore, the mission of God is not, and never has been, limited to the biological descendants of Abraham. The mission of God which was manifest in Israel throughout the Old Testament is the same mission that is seen in the Church in the New Testament.

The book of Acts is filled with references to God’s mission to the Gentile nations. However, for our purposes, a few will suffice. In Acts 1:8, Jesus Himself specifies the object of His mission: “You will be My witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.” The mission will begin where the disciples are at present – in Jerusalem. From there, it will spread out to all nations – Judea, Samaria and the ends of the earth. In fact,

“It has often been pointed out that the geographic terms of verse 8 provide a sort of ‘Index of Contents’ for Acts. ‘You will be my witnesses’ might be regarded as announcing the theme of the book; ‘in Jerusalem’ covers the first seven chapters, ‘in all Judeae and Samaria’ covers 8:1 to 11:18, and the remainder of the book traces the progress of the gospel outside the frontiers of the Holy Land until at last it reaches Rome.”⁵³

The account of Peter and Cornelius in Acts 10 gives a clear indication that the mission of God is to encompass all people, Jews and Gentiles. “Truly I understand that God shows no partiality, but in every nation anyone who fears him and does what is right is acceptable to him.” (Acts 10:34-35) After hearing how God spoken to Cornelius,

⁵¹ Luke Timothy Johnson, *Reading Romans: A Literary and Theological Commentary*, (New York, NY: The Crossroad Publishing Company, 1997), 73.

⁵² Douglas Moo, *The Epistle to the Romans*, The New International Commentary on the New Testament. (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1996), 278.

⁵³ F.F. Bruce, *The Book of the Acts*, The New International Commentary on the New Testament. (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1988), 36-37.

“The first words that Peter spoke were words of the weightiest import, sweeping away the racial and the religious prejudice of centuries. The words of Cornelius confirmed the lesson that Peter himself learned in Joppa: God has no favorites as between one nation and another, but anyone, from whatever nation, who fears him and acts rightly is acceptable to him.”⁵⁴

The final Old/New Testament connection that we will address is found in the Apostle Paul himself. In Philippians 3:4-6, Paul goes into detail about his Hebrew roots. If there was anyone who could lay claim to the Abrahamic promise through bloodline and commitment to the Hebrew tradition, it was Paul. “**Circumcised on the eighth day**, as every male Israelite child had to be, according to the terms of God’s covenant with Abraham (Gen 17:12). He is a Jew by birth, not a proselyte from paganism who would have been circumcised at the time of his conversion.”⁵⁵ He is “of the people of Israel” and “a Hebrew of Hebrews.” But it was more than just being born into the people of Israel. “...the interest is not simply in what was given to him by birth, but in what he himself did so as rightly to be designated ‘a Hebrew of Hebrews.’”⁵⁶

Yet it was this same person whom God had chosen to be His instrument in spreading the mission to the Gentiles. This was shocking even to the believers in Christ. Ananias, who in Acts 9 is called by God to address the newly converted Paul and, in a sense, to commission Paul, questions God on His choice. Later in the same chapter, the disciples avoid Paul because they are afraid, so great was Paul’s reputation of hatred for the church. Yet, in Ephesians 3:8, Paul tells of the mission he was sent on: “to preach to the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ.” The Hebrew of Hebrews is sent by God on the mission of

⁵⁴ Ibid, 211.

⁵⁵ F.F. Bruce, *Philippians*, New International Biblical Commentary. (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, Inc., 1989), 107.

⁵⁶ Gordon D. Fee, *Paul’s Letter to the Philippians*, The New International Commentary on the New Testament. (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1995), 305.

blessing the Gentile nations. Although he was questioned by the disciples at first, what could make God's mission to ALL NATIONS more clear than by God sending the man who had stood most strongly for Israel alone?⁵⁷ "He is a chosen instrument of mine to carry my name before the Gentiles and kings and the children of Israel." (Acts 9:15)

Returning to *The Mission of God*, Wright, in the introduction to Part IV, makes a powerful connection between the Old and New Testament missions through two sermons of Paul recorded in Acts. His sermon in Pisidian Antioch (Acts 13:16-41) is directed largely to a Jewish audience, while the Athens sermon in Acts 17:22-31 is preached to mostly Gentiles. The same Paul describes the mission in two distinct, yet parallel, ways. In both cases, God is the acting agent of the mission, working through the preacher to accomplish His goal. In the first case, the people who are objects of God's mission are Israel and the arena is the land of promise. In the second sermon, the people are all nations and the arena is the entire earth. Wright contends that the mission did not change, but the scope is ever expanding. In fact, I would argue that we can take a step back to Abraham and see that God's mission began with a promise to one man with the intent of expanding that to one nation and then expanding that to the ends of the earth, which was God's motivating goal from the start.⁵⁸

As congregations seek to define and distinguish themselves through their mission statements, it is important to keep in mind that there is a unified mission of God. Although the way this one mission manifests itself may be unique in each individual context, each

⁵⁷ For more on mission in the writings of Paul, see Don N. Howell Jr., "Mission in Paul's Epistles: Genesis, Pattern, and Dynamics" and "Mission in Paul's Epistles: Theological Bearings," in *Mission in the New Testament: An Evangelical Approach*, ed. William J. Larkin Jr. and Joel F. Williams (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1998), 63-116.

⁵⁸ The introduction to Part IV (p.393-396) gives a diagram of this understanding of the expanding mission of God. The implication, according to Wright, is that the ultimate goal has always been to save all nations. However there had to be a starting point. Therefore, the expansion of the mission does not imply a change in the mission or multiple missions. Instead, it shows a progression through the stage of implementation towards a single mission goal.

congregation is nevertheless a part of the greater mission of God. Just as the mission was the same in the Old and New Testaments, so too, it continues in the church today. Before we address the church in mission, we first turn our attention to the nature of the church.

The Biblical Continuity of Israel and the Church: God's Chosen People

Francis Pieper states that “The Christian Church is composed of all those, and only those, in whom the Holy Spirit has worked faith that for the sake of Christ’s vicarious satisfaction their sins are forgiven.”⁵⁹ Edward Koehler says that “all those whom the Holy Ghost through the Gospel has ‘called out of darkness into His marvelous light,’ constitute that ‘chosen generation, royal priesthood, holy nation, people for God’s own possession’ (1Pet.2:9), which is called the Church.”⁶⁰ And the writers of the Augsburg Confession assert that “the church is the assembly of saints in which the gospel is taught purely and the sacraments are administered rightly.”⁶¹ Each of these definitions creates a sharp contrast between the Old and New Testaments since the church is defined in ways that preclude the inclusion of those before the advent of the Christ – “Christ’s vicarious satisfaction,” “the Gospel,” and “the sacraments.” All of these things/terms would be completely foreign to the Old Testament people of Israel. In what follows, we will see that, despite these aspects of the church, God’s relationship and work with Israel is maintained and furthered in the New Testament church. In order to do this, we will look at three names used to refer to those in relationship with God.

⁵⁹ Francis Pieper, *Christian Dogmatics*, Vol. III, (St. Louis, MO: Concordia Publishing House, 1953), 397.

⁶⁰ Edward W.A. Koehler, *A Summary of Christian Doctrine*, (St. Louis, MO: Concordia Publishing House, 1939), 236.

⁶¹ Robert Kolb and Timothy J. Wengert eds., *The Book of Concord: The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, Trans. Charles Arand, Eric Gritsch, Robert Kolb, William Russell, James Schaaf, Jane Strohl, Timothy J. Wengert (Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg Fortress, 2000), 43.

Israel

Although it is our goal to show the continuity between the people of God in the Old and New Testaments, we start by looking at a term for the people of God that is associated almost exclusively with the Old Testament – Israel.

The first occurrence of the name “Israel” in the Old Testament is in Genesis 32:27 when Jacob wrestles with “a man” who then changes his name from Jacob to Israel. There is debate over the significance/meaning of the name. There appears to be a play on words with the Hebrew words for “Israel” and “struggled.”⁶² However, after a lengthy discussion of the potential understandings of the name, H.-J. Zobel concludes that “the basic meaning is ‘rule, be exalted.’ In this case, the original meaning of our name would be ‘El reigns, El is supreme.’”⁶³ So the first occurrence of “Israel” does not focus on Jacob, but on the reign of God. “Not only does the name ‘Israel’ in the OT have a ‘religious aura’ from the outset; it also embodies the notion of totality, united inwardly by common hopes and convictions and defined outwardly by the common confession of ‘El, the God of Israel.’”⁶⁴

Note that there is no mention of a national identity as a central focus for Israel. The emphasis is on the work of God in uniting the people in His promises. The national identity of Israel which is so commonly assumed in the church does not actually develop until later in Israel’s history. In fact, Zobel also asserts that “A change appears to take place [in the use of “Israel”] early in the period of David; ... The name “Jacob” begins to shine with the reflected religious glow of the term “Israel,” and the designation ‘Israel’ begins to have stronger

⁶² Hamilton, *The Book of Genesis*, 334.

⁶³ G. Johannes Botterweck and Helmer Ringgren, eds. *Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament* Vol. VI, trans. David E. Green, (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1990), s.v. “yisrael,” by H.-J. Zobel, 401.

⁶⁴ *Ibid*, 412-413.

overtone of national solidarity.”⁶⁵ This implies that the initial emphasis of the name Israel was not on the nation, but more on the religious aspects discussed above. It is only in time that the nationalistic meaning, which many people assume today, begins to take shape.

We see a restoration of this emphasis when we look at the use of “Israel” in the New Testament. We start by looking at the use of Israel in Matthew and Luke. “While Matthew associates Jesus’ call to repentance with Israel and his announcement of the kingdom of God directly with the Church..., according to Luke-Acts ‘the Church as the people of God exists in continuous development from Israel to the Gentiles’ (Schneider, 426).”⁶⁶ In other words, there is movement in both Gospels from the nationalistic Israel to the Church, or in Luke’s case an expansion of Israel to include Gentiles in the Church. Going further in interpreting Matthew, David Holwerda asserts that “according to Matthew, those who believe in Jesus ... are the recipients of the privileged status and task of Old Testament Israel.”⁶⁷

Turning to the writings of Paul, “a Hebrew of Hebrews,” we see that

“it is indisputable that Ἰσραήλ has in Paul a specific religious meaning in comparison with Ἰουδαίος. ... In the play on word, ‘not all from Israel are Israel’ (Rom. 9:6...), Paul affirms that descent from the ancestor Israel or membership in the people by blood is not sufficient to make valid the claim to be Israel...”⁶⁸

“Not sufficient” does not imply that no one who is a descendant of Jacob can be a member of the true Israel. It is simply not enough to just be a descendant of Jacob. “Paul affirms that the

⁶⁵ Ibid, 414.

⁶⁶ Horst Balz and Gerhard Schneider, eds. *Exegetical Dictionary of the New Testament* Vol. 2, (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1990), s.v. “Ἰσραήλ,” by Horst Kuhli, 203.

⁶⁷ David E. Holwerda, *Jesus and Israel: One Covenant or Two?*, (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1995), 56.

⁶⁸ Horst Balz and Gerhard Schneider, eds. *Exegetical Dictionary of the New Testament* Vol. 2, 204.

promise continues for Israel also, of course in a way different from the promise to the Gentiles, since it is limited only to a ‘remnant’”⁶⁹

Although some will not take it so far, there are those who assert that the New Testament “church” is Israel. David Holwerda makes numerous connections between OT Israel and the NT church. Building on what is stated above concerning Paul’s view of Israel, Holwerda states that because “Jesus is the corporate representative of Israel, God now recognizes as Israel all who respond in faith and obedience to the presence and will of God revealed in Jesus.”⁷⁰ In his exegesis of Matthew 28:16-20, Karl Barth asserts that the “community of Jesus... is the eschatological Israel, the Israel which receives into its life and history the chosen ones from among the Gentiles.”⁷¹ Robin Routledge deals with the name of Israel in the context of the covenants of God with Israel and asserts that it is not just about the title of “Israel”, but that we must “talk in terms of the extension of the covenant with Israel to the nations, and of the nations coming to know and worship Israel’s God.”⁷²

So, in looking at the title of “Israel” we see that there is continuity between the Old Testament followers of God and those of the New Testament. We will now turn our attention to the God-established nature of that relationship.

Chosen

The fact that the relationship of Israel to God rests solely on God is emphasized in their designation as “chosen.” Of course, the term “chosen” immediately implies that the one

⁶⁹ Ibid, 204.

⁷⁰ Holwerda, *Jesus and Israel: One Covenant or Two?*, 57.

⁷¹ Karl Barth, “An Exegetical Study of Matthew 28:16-20” in *The Theology of Christian Mission*, ed. Gerald H. Anderson (New York, NY: McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 1961), 64.

⁷² Robin Routledge, “Mission and Covenant in the Old Testament” in *Bible and Mission: A Conversation Between Biblical Studies and Missiology*, 10.

choosing is in the position of authority. However, the one(s) being chosen might also play a part – earning the right to be chosen or demonstrating ability for the task for which they are chosen. However, “Yahweh chose Israel to be holy and thereby to serve as His witness among the nations (Deut. 14:6). But her election is not based on her own greatness but on the greatness of the Lord’s love (Deut. 7:7 f.).”⁷³

Beginning with Abraham in Genesis 18, the people of God are frequently designated as “chosen.”⁷⁴ Quoting Th. C. Vriezen, Horst Seebass says that “In the OT the choice is always the action of God, of His grace...”⁷⁵ Although they would be called to act as a result of God’s covenantal choosing of Israel (See below **The Theological Context of the Church in Mission**), their designation as chosen implies that the covenantal relationship is established completely by the grace of God.

If we look at the equivalent verb in the Greek NT, (εκλέγομαι – choose, elect) we see that there is a common understanding with the OT election. “Just as the experience of salvation was the basis for belief in election within Israel (cf. Deut. 14:2), so the Church composed of Jews and Gentiles also viewed itself as elect on the basis of the Christ-event (Mark13:20).”⁷⁶ So, although both Israel and the Church have at times taught that men must in some way contribute to their being chosen by God, the biblical verbs clearly indicate that the choosing of each is exclusively the work of God.

⁷³ Harris, *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament, volume 1*, s.v. “231 - bahar,” by John N. Oswalt, 100.

⁷⁴ “The root and its derivations occur 198 times” and “is used in only a few instances without specific theological overtones. ... Apart from these exceptions, the word is used to express that choosing which has ultimate and eternal significance.” Harris, *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament, volume 1*, s.v. “231 - bahar,” by John N. Oswalt, 100.

⁷⁵ G. Johannes Botterweck and Helmer Ringgren, eds., *Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament*, Vol. II, (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1975), s.v. “bavhar” by Horst Seebass, 87.

⁷⁶ Horst Balz and Gerhard Schneider, eds. *Exegetical Dictionary of the New Testament* Vol. 1, (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1990), s.v. “εκλέγομαι,” by Josef Eckert, 416.

The Church

Just as we started with a term that is usually associated with the Old Testament, we conclude with a word that is exclusive to the New Testament – the church. “The noun *ἐκκλησία* is derived etymologically from *ἐκ* and *καλέω*; accordingly it was used to designate ‘(the totality of) those who are called out.’”⁷⁷ There is no inherent theological connotation to the word. It is often used of general secular assemblies as well (See Acts 19:32-41). When referencing specifically the gathering of believers in Jesus Christ, Scripture often uses the more descriptive “church of God.” “Indeed, this formulation might have come into existence as a translation of *q^ehal ’el*, which is attested in apocalyptic Judaism as a term for the eschatological company of God.”⁷⁸

“The term was used because it corresponded with the eschatological self-understanding of the Church, which understood itself to be the company elect by God and determined by him to be the center and crystallization-point of the eschatological Israel now being called into existence by him.”⁷⁹

So, those called out by God through Christ to be His church viewed themselves as the continuance of the people called out by God through faith in His promises of a coming Messiah in the Old Testament. This parallels Karl Barth’s assessment of the church as an eschatological Israel as discussed above. So it should not be surprising that the term that is adopted for the gathering of God’s people in the New Testament draws connections to His people in the Old Testament.

The word church is often used in two different ways. It can describe the universal, invisible gathering of all believers or it can refer to a local congregation or church.

⁷⁷ Horst Balz and Gerhard Schneider, eds. *Exegetical Dictionary of the New Testament* Vol. 1, (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1990), s.v. “ἐκκλησία,” by Jurgen Roloff, 411.

⁷⁸ *Ibid*, 411.

⁷⁹ *Ibid*, 412.

Sometimes we distinguish between these as Church (universal) and church (local). However, “the Church Universal and the local churches are not two different churches or two kinds of churches, but the Church Universal consists of all the local churches plus those believers who are prevented by circumstances from joining some local church.”⁸⁰ In fact, “the distinction between *congregation/church* (the body of Christians at a specific place...) and *Church* (the supra-congregational association of God’s people or the totality of all Christians...) is foreign to the NT.”⁸¹ This is not to say that the local and universal churches are identical, but that the former is a local manifestation of the latter. Therefore the church, local or universal, is properly understood as the people of God in the same way as Israel was the people of God. “And I will be their God and they will be my people.” (Hebrews 8:10 quoting Jeremiah 31:33)

Just as we observed that the salvation mission of God to all nations is continuous throughout Scripture, so, too, the people of God continue throughout Scripture. The Old Testament Israel and the New Testament church are the people chosen by the grace of God, through faith in His promises. For the Old Testament people of God, they trusted in the promises to be fulfilled when the Messiah would come. For the New Testament people of God, they trusted in the promises fulfilled when the Messiah came and to be fulfilled when He comes again. Therefore, having seen the Scripture continuity of mission and of the elect, we now turn our attention to the role of the elect in mission.

⁸⁰ Francis Pieper, *Christian Dogmatics*, Vol. III, 419.

⁸¹ Horst Balz and Gerhard Schneider, eds. *Exegetical Dictionary of the New Testament* Vol. 1, s.v. “ἐκκλησία,” by Jurgen Roloff, 411.

The Theological Context of the Church in Mission

We have seen that God has set forth a singular mission of salvation for all nations throughout Scripture. We have also seen that inclusion in the people of God has consistently been based on faith and God's choosing throughout Scripture. Now the question arises as to what is the relationship between God's singular mission of salvation and the chosen people of God?

To begin, we return to a word that was used to describe the people of God and the nature of their relationship with God: chosen. In discussing the various uses of *bahar* in the Old Testament, John Oswalt states that "in all these cases serviceability rather than a simple arbitrariness is at the heart of the choosing."⁸² The nature of God's choosing was not just so that those chosen could revel in their election. They were chosen for purpose. "In the OT the choice is always the action of God, of His grace, and always contains a mission for man;"⁸³ Horst Seebass expands the nature of this choosing stating:

"Everywhere that *bhr* occurs in relationship to persons, it denotes choice out of a group (generally out of the totality of the people), so that the chosen one discharges a function in relationship to the group. Thus throughout, *bhr* includes the idea of separating, but in the sense that the one separated by *bhr*, "choosing, selection," stood that much more clearly in service to the whole."⁸⁴

The promise to Abram once again comes to mind, as God chooses him not only to be blessed, but so that "in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed." (Gen. 12:3) The nature of choosing Israel (OT and NT) out of the world is for their service to the world.

"Election does not imply favoritism. Election is not for private enjoyment, but to service.

⁸² Harris, *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament, volume 1*, s.v. "231 - bahar," by John N. Oswalt, 100.

⁸³ G. Johannes Botterweck and Helmer Ringgren, eds. *Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament* Vol. II, trans. David E. Green, (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1990), s.v. "bachar," by Horst Seebass, 87.

⁸⁴ *Ibid*, 82-83.

God's election of Israel does not thereby exclude anyone."⁸⁵ Arguing from the continuity of God's people as discussed above, we can extend the missionary nature of God's choosing to all of Scripture. All God's people, chosen by God, have a God-given mission to the world inherent in their choosing. "But the question comes, what kind of service was [Israel] to render?"⁸⁶

Unified Mission of God's People

As mentioned before, the modern emphasis on mission statements and strategic planning often (unintentionally?) leads to the understanding that each congregation or ministry has a unique mission, distinct from all other congregations and ministries. However, is it possible for a congregation that worships the one-true God of the Bible, which tells of God's singular mission throughout history, to have different missions in the world? Russell John Briese makes the following distinction. "Mission is spoken of both as a singular, and as a plural, missions. The one mission of the church encompasses a number of specific missions.... The church has a single mission which is realized by the many and various missions"⁸⁷ It makes sense that if there is one God, who had one mission and elected one people by faith in Him, that this same God would have one mission for that elected people as a whole.

⁸⁵ Roger E. Hedlund, *The Mission of the Church in the World: A Biblical Theology*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House Company, 1998, 1991), 37.

⁸⁶ *Ibid*, 38.

⁸⁷ Russell John Briese, *Foundations of a Lutheran Theology of Evangelism*, (New York, NY: Peter Lang, 1994), 14.

And what is that singular unified mission of the church? "... a New Testament church's function is the promotion of Christ's redemptive purpose for all humans."⁸⁸ The church's role in the mission of God defines the church. "The Church *is* witness. And when this is not true the Church is not the Church."⁸⁹ Speaking of the church mission in connection to the *Missio Dei*, Vicedom states that "the church can accomplish a variety of things, but she must not seek these apart from her one real duty. Separated from this duty, all other concerns belong to the other kingdom."⁹⁰

Before we look at two aspects of scripture and doctrine that support the conclusion that the church's one mission is participation in the salvation mission of God, we need to address some suggestions that there are multiple missions in the church. Harold Lindsell suggests two purposes for the church: "The Church is a redemptive fellowship which exists in the world for the sake of believers" and "The Church is a witnessing fellowship in the world for the sake of the world."⁹¹ Mike Breen and Walter Kallestad seem to suggest a three-fold purpose for the Christian life (and by extension the church): our personal faith in our **UP** relationship with God; our corporate faith in our **IN** relationship with fellow believers; and our **OUT** relationship with those outside of the church. The third corresponds with the salvation mission of God, while the other two seem to be additional missions.⁹² Even my own congregation's mission statement seems to be in line with Breen and Kallestad: "Bring people to Christ [OUT], Nurture People in Christ [UP], Equip People for Christ [IN]."

⁸⁸ Ron Rogers, "The Missionary Purpose of God's People" in *Missiology: An Introduction to the Foundations, History, and Strategies of World Missions*, eds. John Mark Terry, Ebbie Smith, and Justice Anderson (Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1998), 115.

⁸⁹ Harold Lindsell, "Fundamentals for a Philosophy of the Christian Mission," in *The Theology of Christians Mission*, ed. Gerald H. Anderson, (New York, NY: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1961), 247.

⁹⁰ Georg F. Vicedom, *The Mission of God*, 46.

⁹¹ *Ibid*, 247.

⁹² Mike Breen and Walter Kallestad, *The Passionate Church: The Art of Life-Changing Discipleship*, (Colorado Springs, CO: Cook Communications Ministries, 2005), 81-105.

Before we jump to the conclusion that these valid functions of the church constitute a different mission, we must remember that God choosing Israel was not a different mission from God's desire to reach all mankind. So, too, the work of the church in the personal faith of believers is not necessarily distinct from the one evangelistic mission.

In strategic plans, there is a distinction between the over arching mission of the organization and the goals or objectives that are established to work toward the mission. The goals and objectives are specific and usually reach a conclusion, while the mission is ongoing. The different goals and objectives of the church are only properly the work of the church if they contribute towards the overarching mission of the church, which is the spreading of the Gospel.

Taking my own congregation's mission statement as an example, the three mission goals work together for the common mission of outreach. When someone comes to faith in Jesus (Bring people to Christ) they then need to grow in their understanding of that faith (Nurture People in Christ). As they grow in their faith, they are "Equipped for Christ," that is they are equipped to "Bring People to Christ." And so we find that each goal of the congregation builds towards that singular salvation mission of God as He works through the church.

A People Commissioned

The Merriam-Webster on-line dictionary defines commission as "authority to act for, in behalf of, or in place of another." So Matthew 28:18-20 is appropriately called the Great Commission, because the disciples (and by extension the whole Christian church) are authorized to act on behalf of Christ. The authority that is granted is that of Jesus Christ who

says, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me.” That authority is the basis for the task that is laid before the disciples to “go and make disciples of all nations.”

According to D.A. Carson, the “therefore” at the beginning of v. 19 is “probably the correct reading; but even if the word is absent, the logical connection is presupposed by the flow of the commissioning.”⁹³ The work is properly God’s, but here the church is commissioned to participate in the continuing work of God in the world.

This is not the only instance of commissioning in Scripture. Although there is no mention of authority in Genesis 12, Abram receives his commission from God. Other than leaving his home and going where God instructs, this initial commission is completely the work of God: “I will make you a great nation, and I will bless you and make you name great so that you will be a blessing.” The final statement that “in you all the families of the earth will be blessed” commissions Abram to be a part of God’s salvation plan. “If the verb in question has passive force [which Hamilton later argues is correct], then 12:3 clearly articulates the final goal in a divine plan for universal salvation, and Abram is the divinely chosen instrument in the implementation of that plan.”⁹⁴ It is again God’s work and Abram is invited to participate in what the Lord is going to do.

More clearly still is God’s call to Moses in Exodus 3. The commission to Moses is first and foremost based on the identity (and authority) of God: “I am the God of your father the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.” “The function of this introductory, self-identifying formula is everywhere to emphasize effectively the

⁹³ D.A. Carson, *Matthew: Chapters 13 Through 28*, The Expositor’s Bible Commentary. (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1995), 595.

⁹⁴ Victor P. Hamilton, *The Book of Genesis, Chapters 1-17*, 374.

unimpeachable authority behind the ensuing declaration.”⁹⁵ In verse 8, God tells Moses that “I have come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians and to bring them up out of that land to a good and broad land...” This is what God is going to do. Moses commission then follows in verse 10: “Come, I will send you to Pharaoh that you may bring my people, the children of Israel, out of Egypt.” “[Moses] is now commissioned to become the emissary of God to the court of Pharaoh.”⁹⁶ It is God who is going to accomplish this, but Moses will be a co-worker with God in His mission to Israel.

In these, and many other Scriptural commissionings, the mission is God’s mission and those who are chosen are called to participate in that mission.⁹⁷ And so, “from the point of view of *Missio Dei*, the life of the church and of Christians is participation in God’s mission of love. ... The church is the principal and essential instrument of mission, but the ultimate goal is the reign of God.”⁹⁸

The Missional Nature of the Marks of the Church

From a Lutheran perspective, the definition of church is a bit different. “The church is the assembly of saints in which the gospel is taught purely and the sacraments are administered rightly.”⁹⁹ “The means or instruments which God employs to gather and preserve the Church is the Gospel in all its forms (Word and Sacrament), because only the

⁹⁵ Nahum M. Sarna, *Exploring Exodus: The Origins of the Biblical Israel*, (New York, NY: Schocken Books, Inc., 1986), 43.

⁹⁶ Ibid, 49.

⁹⁷ For a further listing of those called to the mission of God in the Old Testament, see W. Bryant Hicks, “Old Testament Foundations for Missions,” in *Missiology: An Introduction to the Foundations, History, and Strategies of World Missions*, eds. John Mark Terry, Ebbie Smith, and Justice Anderson (Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1998), 55-60.

⁹⁸ Risto A. Ahonen, *Mission in the New Millennium: Theological Grounds for World Mission*, trans. Michael Cox and John Mills, (Helsinki: The Finnish Evangelical Lutheran Mission, 2000), 43-44.

⁹⁹ Robert Kolb and Timothy J. Wengert, eds., *The Book of Concord*, 43.

Gospel creates and sustains saving faith.”¹⁰⁰ Initially, it might seem that defining the church as marked by Word and Sacrament is contrary to the assertion that mission is the defining mark of the church. However, we conclude our discussion on the church by setting forth the missional nature of the Word, Baptism and the Lord’s Supper.

Word

As the first section of the chapter (**The Biblical Foundation of Missions**) details, scripture can be read as a continuous account of the mission work of God in the world. That in and of itself is sufficient to establish the missional nature of Scripture. However, Scripture itself states its function in the mission of God.

Peter writes that the believers to whom he is writing “have been born again, not of a perishable seed but of imperishable, through the living and abiding word of God.” (1 Peter 1:23) The note in the *Lutheran Study Bible* comments on this, saying that “the Holy Spirit works faith through the proclamation of the Gospel – in the OT, in the preaching of the apostles, in the emerging NT documents, and above all in Christ, the Word made flesh (Jn 1:14).”¹⁰¹ The Gospel, the Word of God, is a means utilized by God for his mission of bringing salvation through faith to the world.

Paul emphasizes the salvation power of the Word in his letter the Romans. “God cannot be dealt with and cannot be grasped in any other way than through the Word. Accordingly, justification takes place through the Word, just as St. Paul notes [Rom. 1:16]:

¹⁰⁰ Francis Pieper, *Christian Dogmatics, Vol. III*, (St. Louis, MO: Concordia Publishing House, 1953), 415.

¹⁰¹ Edward A. Engelbrecht, ed., *The Lutheran Study Bible*, 2151.

the gospel ‘is the power of God for salvation to everyone who has faith.’ Likewise [Rom. 10:17]: ‘Faith comes from what is heard.’¹⁰²

So we see that the Word, as a mark of the church, is a means by which the Holy Spirit inspires faith, which is the mission of God. This is also important to our understanding of the Sacraments since it is the Word that makes the Sacraments into Sacraments. It is to these physical manifestations of the Word that we now turn our attention.

Baptism

In defining baptism and its benefits in his *Small Catechism*, Luther says, “Baptism is not simply water. Instead it is water enclosed in God’s command and connected with God’s Word” and “it brings about forgiveness of sins, redeems from death and the devil, and gives eternal salvation to all who believe it, as the words and promises of God declare.”¹⁰³ And so, Baptism, by the power of the missional Word of God, brings about God’s salvation mission goals of forgiveness and eternal life. Therefore, baptism serves as a tool for the church in the mission of God.

We see this again in Matthew 28:18-20. The disciples are commissioned by Christ to make disciples (the missionary task of God – see also Luke 24:45-49 and John 20:21-23) and then they are instructed in the means of disciple-making: baptizing and teaching. This is further emphasized in the parallel account in Mark 16:16 – “Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved.” These verses, along with others (See Acts 22:16, Acts 2:38, Romans 6:4, 1 Peter 3:21), indicate that God has given baptism not simply as a mark of the church, but as a means of accomplishing God’s mission. “In Baptism everything that Christ through

¹⁰² Robert Kolb and Timothy J. Wengert, eds., *The Book of Concord*, 131.

¹⁰³ *Ibid*, 359.

cross and resurrection has done for him is given to the believer.”¹⁰⁴ “This is the simplest way to put it: the power, effect, benefit, fruit, and purpose of baptism is that it saves.”¹⁰⁵

To further the idea that baptism is God’s work through the church, the Apology of the Augsburg Confession, commenting on Mark 16:16, says, “baptism is not a work that we offer to God, but one in which God, through a minister who functions in his place, baptizes us, and offers and presents the forgiveness of sins.”¹⁰⁶ In his Large Catechism, Luther states, “to be baptized in God’s name is to be baptized not by human beings but by God himself. Although it is performed by human hands, it is nevertheless truly God’s own act.”¹⁰⁷ Therefore, baptism, as a mark of the church, is a way in which the church participates in the mission of God.

Lord’s Supper

The institution of the Lord’s Supper by Christ in Matthew 26 is the foundation of our missional understanding of this sacrament. “Take, eat; this is my body” (v.26) and “this is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins” (v.28). Although the discussions of these verses often revolve around the meaning of “is,” (For more on this, see the Formula of Concord, Solid Declaration, Article VII: Holy Supper) for our purposes the emphasis is on “for the forgiveness of sins” because this is the mission of God. “The words ‘given for you’ and ‘shed for you for the forgiveness of sins’ show us that forgiveness, life, and salvation are given to us in the sacrament through these words, because

¹⁰⁴ Georg F. Vicedom, *The Mission of God*, 128.

¹⁰⁵ Robert Kolb and Timothy J. Wengert, eds., *The Book of Concord*, 459.

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid*, 260-261

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid*, 457.

where there is forgiveness of sins, there is also life and salvation.”¹⁰⁸ Vicedom says, “the Lord’s Supper bears the mission character”¹⁰⁹ and “the gifts of God in the sacraments ... serve the salvation of men Therefore the sacraments are of great significance for mission work among the nations.”¹¹⁰

Conclusion

From the beginning of creation, God has provided for the needs of His creation. With the fall of mankind into sin, God addresses the need of mankind for forgiveness and salvation. This mission is the unifying narrative of all Scripture, with the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus as the central work of God towards this end.

In fulfilling this mission to all people, God chooses to work through those whom He has called to faith. From Abram and Moses to the disciples and modern day Christians, whether they are called Israel or the church, God, by His grace and the Holy Spirit, works to call others to faith in Jesus Christ. Therefore, the singular mission of the church today is to heed the invitation of God to join in His salvation work by being His witnesses, telling others what He has done.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid, 362.

¹⁰⁹ Georg F. Vicedom, *The Mission of God*, 129.

¹¹⁰ Ibid, 130

CHAPTER 3

THE PROJECT IN THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVE

Introduction

In light of the Biblical understandings of mission and the people of God, we now turn our attention to the manifestations of the Mission of God that are specific to this project, namely short-term overseas mission trips and local outreach. Discussing the relationship between short-term missions and local outreach will be a challenge since there is little that has been written specifically about the impact of short-term mission trip participation on the life of the congregation as a whole. In her guide for mission volunteers, Martha VanCise suggests the opposite, that “volunteers have found home missions to be an excellent training ground for foreign missions.”¹¹¹ However, the question under consideration is whether or not foreign missions can serve as a training ground for home missions.

Based on the current writing on short-term mission, it seems that this question has not been addressed in any truly significant way. Perhaps it is because, by the nature of short-term missions, such a small percentage of a congregation actually participates by going that many do not see the importance of utilizing the experience for the life of the congregation. In describing the neglect of returning short-term mission participants, Michael J. Anthony states:

Many times these people are overwhelmed by what they have seen and experienced but are lost when it comes time to channel that experience back into their local church. We may give them a token five-minute spot in an evening service to share their experience with us. But when it comes to really influencing the life of the church, their short-term trip is usually buried under

¹¹¹ Martha VanCise, *Successful Mission Teams: A Guide for Volunteers* (Birmingham, AL: New Hope, 1996), 12.

a host of other activities and events. Eventually they feel out of place and they get the impression that missions is all right for a few people, but it isn't important in the life of the church as a whole.¹¹²

And it is a shame that the connection between short-term missions and the life of the congregation has not been investigated further. Much has been written concerning the impact short-term missions have on the participants.¹¹³ It seems that some of that impact would carry over into the life of the congregation as well.

What little is written concerning the impact of short-term mission trips on the life of a congregation is quite general and does not offer much in the way of advice for capitalizing on the short-term experience:

Congregations that embrace an intentional mission ministry experience a shift from the 'inside out.' ... Enlisting, equipping, and sending people on short-term mission trips raise the *missional temperature* of a congregation. What begins as a slow and steady movement upward transforms a church one person at a time and will, in most cases, make an exponential jump that will lead to a culture change. ... 'If we can do it there (on the mission field) we can do it anywhere!' Mission eyes are opened to see the opportunities which have always been around us in our communities.¹¹⁴

These changes are what this project is intended to gage, but very little has been written about it. Therefore, in order to discuss recent literature on this topic we will have to build from the ground up. First, we will look at general mission practices that are discussed in missional literature. Then we will see how those practices are implemented for both short-term mission trips and local evangelism. Finally, we will connect the dots to show that the shared

¹¹² Michael J. Anthony, ed., *The Short-Term Mission Boom: A Guide to International and Domestic Involvement* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 1994), 9-10.

¹¹³ For statistical information on the impact of short-term missions on participants, see Roger Peterson, Gordon Aeschliman, and R. Wayne Sneed, *Maximum Impact Short-Term Mission: The God-commanded, Repetitive Deployment of Swift, Temporary, Non-professional Missionaries* (Minneapolis, MN: STEMPress, 2003) p.143.

¹¹⁴ Mike Gibson, "Short-Term Missions Transform Congregations!?", *Missio Apostolica: Journal of the Lutheran Society for Missiology*, Vol. XVIII, no. 1 (May 2010), 23-29.

characteristics of short-term missions and local evangelism imply that each can be used as a training ground for the other.

Mission Methods

As we begin to talk about the specific implementation of a missional theology, we would do well to look to long standing communication theory to help mold our discussion.

Aristotle theorized that persuasion takes place in an interplay between the *speaker*, the *message*, and the *audience*, within a (cultural and historical) *context*. (More specifically, he taught that persuasion occurs from the interaction of the *ethos* of the speaker, the *logos* of the message, and the *pathos* of the audience.) While writers have often used other terms for the speaker... and for the audience..., Aristotle's essential model has served as the prevailing model of the communication process for twenty-three centuries.¹¹⁵

For Christians, the *logos* never changes because the content of the message is Scripture alone. However, the *ethos* and the *pathos* can and are in a constant state of flux. We could certainly use a considerable amount of space and time discussing the many different mission practices of the church.¹¹⁶ However, for the purpose of establishing the connection between short-term missions and local evangelism, we will focus on two: a servant attitude (the *ethos* of missions) and an incarnational approach (the *pathos* of missions).

Servant Attitude

If we are to talk about the servant attitude of mission, we must, of course, start with THE servant missionary – Jesus. As seen in the example of Jesus, servanthood is a

¹¹⁵ George G. Hunter III, *The Celtic Way of Evangelism: How Christians Can Reach the West...Again*, (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 2000), 56-57.

¹¹⁶ For an extensive listing of various mission practices, see Tom Telford, *Today's All-Star Missions Churches: Strategies to Help Your Church Get into the Game* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2001).

foundational characteristic of ministry in the church and, as discussed in the last chapter, the purpose of all church ministry is missional in nature. Apart from His sacrificial death on the cross, the clearest example of the servanthood of Jesus is the washing of the disciples' feet. "By this act of lowly service he dramatized his role as the unique servant of God and called his disciples to put servanthood at the heart of their understanding of the ministry (John 13:12-17)." ¹¹⁷ The entire life of Jesus was one of service as indicated by His words to the disciples when James and John requested places of honor in the Kingdom: "But whoever would be great among you must be your servant, and whoever would be first among you must be your slave, even as the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many." (Matthew 20:26-28). So to be great in the Kingdom of God, to excel in the purpose of His people, is to be a servant to God and to others.

Since the church follows in the mission of Jesus, whose work was characterized by service, the mission of the church should be that of service. "Mission, too, is involved in the nature of the Church as *servant of the Servant*."¹¹⁸ "Election does not imply favoritism. Election is not for private enjoyment, but to service."¹¹⁹ Therefore, all mission efforts of the church should be characterized by an attitude of service. "In seeking to act in a Christ-like way, we cannot rely on normal forms of power to communicate the gospel but have to take Jesus's model with absolute seriousness (Matt. 23:25-28; Phil. 2:5ff). This commits us to servanthood and humility in our relationships with each other and the world."¹²⁰

¹¹⁷ Arthur F. Glasser, *Announcing the Kingdom: The Story of God's Mission in the Bible* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2003), 205.

¹¹⁸ Gerald H. Anderson, *The Theology of the Christian Mission*, 80.

¹¹⁹ Roger E. Hedlund, *The Mission of the Church in the World: A Biblical Theology* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 1985), 37.

¹²⁰ Alan Hirsch, *The Forgotten Ways: Reactivating the Missional Church* (Grand Rapids, MI: Brazos Press, 2006), 133.

This does not mean that the community being served dictates the mission activities of the church. The center of the mission is still the proclamation of salvation in Jesus Christ – the greatest need for the entire world.

Humanitarian service alone is not the mission of the people of God. The service which God demands includes witness. It seems more biblical (and evangelical) to define mission as ‘mission = witness + service’... Witness is essential. The biblical ideal is that service should point to God.¹²¹

Therefore, the mission of the church is characterized first by service to God and second by service to those whom God has sent them.

Incarnational Approach

Many books and articles on church mission and leadership apply the idea of servanthood in the church to establish the idea of “incarnational” missions. Incarnational missions can be thought of as follows:

Incarnational mission implies a *real and abiding* incarnational presence among a group of people. Quite simply, it means that if you want to reach the local *gangstas*, you are going to have to live where they live and hang out where they hang out. Or it might mean that if you want to plant a church in a given suburb, you should really think about living there.¹²²

In order to be in mission, the church must understand and operate within the culture of those to whom they are ministering – not just the members of the congregation.¹²³

The basis for this concept is found in the life of Jesus. “The biblical model is incarnation. Jesus is the Word of God become human in daily reality.”¹²⁴ The implication is

¹²¹ Roger E. Hedlund, *The Mission of the Church in the World*, 38-39.

¹²² Michael Frost and Alan Hirsch, *The Shape of Things to Come: Innovation and Mission for the 21st-Century Church* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, Inc., 2003), 39.

¹²³ “Maintenance churches concentrate this resources considerably on member-related activities, losing touch with the community and world mission responsibilities.” Waldo J. Werning, *God Say, ‘Move!’ Go Where He Leads*” (Lima, OH: Fairway Press, 1997), 15.

that, in the incarnation of Christ, the Son of God came to a specific culture at a specific time and ministered in such a way that was understood by that culture. Therefore, at its foundation, the mission of God in Christ was incarnational.

In Scripture, it is not just the work of Jesus that attests to the incarnational nature of missions.

The journey of the church from its beginning as a Jewish sect to becoming a largely Gentile body that proclaimed a universal faith required the gospel to engage new cultural groups and circumstances at each point along the way.... All four Gospels, we could say, are attempts to contextualize the story of Jesus for different audiences. Paul's letters are models of doing context-oriented theology for the diverse churches and situations he addressed."¹²⁵

Therefore, much of the New Testament gives examples of incarnational/contextual ministry by Jesus and the disciples.

By extension, the church in mission must also operate incarnationally. Peter Beyerhaus describes being an incarnational church (he uses the word indigenous church, but the implications are similar) as when "a church, in obedience to the apostolic message that has been entrusted to it and to the living guidance of the Holy Spirit, is able in its own particular historical situation, to make the Gospel intelligible and relevant in word and deed to the eyes and ears of men."¹²⁶

The Theology of the Cross for the 21st Century is a collection of essays, many of which deal with the idea of incarnational mission. In his opening essay on "Signposts for Global Witness," Alberto Garcia sets forth four key elements of Luther's theology of the cross that apply to our witness throughout the world. One of these four is "The Incarnational

¹²⁴ Rollin G. Grams, *Bible and Mission*, 261.

¹²⁵ Dean Flemming, *Contextualization in the New Testament: Patterns for Theology and Mission* (Downers Grove: IL InterVarsity Press, 2005), 15.

¹²⁶ Stephen Neill, Gerald Anderson, John Goodwin, eds. *Concise Dictionary of the Christian World Mission* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1971), s.v. "Indigenous Churches," by Peter Beyerhaus.

Dimension.” Particularly applicable to the North American approach to mission in recent history is the critique that “the Gospel has been used as an excuse to impose another way of life or culture on other people rather than to proclaim the Gospel in their situation.”¹²⁷

Indeed, many churches in America have “assimilation” programs to help new members blend into the existing society and culture of the congregation. The mission of the congregation becomes making others behave like us or recruiting congregation members.

In “Cultural Obstacles to Evangelism,” Joel D. Heck discussed the obstacles to the Gospel that exist in culture. Although he makes many valid points that should be heeded, I found his introductory side bar on the Church’s obstacles to the Gospel much more poignant. Often times, we equate conversion with assimilation into the congregation’s culture. These “Boards of Assimilation” betray a view that bringing someone to Christ is identical with bringing them into the existing church culture. So we equate the two ideas in practice. It is important, even essential, for the church to realize that our goal is not the proliferation of our congregation, but the spreading of the Gospel.¹²⁸

We can contrast this with the picture of the Apostle Paul painted by Robert Kolb in his essay included in the collection. When called by God, Paul (Saul) was fully committed to the Hebrew culture. Yet God chose him as His ambassador to the Gentiles. This necessitated the “death to his old faith and his accustomed way of living.”¹²⁹ It seems that Paul was specifically chosen so that he would have to humble himself culturally and learn to minister in a countercultural manner – he was chosen for incarnational mission work.

¹²⁷ Alberto L. Garcia and A.R. Victor Raj, eds., *The Theology of the Cross for the 21st Century* (St. Louis: MO, Concordia Publishing House, 2002), p. 18.

¹²⁸ Joel D. Heck, “Cultural Obstacles to Evangelism,” in *Christ and Culture in Dialogue: Constructive and Practical Applications*, ed. Angus J.L. Menuge, (St. Louis, MO: Concordia Publishing House, 1999), 264-278.

¹²⁹ Robert A. Kolb, “A Missiology of the Cross,” in *The Theology of the Cross for the 21st Century*, Alberto L. Garcia and A.R. Victor Raj, eds., p.39.

Angus Menuge also addresses the issue of incarnational mission in the essay collection he edited, *Christ and Culture in Dialogue*. In setting forth the main function of this collection in his introduction, Menuge asserts that there are “two unhealthy extremes” in the workings of the church in America today. The one is “Christian fundamentalism” in which the Church vainly attempts to rid itself of any cultural influence and thus create a utopian purified community. The other is “cultural fundamentalism” in which the Church molds itself to the surrounding culture in order to accommodate the culture without regard for the spiritual ramifications.¹³⁰ This collection of essays is intended to create a more healthy dialogue between the mission of the church and the cultures in which it works.

Incarnational mission seems to be difficult for the church today. Perhaps it is because the church growth movement has placed a significant emphasis on individual congregational growth. Alan Hirsch describes his own congregation’s experience of this saying that as he observed it becoming the goal of the church to draw people into their own specific community of believers, “our roles become more managerial than ever. But this mechanization of ministry was not only felt by the leadership of the church; the people in the church were increasingly being programmed out of life and therefore less engaged in active relationships with those outside of the faith community.”¹³¹ In other words, the church became less incarnational and more invitational – inviting others to come and be a part of what they were doing.

An invitationally oriented church is not following the biblical model of incarnational missions.

¹³⁰ Angus J.L. Menuge, ed., *Christ and Culture in Dialogue*, 15.

¹³¹ Alan Hirsch, *The Forgotten Ways*, p. 182.

If we are to take a scriptural approach, we are to adapt ourselves and our presentation of God's message to the culture of the receiving people. If we demand that they become like us in order to be acceptable to God, we, like most of the early Jewish Christians (*see* Act 15:1), have misrepresented God. We, the witnesses, are to make the cultural adjustments, not they, the potential responders.¹³²

It is not just typical ethnic culture that can be a barrier to gospel. It can be organizational church structure acting as culture as well. When we are overly wrapped up in our own structure, we "are in danger of falling into provincialism and ethnocentrism. ... The local congregations will be spiritually enhanced and doctrinally undergirded when viewed from the perspective of the universal church and its relation to the kingdom of God. Church growth will not be an end in itself but a means to the end of world evangelization."¹³³

It is important to note that this does not mean that the local congregation is unimportant. It is the local manifestation of the universal church. However, looking only to the growth of the local church without recognizing that it is a part of the greater universal church misses the point. As mentioned earlier, "the distinction between *congregation/church* (the body of Christians at a specific place...) and *Church* (the supra-congregational association of God's people or the totality of all Christians...) is foreign to the NT."¹³⁴ Therefore, local church growth is kingdom growth. However the local church culture is not necessarily universal. It can (and should) change incarnationally as the mission needs of the community dictate. As Christ's ambassadors, we have to leave the confines of the church building and go to those whom God would have us reach. They need not, and in fact probably will not, come to us. We have to abide by their standards of communication,

¹³² Charles H. Kraft, *Anthropology for Christian Witness* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1996), 2.

¹³³ John Mark Terry, Ebbie Smith, and Justice Anderson, eds., *Missiology: An Introduction to the Foundations, History, and Strategies of World Missions*, (Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1998), 11

¹³⁴ Horst Balz and Gerhard Schneider, eds. *Exegetical Dictionary of the New Testament* Vol. 1, s.v. "ἐκκλησία," by Jurgen Roloff, 411.

behavior and relationship (as long as it is not contrary to the commands of God). It is the church's responsibility to immerse itself in their culture, not convert them to ours.

Mission Methods in Short-Term Mission Trips

Having now established the servant and incarnational nature of the church in mission, we turn our attention to the manifestation of those attributes in short-term mission trips. Since short-term mission trips are the focal point of this project, we will first look at the biblical foundation/justification for short-term mission trips and then develop a brief history of short-term missions before looking at how servant attitudes and incarnational approaches are applied to short-term mission trips.

Biblical Basis for Short Term Missions

A congregation that is considering participation in a short-term mission for the first time may question whether or not this is the best approach to missions. Some object that the cost, the lack of long-term impact, the local need, and the existence of the church already in the area make short-term mission trips unnecessary at best and a waste of resources at worst. One way that some authors use to combat these objects is demonstrate the biblical precedent for short-term missions.

In *Maximum Impact Short-Term Missions*, the authors give a substantial list of short-term missions found in Scripture. Although some of the examples might be debatable, the list is entirely comprised of short-term (less than 3 years) work of God's people. It will suffice to highlight a few here.

Moses was called by God to deliver the people of Israel from Egypt. The total time he spent in Egypt was less than one year. “All this cross-cultural work took place in less than a year. And its radical, life-altering outcomes back then still remain the continuing testimonies of God’s incredible power today.”¹³⁵

Elijah gives a short-term relief mission example in his stay with the widow of Zarephath. Less than three-years there, but by the grace of God, Elijah provided food for her and her son, raised her son from the dead, and in response she “acknowledged the reality of God and the truth of His Word.”¹³⁶

Nehemiah went on a 52 day short-term construction mission, being called by God to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem. Jonah went to Nineveh for less than 40 days – perhaps as short as two days – and brought the entire city to repentance, reluctant though he was.¹³⁷

Turning to the New Testament, there are many examples from the life of Jesus. You can start with his ministry to the disciples. Although it was not location specific, he spent less than three years with them, sharing the grace of God and teaching them to do the same.

In that time, Jesus gave them an example of a short-term mission in his ministry to the Samaritan woman at the well.

In spite of the prevailing cultural bias and racially-motivated hate between Jews and Samaritans, Jesus’ penetrating, yet loving, discourse with the non-Jewish woman not only caused her to believe, but on the spot, converted this adulterer into and evangelist.... Deviating from His original plan, Jesus temporarily, intentionally engaged Himself in cross-cultural mission – and was successful – in a whopping span of just 48 hours.¹³⁸

¹³⁵ Roger Peterson, Gordon Aeschliman, and R. Wayne Sneed, *Maximum Impact Short-Term Missions*, 201.

¹³⁶ *Ibid*, 204.

¹³⁷ *Ibid*, 205-207.

¹³⁸ *Ibid*, 209.

In addition to the Samaritan woman becoming an evangelist, Jesus sent out his disciples on short-term mission trips on at least two occasions – once sending the twelve (Matthew 10) and once sending the seventy-two (Luke 10). We do not know the exact length of these trips, but they were definitely short-term and, as is relevant to this project, they were tools Jesus used to teach further mission work. “The Twelve were able to debrief with Jesus, who clearly wanted them to talk through and rejoice in what had happened and then get some rest before being immersed in ministry again.”¹³⁹ And referring to the seventy, “again, there is joy as they return to debrief with Jesus. They all rejoice that the kingdom of God has been extended through their witnessing, preaching, healing, and deliverance ministry.”¹⁴⁰

As a final example, we turn to the Apostle Paul. “Some would argue against using Paul as an example of short-term missions, because he had committed himself to incarnational ministry for the long haul. True, but he was a short-term missionary in the sense that he only stayed for a short time in any particular location.”¹⁴¹ In fact:

Paul ... never spent a full ‘four-year term’ in any place but was constantly changing his field of ministry. His longest stay in any one place was two years (at Ephesus). Many of His ministries were accomplished in time periods that today would be considered as only a brief visit to the mission field. Paul, however, was used of God to plant churches in four different provinces of the Empire, spanning two continents in less than ten years.¹⁴²

¹³⁹ Bryan A. Slater, “Short-Term Missions: Biblical Considerations”, *Evangelical Missions Quarterly*, Vol. 36, no. 4 (Oct. 2000), 452-457

¹⁴⁰ Ibid.

¹⁴¹ Ibid.

¹⁴² Donald Kitchen, *The Impact and Effectiveness of Short-Term Missionaries* (Dallas, TX: Dallas Theological Seminary Department of World Missions, 1976), 24, quoted in Roger Peterson, Gordon Aeschliman, and R. Wayne Sneed, *Maximum Impact Short-Term Missions*, 210.

From the Old Testament to Jesus to the disciples,¹⁴³ short-term missions were a part of the mission of God and of the church. So there is certainly a well established biblical precedent for the continuation of short-term missions today.

History of Short-Term Missions

There is little that is written specifically about the recent history of the short-term mission movement. Much more is written about missionary movements throughout the history of the church. So we begin by discussing the general history missionary movements that eventually led to the recent prominence of short-term mission trips.

David Bosch, in *Transforming Mission*, outlines some of the historical shifts that have occurred in the understanding of mission. The first three historical shifts discussed seem to lead into one another. In the early Eastern Church, the first shift is from a mobile, apostolic mission to an institutional mission. With the establishment of Christianity as an institution, joining the institution became synonymous with salvation. Instead of simply being a fellowship of believers, the institutional Church becomes the mediator of salvation on behalf of God. That is an awesome power to assume to oneself.

It is not surprising then that next we see, in the medieval period, a furtherance of the assertion of power as colonization and military force become a means of “outreach.” By imposing Christianity on others, the church neglected the gracious invitation of God’s mission. Although there were those who came to faith through this period, it was hardly a time where the love of God for all people was clearly seen in the church.

¹⁴³ For a comprehensive discussion of short-term mission texts, see Roger Peterson, Gordon Aeschliman, and R. Wayne Sneed, *Maximum Impact Short-Term Missions*, 199-233.

By incorporating so many into the faith through conquest, pure teaching necessarily became a high priority and led to the paradigm shift in the Reformation period. However, the effect on missions was quite negative: “The church of the pure doctrine was, however, a church without mission, and its theology more scholastic than apostolic.”¹⁴⁴ “The Reformers evidenced no concern for overseas missions to non-Christians. Indeed, three centuries elapsed before Protestantism at large began such outreach.”¹⁴⁵ Although the lack of mission focus during the Reformation and Post-Reformation periods is probably overstated here, the inward turning of the Church to the tasks of seeking out and eliminating heretical teachings made outward looking missions less of a priority.

The Enlightenment brought with it a renewed missionary fervor. The expansionism of this period also caught on in the church. The Great Awakenings of the 1700s were the activities of the expansionist church. The “Manifest Destiny” showed up in the church in the Puritans who “believed that the Anglo-Saxon race was divinely mandated to guide history to its end and usher in the millennium.”¹⁴⁶ The biggest problem with this mentality of missions was that the anthropocentrism of the Enlightenment manifested itself as ethnocentrism in the mission. The goal was to bring Christian Enlightenment and western culture/civilization to others cultures. “In theory, Protestant missions aimed at the establishment of ‘independent’ younger churches. The pervasive attitude of benevolent paternalism, however, often militated

¹⁴⁴ David J. Bosch, *Transforming Mission: Paradigm Shifts in Theology of Mission*, (Maryknoll, New York, Orbis Books, 1991) 249.

¹⁴⁵ William Richey Hogg, “The Rise of Protestant Missionary Concern, 1517-1914” in Gerald H. Anderson, ed., *The Theology of the Christian Mission*, 95.

¹⁴⁶ David J. Bosch, *Transforming Mission*, 300.

against this declared goal.”¹⁴⁷ This anthropocentric view of missions as the benevolent saving of other nations continued into the 20th century.¹⁴⁸

Turning our attention specifically to the recent history of short-term missions, we note that “cataloguing the modern history of short-term missions is an impossible task.”¹⁴⁹ Since there are various definitions of short-term mission (over 700 million by some estimates!¹⁵⁰) and many different organizations involved, it is impossible to monitor every short-term mission that is implemented in a given year. Some entities, such as denominational mission organizations and other mission agencies (whose central focus is overseas missions), keep meticulous records of such trips and make reports of mission activities available. Other entities, such as individuals and individual congregations, participate in short-term missions on their own and have no method of reporting that is accessible outside of their own context. Therefore, any historical data would be incomplete or mere conjecture.

What can be stated about short-term missions in the last 50 years is that it has increased rapidly. Though only estimates, it is asserted that short-term mission involvement increased twenty-fold from 1965 to 2003,¹⁵¹ and “considering just the 40,000 U.S. sending entities alone, it is highly probably that our estimate of one million short-termers is actually far too conservative.”¹⁵² In fact, “there is good reason to believe that more than one and a

¹⁴⁷ Ibid, 295

¹⁴⁸ For a more thorough dealing of the historical shifts in the theology of mission than the scope of this project allows, see David J. Bosch, *Transforming Mission*, (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1991) 181-345; Kenneth Scott Latourette, *A History of Christianity: Beginnings to 1500* vol. 1 and *A History of Christianity: Reformation to the Present* vol. 2, (Peabody, MA: Prince Press, 1953).

¹⁴⁹ Roger Peterson, Gordon Aeschliman, and R. Wayne Sneed, *Maximum Impact Short-Term Missions*, 241.

¹⁵⁰ Ibid, 68.

¹⁵¹ Ibid, 243.

¹⁵² Ibid, 255.

half million U.S. Christians travel abroad each year on ‘short-term mission trips,’ with an additional unknown number traveling on similar trips within the United States.”¹⁵³

The cause of this increase is also not well documented. However, “eras in mission, like eras in anything else, grow out of a context”¹⁵⁴ as we saw in the early mission shifts discussed in Bosch above. Gary Corwin asserts that

The same spirit that provided the energy for the great economic and entrepreneurial boom of the last half century also spurred the missions enterprises to new feats.... The enormous popularity of short-term missions is a reflection of local churches’ desire to be involved more *directly* in global missions.... The tidal wave of short-term missions is also a reflection of the cultural reality that relationships and choice, rather than authority and institutional loyalty, now rule the day.... [And] we should remember that as much as anything, short-term missions is the product of a particularly wealthy and mobile historical context.¹⁵⁵

Maximum Impact Short-Term Missions lists many historical factors that may have contributed to the short-term mission movement arising beginning in the 1950’s. Among those causes are the world experiences of those returning from World War II. This, coupled with the affordability and commercialization of air travel made short-term missions feasible where before only the wealthy would have been able to travel to a foreign country for a short period of time. The establishment of the Peace Corp in the 1960s may have contributed to the general church population buying into the idea of traveling the world for the sake of mission – not mission for nation, but for God. Communication and technology developments also make world missions a part of our immediate neighborhood. All of these timely

¹⁵³ Robert J. Priest, Terry Dischinger, Steve Rasmussen, and C.M. Brown, “Researching the Short-Term Mission Movement”, *Missiology: An International Review*, Vol. XXXIV, no. 4 (October 2006), 432.

¹⁵⁴ Gary Corwin, “The message of short-term missions,” *Evangelical Missions Quarterly*, Vol. 36, no. 4 (October 2000), 422-423.

¹⁵⁵ *Ibid*, 422.

developments in the 1950s and later may have contributed to the rapid increasing in short-term missions.¹⁵⁶

Now that we have established the biblical foundation of short-term missions and placed them in the overall missional history of the church, we return to the specific mission characteristics of servant attitude and incarnational approach.

Servant Attitude

We have already discussed the general call to missions for the entire church and the importance of servant attitude for missions. However, in his book, *The Essential Guide to the Short Term Mission Trip*, David C. Forward connects the two stating that “our servant role as servants of Jesus Christ” is itself a “mandate for mission work.”¹⁵⁷ Although he is speaking of mission in general again, the Christian’s servant role is the foundation of the work of a short-term missionary.

There’s only room for one Savior on earth. And neither you nor I are that one. We must not go into the world believing we can save it. Only Christ can do that. But we can spread His healing love as men and women who go to other cultures and nations willing to learn from others, to serve beside them in whatever way the Holy Spirit of God guides.¹⁵⁸

In discussing service to the poor in the context of a short-term mission trip, Leopoldo Sanchez writes, “we ought to think of the poor as human beings we are called to serve – simply because they are our neighbor – according to our God-given vocations in life.”¹⁵⁹ It is

¹⁵⁶ Roger Peterson, Gordon Aeschliman, and R. Wayne Sneed, *Maximum Impact Short-Term Missions*, 241-255.

¹⁵⁷ David C. Forward, *The Essential Guide to the Short Term Mission Trip*, (Chicago, IL: Moody Press, 1998), 20.

¹⁵⁸ Douglas Millham, “A Call for Ordinary People,” in *Stepping Out: A Guide to Short Term Missions*, eds. Tim Gibson, et. al., (Seattle, WA: YWAM Publishing, 1992), 21.

¹⁵⁹ Leopoldo A. Sanchez M., “Pedagogy for Working among the Poor: Something to Talk about before Going on Your Next Short-Term Mission Trip”, *Missio Apostolica*, Vol. 16, no. 1 (May 2008), 81-83.

not just generally applicable to missions, it is specifically essential to short-term missions.

“To do the spiritual work that mission tours require, you will need **flexibility, openness and a spirit of servanthood.**”¹⁶⁰

It is important to remember when serving in short-term missions that it is not about what the mission team wants to accomplish, but what the people who are being served need. Robert Reese talks about short-term missions in light of taking up your cross, saying “it means dying to self-centeredness in order to serve others from pure motives.”¹⁶¹

Mack and Leeann Stiles tell the story of a girl named Joanne who learned what being a servant on a short-term mission means. Sent to work with a Kenyan family (the father of the family worked with a high school student ministry), Joanne looked forward to doing great things for the kingdom. Instead, she did laundry, served tea and watched the kids while the father went to do the work she thought she was supposed to do. After a few weeks of fuming, she came to the realization that she came to serve and that is what she was doing.

Her witness of service made an impression on some of the students whom she did meet. The following summer, during an evangelistic outreach,

hundreds of people came to Christ due, in part, to the witness of American and Kenyan Christians working together. . . . I wonder if our outreach would have happened without Joanne. It wasn't her power that served as a witness but her humility. Joanne *did* usher in God's Kingdom, though it happened in a way she didn't expect. She didn't even get to see it.¹⁶²

¹⁶⁰ Martha VanCise, *Successful Mission Teams*, 14.

¹⁶¹ Robert Reese, “Short-Term Missions as Spiritual Exercise”, *Evangelical Missions Quarterly*, Vol. 44, no. 2 (April 2008), 158-163.

¹⁶² J. Mack & Leeann Stiles, *Mack and Leeann's Guide to Short-Term Missions*, (Downers Grove, IL: Intersarsity Press, 2000), 75.

True service is done to the glory of God and not to glorify or satisfy oneself. Even when the results of the work are not readily apparent, service done in the name of the Lord will bear fruit to His glory, even if one is only there for a short time.

Incarnational Approach

“Short-term missions are all about relationships: the relationships between Christians of different cultures, the relationships among team members, the relationship between Christians and God as the short-termer becomes a more mature believer.”¹⁶³ It is to the first of these relationships – between Christians of different cultures – that we turn our attention.

Although not all short-term mission trips are out of the country, most involve travel to a new area and many do involve foreign countries and vastly different cultures. “Our task in cross-cultural communication is to enter into a culture different from our own and to relate the gospel in terms that make sense to the people of that culture. This communication happens when our meanings match their meanings across the bridge of words, lives and actions.”¹⁶⁴ It is perhaps obvious to state, but short-term overseas mission work is, by nature, incarnational.

However, just going to a foreign country is not completely incarnational. You may enter the culture, but still be expecting the host culture to capitulate to your expected norms. Participating in short-term missions incarnationally is defined as “living as much like and with the people to whom you’re ministering as you are able. Just as Christ took on our flesh and culture to serve us, so cross-cultural missionaries often aspire to enter the culture and

¹⁶³ Kim Hurst and Chris Eaton, “Financing Your Mission Experience,” in *The Short-Term Mission Boom*, ed. Michael J. Anthony, 84.

¹⁶⁴ Tim Dearborn, *Short-Term Mission Workbook: From Mission Tourist to Global Citizens*, (Downer Groves, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2003), 33.

struggles of the people they desire to serve.”¹⁶⁵ “Many opportunities are missed by short-termers because their attitude is that of ministering to, not ministering among or with. In Matthew 20:20-28, Jesus rebuked His disciples for the very same attitude of subtle superiority.”¹⁶⁶

In writing on short-term missions, many people address culture shock or culture clash as an approach to incarnational missions. Laurel Cocks talks about the cultural losses and gains that a person experiences in a new culture:

Losses you may experience:

- Support from family and friends from church or school.
- Familiar ways of communicating and relating to people, non-verbally as well as verbally.
- Knowing how to act and what’s expected from you.
- A familiar setting that provides security and a sense of worth.

Things you stand to gain:

- A new setting and all the sights, tastes, smells, and sounds that go with it..
- New acquaintances who will be new friends and co-workers.
- New language, patterns of speech, and nonverbal cues.
- A new role, identity, or position within a different society.¹⁶⁷

Knowing the struggles and the blessings of adapting to a new culture ahead of time can help ease the shock of the many differences a person will experience.

It is important to learn the distinction between something being different and something being wrong. The church in America often associates the unique cultural manifestations of church in America with biblical Christianity.¹⁶⁸ “Discarding or setting aside something of one’s Americanness or one’s social or church identity is almost sacrilege to

¹⁶⁵ Tim Gibson, et.al., eds., *Stepping Out: A Guide to Short Term Missions*, (Seattle, WA: YWAM Publishing, 1992), 57.

¹⁶⁶ Stephen T. Hokes, “No Longer Strangers: Building relationships with nationals,” in *Stepping Out*, eds. Tim Gibson, et.al., 109.

¹⁶⁷ Laurel A. Cocks, “Culture Clash: How to ease the shock,” in *Stepping Out*, eds. Tim Gibson, et.al., 146.

¹⁶⁸ For further discussion on this, see Joel D. Heck, “Cultural Obstacles to Evangelism,” in *Christ and Culture in Dialogue: Constructive and Practical Applications*, ed. Angus J.L. Menuge, (St. Louis, MO: Concordia Publishing House, 1999), 264-278.

many people. Our way of life is often equated with godliness, and we defend vigorously its apparent rightness.”¹⁶⁹ “Respecting cultural diversity occurs when we are able to recognize differences in the two cultures – ours and theirs.”¹⁷⁰

An excellent place to learn the foundations of cultural differences is *Ministering Cross-Culturally* by Sherwood Lingenfelter and Marvin Mayers. This work includes discussion of six main areas of cultural differences: views of time, judgment, handling crises, goals, self-worth, and vulnerability. However, they do much more than discuss these areas and point out pitfalls to avoid. Included in the book is a short assessment that readers can complete and plot out their own cultural biases and tendencies. This helps the short-term missionary to understand what their own views and expectations are and to prepare for the necessary adjustments that may need to be made in order to work incarnationally in the culture to which they are traveling.¹⁷¹

The struggle for many short-term missionaries is not just knowing their own cultural biases, but knowing and preparing for the cultural biases that they will encounter in the foreign field. In his *Essential Guide to the Short Term Mission Trip*, David Forward tells short-term missionaries that in order to “Learn to Respect Cultural Diversity” you will need to “Recognize Differences in Culture,” “Know the Cultural Rules,” “Speak the Language,” and “Respect Their History and Traditions.”¹⁷² Each of these suggestions requires that the person learn about the specific place to which they are going – there are not just general culture, language, history and tradition rules that are universally applicable. In order to

¹⁶⁹ Sherwood Lingenfelter and Marvin Mayers, *Ministering Cross-Culturally: An Incarnational Model for Personal relationships*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 1986, 2003), 24.

¹⁷⁰ David C. Forward, *The Essential Guide to the Short Term Mission Trip*, 134.

¹⁷¹ Sherwood Lingenfelter and Marvin Mayers, *Ministering Cross-Culturally*, 27ff.

¹⁷² David C. Forward, *The Essential Guide to the Short Term Mission Trip*, 134-140.

prepare to enter a specific cultural context, it is helpful to obtain literature on the specific country/region to which a group is traveling.¹⁷³ It is important for the short-term mission team to prepare for the cultural changes and prepare to live incarnationally for the sake of the gospel.

Mission Methods in Local Outreach

At this point, it is not necessary to establish a separate biblical foundation for local evangelistic efforts. The missional nature of the church has been clearly seen and nothing indicates a prohibition from doing so locally. In fact, contrary to the intent of this project, it is often suggested that Acts 1:8 is to be taken chronologically and that missions are all to start in Jerusalem, that is, in our own backyard. The purpose here is not to justify any specific evangelistic program, but to look at the characteristics that local evangelism shares with short-term missions.

Servant Attitude

We have clearly seen – established from Scripture, from mission literature, and from short-term mission literature – the need for a servant attitude in the work of the church. So it might seem redundant to speak to it here in the context of local outreach. However, “when the church goes looking for new members in order to enlarge their ivory tower, or even

¹⁷³ For St. Lucas Lutheran Church’s trip to Brazil, we utilized Thomas E. Skidmore, *Brazil: Five Centuries of Change*, (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999, 2010), and Volker Poelzl, *Culture Shock! A Survival Guide to Customs and Etiquette - Brazil*, (Tarrytown, NY: Marshall Cavendish Corporation, 2006). The *Culture Shock!* series has titles for many different countries of the world.

maintain a relatively humble one, it is time to look again at the *why* of mission.”¹⁷⁴ This is the motivation for Russell John Briese’s work on a Lutheran theology of evangelism. Although it would seem obvious that we need to reach out to others in our local communities, the intrusion of a selfish motivation into mission necessitates the discussion of a servant attitude for local outreach. However apparent the teaching of a servant attitude is in the church, the implementation of a servant attitude can use a second (or third) look.

Relating missions to evangelism in his discussion of the ecumenical movement, Briese states that “mission begins not so much with what the church wants to do, but with what the world needs.”¹⁷⁵ The motivation for evangelism is not the benefit of the local congregation, but the needs – both physical and spiritual – of those to whom they are ministering. It is easier to take this approach in a foreign country where there is no possibility of recruiting new members for the home congregations. However, Briese implies that the same approach of a servant attitude needs to apply in the home mission as well.

Christian Schwarz refers to this as “need-oriented evangelism.”

It is the task of each Christian to use his or her gifts to serve non-Christians with whom one has a personal relationship, to see to it that they hear the gospel, and to encourage contact with the local church. The key to church growth is for the local congregation to focus its evangelistic efforts on the questions and needs of non-Christians. This ‘need-oriented’ approach is different from ‘manipulative programs’ where pressure on non-Christians must compensate for the lack of need-orientation.¹⁷⁶

The focus is shifted from the need for the congregation to survive in its current state to the needs of the people amongst whom they have been placed.

¹⁷⁴ Russell John Briese, *Foundations of a Lutheran Theology*, (Frankfurt am Main, Germany: Peter Lang, 1994), 8.

¹⁷⁵ *Ibid*, 52.

¹⁷⁶ Christian A. Schwarz, *Natural Church Development: A Guide to Eight essential Qualities of Healthy Churches*, (St. Charles, IL: ChurchSmart Resources, 1996), 35.

And it is not just for the pastor or the leadership. “The ministry of the laity is not to look inward, but outward. Only then will the church speak to the world and not only to itself.”¹⁷⁷ The entire congregation, even those who do not participate directly in the evangelism efforts of the congregation, is to have a servant attitude towards the community and to live out that service in their daily lives.

This is not always easy in a culture of comfort. The people that are in our communities do not look, act or talk like we do in the church. Their values are not necessarily the same as the church’s. However,

if your church is serious about reaching the unchurched, you must be willing to put up with people who have a lot of problems. Fishing is often messy and smelly. Many churches want the fish they catch to be already scaled, gutted, cleaned, and cooked. That is why they never reach anyone.¹⁷⁸

The church must serve in the needs of the community before the members of the community will even consider their place in the church.

George Hunter shows that this is nothing new, that it has long been a part of the Celtic Christian evangelistic approach. In fact, the foundations for effectively communicating a message to the community go back much further than that.

Aristotle identified three principles in the communicator’s ethos; *intelligence, character, and good will*. To be believed, the speaker must be perceived to be informed, knowledgeable, and competent in the subject matter, with a capacity for valid reasoning, good judgment, and wisdom. To be trusted, the speaker must be perceived as a person of honesty, virtue, and integrity. To be believed and trusted, the speaker needs to be perceived as ‘for’ the audience, on their side, more concerned for the audience’s welfare than for self gain.¹⁷⁹

¹⁷⁷ Russell John Briese, *Foundations of a Lutheran Theology*, 244.

¹⁷⁸ Rick Warren, *The Purpose Driven Church: Growth Without Compromising Your Message and Mission*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1995), 198.

¹⁷⁹ George G. Hunter III, *The Celtic Way of Evangelism*, 58-59.

Therefore, a servant attitude is an essential characteristic of the *ethos* in missions, regardless of whether that mission is lived out locally or abroad.

Incarnational Approach

Since the servant attitude of the *ethos* in mission remains the same regardless of location, I suggest that a missionary's response to the *pathos* will also remain consistent both locally and abroad. In fact, everything that has been said thus far concerning incarnational missions makes little mention of location – simply of different cultures. And the truth is that whenever a believer walks out of the church building, he leaves the culture of the church and enters the foreign culture of the unbeliever.

Some might say that, by locating a congregation in a given location, the congregation has already become incarnate in the community. However, it is not simply about proximity, it is about actively and consistently engaging the community in a meaningful and long-term relationship.

Having called men, Jesus made it a practice to be with them.... Jesus had no formal school, no seminaries, no outlined course of study, no periodic membership classes in which He enrolled His followers. None of these highly organized procedures considered so necessary today entered at all into His ministry. Amazing as it may seem, all Jesus did to teach these men His way was to draw them close to Himself. He was His own school and curriculum.¹⁸⁰

“Christians enjoy being in their own community. The more they seclude themselves, the less they can function in the real world. So many Christians are caught in the Christian

¹⁸⁰ Robert E. Coleman, *The Master Plan of Evangelism*, (Tarrytown, NY: Fleming H. Revell Company, 1963), 38.

‘Bubble’”¹⁸¹ This prevailing view that Christians are not connected to the culture they live in flies in the face of the call to live incarnationally.

Part of the problem is that the focus of many congregations is the recruitment of new members instead of the sharing of God’s gracious love and forgiveness in word and deed. “Outsiders wonder if we genuinely care about them. They feel like targets rather than people. They question our motives when we try to get them ‘saved,’ despite the fact that many of them have already ‘tried’ Jesus and experienced church before.”¹⁸²

The culture around the church has changed, but the approach that the church is taking to that new culture around us has very much remained the same.

The world today seems utterly indifferent to, and hopeless ignorant of, what we regard as the very elements of the Gospel. It is no longer enough to invite people to come and hear what we have to say. We must go out to meet them. We must do our utmost to get people to listen to us wherever they are.¹⁸³

Written more than half a century ago, the church as a whole has not heeded the encouragement to move beyond simple invitation to incarnation in missions.

Although the Gospel (the logos) does not change, the language and methods with which it is communicated does change, and appropriately so. The message of the Gospel is given by God and cannot be changed. “But that does not mean that it must be preached to men and women everywhere in the same ways and in the same terms.”¹⁸⁴ In support of this, Cook refers to Ezekiel, who tells us that “I sat where they sat,” and to the writer of Hebrews and Paul who used different language and illustrations to teach similar points to vastly

¹⁸¹ David Kinnaman and Gabe Lyons, *Unchristian: What a New Generation Really Thinks About Christianity... and Why it Matters*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2007), 121.

¹⁸² Ibid, 29.

¹⁸³ Henry Cook, *The Theology of Evangelism: The Gospel in the World To-Day*, (London: Carey Kingsgate Press Ltd., 1951), 10.

¹⁸⁴ Ibid, 27

different audiences.¹⁸⁵ This leads us again to the idea that our local evangelism efforts should be incarnational – the one message should be presented in a way that is understandable in the various unique cultural settings.

In *The Purpose Driven Church*, Rick Warren gives many practical applications of the incarnation life in local outreach. First, he encourages readers to “Learn to Think Like a Fish.” In order to reach out to unbelievers you have to understand how they think and live.

How do you learn to think like unbelievers? Talk to them! One of the greatest barriers to evangelism is that most believers spend all their time with other Christians. They don’t have any non-believing friends. If you don’t spend time with unbelievers, you won’t understand what they’re thinking.¹⁸⁶

But it takes more than just having conversations with unbelievers to become incarnate in the culture. Without compromising Scriptural teachings, we need to adapt our presentation of the Word to communicate the message in the culture of the unbeliever.

Too often we let cultural differences between believers and unbelievers become barriers to getting the message out. For Some Christians, any talk of ‘adapting to their culture’ sounds like theological liberalism. This is not a new fear. In fact, it was the reason the apostles held the Jerusalem conference in Acts 15. . . . To penetrate any culture you must be willing to make small concessions in matters of style in order to gain a hearing.¹⁸⁷

Incarnational evangelism means that the culture of the church, not its teachings, must take back seat to the mission. Warren continues discussing incarnational evangelism, stressing the importance of “letting the target determine your approach,” “beginning with the felt needs of the unchurched,” and “changing methods whenever necessary.”¹⁸⁸ This is not easy. We prefer to have a set methodology that will always work. However, if we are to evangelize

¹⁸⁵ Ibid, 26-28

¹⁸⁶ Rick Warren, *The Purpose Driven Church*, 189-190.

¹⁸⁷ Ibid, 195-196.

¹⁸⁸ Ibid, 196-200.

incarnationally, we must continually reinvent our approach for the sake of the constant, unchanging Word and mission.

Here we must issue a word of caution. In the zeal for mission, it would be tempting to neglect the ministry of the church to believers as well. However, our witness grows with our faith in and knowledge of God and His Word. Kingdom growth requires believers to gather and strengthen each other in support of the mission. Although much is written in support of an incarnational approach to mission as opposed to invitational, at some point the invitation to fellowship must also be issued. Ignoring church and church membership, according to Henry Cook, “is a disastrous mistake, and it is due, as I see it, to a failure in theology, a lack of understanding of all that is involved in the meaning of salvation. . . . There is a community side of salvation that we left entirely alone, and, if we are to do full justice to the New Testament, we must take into account.”¹⁸⁹ Much of the incarnational mission we have talked about thus far has as its goal the establishment of a vertical relationship with God. However, in the establishment of the vertical relationship, the newly converted are connected into a horizontal relationship with other believers. If the church is neglected, then there is no fellowship into which to bring the newly converted.

Perhaps the biggest struggle with incarnational missions is that it is not a quick fix. Incarnational missions require a long-term commitment to those who we are building relationships. The friendship might develop over months or even years (perhaps many years) before the gospel message begins to take root in the life of the unbeliever. In talking about the Double Strategy (intensification and opening) of evangelism in Germany, Russell Briese states that “the developers of this scheme have a rather sobering assessment even of their

¹⁸⁹ Henry Cook, *The Theology of Evangelism*, 104.

own efforts, saying such a scheme is necessarily long-term.”¹⁹⁰ Local evangelism must be committed to those with whom they come in contact. Door-to-door evangelism is not effective if the mentality is that a one-time contact is all that is needed. There must be a commitment, which is why many people are suggesting life-style evangelism as a more effective approach. The relationships are not forced for the sole purpose of the Gospel, but the Gospel permeates every relationship in which the believer engages. This is the incarnational approach to local evangelism.

Conclusion

For the purpose of this project in investigating the relationship of foreign missions and local outreach, Briese makes an important point. “Ultimately the difference between the terms evangelism and mission may be better understood in regard to their geographic sphere of operation, rather than their content.”¹⁹¹ In other words, the difference between foreign missions and local evangelism is not content or method, but merely location. The truth is that both local and foreign missions are cross-cultural in nature. George Lindbeck states that “a religion can be viewed as a kind of cultural and/or linguistic framework or medium that shapes the entirety of life and thought.”¹⁹² Therefore, in order to share our Christian beliefs with those outside of our own congregation, we necessarily minister cross-culturally – from a church/religious culture to a non-church culture. This is as true locally as it is internationally. That is exactly the point I am investigating, the results of which are in the following chapters.

¹⁹⁰ Russell John Briese, *Foundations of a Lutheran Theology of Evangelism*, 261.

¹⁹¹ *Ibid*, 17

¹⁹² George A. Lindbeck, *the Nature of Doctrine: Religion and Theology in a Postliberal Age*, (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 1984), 33.

CHAPTER 4

THE PROJECT DEVELOPED

Introduction

How does a congregation that is declining in membership and worship attendance and that has become disconnected from its community regain a zeal for the *missio dei*? How do you lead a congregation from being focused on membership recruitment for its own survival to being focused on the kingdom goal of sharing the forgiving message of Jesus Christ? The goal of this project is more than just the implementation of an evangelism strategy. The purpose is to find a way to change the general understanding of and attitude toward the mission of God in the Church. Could a short-term overseas mission project serve as the catalyst that moves a congregation toward a better understand of their mission in the Kingdom of God and to a more positive attitude toward the mission of God in their own community? As discussed in the previous chapter, short-term overseas missions and local outreach both have the need for a servant attitude and an incarnational nature. Therefore, the hypothesis of this project is that a congregation's participation in a short-term mission project can increase the entire congregation's understanding of the purpose of local missions and create a more positive attitude towards those efforts.

For this project, the planning, implementation, and debriefing of a short-term mission trip were developed not only to prepare for and evaluate the mission trip itself, but also to instill a greater understanding of the missional nature of the church and a more positive attitude toward the local manifestations of the mission of God in the minds of the members of St. Lucas Lutheran Church, St. Louis, MO.

The Design of the Study and Implementation of the Project

The project was designed to obtain both quantitative and qualitative data on the effects that a short-term overseas mission trip has on the congregation members' understanding of and positive attitude toward local outreach efforts. Since there is very little that has been written which is directly relevant to the question, the research protocol was developed specific for this project. There were four stages to this project, with the first two overlapped due to the timing of the project relative to the planned mission trip.

Throughout the implementation, nothing was said of the connection between the surveys and the mission trip to Brazil. This was intentionally done so that I would not inadvertently influence anyone to respond in a way that supported the hypothesis for the project. If respondents were informed that the research project was intended to show the effects of a short-term mission trip on the understanding of and positive attitudes towards local outreach, they may have responded in a way that they believed would help my research instead of with honesty. Also, apart from asking Mission Team members and church leadership what we can do to continue the mission work begun on the trip once the mission trip was over, nothing was said to indicate that the mission trip implementation was designed to influence our ministry back home. Although this was done to ensure that the research pool was not unduly influenced, it also potentially lessened the influence that the short-term mission trip could have on the members of the Church. For the sake of the research, I did not directly state the similarities between short-term missions and local outreach as outlined in Chapter 3. Stating this directly could have made participants more aware of the missional nature of the Church and positively influenced the results of the surveys

Stage 1 – Pre-Trip Survey

The first step was to assess the congregation's understanding of and attitude towards current local outreach efforts of the congregation using a pre-trip survey. This survey would serve as the baseline data for the project. This survey was sent by mail to all active members of St. Lucas Lutheran Church in January 2011. The deadline for survey submission was February 28 so that the responses would not be overly influenced by the planning that was already under way for the mission trip. (For more on the pre-trip and post-trip surveys, see **Research Tools and Methodology** and Appendix A for copies of the surveys and the accompanying cover letters).

Stage 2 – Mission Trip

The second stage was the implementation of the overseas mission trip. The recruiting, training, planning, on-site activities and devotions, and debriefing would focus on the actual purpose of the trip, while also including instruction in the biblical foundations for missions that are relevant to both overseas and local mission. In this way, the effectiveness of the overseas mission itself would be enhanced, while providing the opportunity for mission team members and general congregation members alike to grow in their understanding of and attitude toward mission.

The members of the Mission Team were recruited beginning in August 2010 by invitation at worship services and sign-up sheets in the narthex. The only requirement for participation in the mission trip was membership at St. Lucas Lutheran Church. In this way, I could not build a team that I believed would be more likely to show the changes in understanding of and positive attitude toward local outreach. Information meetings about the

trip were held on September 19 and October 3, 2010 (See Appendix B for Information Meeting Agenda). After that, a commitment was required by November 14, 2010. The team was comprised of a husband and wife, a father and teenage daughter, two middle-age women, one married and one single, and myself.

The first orientation meeting was held on November 14, 2010 (For Agenda Outlines for each of the pre-trip planning meetings, see Appendix B). Each monthly planning meeting included a Bible study or devotion intended to help those attending increase their understanding of the outreaching nature of the Church and to build a positive attitude towards outreach. We would then discuss fundraising, plans for the trip, cultural consideration, and pre-trip tasks that needed to be completed, such as obtaining passports, visas and vaccinations.

At the first meeting in November 2010, each Mission Team member was asked to recruit 3-5 members of the congregation to serve on their Support Team. Support Team members would be encouraged to attend the monthly meetings, to commit to pray for the Mission Team member in the preparation, implementation and return for the mission trip, and to assist with as much planning and fundraising as possible. Later, we determined that the Support Team could also help with ensuring that the Mission Team member's family and affairs were looked after in their absence.

In order to include the entire congregation in the preparing and learning, information articles were included in the monthly newsletters of St. Lucas in the months leading up to the trip (See Appendix C). In addition, the Bible study that was included in the February and March 2011 Mission Team Meetings was also presented to the members who attend the Sunday Morning Bible Class and was included in the monthly newsletters (See Appendix C –

April 2011 and May 2011 Newsletter Articles). Though not documented, the information and biblical lessons discussed in the Mission Team meetings were often included in the announcements, sermons, and other Bible study discussions throughout the year to ensure that the information about the mission trip planning was being received by the general membership as well. In addition, at the two worship services on Sunday, July 17, 2011, two days before the Mission Team departed for Brazil, the Mission Team was commissioned by the congregation, reminding the members of St. Lucas that the Mission Team was an extension of the local mission work of the entire congregation. (See Appendix D) All of this served to try to bring an increased understanding of and positive attitude towards local mission work to the rest of the congregation beyond the Mission Team and Support Team members.

The events of the trip itself were coordinated with the help of Dr. Bill Thompson, President of the Brazil Mission Society (BMS), and Rev. Mario Lehenbauer, Director of Projects for the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Brazil (IELB). I chose this organization for the trip because I had traveled to Brazil with BMS as part of the Pastoral Leadership Institute (PLI) in 2009. In order to anticipate as much as can be anticipated in a foreign mission field, I felt it was important that I had previous personal experience with the region and with the organizations involved (For the trip itinerary, see Appendix E).

During the trip, each day began with a time of devotion for the Mission Team (See Appendix F for the devotion outline). The events of the trip were designed with three purposes in mind: 1) meaningfully contribute to the work of the Lord through the Church in Brazil; 2) incarnationally learn about the culture and the Church culture of Brazil; 3) develop an attitude of joyfully serving the needs of others. As such, the daily activities fell into three

overlapping categories. Some events were merely designed to learn about the culture – e.g. attending the German Festival in Sao Leopoldo. Other events served to introduce the group to the ministries and work of the IELB in Brazil – visiting Concordia Seminario, ULBRA, IELB headquarters, and the IELB publishing house. Finally, we also spent time in service to the ABRASSE daycare in the community of Sharlau. This included singing as a choir in the Sunday morning worship, celebrating the dedication of the daycare, construction, cleaning, and painting. We spent a total of four days with the people of ABRASSE.

After the trip, the Mission Team, with the help of Support Team members, created a presentation for the congregation to share our experiences with them. One member created a nineteen minute video of the mission trip and each of the seven members of the Mission Team shared what they felt was most important about the mission trip. Afterwards, we hosted a reception which included some Brazilian desserts and provided time to share the mission trip with people in an informal setting. This presentation concluded the formal implementation of the short-term mission trip from St. Lucas.

Stage 3 – Post-Trip Survey

The third stage was to re-assess the congregation's understanding of and attitude toward local outreach efforts to determine if there was a change in these areas. This was done using the same survey administered prior to the mission trip in order to provide a direct comparison of the results. One question was added to the post-trip survey asking if the respondent was willing to participate in a small group interview to discuss the results. This was necessary for the final stage of the project.

Stage 4 – Small Group Interviews

The fourth stage was to conduct small group interviews to determine what aspects of the mission trip contributed to the changes in understanding of and attitude toward local outreach and to determine if anything else could have been done in connection with the mission trip to affect these changes. These three meetings were held on May 1st and 4th. Each of the three small groups was comprised of five people. Each small group was composed of people entirely from one of the following subgroups of survey respondents: Mission Team members, Support Team members, and congregation members who were not a part of the Mission Team or any Support Team. This stage was necessary because the mission trip was not the only event in the life of the church for the entire year. The quantitative changes that were observed through the survey (and the expected changes that were not observed) could have been the result of other aspects of church ministry and not directly related to the mission trip. It was necessary to question those who completed the survey to allow them to indicate, qualitatively, whether or not the mission trip contributed to the changes in understanding of and positive attitude toward local outreach that were indicated in the surveys (See Appendix H for Interview Protocol and Transcripts of the Small Group Interviews).

Research Tools and Methodology

Surveys

In order to gather quantitative data concerning the congregation members' understanding of and attitude towards local outreach, it was necessary to develop a pre-trip and post-trip survey specific to the congregation. The pre-trip and post-trip surveys were identical with the exception of an additional question on the post-trip survey asking about the

member's willingness to participate in a small group discussion concerning the results of the survey (See Appendix A).

The survey had four components. The first component had two open ended questions designed to help those completing the survey focus on what they believe to be the mission of the church and how that mission is lived out at St. Lucas. Although these questions would not serve as the main source of data from the surveys, they do show what people believe to be the purpose of the Church and also give those who completed the surveys the opportunity to indicate what aspects of Church life they feel are most integral to that purpose.

The second component was a series of Likert questions concerning the importance of various ministries to the mission of the Church. Not all ministries of St. Lucas were included. Twelve were chosen so that an adequate number of ministries were included, but not so many that people would be unwilling to complete an unnecessarily lengthy survey. The twelve ministries can be divided into two groups: invitational ministries that require those outside of the congregation's membership to be invited into what we are doing and incarnational ministries that require the congregation members to invest themselves in the community (Assisting Immigrant Groups, Building Long-Term Relationships with Those Outside of the Church, Door-to-Door Outreach Visits, Providing Resources [Food, Money, Grocery Vouchers...] for Those in Need, Community Servant Projects, Living a Christian Life in the Work Place/School). This was not intended to devalue those ministries that are invitational in nature such as worship, Sunday School, Bible classes and Confirmation. However, these ministries focus on strengthening the faith of people who already have a living faith in Christ. Although the responses concerning the six invitational ministries are not integral to the project, they give the respondents a variety of ministries for comparison.

The third component of the survey asked the respondents to place the twelve ministries from the previous component in order of importance. This component was included to allow those who placed a high priority on all areas of ministry to express relative importance. Again, the intent is not to encourage a lower ranking for invitational ministries, but to encourage a more balanced view of the ministries that are invitational and incarnational. If a respondent did not properly complete this section (i.e. ranking multiple ministries with the same number), their responses to this component of the survey were not included in the averages.

The fourth component was designed to measure positive attitude towards the same ministries. While respondents may have rated a ministry as very important, they may not have a positive attitude toward that ministry. The previous components deal mostly with understanding of local outreach. This component gives the respondents the chance to indicate their own feelings about each ministry. The same twelve ministries were included in this component of the survey.

The pre-trip survey was mailed to all active members of St. Lucas in January of 2011. Only active members were included for two reasons. First, it was necessary for respondents to be active in the church so that they would have informed responses. Second, all active members were included to ensure that the selection process did not influence the results.

Respondents were asked to include their names on the survey so that the pre-trip and post-trip surveys could be compared. However, in order to ensure confidentiality, the surveys were submitted to the congregation secretary who assigned a number to each and removed the names before turning them over to me for processing. The numbers were recorded by the secretary for comparison purposes. In order to evaluate the surveys in subgroups of Mission

Team and Support Team, I also submitted the names of both Mission Team and Support Team members to the secretary who only told me the numbers of anyone from those groups, without giving names.

Pre-trip surveys were not processed until after the Mission Team's post-trip presentation. In this way, I would not directly address any areas of concern specifically because of the surveys. If those areas were addressed, it was because of the normal planning and execution of a short-term mission trip.

The post-trip survey was sent by mail in October 2011, one month after the Mission Team presentation. The delay was needed to discourage anyone from making the connection between the surveys and the mission trip. The post-trip surveys were only sent to members who completed the pre-trip survey. This prevented the findings from being the result of two completely different groups completing the pre-trip and post-trip surveys.

The surveys were once again submitted to the secretary who assigned the same number to the post-trip survey as the pre-trip survey. Surveys were evaluate as a complete group, Mission Team members only, Support Team members only, and those who were neither Mission Team or Support Team members (See Appendix G for raw data and comparisons of pre-trip and post-trip surveys by group).

Small Group Interviews

As stated above, the changes (or lack of changes) in survey results could not immediately be attributed to the congregation's participation in a short-term mission trip. The small group interviews were needed to determine what influence, if any, the mission trip had on the congregation members' understanding of and attitude toward local outreach.

The small groups were randomly selected from those who indicated willingness to participate in the small group discussions. All the survey numbers that indicated a willingness to participate were separated into Mission Team members, Support Team members, and other members. The numbers were randomly selected and placed in order of selection for each of the three groups. The secretary then changed the list into a list of names and they were contacted, in order, to get their commitment to participate on a specific day and time. Three small group discussions were held – Mission Team members, Support Team members, and other congregation members. Each small group was comprised of only 5 people to ensure that all participants would have ample opportunity to respond during their discussions. Once a group of 5 was achieved from each of the 3 small groups, no further contacts were made, as there were not enough names remaining on the lists to form a second group.

The protocol was developed to collect two different sets of qualitative input, depending on the results of the survey. First, if there was a notable change in a rating of importance and/or attitude toward a specific outreach ministry, the respondents were asked what, if any, aspects of the mission trip contributed to the change. If there were no notable changes or the changes were negative, the respondents were asked if anything could have been done in conjunction with the mission trip that would have affected a positive change in perceived importance or positive attitude toward the particular outreach ministry. The small group meetings were recorded and transcribed (See Appendix H for transcripts). Each participant signed a release allowing the use of comments for the purpose of this research project, without associating any comments with a given individual, (See Appendix I for a sample release form). After the small group discussions were conducted and the results

processed, I submitted the proposed guidelines for coordinating short-term overseas mission trips to be member checked by the participants in the small group discussion to ensure that results are consistent with the comments of those who participated and not simply my own thoughts.

CHAPTER 5

THE PROJECT EVALUATED

The hypothesis of this project is that by having some members of the congregation participate in a short-term overseas mission trip, many members of St. Lucas Lutheran Church (even those who did not directly participate in the trip) will have a better understanding of and a more positive attitude towards local outreach. This chapter will present the findings of the surveys, comparing the pre-trip and post-test results (See Appendix G for tables of raw data and comparisons of averages for the surveys). In order to process the data in a meaningful way, we will look at the survey in three parts: open ended questions, rating and ranking of the importance of various ministries, and rating of personal attitude toward various ministries. In each of these sections, we will look at the data from the surveys; analyze the data, relying heavily on the input from the Small Group Interview sessions to help interpret the data from the surveys; and suggest ways that these results will influence a set of guidelines for maximizing the local impact of a short-term mission trip.¹⁹³

Open Ended Questions

There were two open ended questions asked at the beginning of the survey: “In your own words, what is the purpose/mission of the Church?” and “How is that purpose/mission demonstrated at St. Lucas?” The answers to these two questions were to be the basis for the respondents’ answers to the questions that followed. In order to evaluate the overall

¹⁹³ The data analysis for the project is simply descriptive. The survey data was not put through a specific statistical analysis protocol. Any statistical terminology that is used either in the analysis of the data or in the interview protocol should be read descriptively, without any technical/statistical meaning implied.

responses, a point scale was applied to responses after the surveys were completed. Although the assignment of points was subject to the biases of researcher, they do give a valuable view of the overall responses. The scale was set up to determine how much emphasis respondents were placing on internal or invitational ministries and how much of an emphasis they placed on external or incarnational ministries. 1 point was assigned to those responses that exclusively mentioned internal ministries. 2 points were assigned to responses that mentioned more internal ministries, but did include some external ministries as well. 3 points were assigned to responses that mentioned an equal number of internal and external ministries. 4 points were assigned to responses that had more external ministries, but did include internal ministries. And 5 points were assigned to responses that exclusively mentioned external ministries. These points were then averaged and the averages of the pre-trip and post-trip survey responses were compared.

As mentioned earlier, the intent is not to diminish the value of internal ministries such as worship and Bible study. Therefore, a score of 5 would indicate a neglect of the need for internal ministries of the church. However, since the mission focus of God seen in Scripture is to reach out to the lost, it is intended that answers to these questions would have an average near 4.

Results

For respondent's definition of the mission of the church, the pre-trip average was 3.83 and the post-trip average was 4.18. This represents a minor shift towards externally focused ministries, though both pre-trip and post-trip scores indicate an appropriate balance of internal and external ministries for the mission of the church. However, when you break up

the scores into three groups based on levels of participation (Mission Team, Support Team, General Member), there is a notable increase for the Mission Team (from 3.33 to 4.83), a small increase for the Support Team (from 3.63 to 4.0), and a decrease for the congregation in general (from 4.05 to 3.71). Part of the hypothesis for this project is that the effect of the mission trip would vary in direct relationship to the level of involvement, which was observed for this question. The results for this question are consistent with that hypothesis.

For respondent's indications of how the mission definition given in the first question is demonstrated at St. Lucas, the pre-trip average was 1.94, indicating that a majority of the ministries mentioned as missional were actually internally focused. The post-trip average was 3.09. This indicates a large shift towards externally focused ministries. Again, the amount of increase varied based on the three groups based on level of involvement, but not as anticipated. The Mission Team score went from 2.0 to 2.83. The Support Team score increased modestly from 2.5 to 2.71. And the score for general members increased considerably from 1.77 to 3.29.

Data Analysis

The results of the open ended questions were not discussed in the small group interviews. However, some of the comments have a bearing on the shift to a more externally focused definition of the church's mission and the manifestation of that mission at St. Lucas. One of the main factors that seems to have contributed to these changes was simple awareness of opportunities. In talking about outreach to immigrant groups, one person commented that, "I became more interested as a Support Team member, but I knew nothing about it. So I didn't know what's even available as an outreach to immigrant groups here."

The mission trip opened people's eyes to the many ministry opportunities in our own community.

One common negative question that has been asked by the congregation in general that actually may have had a positive effect on people's awareness of local opportunities is why we were sending people to Brazil when there is so much that needs to be done in our own neighborhoods. Although this question stems from a negative attitude towards the congregation's participation in the mission trip, it does force those who ask it to look around and identify local opportunities for missions that are comparable to the work that was done on the short-term mission trip. This could have resulted in the increased score for the open ended question concerning how the mission of the church is demonstrated at St. Lucas.

As mentioned above for the first open ended question, the change in scoring is consistent with what would be expected with the exception perhaps of the slight decrease for the congregation in general. It is important to note that with the decrease for the congregation in general, the average still indicated an emphasis on an outreaching/incarnational understanding of the mission of the church.

For the second question concerning the demonstration of the mission at St. Lucas, it was interesting that, although all three groups showed a movement towards more externally focused ministries, it was the congregation in general, apart from the Mission and Support Team Members, that demonstrated the greatest change. Again, since these changes were not addressed in the small group interviews, there is no way to determine the reasons for these changes. However, the results for both questions do indicate an increase in the congregation members' understanding of the mission of the church.

Implications for Short-Term Mission Guidelines

One thing that applies to the open ended questions as well as all other areas of the survey that might have lessened the effect of the mission trip on the congregation's understanding of and attitude toward local outreach is that, in order to not unduly influence the responses, I did not mention the possible effects that a short-term mission trip could have on local outreach until one of the small group interview sessions. As I processed the results, I realized that it would have been beneficial to the research project and to the congregation as a whole if I had informed them of the potential applications of the training and experiences of the mission trip to our local outreach. This could have been done without indicating any connection to the research project so as to not influence responses. One person indicated that, "goals and expectations probably need to be better presented to the congregation." Although this comment was made in reference to door-to-door outreach, it applies to the mission trip and its connection to local outreach as well. Knowing the affect that a short-term mission trip could have on our own outreach could have also lessened some of the resistance to the mission trip, knowing that part of the purpose is to benefit our own outreach ministry as well.

Rating and Ranking of Importance

As stated before, the purpose of having both of these questions on the survey is to allow those who rate every ministry with the same level of importance the opportunity to differentiate between the ministries by ranking them according to their relative importance to each other. Although the ranking comes second on the survey, we will address it first because the results are not as useful as the results of the individual rating of each ministry.

Results

For the ranking of the ministries from 1 to 12, there was very little movement from the first survey to the second. The last two pages of Appendix G show the order in which the ministries were ranked looking at all the surveys and the various subgroups from before. Although some ministries moved up or down in their relative importance, there was very little movement by the externally focused ministries as a whole. If one moved up, another moved down and the same general emphasis on internal ministries was maintained. For the entire group and for each subgroup, at least three of the four most important ministries for the mission of the church were internally focused in both the pre-trip and post-trip surveys. Although we will see below that many of the externally focused ministries were perceived to increase in importance, their importance relative to the other ministries remained virtually unchanged.

For the complete results of the ratings of importance, broken down by subgroups, see the “Survey Comparison” in Appendix G. For the six externally focused ministries that were listed, the ratings of their importance increased for four of the six ministries when all the surveys were processed together. However, only the increase for “Assisting Immigrants” was noteworthy (from 3.33 to 3.64). Of the two that decreased, only “Providing Resources for those in Need” decreased substantially (from 3.76 to 3.49). The same results (not with the exact same numbers) held true for the subgroup of members who were not on either the Mission Team or a Support Team. For the Mission Team subgroup, one ministry area remained unchanged, while the other five increased by at least 0.17. “Living a Christian Life in the Work Place/School” increased by 0.33; “Community Servant Projects” increased by 0.34; and “Assisting Immigrant Groups” increased by 0.5.

The surprising results from this question were for the subgroup of Support Team members. Four of the six externally focused ministries were rated as less important in the second survey than in the first. Of the other two, one remained the same and only “Living a Christian Life in the Work Place/Home” saw an increase of 0.12. It is interesting to note that every Support Team member who completed the second survey scored “Living a Christian Life in the Work Place/Home” as a 5 – extremely important – while the relative ranking was second each time, the highest of any externally focused ministry in any subgroup.

Data Analysis

Perhaps the most telling comment that relates to the importance of incarnational or externally focused ministries was from the Mission Team member who, in response to the suggestion that churches in foreign countries “can always use money,” said, “I know, but...it’s not part of us, it’s not our love that’s going there.” The Mission Team observed firsthand the value of being among a people and sharing their lives. Their changes in attitude will be discussed later, but the increased sense of importance can be traced to the experience of how important the similar work in which we participated in Brazil was to those we served. Although a number of Mission Team members expressed the desire to “do more,” they also recognized the impact that being among the people in an incarnational way had on those with whom we worked.

This impact was felt by the congregation as a whole as well. One comment from the congregational small group sums up the cause of their increase in understanding: “It comes back to the people who have been on the trip talking about their experiences. And let’s face it, if someone gives a positive response to doing something it’s going to pique other people’s

interest and their willingness to at least explore the possibility of doing it.” A number of people in both the congregational interview group and Support Team interview group commented on both the presentation by the Mission Team and general conversations with the Mission Team members that have had an influence on their views of the importance of outreach. One person stated that, “success begets success... we saw something successful, hey we can do this, well maybe we can replicate that here in our community.” That is the intent of this project – to show that the work of a short-term mission trip is no different than every “trip” a congregation takes out of the church building.

The almost universal decrease in perceived importance of externally focused ministries by the Support Team members is not easily explained. Some in that group suggested that it might have been, “overexposure,” a “bias” in the congregation toward helping other places such as Slovakia, or the need to have “more involvement between support group and the Mission Team.” These concerns will be addressed in the next section, Implications for Short-Term Mission Guidelines. However, it is important to note some short-comings in my own implementation of plans for the mission trip.

The intent for having Support Teams was to get members involved in the learning and planning of the mission trip who were not actually going to Brazil. Instructions on recruiting and including Support Team members in the preparation meetings were given at the first meeting in November 2010. However, it would have been helpful if I had given out a sheet listing expectations for Support Team member and perhaps asked for a formal commitment like the one required of Mission Team members. Throughout the planning, Support Team members were invited to come to meetings, but very few were consistent about this. Little was done to try to change this and, as a result, the comment above is completely accurate –

there needed to be more of an effort to involve the Support Team members in the planning process.

Implications for Short-Term Mission Guidelines

There are a number of insights that should be included in a set of guidelines for short-term missions. First, the debriefing each day on the trip should include discussions about the importance of the activities that day. It was not always apparent to Mission Team members the impact that encouragement ministry had on those we worked with.

Second, the training and debriefing of the Mission Team need to include an emphasis on sharing the mission story when we return. Many people commented on the impact that hearing the experiences from the Mission Team had on them. This was not limited to the formal presentation either. Those returning from the mission trip need to be encouraged to have the message of God's work that we were a part of always on their lips to keep it before the people back home.

There also needs to be more guidance given to Mission Team members on the role that Support Team members play in the mission trip. In turn, the Support Team members need to be clear about the importance of their support role for the success of the mission as well as the application of the mission principles back home.

Rating Personal Attitude

For the final section of the survey, respondents were asked to rate their own personal attitude towards the same ministries as in the previous sections. The intent was to see if

members of St. Lucas would have a more positive attitude towards outwardly focused ministries as a result of the short-term mission trip.

Results

In processing all the surveys together, personal attitudes towards four out of six outwardly focused ministries became more positive. Of those four, only two (“Assisting Immigrant Groups” and “Community Servant Projects”) saw notable increases – 0.19 and 0.28 respectively. Personal attitude towards two ministries decreased, but by 0.07 or less. By way of comparison, attitudes towards the inwardly focused ministries were evenly split – three became more positive and three became less positive. All of the changes in these areas were by less than 4% of the previous rating average for the entire survey group.

For the Mission Team, personal attitudes became more positive in all six outwardly focused ministries by at least 0.16. The average attitude toward “Door-to-Door Outreach Visits” increased the most, moving from 3.33 to 4.17, an increase of .84 or 25% of the original rating. This is in line with the expectation that the Mission Team members would experience the greatest shift in personal attitude toward outreach.

The Support Team results were again contrary to expectations, with attitudes becoming less positive for four of the six outwardly focused ministries. Only the decrease for “Door-to-Door Outreach Visits” was noteworthy, moving from 3.13 to 2.57 – a decrease of almost 18%. It is important to note that personal attitudes toward inwardly focused ministries also decreased for four of the six ministries.

Looking at only surveys completed by general congregation members who were not on the Mission Team nor on any Support Team, attitudes became more positive toward four

of the six outwardly focused ministries, reflecting increases in the same areas as the entire set of surveys for this area. The two areas of decrease, therefore, were also the same areas that decreased for the entire survey set, however the decreases were more pronounced when the Mission Team and Support Team members were excluded.

Data Analysis

The Mission Team members indicated many times the impact that the mission trip had on them personally. They indicated an increased awareness of and positive attitude towards people of different backgrounds and cultures in their neighborhoods and workplaces. Much of the literature on short-term mission trips indicated that this is a benefit of the trips. One cause of this for the members of the St. Lucas Mission team was being ministered to by those around them in the mission field. One person indicated that, “it felt good there, when people reached out to help us in making us feel welcome, making us feel at home, helping us get around – I am willing to help people here to give them the same welcomeness, comfort.” “Whether planned or not, the reality of short-term mission is that the host received participants likewise have something to give in return to goer-guests. For many goer-guests, this comes as a pleasant, serendipitous surprise.”¹⁹⁴

For the positive changes observed in attitude towards outwardly focused ministries, a frequent comment among those not on the Mission Team was that the post-trip presentation and personal conversations with Mission Team members had a substantial influence on congregational attitudes. “Again, it comes back to people who have been on the trip talking about their experiences.”

¹⁹⁴ Roger Peterson, et. al. eds. “*Maximum Impact Short-Term Mission*,” 176.

For the negative changes in attitude, those who attended the Support Team small group interview stated a few times that they do not believe the mission trip itself was a contributing factor to the less positive attitudes. In some cases, events involving various outreach ministries that occurred during the time between the surveys had a negative effect on people's attitudes towards those ministries.

Implications for Short-Term Mission Guidelines

In order to create a more positive attitude towards local outreach, the small group interviews indicated aspects of the mission trip that had the desired influence as well as suggested other ways to bring this change in attitude to the congregation. As with changes in the view of the importance of outwardly focused ministries, short-term mission trips exert their influence over the attitudes of the congregation through the Mission Team sharing their experience both formally in a presentation and informally in conversation with other congregation members. The training, therefore, must include encouragement to share their story with others and a presentation for the congregation should follow quite soon after the trip. For St. Lucas, we held a separate meeting for the presentation. However, it would be more effective and would have reached more of the congregation if it were part of a regular worship service giving thanks and praise for the work that God did on the trip and is continuing to do in the mission field (or maybe have a shortened presentation during the worship services and the full presentation at another time).

Another way that was suggested to change attitudes in the congregation was to involve the congregation in work ahead of time. This could be done through the gathering of supplies for various ministries in the area to which we were traveling. It was also suggested

that more information about the specific people and ministries that the Mission Team would be working with would have created greater excitement before the trip and increased the impact of the post-trip presentation and conversations with the Mission Team.

One person suggested that we could have had “the Mission Team and Support Team kind of do ... a practice run, by maybe going to the food bank and serving food...” This is another way that this research project interfered with the results it was intending to measure. The purpose of the research project was to see if short-term missions could influence local outreach, not the other way around. I had thought about doing a local project as part of the mission trip training, but felt that this was contrary to the intent of the research. Future trips should include a small local project to give the Mission Team the opportunity to work together ahead of time and give the congregation and Support Team members a chance to get some of the experience of the mission trip.

Small Group Interviews

Since the Small Group Interviews were discussed in the Data Analysis above, here we only need to say a few words about the effectiveness of the interviews themselves. With the amount of data that needed to be shared with the group for the purpose of getting feedback, it would have been helpful to have the data in a handout or in a PowerPoint presentation for the participants to see. This would have aided in their understanding of the questions. There were a number of times that clarification was needed. At one point during the Support Team group interview, a Support Team member asked if it was the purpose of the mission trip to help the congregation have a better understanding of long-term relationships outside of the congregation. My response to that question was basically a statement about the nature of the

research. Although my response did not say what the intended results were, my response potentially influenced the answers of the respondents. This must be taken into consideration when weighing the value of interview responses from Support Team members. That being said, after the first couple of questions, the participants in all three small groups seemed to fully understand the questions and needed less clarification as the small group interview continued. Overall, the responses indicated which aspects of the mission trip had the greatest influence on people's understanding of and attitude towards local outreach as well as giving insightful suggestions for other ways to bring the influence of the mission trip experience to the rest of the congregation.

Guidelines to Maximized Local Impact of Short-Term Missions

What follows is intended, first and foremost, as a set of guidelines for my own use in future short-term mission trips, both domestic and foreign, at St. Lucas Lutheran Church. It is my hope that, by sharing these with fellow pastors, lay people with a missionary spirit, and other mission organizations, these will also help others to maximize the impact that a short-term mission trip can have on their congregations and organizations. These are not intended to be a complete guide for the planning and executing of a short-term mission trip. There are many books that have already been written on that subject. These are intended to supplement those guides to help maximize the impact that the short-term mission trip has on the congregation's understanding of and attitude towards local outreach.

The following guidelines were submitted to participants in the Small Group Interviews as a member check. They were simply asked to read through them and make sure

that they reflected their thoughts and opinions as expressed during the Small Group Interview. Modifications were made based on their responses.

Preliminary Considerations

- ❖ Congregation Input – It is obviously important to seek congregational approval for a trip before it is planned. However, it can influence the congregation more if they have input into the destination as well. If members already have a connection to a country or a particular ministry, they are more likely to pay attention to planning events and newsletter articles concerning the trip.
- ❖ Communication – Make sure you are clear with the congregation about the purpose of the trip. Explain the connection between short-term missions and local outreach so that they can see the benefits that the trip will have on our local outreach efforts as well.

Pre-Trip Planning

- ❖ Funding the Trip – Although it may be tempting to include the expenses for the mission trip in the budget or to simply ask each person to pay their own way, there is value to including fundraising in the plans, especially writing letters or directly asking people to contribute to the mission trip. This involves people beyond the congregation and gives the Mission Team experience in presenting the trip to others, which is excellent preparation for the post-trip presentation (see Post-Trip Activities below).
- ❖ Local Mission Project – As part of the training for Mission Team and Support Team members, as well as anyone from the congregation who wishes to participate, arrange

- for a local outreach project and/or servant event. Include the Mission Team and Support Team in the planning of the event. The event should also be a part of the post-trip debriefing in discussing possible local applications for what was learned from the trip.
- ❖ Support Team – Present a clear set of expectations to Support Team members for their involvement in the planning of the mission trip. Included in these expectations should be participation in the local mission project that is part of the training (see above).
 - ❖ Personal Connections to the Mission Field – Work with the mission agency to make contact with someone or multiple people from the area in which the Mission Team will be working. In newsletters and worship service announcements, present the correspondence to the congregation so that they know ahead of time the value of going instead of just sending money.
 - ❖ Local Connections to the Mission Field – If there are organizations or groups of people from the country to which we are traveling, contact those groups and have them be a part of the cultural training for the Mission Team. If possible, include members of those groups in a theologically appropriate way in worship or bible classes to expose the entire congregation to the possible local implications of the trip.
 - ❖ Bringing Supplies - Discussion with the mission agency to find out what can be brought to the mission field to assist with the work. Present this list of requested items to the congregation – not the Mission Team – so that the congregation can participate in the mission work. Make sure that you bring a report back to the congregation so that they know what their contributions did for the work in the mission field.

- ❖ Post-Trip Presentation – This is also discussed below. However, it is important to set the date for the presentation during the pre-trip planning so that the Mission Team can be prepared and the date can be close to the return date. Five weeks is too long between the trip and the presentation.

In the Mission Field

- ❖ Daily Debriefing – During the debriefing at the end of each day, include a discussion of the importance of that day’s activities for both the church in the mission field and for the Mission Team’s work in the mission field. Also, discuss how the experiences that day might influence the ministry of the congregation back home. This will get the Mission Team to start thinking about how the mission trip never really ends, it just continues back home in their native mission field.
- ❖ Building Long-Term Relationships – When possible and appropriate, gather contact information that can be used to keep the congregation back home informed about the progress in the mission field for the months and years to come. E-mail, social networking sites, and letter writing can each be used to provide continued connections to the mission field.

Post-Trip Activities

- ❖ Post-Trip Debriefing – Encourage Mission Team members to get their Support Team together and share the experience with them. This will give the Support Team the opportunity to be more involved with the follow up and to help the Mission Team member clarify what they want to share with the rest of the congregation.

- ❖ Informal Sharing – Remind Mission Team members to take every opportunity to tell others about the mission trip experience. Personal sharing will prepare them for the presentation and will have a significant impact on those with whom they share.
- ❖ Post-Trip Presentation – This should include information that connects the congregation with the work they were involved with before the trip. If items were collected to take on the trip, someone should share the impact those items had on the work in the mission field. It is important that EVERY Mission Team member present something from the trip. Each person will connect with a different demographic. Also, the Mission Team member will benefit from the experience of sharing the message of the trip with others. If there is a local mission that needs resources (such as a food bank or homeless shelter), people who are invited to the presentation can be encouraged to bring items that are needed by that local ministry to the presentation as an extension of the mission trip to the local community.
- ❖ Long-Term Contact – Mission Team and Support Team members should keep in contact with those in the mission field whenever possible. A long-term relationship with the mission field can be maintained by including updates on the mission field ministries that were blessed by the trip in newsletters and bulleting announcements for at least a year following the trip to continue to demonstrate the value of missions, both local and abroad.

CHAPTER 6

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Contributions to Ministry

In Acts 1:8, Jesus tells his disciples that “you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.” Most people who read that see it as chronological. First go to Jerusalem – your local context. Then, when you have sufficient experience, you are prepared for Judea and Samaria – going outside of your local context, but not too far. And only then are you prepared for the ends of the earth. However, the non-believing world that surrounds our congregations is every bit as much a foreign mission field as any country at the ends of the earth. Though the people may look like us and speak the same language as us, as Christians we are strangers in the world. Sometimes, we forget that and become so comfortable living in “Jerusalem” that we do not see the spiritual or physical needs of those around us. Sometimes, we need the obvious foreign nature of a distant country at the ends of the earth to wake us up to the mission work that lies just outside our door.

The intent for this project was to see if a short-term mission trip could instill in the members of St. Lucas a more missional understanding of the church and give them a more positive attitude towards local outreach. It seems that for St. Lucas, the mission trip to Brazil has done that and more. In my presuppositions, I stated that it was assumed that an increase in the understanding of and positive attitude toward local outreach would lead to greater participation in outreach, but that it would take months and probably years to measure the change in participation. However, the effects on participation have already been manifested in the life of St. Lucas.

Upon returning from the mission trip, the church council was asked, “What now?” From that, the congregation has taken on a different local mission project each month – from collecting money for disaster relief to collecting food items for the local food pantry. It has been my intent and others have requested that future month projects include participation in the local ministry and not just collecting resources. Such projects are being planned for later in 2012. There is still some hesitancy about the projects, but most people have embraced the projects as a way to reconnect with a community that we have not effectively engaged in sometime.

In addition, the opportunity presented itself to work alongside a student from Brazil who was coming to the St. Louis area to work on his PhD. He had completed his pastoral training and wanted to continue to work with a church during his time studying in St. Louis. St. Lucas raised funds to help support him in his education, recognizing the value that his education will have for the church in Brazil, while also committing to work with him in local areas of outreach. His main area of volunteer service will be to help St. Lucas members connect with our local community through the efforts of Christian Friends of New Americans – an organization which serves the immigrant communities in St. Louis by helping them to integrate into life in the United States. What we have learned in Brazil about the importance of a servant attitude and an incarnational approach will serve us well as we engage the foreign mission field in our own “Jerusalem.”

Although the guidelines created in the project are intended for short-term mission trips, many of the guidelines apply to our local work as well. We need to communicate the purpose of local outreach projects clearly to the congregation, to make long-term commitments to the relationships we build in those projects, and to keep information about the work that is going

on always before the congregation so that even those who are not participating directly will be able to rejoice together with all God's people as we witness His work in the world through us.

In addition, the guidelines will serve me and other leaders of St. Lucas on future mission trips. Although we do not have another mission trip that is currently being planned, there is interest in many different mission trips – both foreign and domestic. Mission Team members and other congregation members have expressed interest in returning to Brazil or going to a different country, with some Mission Team members expressing a desire to lead a mission trip. A number of people have also talked about participating in national mission trips for disaster relief. And still others have looked on-line at LC-MS mission opportunities. For all of these opportunities, the short-term mission guidelines will assist those who are organizing the trip to do so in such a way that the potential local impact is also maximized.

Beyond our own congregation, this project serves as a first step towards helping other congregations utilize short-term missions for training in local outreach. For congregations that are declining and in need of revitalization, a short-term mission trip can serve as the catalyst for a more missional approach to ministry that helps them re-engage with their community and reignite passion for local mission work in their members. The guidelines developed here will be shared with other congregations and mission agencies. Some may utilize them to supplement an already effective mission program while others may see in this an invitation to move their congregation in a new mission driven direction.

As mentioned before, very little has been written on the effects of short-term missions on local outreach. Some have written about short-term missions as a life-changing event for those who go on the mission trip. Others have indicated that those who return can be

instruments of missional change in their congregations without giving many details on how to effectively accomplish that. However, to my knowledge, no one has tried to measure the affect that sponsoring a short-term mission trip has on a congregation. It is my hope that this project may serve as a catalyst for future discussions and research in the church on how to capitalize locally on the experiences of a short-term mission trip.

Contributions to Professional and Personal Growth

As a result of this project, I have experienced many professional and personal benefits. Professionally, my own understanding of the purpose of the church in the mission of God has increased. As the project itself indicates, participation in short-term missions tends to increase one's understanding of the importance of mission. Having gone to Brazil twice since 2009, I have experienced firsthand the changes that occur in one's view of the church as a result of short-term missions.

In addition, I have grown in confidence as a leader. Although I had never led a short-term mission trip before, my previous participation gave me the understanding of the mechanics of the trip that was necessary in order to lead a mission trip. Others on the trip who had either never travelled internationally or never travelled internationally on a mission trip looked to me for leadership, guidance, and peace of mind. My firm belief in the importance of the work that we would be doing gave me the confidence to move forward even when there were aspects of the trip about which I was uncertain.

This has influenced my leadership back home in the congregation. There was not unanimous support in the congregation for the plan to utilize a student from Brazil for outreach. In some cases, the lack of support was directly for the outreach aspect of the plan.

Some still feel that we should be focusing our congregational efforts on tending to the needs of those who are there. It would be easy to get discouraged or abandon the plan because of those who do not support it. However, participation in mission trips has convinced me of how essential it is that we actively invest our time in our community for the sake of the Kingdom of God. Although not everyone is fully behind some of the plans that are being put in place, many others are. One member who made a financial contribution towards our plans indicated that he was not entirely convinced that this approach was correct, but he completely understood the need to do something to re-engage the community. At least our current plans are a place to start, so he is fully supporting the efforts. Comments like these and a better understanding of the God-given mission of the church has helped me to set a direction and faithfully lead the congregation in the mission of God.

Another way that this project has influenced me professionally is that I have begun two different projects that will seek to implement cross-congregational ministry in the St. Louis area. Working with a fellow pastor, I have begun a youth program that is designed to provide a place for youth to come and safely speak their minds about the issues they face while receiving insights and encouragement from other youth from a biblical perspective. The “Acts 1:8” youth program is open to all congregations and is structured in such a way that makes it accessible to non-church youth as well. This is an excellent place for youth to invite non-believing friends who will not feel intimidated, but will get to discussion issues relevant to the youth today.

Second, I am working on implementing a cross-congregational small group program for the area. This will simply be a way for congregations to share information about small group opportunities that are provided by their congregation so that members from other

congregations and from the community can connect into groups of specific interest to them. The outreaching nature of small groups is a topic for another research project, but the idea for the combined ministry of small groups across congregational boundaries was partially motivated by the learning that occurred in this project.

Another example of the professional growth I have experienced as a result of the project is that I have been asked to consider and have accepted an appointment to the Board of Directors of the Brazil Mission Society. This will provide a way for me to continue to grow in my understanding and practice of God's mission both locally and internationally while working alongside people who have been doing this far longer and far more effectively than myself.

Personally, my eyes have been opened up to the mission of God around me every day. It is not just projects and programs that need to be implemented, but a life to be lived in the grace of God. Some of the activities in Brazil would not be considered "mission work" by some because we did not run a program or build a building. We learned, worked, and lived alongside others for the sake of the Gospel. It is that lifestyle of missions that I continue to seek to implement in my own life.

I have also been blessed by a greater awareness of my family's role in the mission of God. Our children are very attached to both me and my wife. My leaving for Brazil for 11 days was not easy for them. By using networking websites, we were able to connect while I was gone and I was able to share with them the work that was being done. They did not like my being gone, but they seemed to understand that the value of the work made it worth the short absence.

I have also grown to appreciate the support and encouragement of my wife even more. The mission trip was scheduled and would not have been easy to move when we found out we were expecting a third child around the time of the trip. It would have been understandable had she requested that the trip be rescheduled or cancelled given the circumstances. However, recognizing the time and financial commitments that had already been made, she encouraged me to continue with the plans for the trip. Our daughter was born nine days before I left. At that point, she probably regretted the decision, but still supported the trip and did not make me feel guilty for leaving (I felt enough of that on my own). Both her reaction and the response of my children make me optimistic that they will not just support me, but join me on future mission endeavors.

Recommendations

As mentioned above, the purpose of the guidelines that have been developed through this project is to help St. Lucas Lutheran Church (and hopefully other congregations and mission societies) plan and implement future mission trips – local, national, and internal – in such a way that the benefits of the experience for those who participate is passed on to the congregation as a whole. The members of St. Lucas have approved a plan that would implement a mission trip each year with the location of that trip being a three year rotation of local, national, and international opportunities to serve. These guidelines will be used by me or by whoever leads the mission trip so that the impact to the congregation is maximized.

It would give more credibility to these results if the project were repeated in other congregations. It is my hope that others who read this will implement a similar strategy in

their congregation and report on the results so that a pattern of influence can be clearly established.

Although there have already been some changes in our practice of mission at St. Lucas, further research and monitoring would be necessary to determine to what extent these changes and any future changes are the result of the congregation's participation in a short-term mission trip. As I and many members strive to engage our community more and more, I believe we will see many more changes in the congregation's mission involvement. It is also my hope that the plan to participate in different short-term mission trips (local, national, and international) will preserve and/or renew the mission interest in the coming years.

Conclusion

In May of 2001, I graduated from Concordia Seminary and began my public ministry in service to the Lord. My view of the call to ministry was, and still is, very simplistic – God calls who He wants to where He wants to use them for the expansion of His Kingdom. My responsibility is to be open to His calling.

However, there was no way that His calling for me would involve foreign missions of any kind. I sought no classroom or practical training for such a task and truly had no desire for the foreign mission field. God makes everyone unique and I was uniquely not skilled or motivated for mission work. He made others for that.

As ridiculous as it sounds at the end of this project, that was my attitude until 2008 when the reality of the PLI international trip was just months away. At that time, it still seemed as if it would just be a nice experience that I would enjoy and maybe make a photo album to remember the experience.

God has a funny way of ignoring what we think is best for the sake of what He knows is best. A willing servant's heart and an incarnational love for others are the main things that are needed by mission work both at home and abroad. It took a trip of more than 6,000 miles, but God has opened my eyes to see the role that I and my congregation can play in the salvation mission of God. Though there is certainly more to learn, I and many people at St. Lucas are joining in Isaiah's response to God's call saying, "Here am I! Send me."

APPENDIX A
OUTREACH SURVEYS AND COVER LETTERS

Pre-Trip Cover Letter

Dear Member of St. Lucas,

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the risen Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

As you may know, I have been studying at Concordia Seminary for the last 5 years, working on a Doctorate of Ministry (D.Min.) graduate degree. It is a practical degree, meaning that it is not intended for academic purposes, but as a way to increase proficiency in congregational ministry.

As I am nearing the end of the program, I have begun my work on my Major Applied Project (MAP), which is similar to a dissertation, but needs to have immediate application within the life of the congregation. My MAP takes a look at a congregation's understanding of and attitude toward local outreach efforts. The enclosed survey is the first step in my research of this at St. Lucas. There will be a follow-up survey later in the year, followed by discussion groups to talk about the two surveys together.

In order to help me with my MAP, I am asking that you fill out the enclosed survey completely. I do need you to include your name so that this survey can be connected to the second survey. Kathy Christopher will receive the surveys, assign and record a number for each survey, and remove the name from them before they are passed on to me so that I will not know who gave what answers. I need to be able to put your two surveys together, but I do not need to know who said what on each of them. The removal of names will also allow me to present the results to my evaluating committee without violating confidentiality.

After the second survey is received, some of those who completed both surveys will be asked to participate in one of 4 small group discussion meetings about the results of the surveys. The more people who respond to these surveys, the more useful the results will be for my MAP and for the congregation. Please take some time to complete the survey and either send it back to church or bring it with you in an envelope marked "Outreach Survey" and place it in the mail tray outside of Kathy's office. If you have any questions, you can contact me by phone (314)583-8138, e-mail Nesiah1@yahoo.com, or talk to me at church. Thank you for helping me out with this project for my studies. Your assistance is greatly appreciated.

In Christ,

Pastor Biber

Post-Trip Cover Letter

Dear Member of St. Lucas,

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the risen Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

Back in January, you completed a survey concerning understanding of and attitude toward local outreach efforts of St. Lucas. The survey is part of my research for my Major applied Project for my doctorate degree. The next step in the research is to re-survey those who completed the first survey to determine how understandings and attitudes may have changed. You will notice that the survey is the same as the one you completed in January.

Like before, I do need you to include your name so that this survey can be connected to the first survey. Kathy Christopher will receive the surveys, and write the number assigned to your first survey on this one and remove the name from them before they are passed on to me so that I will not know who gave what answers. I need to be able to put your two surveys together, but I do not need to know who said what on each of them. The removal of names will also allow me to present the results to my evaluating committee without violating confidentiality.

After the second survey is received, some of those who completed both surveys will be asked to participate in one of 4 small group discussion meetings about the results of the surveys. The more people who respond to these surveys, the more useful the results will be for my MAP and for the congregation. Please take some time to complete the survey and either send it back to church or bring it with you in an envelope marked "Outreach Survey" and place it in the mail tray outside of Kathy's office. I would like all surveys back by the end of October. If you have any questions, you can contact me by phone (314)583-8138, e-mail Nesiah1@yahoo.com, or talk to me at church. Thank you for helping me out with this project for my studies. Your assistance is greatly appreciated.

In Christ,

Post-Trip Follow-Up Cover Letter

Dear Member of St. Lucas,

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the risen Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

Back in October, you received a follow-up survey for my Major Applied Project (MAP), which is similar to a doctoral dissertation. As of yet, I have not received the form back. It is important that I receive this by the 15th of January so that I can complete my project on time.

Like with the first survey, I do need you to include your name so that this survey can be connected to the first survey. Kathy Christopher will receive the surveys, and write the number assigned to your first survey on this one and remove the name from them before they are passed on to me so that I will not know who gave what answers. I need to be able to put your two surveys together, but I do not need to know who said what on each of them. The removal of names will also allow me to present the results to my evaluating committee without violating confidentiality.

After the second survey is received, some of those who completed both surveys will be asked to participate in one of 4 small group discussion meetings about the results of the surveys. The more people who respond to these surveys, the more useful the results will be for my MAP and for the congregation. Please take some time to complete the survey and either send it back to church or bring it with you in an envelope marked "Outreach Survey" and place it in the mail tray outside of Kathy's office. If you have any questions, you can contact me by phone (314)583-8138, e-mail Nesiah1@yahoo.com, or talk to me at church. Thank you for helping me out with this project for my studies. Your assistance is greatly appreciated.

[Note that on the survey that follows, the final question was not included on the initial survey, for the sake of space, both surveys are not included since the final question was the only difference between the two]

Name

Outreach Survey

The purpose of this survey is to assess the St. Lucas members' understanding of and attitude towards local outreach efforts. Although your name is requested for follow-up purposes, your name will be removed before your answers are evaluated, so you will not be connected with your answers in any way.

In your own words, what is the purpose/mission of the Church?

How is that purpose/mission demonstrated at St. Lucas?

Circle the number that best indicates the importance of the following activities for achieving the purpose of the Church:

	1 Not Important	2	3 Somewhat Important	4	5 Extremely Important
Worship Services	1	2	3	4	5
Sunday School/Bible Classes	1	2	3	4	5
Assisting Immigrant Groups	1	2	3	4	5
Confirmation Class (Adult and Youth)	1	2	3	4	5
Building Long-Term Relationships with Those Outside of the Church	1	2	3	4	5
Youth Group Events/Bible studies	1	2	3	4	5
Door-to-Door Outreach Visits	1	2	3	4	5
Providing Resources (Food, Money, Grocery Vouchers...) for Those in Need	1	2	3	4	5
Community Meals (Slovakfest, Men's Club Brat Dinner,...)	1	2	3	4	5
Community Servant Projects	1	2	3	4	5
Living a Christian Life in the Work Place/School	1	2	3	4	5
Providing Facilities at Church for Community Groups	1	2	3	4	5

Please rank the same activities in order of importance, 1 being most important, 12 being least important. Using the ratings that you gave in the previous question, your rankings should begin with those activities for which you circled 5, then 4, and so on. No two activities can be given the same number.

- | | |
|--|--|
| ___ Worship Services | ___ Door-to-Door Outreach Visits |
| ___ Sunday School/Bible Classes | ___ Providing Resources for Those in Need |
| ___ Assisting Immigrant Groups | ___ Community Meals |
| ___ Confirmation Class (Adult and Youth) | ___ Community Servant Projects |
| ___ Building Long-Term Relationships with Those Outside of the Church | ___ Living a Christian Life in the Work Place/School |
| ___ Youth Group Events/Biblestudies | ___ Providing Facilities at Church for Community Groups |

Circle the number that best corresponds to your personal attitude towards the following ministries:

	1	2	3	4	5
	Negative		Neutral		Positive
Worship Services	1	2	3	4	5
Sunday School/Bible Classes	1	2	3	4	5
Assisting Immigrant Groups	1	2	3	4	5
Confirmation Class (Adult and Youth)	1	2	3	4	5
Building Long-Term Relationships with Those Outside of the Church	1	2	3	4	5
Youth Group Events/Biblestudies	1	2	3	4	5
Door-to-Door Outreach Visits	1	2	3	4	5
Providing Resources (Food, Money, Grocery Vouchers...) for Those in Need	1	2	3	4	5
Community Meals (Slovakfest, Men's Club Brat Dinner,...)	1	2	3	4	5
Community Servant Projects	1	2	3	4	5
Living a Christian Life in the Work Place/School	1	2	3	4	5
Providing Facilities at Church for Community Groups	1	2	3	4	5

Are you willing to participate in a one hour small group to discuss the results of these surveys? _____

APPENDIX B
PRE-TRIP PLANNING MEETING AGENDAS

Brazil Mission Trip Information Meeting
9/19/10 & 10/3/10

- I. Introductions – have each person introduce themselves and why they are considering being involved in the mission trip
 - II. Brazil Mission Society Video
 - III. PowerPoint Presentation
 - A. Pastor Biber's Trip to Brazil in 2009
 - B. Plans for our trip next year
 - IV. Questions about the Trip
-

Brazil Mission Trip First Meeting
11/14/10

- I. Introductions
 - A. Name and role for the trip (going, supporting,...)
 - B. What are you most excited about for this trip?
 - C. What is your biggest concern about this trip?
- II. Discussion of Moses' Call – Exodus 3:1-4:17
 - A. What were Moses' concerns?
 - B. How are they similar to ours?
 - C. How did God respond to those concerns?
 - D. How do God's responses help us as we start our planning?
- III. Support Team
 - A. Sample Letter
 - B. Involvement
 - C. Questions

- IV. Fundraising Plans
 - A. Sample Letter
 - 1. What to include
 - 2. When to start – right now!
 - 3. Keeping track of contributions
 - a. Have people send to you, made out to the church
 - b. Make a database
 - c. Submit to me – I will also keep a database, including who it is to support
 - B. Other Opportunities
 - 1. Advent/Lenten Suppers
 - 2. Door Offerings
 - 3. WOL Chapel Offering
 - 4. Other Ideas – include who, what, where and when.
 - V. Questions
 - VI. Time of prayer in small groups
 - VII. Assignment – if you do not have a valid Passport, begin the application process now!
-

Brazil Mission Trip Meeting
12/12/10

- I. Introductions
- II. Discussion of 1 Corinthians 9:19-23
- III. Handout on Cultural Differences
- IV. Fundraising Plans
 - A. Update of where we are at
 - B. Advent Dinners
 - C. Other opportunities

- V. Questions
 - VI. Time of prayer in small groups
 - VII. Assignment
 - A. Passport
 - B. Vaccinations – Parish Nurses will Reimburse
-

Brazil Mission Trip Meeting
1/9/11

- I. Introductions
- II. Discussion of 2 Corinthians 5:16-21
 - A. Ambassador – one who speaks with the authority of the one who sends
 - B. Two things about us
 - 1. Reconciled to God – spend time in God’s Word
 - 2. Reconciling others through God’s Word (and we see them differently)
- III. Introducing Alexandre and Vieira – Cultural Discussion
- IV. Fundraising Plans
 - A. Update of where we are at
 - B. Advent Dinners
 - C. Other opportunities
- V. Questions
- VI. Time of prayer in small groups
- VII. Assignment
 - A. Passport
 - B. Vaccinations – Parish Nurses will Reimburse
 - C. Daily Devotions

Brazil Mission Trip Meeting

2/13/11

- I. Introductions
- II. p. 1-2 of Mission Study
- III. Fundraising Plans
 - A. Update of where we are at
 - B. Lenten Dinners
 - C. Brainstorming other opportunities
 - D. Letters to friends and family
- V. Questions
- VI. Time of prayer in small groups
- VII. Assignment
 - A. Vaccinations – Parish Nurses will Reimburse
 - B. Daily Devotions

Brazil Mission Trip Meeting

3/13/11

- I. Introductions
- II. p. 3-4 of Mission Study
- III. Fundraising Plans
 - A. Update of where we are at
 - B. Lenten Dinners
 - C. Other opportunities discussed previously
 - D. Letters to friends and family

- V. Questions
 - VI. Time of prayer in small groups
 - VII. Assignment
 - A. Vaccinations – Parish Nurses will Reimburse
 - B. Daily Devotions
 - C. Plans from Fundraising discussion
-

Brasil Mission Trip Meeting
4/3/11

- I. Introductions – Matheus Schmidt & Gerson Linden
- II. Devotion
 - A. Genesis 12:1-3 – Leave everything and trust in me
 - B. What are you have to entrust to the Lord here?
 - C. What are you trusting in Him for while we are there?
- II. Information on Visas
 - A. Will not be applying today
 - B. Need Passport, pictures (2), Letter of invitation, contact person in Brasil
- III. Fundraising Plans
 - A. Update of where we are at
 - B. Lenten Dinners
 - C. Other opportunities discussed previously
 - 1. Banjo Concert
 - 2. Car Wash
 - 3. Better Communication - Bake sales perhaps too close together
 - D. Letters to friends and family (Write thank you note and post-trip follow ups for all contributions)
- IV. Ministry Opportunities
 - A. Service – School, open to a crèche
 - B. Visitation

1. Schools – Arnold Borkert and Sat. programs
2. Orphanage
3. Multi parish & Mission congregations (Mighty Fortress)
4. Seminary
5. Cultural Excursion

V. Questions

VI. Assignment

- A. Vaccinations – Parish Nurses will Reimburse (yellow fever is 10 year)
 - B. Daily Devotions
 - C. Plans from Fundraising discussion
 - D. Date for next meeting in May (1, 8 – Mother’s Day, 15)
-

Brazil Mission Trip Meeting

5/15/11

I. Introductions – Flavio Knopp

II. Servant Devotion – Mark 10:35-45

III. Fundraising Plans

- A. Update of where we are at
- B. Banjo Concert – Turn over to Joe
- C. Letters to friends and family

IV. Visa Applications

- A. Receipt
- B. Passport
- C. Passport Photos
- D. Copies of Drivers License/Birth Certificate
- E. Itinerary – I have
- F. Letter of Invitation – I have

V. Questions

VI. Assignment

- A. Vaccinations – Parish Nurses will Reimburse
 - B. Daily Devotions
 - C. Plans from Fundraising discussion
-

Brazil Mission Trip Meeting

6/5/11

- I. Devotion – Destroying our Plans: The Story of Arizona Paul
Proverbs 19:21 “Many are the plans in a man’s heart, but it is the Lord’s purpose that prevails.”

 - II. Fundraising Plans
 - A. Update of where we are at
 - 1. Banjo Concert over \$1100
 - 2. Totals: Expenses – 22,480
Receipts – 23,397.91
Pending – 1,000
Extra Funds – 1919.91
 - B. Letters to friends and family: Follow Up With Thank You notes and begin to prepare for post-trip letter (get envelopes ready and stamps)

 - III. Visa Applications
 - A. All are being processed
 - B. Should get back this week,

 - IV. Packets

 - V. What phrases do you want to know?

 - VI. Assignment
 - A. Vaccinations – Parish Nurses will Reimburse – Give them a BIG thank you
 - B. Daily Devotions
-

Brazil Mission Trip Meeting

6/5/11

- I. Where we started Discussion of Moses' Call – Exodus 3:1-4:17
 - A. What were Moses' concerns?
 - B. How are they similar to ours?
 - C. How did God respond to those concerns?
 - D. How does God's responses help us as we prepare to go?

- II. Outline of Schedule – probably multiple work sites

- III. Packing
 - A. Looks like there is laundry, not sure of pricing
 - B. There is wi-fi in the rooms
 - C. Look to packet for what to bring
 - D. Electrical Converter
 - E. Bible & Devotions (Portals of Prayer)

- IV. What phrases do you want to know?

- V. Post-trip Meetings and Presentation
 - A. Sunday, August 14th
 - 1. Debrief
 - 2. Plan Presentation
 - 3. Invite Support Team Members (Need help with Presentation)
 - B. Setting date for Presentation in September

- VI. Circle Prayer

APPENDIX C NEWSLETTER ARTICLES

September 2010

In one of the favelas (a squatter's community) in Brazil, a pastor had a dream of what could be. The cycle of poverty could be broken if he could bring education to the children of the community. With the help of the church, he bought a parcel of land in the favela and built a school. Since the school was rightfully on the land, the government could help fund their programs. The government does not interfere with the curriculum – it is as much a Lutheran School as Word of Life. The government is simply glad that the church is providing education that the government cannot provide. This pastor's dream has developed into three schools that are making an impact for the poorest of the poor in Brazil.

In addition to government funding, most of the favela schools in Brazil have a garden and a fish pond. The vegetables and fish are not only used to provide meals for the students, but in some cases are part of the compensation for the teachers of the school. They truly try to do the most with all the resources they have. Funds are hard to come by in favelas (most of the people earn what little they have by sifting through trash for recyclables and selling them at recycling centers), so the schools have learned to do the most with very little.

While in Brazil last year, the school was on winter break (remember the seasons are reversed in the southern hemisphere). However, the teachers were still hard at work. Because the children of the favela have nowhere else to go, the school continues to run education programs during the breaks. We had the privilege of speaking with the children during English lessons and hearing two songs welcoming us to their school. The staff members were happy to be with the children, even though it should have been break time for them. They truly have a love for the work of the Lord in these poor communities of their city.

And that brings us to July of 2011. With the guidance of the Brazil Mission Society (BMS), St. Lucas will be sending a team of about 10 people to Brazil to work with these three schools during their winter break. We will be going as their servants. Whatever they need done to help make the ministry there more effective, we will do. If they want us to work with the children on the English skills, we will. If they need us to do basic construction, we will. If they need us to clean the bathrooms, tend the garden, fish for meals, we will. This is an opportunity for us to serve others as they reach out to those who do not know Christ and hopefully learn some things that we can bring back to our outreach ministries here.

There will be many opportunities to be a part of this trip. First, obviously, we need people with a willing spirit and a servant's heart to go to Brazil next summer as part of the Mission Team. There will be a meeting after late service on October 3rd. We will discuss dates, finances, and plans at this meeting, as well as set up further dates for meeting. Even if you are not sure if you want to or can go, come and join us for this meeting. You may discover that God is calling you to go with us.

Second, we want to form a Support Team for those who are going. This group will be comprised of 3-5 individuals for every member of the Mission Team. The Support Team will be asked to attend planning meeting with their Mission Team member so that they more

fully understand the goals of the trip and the needs of the Mission Team member. There will be time for discussion and encouragement with the Mission Team member and their Support Team at each meeting. The Support Team will also be asked to pray for their Mission Team member and to make regular contact between meetings to see if they need any help with their preparations for the trip. The Support Team will be very important for the preparation as well as the return from the mission trip.

Finally, we will need financial support for the trip as well. The Mission and Support Teams will discuss various ways to raise the funds at the first meeting. However, we will need the entire congregation's support to reach our goals. We will get a better idea of costs early in 2011 (airfare fluctuates considerably), but the cost will probably be between \$2500 and \$3500 per person depending on airfare and accommodation costs (right now, airfare is lower than it was when I went last year). The 5th Sunday Brazil door offerings from now until the trip will be used to offset the costs. There are 5 Sundays in October 2010, January, May and July of 2011. Please consider making a donation over and above your regular Sunday offering on those Sundays. I am also looking into SELC District evangelism grants and other grant money that may be available.

Although the entire congregation will not be able to travel to Brazil, this will be a congregational trip. We will be looking into ways to have on-line interaction with the congregation on the trip so that you can come along with us. The planning and processing of this trip will take everyone working together. Please prayerful consider how God may be calling you to be a part of this outreach experience – give, support, or go. If you have any questions, contact Pastor Biber. You can also fill in the contact form below. And may Jesus Christ be praised in all that we do in His Name.

October 2010

*Then [Jesus] said to his disciples, "The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few; therefore pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest."
Matthew 9:37–38*

Summer is officially over and with the arrival at fall comes changing leaves and harvest decorations of pumpkins and corn. For gardens and farmers, it is time to bring in the fruit of the land.

This fall also brings to St. Lucas thoughts of the harvest – the harvest of the Lord. Jesus told his disciples that there was much to be done to bring people to Christ – to harvest souls for the kingdom of God – but that there were not many to work in that harvest. And Jesus encouraged the disciples to pray for more workers to be sent into his harvest. He might have followed that up with "be careful what you pray for," because immediately afterward, he sent the same disciples out to share the message of the reign of God.

A few months ago I asked the congregation to pray for God to raise up people to travel to Brazil to serve in his harvest and God has answered. Although we have not asked for a

definitive commitment yet, we have 14 people (including myself) who are considering going next year. Please pray for these members as they consider heeding the call to the harvest.

In addition, consider how you can support this mission trip. Those going to Brazil will be asking members to serve as support team members who will participate in the planning, spend time in prayer and do what they can to ensure that things back home will be taken care of in their absence.

Thanks be to the Lord of the Harvest for his abundant response to our prayers for laborers. May He continue to raise up laborers for the harvest in the name of Jesus. Amen.

December 2010

Partnering In Mission

In the last few months, we have begun our plans for St. Lucas' first ever congregational overseas missions trip. I would like to introduce the members of our mission team:

Don Baggett – Don is looking forward to “going out of his comfort zone” and learning to work with different people for the sake of the Gospel.

Lydia Baggett – Lydia is excited about helping others and having this opportunity to grow in her faith as she serves.

Paul Biber – Pastor Biber is excited to be leading his first ever mission trip. He is excited to be a part of the ministries he worked with last year and renew some friendships that began there. He can't wait to work with the kids at the school we will serve.

Joe Pyatek – Joe has been thinking about service opportunities that he might have after retirement and this trip seemed to be a good starting point to see where the Lord might lead him.

Nancy Pyatek – Nancy loves to help people and she loves to travel. This is a great way to combine the two as a service to the Lord and to others.

Sharon Pritchett – Sharon has wanted to go on a mission trip for a long time and was excited to have the opportunity to go as part of St. Lucas. She is looking forward to helping others with the skills that the Lord has given and is excited to do so in another culture.

Stacey Wellman – Stacy was one of the first to step up and commit to this mission trip. She told Pastor back in July that she really felt that the Lord was calling her to this. She is looking forward to helping others in any way she can.

Please keep these seven individuals in your prayers as we learn and plan together for the work that the Lord will do through us next summer. If you would like to be a part of the learning and planning process, feel free to contact any one from the Mission Team and ask them about being on their Support Team.

January 2011

St. Lucas Lutheran Church

2011 Brazil Mission



This month, our Mission Meeting focused on cultural understanding. We looked at various ways that cultures are different and learned where we fall individually in each of those areas. It was interesting to see how diverse our group was. Despite the fact that we were all born and raised in the US (many in St. Louis), we had different ways approaching basic decisions. It is not that one way is better than the other. The point of the exercise was to learn more about ourselves and how we operate in daily life, so that we can better understand others when they operate in different ways.

The importance of this discussion was that we will face very different cultural expectations in Brazil. Although it is a well developed country, the basic assumptions of culture (time vs. event orientation; people vs. task; spontaneity vs. planning, etc.) will vary and we will be the ones who will have to adjust.

This is not only true for our mission team, but for the church as a whole. So often, we expect people to become like us with our church culture and all its expectations. However, if we are the ones that are reaching out to others, we will first need to understand their cultural expectations and make adjustments to our way of life. This does not mean that we compromise what we believe, just the way that we live it out.

It is not easy. We get comfortable doing things the way we have always done them. My hope is that, through this mission experience, we will learn how to be a little uncomfortable for the sake of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Please join us on Jan. 9 after late service for discussions about Brazilian culture and language. May God bless us as we continue to work together for His glory throughout the world.

February 2011

St. Lucas Lutheran Church 2011 Brazil Mission



Here are a few tidbits about Brazilian culture from Alexandre Viera, exchange student from Brazil:

You were invited for a meal at someone's house.

Be ready to stay a long time! Meals are a big event in Brazil.

- Eat as much as you can (not all the food!) if you like the food, for it is a sign of appreciation for the host's hospitality.
- If the host keeps telling you to eat more (polite people in Brazil will insist that you should get more, they want to make sure you are making yourself at home), even though you've had enough, thank the person, make a compliment about the food, and say that you're really satisfied, otherwise you'd take more.
- Speak (if the communication is possible)! This is a time to socialize. It is advisable to ask questions, tell jokes, learn from the other...

Relationship

Brazilians have a relationship-oriented culture. Be aware of that. People will "like you more" if they perceive you have a genuine interest in them than if you work very hard to get things done without trying to come to a personal level. Be ready to be hugged and hug back!

Humor

Our humor is different, and we usually try to have fun all the time. If you're in the middle of a serious conversation, working, etc., and others are laughing, laugh along. Living here, my wife and I noticed that many times we are considered silly because we try to be funny in moments when Americans usually don't. We learned with it. However, since we'll be there, don't be too serious all the time.

Temperature

You'll be there during the winter. Although it doesn't get as cold there as in here, be prepared. In Brazil most people don't have heaters (it's changing now, for it's necessary), so you will be wearing winter clothes even indoors.

March 2011

The Mission of God Throughout Scripture

Below are some Bible study questions we are discussing in our mission meetings. Each individual section can be used as a separate study for brief devotions. If you have any questions, feel free to call Pastor Biber.

In the Beginning (Read Genesis, Chapters 1 and 2)

1. In Genesis 1:2, we are told that "the earth was formless and empty." How does God respond to the formlessness in days 1-3 (Gen. 1:3-13)? How does God respond to the emptiness in days 4-6 (Gen. 1:14-31)?
2. Based on Genesis 1&2, what would you say was God's mission in creation?
3. Look again at Gen. 1:28 and 2:15. What roles does mankind play in God's mission? Who establishes that role?

After the Fall

1. Read Genesis 3. Given that God's mission in creation was to care for and sustain His creation, and specifically mankind, how is that mission effected by man's fall into sin? Is God's mission modified or does it change all together?
2. God responds in four different ways to man's sin. Read again the following verses to see what God's specific response to man's sin is and determine whether it is a law response of judgment or a gospel response of undeserved love:

Verses	God's Response	Law or Gospel
3:8-9		
3:14-15		
3:16-19		
3:21		

Based on this, does mankind's sin change God's care for His creation? Explain your answer.

3. God responds with both justice and love to the sin of Adam and Eve. Look at some of the other sin accounts in the early chapters of Genesis to see how this pattern of God's responses continues:

Verse	Sinners	Sin	Expulsion	Grace of God
Chapter 3	<i>Adam and Eve</i>	<i>Eat</i>	<i>From Eden</i>	<i>Clothes & Promise</i>
4:1-16				
6:1-9:17				
11:1-9, 12:1-3				

In all of this, it is important to notice that God's care for mankind does not change. Although what mankind needs does change from basic needs to forgiveness and salvation, God continues to provide what is needed.

April 2011

The Mission of God Throughout Scripture

Below are some Bible study questions we are discussing in our mission meetings. It is a continuation from last month's newsletter. If you have any questions, feel free to call Pastor Biber.

God's Mission in Israel

1. Read Genesis 12:1-3. According to this promise, what is God's ultimate mission in choosing Abram? Is God's blessing intended to be for Abram and his descendants alone?
2. What is Abram's role in this mission? How is this role established?
3. Many people assume that God's ultimate mission in the Old Testament is to establish the people of Israel. Read the following Old Testament passages to see what it tells us about God's mission for Israel:
 - a. Exodus 19:3-6

- b. 1 Kings 8:41-43
- c. Isaiah 56:3-8
- d. Isaiah 49:6
- e. Jeremiah 29:7

The Mission Continues – The New Testament Mission

1. Look at the Genealogy of Jesus in Matthew 1. Apart from Jesus, who are the two other significant people in this list? How does this connect Jesus to God's promises of the Old Testament?
2. There are three women mentioned in the genealogy: Rahab, Ruth, and Bathsheba. Given that women were not often mentioned in genealogies and that all three were foreigners, what might we conclude is the significance of their inclusion?
3. Read Luke 2:25-32. How is Simeon's song similar to God's words in Isaiah 49:6?
4. Read the following passages. How do they support the idea that God's mission in the Old Testament and the New Testament are one and the same?
 - a. Acts 1:7-8
 - b. Romans 4:13-17
 - c. Matthew 28:18-20 (Compare to Genesis 12:1-3)
 - d. Ephesians 3:7-9
5. What does the consistency of God's mission throughout Scripture tell us about our mission as the church today?

June 2011

"Day after day, in the temple courts and from house to house, they never stopped teaching and proclaiming the good news that Jesus is the Christ." Acts 5:42

I have spent a lot of time lately thinking about what it means to be the people of God – to be the Church. Often, when we think about church we think about Sunday morning worship and Sunday school, VBS and Bible study, program committees and pot luck dinners. Being the people of God means that we are busy doing things here at church so that we are showing ourselves to be committed to the Lord.

Now, certainly those things are important and a vital **part** of what it means to be God's people. However, we shortchange the definition when we limit it to the walls of a building or the borders of a property. The above reading from Acts reminds us that the Christian life is lived out not just on Sundays or on the church property ("in the temple courts"). Our Christian lives are a daily exercise. Each day we have opportunities to be the Church – to be God's people in this world. And it is not just at 7100 Morganford Rd. – it is "from house to house." Wherever you go, you are God's people and can give witness in word and action – speaking and showing grace to others.

This summer, as vacations and weekend trips and time at lake houses and with family take you away from St. Louis and St. Lucas on some Sundays, remember that you are still His people. I encourage you to find a place of worship wherever you are to be strengthened in your faith. And lift up prayers for others while you are away. Have a blessed summer, giving praise to God in all your travels and while you are at home.

July 2011

"Then he said to his disciples, 'The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field.'" Matthew 9:37-38

And we have followed that instruction, haven't we? We so desire for God to reap the harvest of souls by his grace, that we regularly pray that God will send people into the world to share the message of forgiveness of sins through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

But open your Bibles to Matthew 9, read the above verses and then keep reading. What follows after Jesus' instruction to pray for God to send workers in his mission field? After Jesus tells his disciples to pray for the raising up of these workers, he sent those same disciples out into the mission field. It is like Jesus is telling his disciples that they are the answer to that prayer.

And so we are going to Brazil. Not because we are totally prepared or the most qualified or have the best approach to short-term missions. We are going because we have prayed for God to send workers into his harvest and he said, "OK, I choose you!" Those who are going heard about the work God was doing in Brazil and the need for more help and prayed that God would provide. And so God has answered by sending 7 of us to work with these ministries that are doing the work of the Lord.

Please keep us in your prayers in the coming weeks as we make final preparation for the trip and travel to Brazil on July 19th/20th and back on the 30th/31st. Pray for our families that we leave behind. Pray for those with whom we will work that we will be a blessing to them.

But the trip to Brazil is not God's only answer to St. Lucas' prayer for workers in the harvest. Every Tuesday evening, Joyce Kolnik and others from the Board of Outreach visits people in our own community. Sometimes it is members who we haven't seen in a while, sometimes it is people who have visited worship services, and sometimes it is contacts we have made through various church events like the Easter Egg Hunt or VBS. In groups of 3, they go to people's houses, one person shares the message of Christ and the two others are there just for support and safety. You do not have to be the presenter (though you can be trained to do so!). It is a great chance to be a part of the harvest of the Lord.

But there is still more that God is doing. He has chosen you. Not just the Outreach Board or the Mission Team; YOU! In your daily life, God has placed you in the lives of others who will never come in contact with the pastor, or the congregation, or the Outreach Board or anyone else from St. Lucas. They are a part of the harvest field that God has prepared for you. You are God's answer to our prayers. Whether it is through telling about the life of Jesus or living out the concern for others that Jesus showed, you have opportunity to be His witness in the harvest field of the world.

There is a little story about four people named Everybody, Somebody, Anybody, and Nobody. There was an important job to be done and Everybody was asked to do it. Everybody was sure that Somebody would do it. Anybody could have done it, but Nobody did it. Somebody got angry about that because it was Everybody's job. Everybody thought that Anybody could do it, but Nobody realized that Everybody wouldn't do it. It ended up that Everybody blamed Somebody when Nobody did what Anybody could have done. When we look around and see something that needs to be done for the sake of the Gospel and pray that God will raise up somebody to do it, remember that that somebody God is looking for is usually you. May God give you the wisdom and courage to be his worker in the harvest field of the world.

September 2011

"Owe no one anything, except to love each other, for the one who loves another has fulfilled the law."

Romans 13:8

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

Jesus told the disciples that they would be his witnesses to the end of the earth. We may not have gone to the end of the earth, but Brazil is pretty far away. On Sunday Sept. 18th at 2:00pm, the mission team will share more about the trip, but I want to talk about one aspect of it here.

The ABRASSE daycare has been in planning and construction for the last 4 years. It is in the middle of a favela (very poor squatters community) and will be a great outreach for the congregation that it is attached to. Two years ago when I went to Brazil, the lower parts of the walls were built, but there were no funds to complete it. Now as a result of a number of

U.S. congregations helping out financially and with laborers, it is completed and ready to help the people of their community.

We had the privilege of working with the members of Bom Pastor (Good Shepherd) in completing the project when we were there last month. As we prepared to leave ABRASSE after dinner on our fourth day working with them, most of our group and theirs were teary eyed, not wanting to part from brothers and sisters in Christ that had become so dear. The physical work we did will be helpful, but the love of God that we shared with the people we work with will continue to bless the church in Brazil and here.

October 2011

*"The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few; therefore pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest."
Matthew 9:37-38*

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

Becky has already decorated for Halloween. At least that is what she says. But the truth is that there are very few "Halloween" decorations. Most of them are fall or harvest decorations – all in bright yellow, orange, and red. It made me think of the above words of Jesus. The harvest is plentiful – pray for laborers. This passage applies to us today as well.

The harvest is plentiful – there are plenty of people whom God has prepared to receive His word, to be harvested. Sometimes we are blind to those people around us. Sometimes, because we don't know our church neighbors, we do not realize their need for the grace of God. But God assures us that His harvest is plentiful, we simply need to look for it.

And we are the ones who need to look for it – you are the one God has chosen. After Jesus encouraged the disciples to pray for workers in the harvest, He sent them out to share the good news. God answered their pray for workers by chosing them. God answers our prayers to impact our community with His love by sending us. In the coming months, I will be suggesting and looking for suggestions for ways that we can engage the community with the love of Christ. Let us joyfully join the harvest of the Lord.

APPENDIX D
COMMISSIONING RITE – JULY 17, 2011

Pastor: Dear brothers and sisters in Christ, our Lord Jesus Christ, in the last chapter of Matthew commissions his disciples to be a part of God’s salvation mission, saying, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore, go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit and teaching them to obey all I have commanded you. And surely I will be with you always even to the end of the age.”

In response to this call, St. Lucas Lutheran Church has committed to participate in the mission work of God in Brazil for the next two weeks through their prayers and by sending members to Brazil to work with God’s people there.

Therefore, I ask the members of St. Lucas, will you for the next two weeks, pray for the people of Brazil and for the ministry of the Church there. Will you pray for those who go in the name of the Lord and of this congregation, that God will protect them and guide them in the work that he has for us to do, then declare so by saying, “We will and we lift them up to the Lord.”

People: We will and we lift them up to the Lord.

Pastor: To the members of St. Lucas’ Brazil Mission Team, will you accept the commissioning given to you by God and by this congregation to tell the message of Christ in Brazil and will you, to the best of your abilities, share the love of Christ in word and deed in Brazil, then declare so by saying, “We will with the help of God and to His glory.”

Mission: We will with the help of God and to His glory.

Pastor: Let us pray.

Almighty and gracious God, You want all to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth. Magnify the power of the Gospel in the hearts of Your faithful people that Your Church may spread the good news of salvation. Protect, encourage, and bless all missionaries who proclaim the saving cross that Christ, being lifted up, may draw all people to Himself, Amen.

Almighty and merciful God, our heavenly Father, guide and bless Your servants Don, Lydia, myself, Sharon, Joe, Nancy, and Stacey, sent forth to be a witness to Brazil. Graciously look with favor upon us for the sake of Your Son, our Savior, Jesus Christ. Grant us confidence and great boldness, uphold and sustain us in hardship, and grant us faithfulness in all our labors, so that through the speaking of Your Word the nations may come to worship before Your throne in spirit and in truth; through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Pastor: Go in peace and joy. The almighty and most merciful God, the Father, the + Son, and the Holy Spirit, be with you, and bless and strengthen you for faithful service in His name.

APPENDIX E
BRAZIL MISSION TRIP ITINERARY

Schedule -- ST. LUCAS, ST. LOUIS, MO JULY 20 a 31

WEDNESDAY, JULY 20

1. ARRIVAL IN POA –AM or PM Transport to Hotel 10 São Leopoldo

THURSDAY-JULY 21

1. Visit to Concordia Seminary São Leopoldo.
2. Lunch: At the Seminary
3. AFTERNOON 14h ULBRA
4. Dinner at Passoquinha Sao Leopoldo
(Van take back to Hotel 10 - 21horas)

FRIDAY, JULY 22 (Van 9 HORAS -Hotel)

1. MORNING: ABRASSE Day Care – Rev. Jones Rubira
2. LUNCH: (near)
3. AFTERNOON : Visit Favela (neighborhood of Day Care) And recycling Project
4. DINNER: At restaurant with pastor Rubira’s family
(Van returns hotel 19horas)

SATURDAY, JULY 23 (Van 8h Hotel 10)

1. MORNING: Escolas Comunitárias Canoas Vacation only visit Rev. Altair 93477689

SUNDAY, JULY 24 (Van 9h Canoas Hotel)

1. Worship at Bom Pastor
2. LUNCH: with church
3. AFTERNOON: Dedication of ABRASSE
4. DINNER: At restaurant with pastor Rubira’s family
(Van retorna a após janta 9 horas)

MONDAY, JULY 25 (Van 8h Hotel)

1. MORNING: Editora Concordia and Mercado Publico Poa
2. LUNCH: (Resturante Italiano)
3. AFTERNOON: Centro Administrativo IELB
Estádio Olímpico e Morro Santa Teresa
4. DINNER: Galpão Crioulo Churrascaria and Folk Dances
Van retornar a Canoas 22horas

TUESDAY, JULY 26 (Van 8h30min Hotel10)

1. MORNING: AELCA Day Care
2. LUNCH: Iguatemi
3. AFTERNOON: Creche Maria Tereza Rev. José Daniel Stienmetz POA)
4. DINNER: Don Veneto POA

Van após janta leva grupo ao Hotel em São Leopoldo

WEDNESDAY, JULY 27 (Van8h30min Hotel10)

1. MORNING: Work Day at ABRASSE
2. LUNCH: At ABRASSE
3. AFTERNOON: Work Day at ABRASSE
4. DINNER: Hotel 10 18horas

Van retorna a POA as 18 horas

THURSDAY, JULY 28 (Van 8h Hotel 10)

1. MORNING: Work Day at ABRASSE
2. LUNCH: At ABRASSE
3. AFTERNOON: Work Day at ABRASSE
4. DINNER: Churrasco at ABRASSE

FRIDAY, JULY 29 (8h Hotel 10)

1. MORNING: Visit Moreira (Instituto SS Trindade- Orphanage)
2. LUNCH: To be arranged_
3. AFTERNOON: Tour Gramado and Canela
4. EVENING: Return to Hotel 10.

SATURDAY JULY 30

1. Morning: Shopping
2. Lunch at the Mall
3. Airport to check-in and return home

APPENDIX F
DEVOTION THEMES FOR MISSION TRIP

July 21 – Mission is God’s – Genesis 12:1-5

July 22 – Called to Mission – Genesis 12:1-5

July 23 – Servant Mission – Luke 22:24-26

July 24 – Worship In Brazil

July 25 – Incarnational Mission – 1 Corinthians 9:19-23

July 26 – Go vs. Come – Matthew 28:18-20 & Romans 10:14-15

July 27 – We are the Church (Universal) – Ephesians 4:1-6

July 28 – The Body of Christ – 1 Corinthians 12:12-27

July 29 – Encouragement for Each Other – Hebrews 10:19-25

July 30 – Where do we go from here? – Acts 1:1-8

APPENDIX G
SURVEY RAW DATA AND COMPARISON GRID

Open Ended Question Comparison

The rating for the responses to the open ended questions is as follows:

- 0 – No Response (Blank responses did not figure into the average)
- 1 – Exclusively mentions inwardly focused concepts/ministries
- 2 – Mentions more inwardly than outwardly focused concepts/ministries
- 3 – Evenly mentions inwardly and outwardly focused concepts/ministries
- 4 – Mentions more outwardly than inwardly focused concepts/ministries
- 5 – Exclusively mentions outwardly focused concepts/ministries

	Pre-Test Purpose of the Church	Rate	Post-Test Purpose of the Church	Rate
1	To tell everyone that Jesus Christ is their Savior	3	To let everyone know that Jesus Christ is their Savior	3
2	To tell everyone that Jesus Christ is their Savior	3	To let everyone know that Jesus Christ is their Savior	3
3	The purpose or mission of the Church is to Bring people to Christ, Nurture them and equip them to spread the Gospel	4	Bring people to Christ and encourage the nurturing and strengthening of their faith and our faith through worship and the sacraments	4
4	Bring People to Christ	5	Spread the Word of God so that everyone has the opportunity for salvation	5
5	To teach Jesus Christ to all people A) That he dies for our sins B) That he was raised from the dead C) That he lives with the Father in Heaven D) Because of what he has done for us, we too will have a place in heaven E) This is a gift from God. Nothing we can earn	4	To spread the word and bring people to Christ	5
6	- To help those who do not already know them, learn about God (the father, Jesus (our Savior) and the Holy Spirit (the Comforter/Sustainer) - For present members – we offer time and place to worship our God and uplift each other	3	To bring others to know Christ	5
7 M	The mission of the church is to welcome, educate and baptize anyone who wants to get to know and love God our Father, the risen Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ	1	To help others and spread the word of God	5
8	- Bring people to Christ - Nurture people in Christ - Equip people for Christ	4	- Bring people to Christ - Nurture people in Christ - Equip people for Christ Bring people to the love of Jesus our Savior as no one can enter heaven without faith & love in Jesus, his death and resurrection for all sinners	4
9	The Purpose/Mission of the Church is to Bring People to Christ, who is their salvation	5	The Purpose/Mission of the Church is to Bring People to Christ	5
10	Bring people to Christ	5	To teach people about Christ. Spread God's word.	4
11 S	To spread the Word to believers and nonbelievers	3	To bring people to Christ so that they too will learn about God's love & forgiveness so that they will be saved.	5
12	When I was young and small the purpose of the church was to give us a Christian way of life. Now the purpose seems to be mission, go somewhere to bring Christ to other people, far and near.	5	To bring Christ to the people and the people to Christ	5

13	-	0	To educate people to the word of God. Help one another in time of need and show them that God is there for them in time of sorrow and gladness both.	4
14 S	To help build a personal relationship with Christ. Share the love of Christ to others	4	Build a personal relationship with God	3
15 S	To offer comfort, hope & peace in this troubled world by preaching the word of God and the hope of everlasting life. That in death, there is not eternal darkness but a new life.	4	(1) To bring people to Christ and hopefully prepare them to leave a life of goodness and charity, having compassion and understanding of all others. (2) But also the financial demands make me feel like the church is trying to make people poor, wanting to give more not only to church but to missions. The US is gradually becoming a "3 rd world country" with the way things are going.	2
16	To provide a place where people can come to Christ, learn about his plan for them so they can live a Christian life and be able to help others do the same.	3	Have people through the church become better Christians, learning more about Christ so they can better pass the information to others.	4
17	To bring people to Christ	5	To bring people to Christ	5
18	A place people gather to learn about Christ	1	To learn about Christ	1
19	Bring people to Christ	5	-	0
20	To bring people to Christ	5	To bring people in to hear the word of God	4
21	To bring people to Christ	5	To help support the church in canvas the neighborhood	4
24	To bring the Good News of salvation through Christ Jesus' death on the cross to as many people as possible	5	-	0
25	The purpose – provide an atmosphere in which the promise of God can be shared and experience by everyone.	1	1. Further fellowship in the church body 2. Bring Christ to as many as possible 3. Create a nurturing environment	2
26 M	To spread the Gospel of Christ, helping each other grow through the word	3	Spread the message of salvation through God's grace	5
27	To make known the message that Jesus came to redeem all mankind from their sin. That all that we have to do to claim God's promise of salvation is to believe that Christ died and then rose again to pay the price for our sins.	5	1) To bring people to the knowledge of what Jesus Christ has done for them. 2) To give needed tools of how to spread this goodnews. 3) To demonstrate the love of God through Christ in our everyday life	5
28	To spread the Gospel of Jesus Christ to all the world.	5	The mission of the church is to spread the Gospel of Christ for the salvation of souls and to demonstrate the love of Christ.	5
29 M	To preach the word of God thru worship service, Sunday school & confirmation & Bible studies and to reach out to those in the community welcoming them to our church. Also serving those in need – such as the Brazil mission trip.	3	To all people of salvation thru Jesus Christ. To be community minded helping those in our community and within our church. To teach our children the Bible and of salvation thru Jesus	4
30 S	To glorify God by receiving His Word, by Sharing the Gospel about salvation through Jesus to the whole world, and to help people in need	4	I like our 3-point mission statement. It could be worded in reverse, so that those who are part of Christ's kingdom already, first learn more about the mission and about how to carry it out and finally reach out to more people locally and universally.	5
31 S	To bring people to Christ. To strengthen our faith through Word and Sacrament. Help us to be better witnesses of Christ.	4	-	0
33 S	Bring people to Christ Equip people for Christ Nurture people in Christ	4	Bring people to Christ Equip people for Christ Nurture people in Christ	4
34 S	To strengthen us in our faith and help others to find Jesus	3	The church's purpose is to spread the word of God to as many people as possible	5

35 S	Prepare God's children to nurture others in His Word	3	Prepare Christians to serve and witness to others	4
38	1. The purpose/mission of the of the church is to tell others about Christ Jesus and His saving grace and His promise of eternal life. 2. To gather Christians together for worship, hearing God's word & sharing our joys and sorrows.	3	To share the saving grace of Jesus Christ with each other, with our friends, family and neighbors. Encourage each other in our faith, comforting when there is grieving and sharing each others joys.	3
39 M	To share the Good News, baptize people in Jesus' name, and help others.	5	To share the Gospel with everyone	5
40	To spread the word	5	To spread the word of the Lord	5
41 M	To teach the Word of God and reach out to those who have not heard the teachings of God/Jesus. The out reach can be through missions, food pantry's, having an open house, helping pay bills.	4	To bring people to Christ	5
42 M	To help and serve the community how God would want us to.	4	To reach out to people and bring people to Christ	5
	Averages – Entire Group	3.83		4.18
	Averages – Mission Team	3.33		4.83
	Averages – Support Team	3.63		4.00
	Averages – Non-Mission or Support Team	4.05		3.71

	Pre-Test Demonstrated at St. Lucas	Rate	Post-Test Demonstrated at St. Lucas	Rate
1	To be friendly to visitors. Our pastor and officers meet often to plan services and activities	1	Ringing the church bells. Contributing to missions. Contacting non-members through community meals and visits.	3
2	To be friendly to visitors. Our pastor and officers meet often to plan services and activities	1	Ringing the church bells. Contributing to missions. Contacting non-members through community meals and visits.	3
3	By reaching out to those who maybe unchurched or are looking to strengthen their faith, by inviting people to worship services, Bible Class, VBS, Helping Hands	3	Through our parish education program and Mom's Day Out, by directing outreach to the unchurched in our community, by being a witness for Christ, and through fellowship.	4
4	Through worship services, bible studies and outreach to the unchurched. Members set an example through their lives and conduct	3	Through Sunday services, outreach, and programs for the community. Also by individual church members through their daily actions.	4
5	A. In worship service B. In Bible Class C. In the love shown by our members D. In the sacraments	2	Through the sacraments	2
6	- We have an outreach committee who make calls in the neighborhood - We have information talks with the pastor (if requested) - We encourage visitors to come again & give them info on St. Lucas - I don't think we do a very good job on outreach (me included)	2	Door-to-door visits Mission Trip	5
7 M	St. Lucas is a kind and welcoming family. One can feel the warmth out in the narthex every Sunday morning before the worship service which is inspirational and educational	1	By sending people to Brazil Slovakfest Vac. Bible School, Etc.	3

8	Having Sunday Worship Services Bible Class, Door to Door Visits, Confirmation Class (Adult and Youth)	2	Going door to door preaching or letting people hear of God the Father, Jesus and the Holy Spirit. People going to church to hear God's word and sing and pray. Through Sunday School.	2
9	The purpose/mission is demonstrated at St. Lucas with the strong foundation of preaching and teaching of the Word of God. Worship and praise are the center piece of this demonstration, with distribution of the Holy Sacrament. Fellowship and Leadership are by products of this purpose/mission, because – if you can't get the people "in the door" your purpose/mission are worthless	1	This purpose is demonstrated at St. Lucas by: (1) Making worship/Bible study available to people (If you know what you are talking about – how can you bring people to Christ?) (2) Evangelism Group (lead by Joyce Kolnik – Going out on Tues. Evenings) (3) Mission Trip to Brazil	4
10	Outreach – Bible class – Bible Study	2	During Sermons, Sunday School, home visits	2
11 S	Brazil Mission Trip Youth Group – The once a month bible study with Acts 1:8 Evangelism Calls Through Moms Day Out & Preschool/Kindergarten	4	Through the message done during the sermon – but most importantly through our friendships & stewardship between members and non-members of our church	2
12	We have Christian teachings, Sunday School and Church services and clubs. Have side missions for neighborhood and funds for overseas missions	3	The evangelism teams that visit people. Money and food donations to those in need in our community.	5
13		0	The church has many projects in the community and worldwide in the word of God. Helping the less fortunate with time and effort	4
14 S	Through our caring for others. Youth Group. Great Outreach	2	We need to have bible study groups – home groups	3
15 S	By our services administering comfort to the ill & grieving people, to assist those in need when possible. I am a realist. I can't help save everyone. My first priority is to my children and grandchildren and their needs. There are too many organizations including the church that seems whose sole purpose is to tell me its my responsibility & obligation to help everyone. I can't do that.	2	(1) Our church services, preaching the gospel and teaching. Doing mission work (2) Hard to figure the financial needs of the church vs. outreach such as Brazil mission. Our own budget is not being reached and extra financial demands on people is taxing.	2
16	By having a good variety of programs and projects to carry out its mission	2	The church is involved in many projects such as the twelve listed below. Some of them worldwide.	4
17	Worship Service, Bible Classes, Sunday School, Reaching people in the community, V.B.S.	2	Reg. church services, bible study, community outreach	2
18	Bible class, Confirmation class, Sunday School, Worship	1	Sunday School, Bible classes, outreach programs, church services	2
19	Personally I try through the youth group	2	-	0
20	Weekly Church service	1	Through outreach services	5
21	Weekly Church service, bible class & church organizations	1	By supporting the mission work here and abroad	5
22	-	0	-	0
23	-	0	-	0
24	Weekly services, Sunday School, Bible study & confirmation. A huge asset is Pastor Biber's winning & warm personality & determination to preach the pure word.	1	-	0
25	1. Services are held at a regular schedule 2. Group meetings are active, ie Mens club, Wo. Guild, Youth Group, schools, day care, VBS 3. Parish Nurse/help care issues are addressed 4. Limited help for indigent persons	2	1. Group functions 2. Church services 3. Sunday fellowship table 4. Parish nurse and elder visits 5. Assimilation visits in neighborhood & visitors	2

26 M	Education programs, evangelism activity including event such as Slovakfest.	2	Preaching and outreach/evangelism	3
27	In the church's mission statement of Bring people to Christ; Nurturing them in Christ; Equipping them for Christ. Also in the many efforts on Community outreach, ei Church Dinners; Easter Egg hunt; Helping Hands Fund.	3	1) Proclamation of the Gospel in weekly worship; mission trips; 2) Bible class/study' adult/child confirmation class; financial help Christian day school program; youth programs 3) Providing needed resources for those in need; servant projects; providing facilities for community groups	3
28	Teaching, worship and missionary work.	2	It is demonstrated primarily through worship services, Bible classes, and missionary work	2
29 M	Through things such as our outreach group, dinners, community fair (we used to have), trivia night, Easter egg hunt. Confirmation classes, Bible studies. Sunday school, Vacation Bible school.	2	Thru Sunday school, confirmation classes, Church services, Dinners, door to door visits, VBS etc.	2
30 S	We teach and preach the Bible, we share the Gospel (though in limited ways, and we offer our people opportunities and encouragement to serve the needs of people locally and world-wide	4	I think too few of our members have any idea of any ministry other than "helps" i.e. food and food-money to support the mission. An attempt is being made to "involve" more people – disciples by means of mission – trips and CFNA and the Tuesday visits., but teaching and how to learning must be expanded	5
31 S	Word & Sacrament – We hear the message of salvation regularly. I feel we need to try to reach the many people on church roll that never worship – because we need the food, God's word, regularly. Also continue to have outreach calling with the Gospel to those who don't know Christ as their savior. I find it sad that children & youth are not attending Sunday School & Bible Class.	3	-	0
33 S	Through ministries: Shepherding Group, Mens Club, Womens Guild, Bible Classes, Parish Nurse, Christian Education/School, Mom's Day out, Women's Guild.	2	Outreach – Moms Day Out – Shut in visits – Slovakfest – men's Club – Women's Guild – Parish Nurse – 2 Styles of worship	2
34 S	Starting with our mission statement and continuing through everything we do.	1	We spread it well to our own	1
35 S	Through Bible Studies, Worship Services, and other outreach events	2	Through our interactions with others	4
38	#1 – St. Lucas members should have more involvement in outreach & evangelism	1	With Worship Services, Sunday School & Bible Classes, Confirmation Class, Outreach evangelism & fellowship as Christians	2
39 M	Through worship services, bible study, events, and evangelism	2	Church , Sunday School classes, Evangelism team, dinners	2
40	Community Fairs on Church Grounds	1	Youth group events, assisting immigrant groups, community events	4
41 M	-	0	Acts 1:8 [Researcher's Note: this is the name of a youth/outreach program at St. Lucas]	3
42 M	The outreach tea goes out, the youth group hosts events and other events like the brat dinner are held to bring the community together in God's house.	2	With the outreach group and youth group, going door to door in the community	4
	Averages – Entire Group	1.94		3.09
	Averages – Mission Team	2.0		2.83
	Averages – Support Team	2.5		2.71
	Averages – Non-Mission or Support Team	1.77		3.29

For the data grids on the pages that follow, the ministry columns in white are considered "invitational" and those in grey are considered "incarnational"

Pre-Test Survey Results – Raw Data

Importance for Achieving the Purpose of the Church												
Survey Number Mission Team (M) Support Team (S)	Worship Services	Sunday School/ Bible Class	Assisting Immigrant Groups	Confirmation Class (Adult and Youth)	Building Long-Term Relationships	Youth Group Events/Biblestudies	Door-to-Door Outreach Visits	Providing Resources for Those in Need	Community Meals	Community Servant Projects	Living a Christian Life	Providing Facilities for Community Groups
1	5	5	3	5	4	5	3	4	4	4	5	3
2	5	5	3	5	4	5	3	4	4	4	5	3
3	5	5	3	5	4	3	3	4	2	2	5	2
4	5	3	3	5	4	5	3	4	4	4	5	4
5	5	5	3	4	3	4	2	3	3	4	4	3
6	5	5	3	4	2	5	2	2	3	2	4	4
7 M	5	4	3	5	3	4	4	4	4	4	4	3
8	5	5	4	5	4	5	5	5	5	4	5	4
9	5	5	3	5	5	5	2	4	4	2	4	4
10	5	5	3	5	5	4	3	2	4	3	5	3
11 S	5	5	5	3	5	5	3	2	0	5	5	5
12	5	5	4	5	4	5	4	5	5	5	5	4
13	5	3	5	5	4	3	3	5	5	4	5	3
14 S	5	5	4	5	5	5	4	5	5	5	5	5
15 S	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	0	0	0	5	4
16	5	4	4	5	4	5	4	4	4	4	5	3
17	5	5	3	5	5	5	4	3	3	4	5	3
18	5	5	3	5	5	5	4	3	3	4	5	3
19	5	5	3	5	5	5	3	3	3	3	5	1
20	5	5	1	5	2	5	2	1	5	2	5	1
21	5	5	1	5	2	5	2	1	5	2	5	1
22	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	4
23	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	4
24	5	5	3	5	4	5	4	4	4	4	5	3
25	5	5	3	5	4	4	3	2	3	3	5	3
26 M	5	5	3	5	4	5	4	4	4	3	5	3
27	3	4	2	4	4	4	2	4	3	3	5	4
28	5	5	4	3	4	4	2	5	3	4	3	4
29 M	5	5	4	5	5	5	4	5	5	5	5	4
30 S	5	5	0	5	3	4	5	5	2	4	5	3
31 S	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	4	3	5	5	4
32	5	5	3	5	4	5	3	4	3	3	5	3
33 S	5	5	2	5	3	5	3	3	3	3	5	3
34 S	5	5	3	4	4	4	3	3	3	4	4	4
35 S	5	4	4	5	5	5	3	4	4	5	5	4
36	5	4	3	5	4	5	3	5	5	4	5	5
37	5	5	3	5	4	5	3	5	5	4	5	5
38	5	5	3	5	5	5	5	5	3	5	5	4
39 M	5	5	4	5	5	5	5	4	4	5	5	5
40	5	5	4	5	4	4	4	3	5	3	4	3
41 M	5	4	3	5	4	4	3	3	4	3	4	3
42 M	4	4	3	5	5	5	3	4	2	3	4	4
Ave.	4.93	4.73	3.33	4.8	4.12	4.66	3.43	3.76	3.83	3.76	4.76	3.45

Ranked Importance for Achieving the Purpose of the Church												
Survey Number Mission Team (M) Support Team (S)	Worship Services	Sunday School/ Bible Class	Assisting Immigrant Groups	Confirmation Class (Adult and Youth)	Building Long-Term Relationships	Youth Group Events/Bible Studies	Door-to-Door Outreach Visits	Providing Resources for Those in Need	Community Meals	Community Servant Projects	Living a Christian Life	Providing Facilities for Community Groups
1	1	2	12	3	8	4	10	6	9	7	5	11
2	1	2	12	3	8	4	10	6	9	7	5	11
3	3	2	9	4	6	7	8	5	11	12	1	10
4	2	3	10	4	5	6	11	7	9	8	1	12
5	1	2	10	5	6	3	12	7	9	8	4	11
6	1	2	8	4	9	3	11	12	7	10	5	6
7 M	1	3	12	2	10	5	9	6	7	8	4	11
8	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
9	1	4	11	5	3	6	10	12	8	9	2	7
10	1	2	11	3	5	6	8	12	7	10	4	9
11 S	5	7	4	12	1	3	10	11	8	2	6	9
12	1	2	3	5	9	6	10	7	11	12	4	8
13	1	9	8	7	6	11	10	3	4	5	2	12
14 S	1	4	11	5	6	3	9	8	7	10	2	12
15 S	2	5	12	9	10	3	11	7	8	6	1	4
16	1	5	10	3	6	4	11	9	8	7	2	12
17	1	2	12	3	6	5	7	10	9	8	4	11
18	1	2	12	3	6	5	7	10	9	8	4	11
19	1	2	12	3	6	4	8	9	7	10	5	11
20	1	2	12	3	11	4	10	9	8	7	5	6
21	1	2	12	3	11	4	10	9	8	7	5	6
22	1	2	8	3	11	4	9	6	5	7	10	12
23	1	2	8	3	11	4	9	6	5	7	10	12
24	1	2	9	3	11	5	6	7	8	10	4	12
25	1	2	8	3	6	5	9	12	10	11	4	7
26 M	1	2	11	3	6	4	7	8	9	10	5	12
27	9	2	12	3	6	4	11	5	10	8	1	7
28	1	2	4	9	8	6	12	3	10	5	11	7
29 M	1	2	11	3	6	4	12	5	7	8	9	10
30 S	2	1	12	5	8	7	4	6	10	9	3	11
31 S	1	2	8	6	4	7	5	10	12	9	3	11
32	1	4	9	3	6	5	7	8	10	11	2	12
33 S	1	2	4	6	9	5	11	3	10	8	7	12
34 S	1	2	9	8	5	6	10	11	12	4	3	7
35 S	1	5	8	3	9	4	10	6	12	7	2	11
36	1	3	11	2	7	4	12	5	8	9	6	10
37	1	4	11	2	7	3	12	5	8	9	6	10
38	2	3	10	7	5	6	1	8	11	9	4	12
39 M	1	2	10	6	5	3	7	9	11	8	4	12
40	1	2	8	3	5	4	7	12	6	10	9	11
41 M	1	3	12	2	9	5	11	10	6	7	4	8
42 M	7	4	8	5	2	1	10	6	12	11	3	9
Ave.	1.59	2.85	9.61	4.32	6.93	4.68	9.12	7.71	8.66	8.24	4.41	9.88

Personal Attitude												
Survey Number Mission Team (M) Support Team (S)	Worship Services	Sunday School/ Bible Class	Assisting Immigrant Groups	Confirmation Class (Adult and Youth)	Building Long-Term Relationships	Youth Group Events/Biblestudies	Door-to-Door Outreach Visits	Providing Resources for Those in Need	Community Meals	Community Servant Projects	Living a Christian Life	Providing Facilities for Community Groups
1	5	5	3	5	4	5	3	4	4	4	5	3
2	5	5	3	5	4	5	3	4	4	4	5	3
3	5	5	2	5	4	4	3	3	3	2	5	2
4	5	5	4	5	4	5	4	4	5	4	5	3
5	5	5	2	4	3	3	2	2	2	2	4	3
6	5	5	3	5	3	5	2	3	4	3	5	5
7 M	5	5	3	4	3	3	3	5	5	4	4	4
8	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5
9	5	5	1	5	5	5	3	1	3	3	4	5
10	5	5	2	5	5	5	3	1	4	3	5	3
11 S	5	5	3	2	5	5	2	2	0	5	5	3
12	5	5	4	5	4	5	4	4	5	4	5	5
13	5	3	4	5	4	3	4	5	5	4	5	3
14 S	5	3	3	0	5	5	4	5	4	4.5	5	4
15 S	4	4	3	3	3	4	3	3	3	3	5	4
16	5	4	4	5	4	5	4	4	4	4	5	3
17	5	5	3	5	4	5	4	3	3	4	5	3
18	5	5	3	5	4	5	4	3	3	4	5	3
19	5	5	2	5	5	5	5	3	3	3	5	1
20	5	5	1	5	1	5	2	0	0	1	5	1
21	5	5	1	5	1	5	2	0	0	1	5	1
22	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	4
23	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	4
24	5	5	5	5	4	5	5	5	3	3	5	3
25	5	5	3	4	4	4	3	3	4	3	4	4
26 M	5	5	3	4	3	4	2	4	5	4	5	3
27	3	3	2	3	4	4	2	3	4	4	5	4
28	5	5	5	5	4	3	2	5	3	5	4	4
29 M	5	5	5	5	5	5	4	5	5	5	5	5
30 S	4	4	1	4	2	4	3	3	5	3	0	5
31 S	5	5	5	4	4	3	5	3	3	4	5	3
32	5	5	4	5	4	5	4	4	4	4	4	4
33 S	5	5	2	5	5	5	2	3	5	3	5	3
34 S	5	4	3	4	4	5	3	2	4	3	4	3
35 S	5	4	3	5	4	5	3	4	5	4	5	5
36	5	4	4	5	4	5	3	5	5	4	5	5
37	5	4	4	5	4	5	3	5	5	4	5	5
38	5	5	3	5	5	5	5	5	4	5	5	4
39 M	5	5	4	5	5	5	5	4	4	5	5	5
40	5	5	3	5	4	4	4	3	4	3	5	3
41 M	5	4	3	5	3	5	3	4	4	3	4	4
42 M	3	4	3	5	5	5	3	3	2	3	5	4
Ave.	4.86	4.64	3.19	4.66	3.98	4.6	3.4	3.68	4.03	3.65	4.8	3.6

Post-Test Survey Results – Raw Data

Importance for Achieving the Purpose of the Church												
Survey Number Mission Team (M) Support Team (S)	Worship Services	Sunday School/ Bible Class	Assisting Immigrant Groups	Confirmation Class (Adult and Youth)	Building Long-Term Relationships	Youth Group Events/Biblestudies	Door-to-Door Outreach Visits	Providing Resources for Those in Need	Community Meals	Community Servant Projects	Living a Christian Life	Providing Facilities for Community Groups
1	5	5	3	5	4	5	3	3	5	4	5	4
2	5	5	3	5	4	5	3	3	5	4	5	4
3	5	5	5	5	4	5	5	3	3	3	5	3
4	5	5	3	4	4	4	3	3	3	3	5	3
5	5	4	3	4	4	4	1	3	3	3	4	3
6	5	5	4	5	4	5	2	2	2	3	3	3
7 M	5	5	5	5	5	5	3	5	5	5	5	5
8	5	5	4	5	4	4	4	4	4	3	5	4
9	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5
10	5	5	3	5	5	5	3	2	4	4	5	4
11 S	5	5	4	2	5	5	2	2	3	4	5	2
12	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5
13	5	4	4	5	4	4	3	4	5	3	5	4
14 S	5	5	4	5	5	5	4	5	4	5	5	4
15 S	5	4	3	3	4	5	3	3	3	3	5	5
16	5	4	4	5	4	4	3	4	4	4	5	4
17	5	5	2	5	4	5	4	3	3	4	5	3
18	5	5	3	5	4	5	4	3	3	4	5	3
19	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
20	5	5	3	5	3	5	3	2	5	2	5	2
21	5	5	2	5	2	5	2	1	5	1	5	1
22	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5
23	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5
24	5	3	2	4	3	3	3	2	2	3	5	2
25	5	5	4	5	5	5	4	4	4	5	5	4
26 M	5	4	3	5	4	3	3	3	4	4	5	3
27	4	4	3	4	4	3	2	4	3	3	5	3
28	5	5	3	4	3	2	3	3	2	4	3	2
29 M	5	5	4	5	4	5	5	5	4	4	5	4
30 S	5	5	5	5	3	5	5	5	3	5	5	3
31 S	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
32	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
33 S	5	4	3	5	5	5	4	4	4	5	5	5
34 S	5	5	3	4	4	3	3	2	2	3	5	2
35 S	5	5	3	5	4	4	2	3	4	4	5	2
36	5	4	5	5	5	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
37	5	5	5	5	5	3	3	3	3	2	2	2
38	5	5	3	5	5	5	5	5	3	5	5	5
39 M	5	5	4	5	5	5	5	4	4	4	5	4
40	5	5	3	5	3	4	2	2	3	3	5	3
41 M	5	5	3	5	3	3	3	3	4	3	4	3
42 M	5	5	4	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5
Ave.	4.97	4.74	3.64	4.72	4.18	4.41	3.49	3.49	3.77	3.79	4.74	3.51

Ranked Importance for Achieving the Purpose of the Church												
Survey Number Mission Team (M) Support Team (S)	Worship Services	Sunday School/ Bible Class	Assisting Immigrant Groups	Confirmation Class (Adult and Youth)	Building Long-Term Relationships	Youth Group Events/Bible Studies	Door-to-Door Outreach Visits	Providing Resources for Those in Need	Community Meals	Community Servant Projects	Living a Christian Life	Providing Facilities for Community Groups
1	1	2	12	4	7	5	11	10	6	8	3	9
2	1	2	12	4	7	5	11	10	6	8	3	9
3	1	5	3	6	8	7	4	11	9	10	2	12
4	2	3	10	5	4	6	11	7	8	9	1	12
5	1	2	7	3	5	4	12	10	9	8	6	11
6	2	1	10	4	7	3	12	11	8	9	5	6
7 M	1	2	11	4	7	5	12	8	6	10	3	9
8	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
9	1	3	10	5	2	4	12	9	11	8	6	7
10	1	5	12	2	9	6	7	11	8	4	3	10
11 S	3	4	7	10	1	2	12	9	8	6	5	11
12	1	2	5	3	6	4	7	8	10	11	9	12
13	1	5	10	3	8	9	11	6	4	12	2	7
14 S	1	4	11	6	5	3	9	10	7	8	2	12
15 S	1	5	12	7	6	2	8	9	10	11	3	4
16	1	5	10	3	4	6	12	9	11	8	2	9
17	1	2	12	4	6	5	8	11	9	7	3	10
18	1	2	12	4	6	5	8	11	9	7	3	10
19	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
20	1	2	8	3	6	4	7	11	12	9	5	10
21	1	2	11	3	7	4	6	12	8	10	5	9
22	1	2	9	2	6	4	7	8	12	11	5	10
23	1	2	9	2	6	4	7	8	12	11	5	10
24	2	4	11	3	10	7	5	8	12	6	1	9
25	1	2	5	3	8	4	7	9	11	10	6	12
26 M	1	4	12	2	9	10	7	8	6	5	3	11
27	3	4	11	5	2	7	12	9	10	6	1	8
28	1	2	8	3	7	10	9	5	11	4	6	12
29 M	1	2	12	3	11	4	8	5	9	6	7	10
30 S	1	2	10	5	9	7	3	4	12	11	6	8
31 S	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
32	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
33 S	1	8	12	3	4	2	11	9	10	6	5	7
34 S	2	3	9	5	4	8	7	12	11	6	1	10
35 S	1	4	9	2	7	5	12	8	11	6	3	10
36	1	3	12	2	6	4	11	8	9	7	5	10
37	1	3	12	2	6	4	11	8	7	9	5	10
38	2	3	9	5	7	4	1	8	12	10	6	11
39 M	1	2	9	5	4	3	7	8	12	11	6	10
40	1	3	9	2	10	4	1	6	7	12	5	8
41 M	1	2	11	3	12	4	6	10	5	7	9	8
42 M	1	3	12	4	7	2	11	5	8	9	6	10
Ave.	1.24	3.05	9.89	3.79	6.47	4.89	8.5	8.66	9.11	8.32	4.26	9.55

Attitude												
Survey Number Mission Team (M) Support Team (S)	Worship Services	Sunday School/ Bible Class	Assisting Immigrant Groups	Confirmation Class (Adult and Youth)	Building Long-Term Relationships	Youth Group Events/Bible Studies	Door-to-Door Outreach Visits	Providing Resources for Those in Need	Community Meals	Community Servant Projects	Living a Christian Life	Providing Facilities for Community Groups
1	5	5	3	5	4	5	3	3	5	4	5	4
2	5	5	3	5	4	5	3	3	5	4	5	4
3	5	5	4	5	0	5	5	3	4	3	5	3
4	5	3	3	5	4	3	2	3	4	4	3	3
5	5	4	3	4	4	4	1	3	3	3	4	3
6	5	5	3	5	4	5	1	3	4	4	5	5
7 M	5	5	5	5	5	5	4	5	5	4	5	4
8	5	5	3	5	4	5	5	5	4	4	5	4
9	5	5	3	5	5	4	1	2	2	3	5	3
10	5	5	3	5	4	5	3	2	3	4	5	4
11 S	5	5	3	1	5	5	1	3	3	5	5	2
12	5	5	4	5	4	4	5	4	4	3	5	4
13	5	3	4	4	4	4	3	5	5	3	5	4
14 S	5	4	4	4	4	5	4	5	4	4	5	4
15 S	5	4	2	3	3	5	3	3	3	3	5	5
16	5	4	4	5	0	5	3	5	5	4	5	4
17	5	5	3	5	4	5	4	4	4	4	5	4
18	5	5	3	5	4	5	4	4	4	4	5	3
19	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
20	5	5	3	5	3	5	3	1	5	2	5	3
21	5	5	2	5	3	5	3	1	5	3	5	2
22	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5
23	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5
24	5	3	2	5	4	4	3	4	2	3	5	3
25	5	5	4	5	4	5	4	3	4	4	5	4
26 M	5	5	3	5	3	3	3	4	5	5	5	3
27	4	3	3	4	4	3	2	4	4	4	5	4
28	5	5	4	5	3	2	3	4	3	5	4	2
29 M	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5
30 S	4	1	2	3	1	4	2	0	0	0	0	0
31 S	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
32	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
33 S	5	5	3	5	5	5	3	4	5	5	5	5
34 S	5	5	2	4	4	4	2	2	3	3	3	3
35 S	5	5	4	4	5	5	3	3	4	5	5	3
36	5	4	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5
37	5	5	4	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5
38	5	5	3	5	5	5	5	3	3	5	5	3
39 M	5	5	4	5	5	5	5	4	4	4	5	4
40	5	5	3	5	3	4	2	2	3	3	5	3
41 M	5	5	3	5	4	3	3	3	4	3	4	3
42 M	5	5	3	5	4	5	5	5	5	5	5	5
Ave.	4.95	4.56	3.38	4.64	4.08	4.51	3.36	3.61	4.08	3.97	4.82	3.74

Survey Comparison

	Worship Services	Sunday School/ Bible Class	Assisting Immigrant Groups	Confirmation Class (Adult and Youth)	Building Long-Term Relationships	Youth Group Events/Biblestudies	Door-to-Door Outreach Visits	Providing Resources for Those in Need	Community Meals	Community Servant Projects	Living a Christian Life	Providing Facilities for Community Groups
Pre-Trip Importance (All)	4.93	4.73	3.33	4.8	4.12	4.66	3.43	3.76	3.83	3.76	4.76	3.45
Post-Trip Importance (All)	4.97 (+.04)	4.74 (+.01)	3.64 (+.31)	4.72 (-.08)	4.18 (+.06)	4.41 (-.25)	3.49 (+.06)	3.49 (-.27)	3.77 (+.06)	3.79 (+.03)	4.74 (-.02)	3.51 (+.06)
Pre-Trip Importance (Mission Team)	4.83	4.5	3.33	5	4.33	4.67	3.83	4	3.83	3.83	4.5	3.67
Post-Trip Importance (Mission Team)	5 (+.17)	4.83 (+.33)	3.83 (+.5)	5 (-)	4.33 (-)	4.33 (-.34)	4 (+.17)	4.17 (+.17)	4.33 (+.5)	4.17 (+.34)	4.83 (+.33)	4 (+.33)
Pre-Trip Importance (Support Team)	5	4.86	3.83	4.57	4.29	4.71	3.75	3.71	3.33	4.43	4.88	4
Post-Trip Importance (Support Team)	5 (-)	4.71 (-.15)	3.57 (-.26)	4.14 (-.43)	4.29 (-)	4.57 (-.14)	3.29 (-.46)	3.43 (-.28)	3.29 (-.04)	4.14 (-.29)	5 (+.12)	3.29 (-.71)
Pre-Trip Importance (General Members)	4.93	4.75	3.21	4.82	4.04	4.64	3.25	3.71	3.93	3.57	4.79	3.25
Post-Trip Importance (General Members)	4.96 (+.03)	4.73 (-.02)	3.62 (+.41)	4.81 (-.01)	4.12 (+.08)	4.38 (-.26)	3.42 (+.17)	3.35 (-.36)	3.77 (-.16)	3.62 (+.05)	4.65 (-.06)	3.46 (+.21)
Pre-Trip Importance Rank (All)	1.59	2.85	9.61	4.32	6.93	4.68	9.12	7.71	8.66	8.24	4.41	9.88
Post-Trip Importance Rank (All)	1.24	3.05	9.89	3.79	6.47	4.89	8.5	8.66	9.11	8.32	4.26	9.55
Pre-Trip Importance Rank (Mission Team)	2	2.67	10.67	3.5	6.33	3.67	9.33	7.33	8.67	8.67	4.83	10.33
Post-Trip Importance Rank (Mission Team)	1	2.5	11.17	3.5	8.33	4.67	8.5	7.33	7.67	8	5.67	9.67
Pre-Trip Importance Rank (Support Team)	1.71	3.86	8	7	6.29	4.43	9.43	8	9.86	6.57	3.43	9.43
Post-Trip Importance Rank (Support Team)	1.43	4.29	10	5.43	5.14	4.14	8.86	8.71	9.86	7.71	3.57	8.86
Pre-Trip Importance Rank (General Members)	1.44	2.7	9.7	3.78	7.19	4.89	9.19	7.78	8.3	8.56	4.63	9.85
Post-Trip Importance Rank (General Members)	1.24	2.84	9.56	3.4	6.4	5.16	8.4	8.96	9.24	8.56	4.12	9.72
Pre-Trip Attitude (All)	4.86	4.64	3.19	4.66	3.98	4.6	3.4	3.68	4.03	3.65	4.8	3.6
Post-Trip Attitude (All)	4.95 (+.09)	4.56 (-.08)	3.38 (+.19)	4.64 (-.02)	4.08 (+.1)	4.51 (-.09)	3.36 (-.04)	3.61 (-.07)	4.08 (+.05)	3.97 (+.28)	4.82 (+.02)	3.74 (+.14)
Pre-Trip Attitude (Mission Team)	4.67	4.67	3.5	4.67	4	4.5	3.33	4.17	4.17	4	4.67	4.17
Post-Trip Attitude (Mission Team)	5 (+.33)	5 (+.33)	3.83 (+.33)	5 (+.33)	4.33 (+.33)	4.33 (-.17)	4.17 (+.84)	4.33 (+.16)	4.67 (+.5)	4.33 (+.33)	4.83 (+.16)	4 (-.17)
Pre-Trip Attitude (Support Team)	4.75	4.25	2.88	3.86	4	4.5	3.13	3.13	4.14	3.69	4.86	3.75
Post-Trip Attitude (Support Team)	4.86 (+.11)	4.14 (-.11)	2.86 (-.02)	3.43 (-.43)	3.86 (-.14)	4.71 (+.21)	2.57 (-.56)	3.33 (+.20)	3.67 (-.47)	4.17 (+.48)	4.67 (-.19)	3.67 (-.08)
Pre-Trip Attitude (General Members)	4.93	4.75	3.21	4.86	3.96	4.64	3.5	3.73	3.96	3.57	4.82	3.43
Post-Trip Attitude (General Members)	4.96 (+.03)	4.58 (-.17)	3.42 (+.21)	4.88 (+.02)	4.08 (+.12)	4.5 (-.14)	3.38 (-.12)	3.5 (-.23)	4.04 (+.08)	3.85 (+.28)	4.85 (+.03)	3.69 (+.26)

Ministry Importance Ranking Comparison

The following tables place the 12 ministries from the survey in order based on their average rank for the groups indicated in parentheses.

	Pre-Test Ranking (All)	Post-Test Ranking (All)
1	Worship Services	Worship Services
2	Sunday School/ Bible Class	Sunday School/ Bible Class
3	Confirmation Class	Confirmation Class
4	Living A Christian Life	Living A Christian Life
5	Youth Group	Youth Group
6	Building Long-Term Relationships	Building Long-Term Relationships
7	Providing Resources for Those in Need	Community Service Projects
8	Community Service Projects	Door-to-Door Outreach Visits
9	Community Meals	Providing Resources for Those in Need
10	Door-to-Door Outreach Visits	Community Meals
11	Assisting Immigrant Groups	Providing Facilities for Comm. Groups
12	Providing Facilities for Comm. Groups	Assisting Immigrant Groups

	Pre-Test Ranking (Mission Team)	Post-Test Ranking (Mission Team)
1	Worship Services	Worship Services
2	Sunday School/ Bible Class	Sunday School/ Bible Class
3	Confirmation Class	Confirmation Class
4	Youth Group	Youth Group
5	Living A Christian Life	Living A Christian Life
6	Building Long-Term Relationships	Providing Resources for Those in Need
7	Providing Resources for Those in Need	Community Meals
8	Community Service Projects	Community Service Projects
9	Community Meals	Building Long-Term Relationships
10	Door-to-Door Outreach Visits	Door-to-Door Outreach Visits
11	Providing Facilities for Comm. Groups	Providing Facilities for Comm. Groups
12	Assisting Immigrant Groups	Assisting Immigrant Groups

	Pre-Test Ranking (Support Team)	Post-Test Ranking (Support Team)
1	Worship Services	Worship Services
2	Living A Christian Life	Living A Christian Life
3	Sunday School/ Bible Class	Youth Group
4	Youth Group	Sunday School/ Bible Class
5	Building Long-Term Relationships	Building Long-Term Relationships
6	Community Service Projects	Confirmation Class
7	Confirmation Class	Community Service Projects
8	Providing Resources for Those in Need	Providing Resources for Those in Need
9	Assisting Immigrant Groups	Door-to-Door Outreach Visits
10	Door-to-Door Outreach Visits	Providing Facilities for Comm. Groups
11	Providing Facilities for Comm. Groups	Community Meals
12	Community Meals	Assisting Immigrant Groups

	Pre-Test Ranking (General Members)	Post-Test Ranking (General Members)
1	Worship Services	Worship Services
2	Sunday School/ Bible Class	Sunday School/ Bible Class
3	Confirmation Class	Confirmation Class
4	Living A Christian Life	Living A Christian Life
5	Youth Group	Youth Group
6	Building Long-Term Relationships	Building Long-Term Relationships
7	Providing Resources for Those in Need	Door-to-Door Outreach Visits
8	Community Meals	Community Service Projects
9	Community Service Projects	Providing Resources for Those in Need
10	Door-to-Door Outreach Visits	Community Meals
11	Assisting Immigrant Groups	Assisting Immigrant Groups
12	Providing Facilities for Comm. Groups	Providing Facilities for Comm. Groups

APPENDIX H SMALL GROUP PROTOCOL AND TRANSCRIPT

Small Group Interview Protocol

I want to thank you for agreeing to participate in this small group discussion concerning the outreach surveys that were complete this past year. We will spend approximately an hour looking at the results of the survey and discussing possible contributing factors to those results. I will tape our conversation and it will be transcribed for the sake of my research. However, your names will not be used in any documentation. In order to keep your answers confidential, I will call on you by referring to the number on the card in front of you.

As we proceed, I will present the results for 6 specific areas of the survey, one at a time. I will then ask a few questions concerning those results. There is no right or wrong answer. I am simply seeking your observations and opinions.

Mission Team

The results that we are going to be looking at are specifically the responses given by members of the Mission Team for the Brazil Trip last year.

Assisting Immigrant Groups

1. In the Mission Team rating of the importance of "Assisting Immigrant Groups" for achieving the purpose of the church, the ratings increased by 15% from the survey in January 2011 to the survey in October 2011. In the rating of personal attitude toward "Assisting Immigrant Groups" the ratings for the Mission Team increased by 9.5%. What aspects of your participation in the mission trip, if any, may have contributed to this change?

Building Long-Term Relationships with Those Outside of the Church

1. In the Mission Team rating of the importance of "Building Long-Term Relationships with Those Outside of the Church" for achieving the purpose of the church, the ratings remained the same. In the rating of personal attitude toward "Building Long-Term Relationships with Those Outside of the Church" the ratings for the Mission Team increased by more than 8%. What aspects of your participation in the mission trip, if any, may have contributed to this change?

2. Can you suggest anything that could have been done in conjunction with the mission trip that would have increased the sense of importance of "Building Long-Term Relationships with Those Outside of the Church" for achieving the purpose of the church?

Door-to-Door Outreach Visits

1. In the Mission Team rating of the importance of "Door-to-Door Outreach Visits" for achieving the purpose of the church, the ratings increased by 4.5%. In the rating of personal attitude toward "Door-to-Door Outreach Visits" the ratings for the Mission Team increased by more than 25%. What aspects of your participation in the mission trip, if any, may have contributed to this change?
2. Can you suggest anything that could have been done in conjunction with the mission trip that would have increased the sense of importance of "Door-to-Door Outreach Visits" for achieving the purpose of the church?

Providing Resources (Food, Money, Grocery Vouchers...) for Those in Need

1. In the Mission Team rating of the importance of "Providing Resources (Food, Money, Grocery Vouchers...) for Those in Need" for achieving the purpose of the church, the ratings increased by more than 4%. In the rating of personal attitude toward "Providing Resources (Food, Money, Grocery Vouchers...) for Those in Need" the ratings for the Mission Team increased by a little less than 4%. What aspects of your participation in the mission trip, if any, may have contributed to this change?
2. Can you suggest anything that could have been done in conjunction with the mission trip that would have increased the sense of importance of and/or personal attitude toward "Providing Resources (Food, Money, Grocery Vouchers...) for Those in Need"?

Community Servant Projects

1. In the Mission Team rating of the importance of "Community Servant Projects" for achieving the purpose of the church, the ratings increased by almost 9%. In the rating of personal attitude toward "Community Servant Projects" the ratings for the Mission Team increased by a little less than 4%.

What aspects of your participation in the mission trip, if any, may have contributed to this change?

2. Can you suggest anything that could have been done in conjunction with the mission trip that would have increased personal attitude toward "Community Servant Projects"?

Living a Christian Life in the Work Place/School

1. In the Mission Team rating of the importance of "Living a Christian Life in the Work Place/School" for achieving the purpose of the church, the ratings increased by more than 7%. In the rating of personal attitude toward "Living a Christian Life in the Work Place/School" the ratings for the Mission Team increased by a little less than 3.5%. What aspects of your participation in the mission trip, if any, may have contributed to this change?

Support Team

The results that we are going to be looking at are specifically the responses given by members of the Support Teams for the Brazil Trip last year. Think about your role as a Support Team member as you answer the following questions.

Assisting Immigrant Groups

1. In the Support Team rating of the importance of "Assisting Immigrant Groups" for achieving the purpose of the church, the ratings decreased by almost 7% from the survey in January 2011 to the survey in October 2011. In the rating of personal attitude toward "Assisting Immigrant Groups," the ratings for the Support Team decreased slightly. What aspects of your participation in the mission trip, if any, may have contributed to this change?
2. Can you suggest anything that could have been done in conjunction with the mission trip that would have increased the perceived importance of and/or personal attitude toward "Assisting Immigrant Groups"?

Building Long-Term Relationships with Those Outside of the Church

1. In the Support Team rating of the importance of "Building Long-Term Relationships with Those Outside of the Church" for achieving the purpose of the church, the ratings remained the same. In the rating of personal attitude toward "Building Long-Term Relationships with Those Outside of the Church" the ratings for the Support Team decreased by 3.5%. Can you suggest anything that could have been done in conjunction with the mission trip that would have increased the perceived importance of and/or personal attitude toward "Building Long-Term Relationships with Those Outside of the Church"?

Door-to-Door Outreach Visits

1. In the Support Team rating of the importance of "Door-to-Door Outreach Visits" for achieving the purpose of the church, the ratings decreased by more than 12%. In the rating of personal attitude toward "Door-to-Door Outreach Visits" the ratings for the Support Team decreased by almost 18%. What aspects of your participation in the mission trip, if any, may have contributed to this change?
2. Can you suggest anything that could have been done in conjunction with the mission trip that would have increased the perceived importance of and/or personal attitude toward "Door-to-Door Outreach Visits"?

Providing Resources (Food, Money, Grocery Vouchers...) for Those in Need

1. In the Support Team rating of the importance of "Providing Resources (Food, Money, Grocery Vouchers...) for Those in Need" for achieving the purpose of the church, the ratings decreased by more than 7.5%. What aspects of your participation in the mission trip, if any, may have contributed to this change?
2. Can you suggest anything that could have been done in conjunction with the mission trip that would have increased the perceived importance of "Providing Resources (Food, Money, Grocery Vouchers...) for Those in Need"?
3. In the Support Team rating of personal attitude toward "Providing Resources (Food, Money, Grocery Vouchers...) for Those in Need" the ratings for the Support Team increased by 6%. What aspects of your participation in the mission trip, if any, may have contributed to this change?

Community Servant Projects

1. In the Support Team rating of the importance of "Community Servant Projects" for achieving the purpose of the church, the ratings decreased by more than 6.5%. What aspects of your participation in the mission trip, if any, may have contributed to this change?
2. Can you suggest anything that could have been done in conjunction with the mission trip that would have increased the perceived importance of "Community Servant Projects"?
3. In the Support Team rating of personal attitude toward "Community Servant Projects" the ratings for the Support Team increased by 13%. What aspects of your participation in the mission trip, if any, may have contributed to this change?

Living a Christian Life in the Work Place/School

1. In the Support Team rating of the importance of "Living a Christian Life in the Work Place/School" for achieving the purpose of the church, the ratings decreased by 17.75%. In the rating of personal attitude toward "Living a Christian Life in the Work Place/School" the ratings for the Support Team decreased by 2%. Can you suggest anything that could have been done in conjunction with the mission trip that would have increased the perceived importance of and/or personal attitude toward "Living a Christian Life in the Work Place/School"?

Congregation

Assisting Immigrant Groups

1. In the rating of the importance of "Assisting Immigrant Groups" for achieving the purpose of the church, the ratings increased by 9.3% from the survey in January 2011 to the survey in October 2011. In the rating of personal attitude toward "Assisting Immigrant Groups" the ratings increased by 5.9%. What aspects of the mission trip, if any, may have contributed to this change for the congregation in general?

Building Long-Term Relationships with Those Outside of the Church

1. In the rating of the importance of "Building Long-Term Relationships with Those Outside of the Church" for achieving the purpose of the church, the ratings increased slightly. In the rating of personal attitude toward "Building Long-Term Relationships with Those Outside of the Church" the ratings for the Mission Team increased by 2.5%. Can you suggest anything that could have been done in conjunction with the mission trip that would have increased the sense of importance of and/or personal attitude toward "Building Long-Term Relationships with Those Outside of the Church"?

Door-to-Door Outreach Visits

1. In the rating of the importance of "Door-to-Door Outreach Visits" for achieving the purpose of the church, the ratings increased slightly. In the rating of personal attitude toward "Door-to-Door Outreach Visits" the ratings decreased slightly. Can you suggest anything that could have been done in conjunction with the mission trip that would have increased the sense of importance of and/or personal attitude toward "Door-to-Door Outreach Visits"?

Providing Resources (Food, Money, Grocery Vouchers...) for Those in Need

1. In the rating of the importance of "Providing Resources (Food, Money, Grocery Vouchers...) for Those in Need" for achieving the purpose of the church, the ratings decreased by more than 7%. In the rating of personal attitude toward "Providing Resources (Food, Money, Grocery Vouchers...) for Those in Need" the ratings decreased slightly. What aspects of the mission trip, if any, may have contributed to this change for the congregation in general?
2. Can you suggest anything that could have been done in conjunction with the mission trip that would have increased the sense of importance of and/or personal attitude toward "Providing Resources (Food, Money, Grocery Vouchers...) for Those in Need" for the congregation in general?

Community Servant Projects

1. In the Mission Team rating of the importance of "Community Servant Projects" for achieving the purpose of the church, the ratings increased slightly. In the rating of personal attitude toward "Community Servant Projects" the ratings for the Mission Team increased by more than 7.5%. What aspects of the mission trip, if any, may have contributed to this change for the congregation in general?
2. Can you suggest anything that could have been done in conjunction with the mission trip that would have increased the sense of importance of and/or personal attitude toward "Community Servant Projects" for the congregation in general?

Living a Christian Life in the Work Place/School

1. In the Mission Team rating of the importance of "Living a Christian Life in the Work Place/School" for achieving the purpose of the church, the ratings decreased slightly. In the rating of personal attitude toward "Living a Christian Life in the Work Place/School" the ratings for the Mission Team increased slightly. Can you suggest anything that could have been done in conjunction with the mission trip that would have increased the sense of importance of and/or personal attitude toward "Living a Christian Life in the Work Place/School" for the congregation in general?

Transcripts of Small Group Interviews

Audio recordings were made of each of three (3) small group interviews. The recordings were transcribed by Tech-Synergy. Those transcriptions were rechecked by the researcher for accuracy.

Mission Team Small Group Transcript

Moderator: I want to thank you for agreeing to participate in this small group discussion concerning the outreach surveys that were completed this past year. We'll be spending approximately an hour looking at the results of the survey and discussing possible contributing factors to those results. I will tape our conversation and it will be transcribed for the sake of my research, however your names will be not used in any documentation. In order to keep your answers confidential, I will call on you by pointing to you and will not call on you by name.

As we proceed I will present the results for six specific areas of the survey, one at a time. I will then ask a few questions concerning those results. There is no right or wrong answer, I am simply seeking your observations and opinions. The results that we are going to be looking at are specially the responses given by the members of the Mission Team for the Brazil mission trip. So we are not going to look at the general results but specifically the results from the surveys that the six members of the Mission Team filled out.

So the first area of the ministry that we are going to look at is assisting immigrant groups. In the Mission Team rating of the importance of assisting immigrant groups for the achieving of the purpose of the church, the ratings increased by 15%, from the survey in January 2011 to the survey in October of 2011. In the rating of personal attitude towards assisting immigrant groups, the ratings for the mission team increased by 9.5%.

What aspects of your participation in the mission trip if any may have contributed to these changes? So specifically referring to assisting immigrant groups, the increase in importance and the increase in positive attitude towards it.

Speaker: I think you could just see, you know, what your efforts, you know, the fruit or whatever you know, the results of your efforts from being from the work that we did, when we were in Brazil. And, you know, all the good that they can do.

Speaker: Yeah, understanding that there's, there's people who genuinely need help and they are just like us, same problems we face. And it's satisfying to be able to reach out and help them.

- Speaker: And my point I was going to make is that language barrier shouldn't be a big deal because, you know, we communicated -- not knowing the language. And I think with the Bosnian community, you know, they don't know English, we don't know Bosnian but maybe we can still, find a way to communicate with them.
- Speaker: I agree, I was going to say the same thing, language really isn't a barrier anymore. And you are probably working with the Bosnians going from door-to-door and stuff like that, but --
- Speaker: I haven't really met, you know, so far -- and that is from the neighborhood.
- Speaker: Right yeah, I agree with that. You don't have to be afraid.
- Speaker: You will have to say the question again for me.
- Moderator: What aspects of your participation in the mission trip if any may have contributed to the change in the importance of assisting immigrant groups for the purpose of the church and your own personal attitude towards assisting immigrant groups. So is there anything that happened in relationship to the mission trip that that made that seem more important to you or personally gave you a better attitude towards assistant immigrant groups?
- Speaker: Anything specific? Yeah I don't know anything specific gave me a better attitude, I don't -- I really can't -- don't remember what my attitude was prior to going to Brazil. I don't, I think I was more indifferent than being positive or negative on immigrant groups to the US. And I don't know if that has changed. If anything it had changed for the better. I am not as indifferent as I was.
- Moderator: And again if you, if nothing, if nothing happened that answered that question, that's fine. This is just to determine whether or not there was anything, and if there is not that's fine as well.
- Speaker: Well it was, it was, I don't know what the right word is, but it felt good there, when people reached out to help us in making us feel welcome, making us feel at home, helping us get around and it's -- I am willing to help people here to give them the same sense of welcomeness, comfort.
- Speaker: I have changed in the workplace because of that. I work with the public all the time. So if someone comes into the shop and they are struggling I will tend to be the first one out there to help. If I understand -- yeah because I understand what it would be like if I was in a different country and I needed help too. So it's positive, it's been positive.

Speaker: I have a friend who -- her husband became, for the Lutheran church, they went to -- they went to Germany, moved to Germany and he is a liaison for like India and Africa and all these other -- for missionaries out in the field. And so they live in Frankfurt and she posted on Facebook a few weeks back how her attitude changed and made me think about being here that by, when, you know, a lot of people say, well if you are in America, if you moved America learn to speak the language and now she's got the shoe on the other foot and she is trying to get her driver's license and deal with the other things and she - - the people who are patient with her and most of Germans do speak English but a lot of them don't want to unless you try to make that effort to speak German first. And she said, now I, she gives a whole lot more, you know, when she comes back to the US she understands a whole lot more the problems that an immigrant has in trying to assimilate in society and the get things done in their daily life.

Moderator: Anything else? Alright the next area of ministry is building long term relationships with those outside of the church. In the mission team rating of the importance of building long term relationships with those outside of the church, for achieving the purpose of the church the ratings remain the same. In the rating of personal attitude towards building long term relationships with those outside of the church, the ratings for the mission team increased by more than 8%. What aspects of your participation in the mission trip if any may have contributed to the increase in personal attitude towards building long term relationships outside of the church?

Speaker: Well by becoming friends felt like people like Noelli and Leoni and the people at ABRASSE that I felt close too, that I could have that with people in this neighborhood that I don't know. When I do my door-to-door that I can meet someone and have relationship with that person. You know, so I could, I have really grown from that experience because now I am getting a lot more things than I thought I would.

Speaker: In the process of looking for contributors I was surprised that the very positive reactions that I was getting from people that I did not expect it from when telling them about what this trip was going to be and what we are going to be doing. And following up with a report to them after I came back, I was just really overwhelmed by some of the, some of the reactions that I received from them. And it's changed the relationship that I had, a lot of them professional. And it's changed that relationship that made it warmer, closer. So I thought was very positive exchange. I came away from it -- it was a benefit to me.

Moderator: Anything else? Okay, still on building long term relationships, can you suggest anything that could have been done in conjunction with the mission trip that would have increased the sense of importance of building long term

relationships with those outside of the church for the purpose of achieving our mission, something that we didn't do that could have been done?

Is there something that we could have done in the planning, execution and debriefing of the mission trip, either before we went, while we were there, after we came back that would have increased your understanding of the importance of building long term relationship – something that we didn't do that could have been done.

Speaker: And you keep saying that church is mission what, what are talking the mission in generality or that this specific mission to Brazil.

Moderator: No the mission of the church in general, that the survey question asked you to rate the importance of these various areas for the achieving of the mission which the first open ended question asked you what is the mission of the church. So how important are these items for achieving that purpose so now I am asking if there is something that we could have done that would have increased your sense of the importance of building long term relationships before even our purpose.

Speaker: We could have talked about that more because I was just going there to work.

Speaker: Yeah, that's what I thought.

Speaker: To work and we could have, we would and that they are really they have going socialization --

Speaker: So you said they were big on --

Speaker: I know but I didn't really get that.

Speaker: Yeah me neither.

Moderator: You are free to say your opinion even if it's a critic. This is the idea is to find out how the best to do this, so if something wasn't done, wasn't done enough that's perfectly all right.

Speaker: I think I saw when I was there too that just how much like continue, people who needed encouragement and that means a lot to them, I think even just going there and even if we didn't do it any work, it just mean like there is so much to them for us to go there and to be encouragement to them and what they are doing and I think that's important in relationship in long term relationship to keep encouraging each other in what they are doing.

Speaker: I thought that it could have been more physical than just going there and encouraging them. And I really felt that too. I missed that. I want to do, I get there really want to physically see thing that I had done, but I understand that we did do a lot and I wasn't expecting to be able to do a lot without doing anything physically.

Speaker: I would expected if we, if we go back that it is not going to be the same, first I am going to see the same people I was a suspect because you are going to be on a different mission even if it's in the same city and so you don't have to build new relationships again.

Speaker: I think it would be easier to build relationships again because we have a better understanding of the context of how things are set up down there, how they run, what the church is doing and I think it will be easier to get into doing things.

Speaker: And when you if we would ever we have a chance to go back I mean you are meeting new people and then not everybody is the same either, if you maybe the next group of people aren't that friendly --And when we were coming back and we were sitting in the airport in Sao Paolo, I met this gentleman from --

Speaker: They were building a chapel, they were --

Speaker: They were building a chapel, they were from Tennessee, they were building a chapel in he said, so they had been there almost as long as we had at least within the 10 days, 12 or 14 days or so. And he said they pretty much hit the ground running and they were building they were basically doing things from day one all the way up until the day before they came back to Sao Paolo to leave. So, we didn't get into specifics. Maybe his church has a long-term relationship with the area that they are working in.

Speaker: He did talk about that, I think they were going there every year.

Speaker: Yeah, so maybe they already had all that groundwork, but at first I thought wow they got to do all that and because I am like ----- I was expecting to work a whole lot, a whole lot more physical work and maybe they already have that ground work set up and for years on and maybe they, so they can't just come in and wave after wave the people and get things done quicker.

Speaker: I don't know. There is another group that from Germany that came and did a lot of work, did they do or we did every time when they came but they socialized first and then do a little bit or when they would come till they get into right away and start working and we had to do that to build that building.

Speaker: And I would, if we had a chance to go back and work with the same group in the same community I would suspect that okay so already got this relationship with Noelli and Becker and all these other people, would we have more time working just a question in my mind. Will they have more time doing physical work than running around. And don't get me wrong, I thought it was great to go see the city and stuff and we got to see some of the city and the few minutes we had that in going to Concordia and the university and stuff, that was great and I liked it, but I was expecting a little more. And I am not disappointed in the trip in many way in what we did, but --

Speaker: It was different.

Speaker: It was different and I just wondered if we had a chance to just go back if it's the same people and if they are trying to start another church in another favela, we already have this relationship with those people, we would be able to help them --

Speaker: Get more done physically.

Speaker: Get more done physically. That would be like great then. We already got a relationship with them.

Moderator: Okay, any other thoughts on things that could have been done for increasing the sense of importance of building long term relationships?

Moving into the ministry area of door to door outreach visits, in the rating of the importance of door to door outreach visits, the ratings increased by 4.5%. In the rating of personal attitude towards it, the rating increased by more than 25%. What aspects of your participation in the mission trip if any may have contributed to this increase?

Speaker: Well my fear. I was speaking to people I think has changed, I feel like I am more willing to go out and speak to people I don't know, that's weird, it's very strange.

Speaker: But I think it's important and now that I am involved in this Thrivent thing to be able to get money to help these people in the neighborhood, I need to go and I need to get people to help me, to go. They are ready to hear the Word, and we just have to go present it to them and find out what their needs are.

Speaker: Yes it's, we had to do that. When we were down there - and when we were with people that do that all the time, just out of the love that they have for God for the faith and I just kind of it took down some barriers I think.

- Speaker: I know Benjamin I mean that's what he was all about. I learned a lot from Benjamin.
- Speaker: I am just happy I didn't have to do it in Portuguese.
- Moderator: Can you suggest anything that could have been done with the mission trip that what have increase the sense of the importance of door to door outreach business for the mission of the church?
- Speaker: Benjamin here.
- Speaker: We walked to door to door we do down there I mean I just --
- Speaker: We didn't do door to door down there but what were talking about our faith.
- Speaker: Weren't we going to pass out fliers in the favela, wasn't that going to happen at one time we just never accomplished that but I thought we are going to do that can we buy some into the church.
- Speaker: Well that was part of walking, we took that whole walk around the favela.
- Speaker: But we didn't actually pass the flyers around we were supposed to do that aren't we.
- Moderator: There was mention of that, I think that I think that the church itself would have done that by the time we were going to do that.
- Speaker: Prior to that.
- Speaker: See, but I was told not to go to go to Graci's house because that's not how things were done and so that's why I had to give the note to - who is the professor, who is the professor?
- Speaker: Jefferson.
- Speaker: Jefferson to give the notes with followers, who is the pastor though, Benjamin and the bag of goodies and stuff.
- Moderator: Anything else. All right next area of ministry is providing resources such as food, money groceries, vouchers, et cetera for those who need. And the mission teams ratings of the importance of providing resources for those in need for achieving the purpose of the church, the rating increase by more than 4%. In the ratings of personal attitude towards providing resources for those in need, the ratings of the mission team increased by a little less than 4%. What

aspects of your participation in the mission trip if any, may have contributed to the change?

Speaker: I don't there was really a change, it was either still the same I mean --

Speaker: I try to bring groceries every week. And I, you know, so my attitude has gone up.

Speaker: I know the thing with Thrivent, we have the helping hands that I know that they provide help to people. So that's important, you know.

Moderator: Is there anything that could have been done in conjunction with the mission trip that would have had a greater impact on the sense of importance or positive attitude towards providing resources for those in need?

Speaker: Maybe working directly with the people that lived in the favela, but we really didn't have any -- we did, the people have belonged to the church, but the people that did not, maybe I don't know.

Speaker: Yeah a little more direct contact with them.

Speaker: We were sheltered a little bit.

Speaker: We had contact with people that were kind of in charge of running the church more than the daycare.

Speaker: One of the reasons that I thought we were sheltered there is because they kept saying that the favela was a scary thing.

Speaker: Yeah, but that group that came there before they did a VBS didn't they from what I heard, or they had a fair or something and they did a video, I think that would be neat if we could have done something like that to get to know the people there better.

Speaker: We were there during --

Speaker: Through the break, yeah.

Speaker: I think that -- again I thought originally we were going to be at one of the schools and helping there and that, we might have more contact with kids and families and a better sense of needs, that might help.

Speaker: Yeah, I thought we were going to do the school too, that would have been great to be in there, but how were the dates picked, the trip dates?

Moderator: Based on of availability of everyone.

Speaker: Of us or --

Moderator: And resources there.

Speaker: Okay.

Speaker: And Bill figured that out or --

Moderator: In conversation with me.

Speaker: I think it would be really neat to be like VBS or something.

Speaker: We would definitely need to know the language. You don't think so?

Speaker: Maybe not.

Speaker: Well if you haven't -- I guess.

Speaker: I think music and crafts and kids like to do that kind of stuff.

Moderator: Anything else in the area of providing resources for those in need?

Speaker: Well there were times where we wanted to send things and you really can't send things that we can personally make and send --

Speaker: Because of the --

Speaker: Yeah I think that's a barrier.

Speaker: They can always use money, they can --

Speaker: I know but -- but that's not -- it's not part of us, it's not our love that's going there.

Speaker: But we can do it to those in the community.

Speaker: Sure.

Speaker: So we could take what we would have done there are spread it to the arehere.

Speaker: That's very good.

Moderator: Moving on to the fifth area community servant projects. In the mission team's rating of the importance of community servant projects for the purpose of the church. The ratings increased by almost 9%. In the ratings of personal attitude towards community serving projects the ratings increased by about 4%. What aspects of your participation in the mission trip may have contributed to this change?

Speaker: Does it have to be immediate community or like Missouri?

Speaker: When that tornado high Joplin I really -- I couldn't just because of things were in the way, but I would have loved to just go there and help, I really would have, and I just felt that since the Brazil trip, I wanted to do more of that.

Speaker: So did I. I wish I would have done some kind of trip like this in the US or doing a mission trip anywhere prior to my -- the age I am now, years ago, because I -- it's certainly has changed me and I would have wanted to go to Joplin too and the opportunity hasn't presented itself where it coincided where I could have gone. Salem was going, but the dates weren't working and other groups, I know were going in that, the dates weren't working. But prior to going to Brazil I probably would have gone 'oh yeah that sounds neat' and then would have gone on and -- but I really gave it a considerable thought and can I get out of what I am doing and go and I couldn't.

Speaker: I was moved to take training to be able to volunteer to go into areas where there's natural disasters like earthquake or tornados to do structural evaluation. So I'm on a team now in Missouri that can be called up to go into places to do that. So that's the community service that I'm going to do, that was motivated out of this experience. Where I could take, what I have, what I know and be able to apply it in ways that would be helpful.

Speaker: I went through the synod website and I found -- I think it was the synod website, I heard something on KFUEO and anyway there was this -- there was all of these places that the Missouri Synod has where you can go, do mission trips, some of them are native Americans, there is -- up in Alaska, there are all over -- just US there is -- then there is international too and I was looking through that. I've done it a couple of times and I think wow I'd like to do that, but I'm not a good organizational person to try to get -- just to get -- raise money for myself to go, to fly Alaska and help Eskimos do whatever the mission of the trip is. And then there is -- some of them say restrictions too and I don't even apply -- it doesn't apply to me. But I look through that a whole lot more now and try to figure out what I can do. And I told you last week, I said you were hoping one of us who would maybe want to do something, and I would like to and XXXXX says she would like to go do it and I think we having XXXXX there, that's a comfort for me having her there, but she said yeah I would like -- whatever you do, I would like to go

with you and lead whatever group back to Brazil or something, but I just -- I've never been picked as a leader in any of the places I've worked, I've always felt like I could do it, but back to self confidence now since I don't -- since nobody ever seen that in me. So I would feel like I would need some guidance in that area.

Moderator: That actually leads in to the next question. Can you suggest things that could have been done in conjunction with the mission trip that would have increased personal attitude towards community servant projects more, something that we didn't do that we could have done?

Speaker: Brought supplies with us.

Speaker: Maybe actually and I know it didn't present itself and I've already said, but like maybe doing more with the people there. I think that might -- maybe a little bit more of an impact you know.

Speaker: I know we never thought of that, but each one of us could have an extra suitcase, and would have been able to put others supplies in there that we could have left with them and never even realized that we could have done that, I mean we could have brought extra underwear and stuff like that and given it to the orphanages and it would have been just legal for us to get it there, but we could have done that we never thought.

Moderator: The final area that we are going to discuss is living a Christian life in the workplace and schools, and the mission team's rating of the importance of living a Christian life in the workplace of school for achieving the purpose of the church. The ratings increased by a little bit more than 7%. In the ratings of personal attitude towards living a Christian life in the workplace, the ratings for the mission team increased a little bit less than 3.5%. What aspects of your participation in the mission trip if any may have contributed to this change? And please note on these percentages, these already ranked fairly high on the survey, so there wasn't a whole lot of room for improvement, so that is part of the reason why it's not a larger percentage growth.

Speaker: I think it is like the pass it on thing - people see God in your actions and then it'll make them want to do that also, whether they are not a church going person but say they are Christian, but I know -- we have good people and bad people at work, you have it everywhere and people that slack off, people that do good work and maybe they just see how you're acting and how you treat other people and it will help them.

Speaker: I think just hearing the story and how much it meant for us to go and how it changed how we feel in our life that it just encourages other people to want to

do either community projects here or to go on a mission trip, when they hear about the good experiences that we had.

Speaker: Yeah that's -- it just reinforces what I said before about the reactions I've gotten from some people when I was approaching them to donate money, people that I work with and do business with and their reaction to it, thinking that it was really positive, something that they admired, something that they thought they would like to get involved with themselves, through their own organizations or churches or whatever.

Speaker: I think when they -- when people that did contribute, when they got our letter they came to our presentation and they felt emotions and saw our emotions and saw, I just think that it helps to encourage them, that it really does -- what they give their money for, I mean it really was a good thing.

Speaker: It changed.

Speaker: Yeah and it was -- it meant a lot to the people there.

Speaker: Anything else in terms of the relationship of the mission trip to living a Christian life in the workplace or school?

Speaker: They were very excited to hear, even people with where I work about the trip.

Speaker: Oh you did your presentation finally?

Speaker: Tuesday.

Speaker: Oh seven months later.

Speaker: Yeah, not for lack of trying.

Speaker: Oh you made the presentation at Concordia?

Speaker: Oh nice.

Speaker: Thank you sir. So now I can tell them that the orphanage is up and running. So now how many students, I'm sorry, how many students did you say was --

Moderator: 30 students.

Speaker: 30?

Speaker: But that's 30 in the morning and 30 at night?

Moderator: Right I believe so, I believe so.

Speaker: That's really exciting.

Speaker: Almost 60 lives impacted by something that we helped with, that's nice.

Speaker: It's nice to know.

Speaker: Really nice.

Speaker: My attitude at work is not good. I've been there for 20 plus years and it is not good at all. I'm not going even answer your question.

Speaker: Well, these are all the questions that I have. Thank you for your participation, this would be very helpful for the work that I am trying to write up.

[After the interview was concluded, the group members continued talking and had insights that were relevant to the research. I restarted the recorder to document the following conversation]

Moderator: Tell us about the presentation.

Speaker: The presentation was the easy part for me versus -- in the past when I had to speak in front of people, I was nervous and I would stutter and just generally make an ass of myself. But this presentation, for some reason, came very natural and easy for me to stand in front of everybody and speak of my experiences in Brazil. I don't know why it was different, but it was. And I've gotten more comfortable doing the reading too. So, I have been doing those for -- this past Sunday, it was like, I guess, my third or fourth one and I have been doing that for about a year now.

Moderator: Anyone else with thoughts on the impact of having to present?

Speaker: I thought I wasn't going to have anything to say and then it just -- there was a lot more than, you know, I realized that, you know, I thought I wouldn't be able to fill the five minutes that you wanted us to talk.

Speaker: Well, I was nervous I admit that.

Speaker: Yeah I was too

Speaker: I don't like to speak in front of people, but I feel like I am going up to people I don't know now and talking to people. I am meeting people from other Churches through Thrivent. I would never have done that before. You know

from St. Luke's and Holy Spirit and I don't know these people, but I'm meeting them through, I don't know, God's calling me to do a different thing now. You know, it is Youth Director of Thrivent and getting funds for different things and I think -- That is because of Brazil.

Speaker: My cousin, she lives in Chicago and I was telling her about it and she is interested and she thought that's something that -- she hadn't really considered that it was something that she might be able to do herself and just hearing about the experiences that we had -- it just -- it really helps people and encourages them to see that they could do that too and not just in Brazil, but here.

Speaker: I make presentations all the time - small groups, big groups, but I've never had to make one that was as difficult for me as that one was. I think it was because when I deal with groups professionally, I'm drawing on decades of experience and I know my topic very, very well. Really I guess I was unsure of having to talk about something so intensely personal as that experience. That was -- it was very hard for me to do that. I just -- I had a lot of difficulty with it. But it -- coming out of it, afterwards, it's -- I think it has changed the relationship that I have had with some people in St. Lucas who were at the presentation and -- in a positive way. I am not sure why, but I was --

Speaker: -- mine was changed too with other people I don't know why --

Speaker: I think they feel like maybe they --

Speaker: They know you with the --

Speaker: They know you better.

Speaker: Maybe that's it, maybe that's it.

Speaker: Yeah.

Speaker: And people like to be around that excitement that you feel from going on the mission trip. It's a positive feeling and an exciting feeling and that can catch on to them and help them.

Speaker: Asking people for money -- that was a difficult thing for me to do to -- I felt like, why would anybody want to -- that I am not -- especially personally want to contribute money for me XXXXXXXX to be a part of a group that goes to Brazil. Why would they want to do that? And that people did that is just really humbling, even though, overall, the money that I raised personally with everybody I asked didn't come close to covering both me and XXXXX and so I am even more humbled by all the people who, from the Church and

wherever else the money came from. I am just still flattered and humbled by that experience and like because nobody -- I felt like so insignificant a lot of the times in my life and like nobody cares, and why would somebody care to send me to go to help other people in another country, and there's even people across the river or north St. Louis or something that need to be helped here too and that was very humbling.

Speaker: That surprising that you experienced with the donations and the sources. In my case I have made assumptions about some people that I sent a request to that I never imagined that they would contribute, but they did. It overturned those assumptions, which was like a good thing. It was a great thing and it's -- there, again, I think it has changed relationships.

Speaker: This has been good for XXXXXX because she is all -- for a long time spoke about wanting to go to dental school and to be an orthodontist, but earlier this week she said something about going to the Concordia in Mequon, Wisconsin and she is thinking about going into, I think, the mission field or helping maybe youth leadership is what she said. I said, I think you would be very good for that, that would -- I think that would fit her personality much better, but I think she didn't say it, but I just -- my immediate thought was that Brazil has something to do with that and the youth group XXXXX and all -- in her experiences both here in and Salem in the youth groups and when I think that, that -- it's feeling some of that.

Moderator: Any other thoughts upon the mission trip in general and the effects that it has had?

Speaker: It was a good experience.

Speaker: Yeah.

Speaker: It was just a marvelous experience; a great opportunity.

Speaker: I would encourage anybody.

Speaker: Don't be afraid either.

Speaker: Yeah any age can do it.

Speaker: There were some inspirational people.

Speaker: You know, there was something any age like you said like if you can't do the physical work then you could try work with the children or the other people there.

Speaker: Yeah.

Speaker: I know XXXXXX worked with a lot of the -- working with those girls.

Speaker: I would do it again.

Speaker: Good.

Speaker: Well, thank you.

Support Team Small Group Transcript

Moderator: I want to thank you for agreeing to participate in this small group discussion concerning the outreach surveys that were completed this past year. We will spend approximately an hour looking at the results of the surveys and discussing possible contributing factors to those results. I will tape our conversation, it will be transcribed for the sake of my research, however your names will be not used in any documentation. In order to keep your answers confidential, I will simply point to you when you want to speak and I will not call you by name.

As we proceed I will present the results for six specific areas of ministry on the survey one at a time. I will then ask a few questions concerning those results. There is no right or wrong answer. I am simply seeking your observations and opinions. The results that we are going to be looking at are specifically the responses given by members of the Support Teams for the Brazil Mission trip last year. Think about your role as a Support Team member and as a congregation member as you answer the following questions.

So the first area we are going to look at is assisting immigrant groups. In the support team's rating of the importance of assisting immigrant groups for achieving the purpose of the church, the ratings decreased by about 7% from the surveys in January to the ones in October, so that means a decrease in the view of their importance. In the ratings of personal attitude towards it, there was just a slight and somewhat insignificant decrease. Were there any aspects of your participation as a Support Team member, that may have contributed to the change that occurred and if not were there any things that we could have done that would have given a positive change to those?

Speaker: Are you speaking from the standpoint of our congregation?

Moderator: For our congregation. So these are results from -- specifically for the Support Team from January to October, the view of the importance of reaching out to immigrant groups from Support Team members decreased. So Support Team members in general found it to be less important in October than they did in January and there was a slight decrease in their own personal attitude towards that, so is there anything that was done that may have contributed to that?

Speaker: Maybe over exposure. I think we were like done with it.

Speaker: It could have also been picking up on some of the feelings, some of the congregation at large, because there was -- I guess there was bias, saying we should be helping Slovakia as opposed to Brazil and it could have rubbed off on some people.

Moderator: I will move on to the next question once it seems like no one is going to say anything else. So a follow up to that --

Speaker: Just a question. If we come up with something later can we?

Moderator: You can, and that's fine. The follow up question is can you suggest anything that could have been done in conjunction with the mission trip and specifically for Support Teams that would have increased the perceived important or personal attitude towards assisting immigrant groups. So for example and I don't want to put words in your mouth, but you just said that some people said we should have been going to Slovakia, so that could be a suggestion if we had gone to a place that would have been more connected with the congregation – anything like that, that could have been done, that maybe would have increased positive attitude or a sense of importance for this particular, and if not, no answer is a valid answer as well.

Speaker: Perhaps if we had known about the lives of some of the people down there in Brazil, where we would meet real people as opposed to poor people in general.

Moderator: We'll move to the second area of ministry was building long-term relationships with those outside of the church. So again looking specifically at Support Team rating of the importance of building long-term relationships outside of the church, the ratings pretty much remain the same for their importance. And then in terms of personal attitude towards it, it was a slight decrease of about 3.5%. Again with the follow up question can you suggest anything could have been done in conjunction with the mission trip that would have increased the perceived importance or personal attitude towards building long-term relationship outside of the church?

Speaker: I think like letters beforehand looking into like XXXXXX said with the connection, like one that says we're looking forward for you to come down, there is some pictures of people, just a better connect and then afterwards, I mean we haven't heard from any individuals since then.

Speaker: Another thing would be for immigrant groups in our general area, at one of the meetings it was brought up that there were some group on North Grand or whatever it was where people -- oh and your wife?

Speaker: She goes and helps out there. CFNA

Speaker: And I became more interested as a Support Team member, but I knew nothing about it. So I didn't know what's even available as an outreach to immigrant groups here.

Speaker: I have got one. The word “relationships” has been very unclear to me all my life and I suspect that I’m not the only one. So just recently I was reading something in the Concordia Journal I believe it was, where the word, the new word came up to -- the new President of the Synod uses -- instead of using the word relationships he uses a different word and I can’t remember what it is, but what he’s -- what that does they -- so as a result they are studying these words in the Bible and it starting to become clearer to me what’s meant by that. I’m suggesting that possibly other people need to know that too, because if you are talking about relationships but we don’t know what’s meant by that, what good is that doing me?

Speaker: Possibly could have found some immigrants from Brazil in the St. Louis area, that we could have maybe heard from them, especially the most recent immigrants they could actually tell us more or less what was -- what the conditions were down there, so we -- the only -- the first thing we got was a wonderful presentation that XXXXXX made the video presentation with all the slides and pictures, that actually showed what it was like.

Moderator: Any other thoughts on Building long-term relationships outside of the church as opposed to inside with us, that’s another question.

Speaker: Another question for me, so when you say the Brazil mission trip and it’s followed up, are intentional to grow a stronger understanding of relationships for outside St. Lucas.

Moderator: Yes, so one of the potential results, potential results of a short-term mission trip is that people will have a stronger sense of the importance of and a better attitude towards spending time outside of a church family, building relationships with unchurched people. Now maybe a short term mission trip doesn’t do that, and can’t do that. So that’s sort of my question, there was no change pretty much, no significant change in either direction for Support Team members in this areas, maybe there could never be. So my question is are there things that maybe we could have tried in conjunction with the trip, in the planning, in the execution, in the follow up that would have possibly had that effect on Support Team members.

Speaker: I think that probably with the Mission Team members there is more of an effect, rather than the support group because we didn’t have any contact, really with anyone there.

Speaker: I don’t know if this is the right time to bring it up but is there any attempt to contact Brazilian immigrant populations in the St. Louis area and let them know that we have a Brazilian student that is going to be working here - possibly make contact with those groups.

- Moderator: There is not yet, but that's a suggestion, that falls – this is the appropriate time to do that yes.
- Speaker: I think that this -- having a student is a follow up and this is probably going to end up being a successful one, hard to tell right now, because it's going to, he is going to have a direct relationships with our people.
- Speaker: Maybe having more involvement between support group and the Mission Team, because that'd probably get us closer to other people.
- Speaker: I was thinking too, some people use the word public relations and they mean insides the church - that maybe important. But – a better job of letting the people know what was going on. On the other hand when I use the word public relations I am not talking about in the church and I know that cities like St. Louis it is difficult to do public relations in the newspapers and in the media. But it isn't impossible. We are not doing much at all in that respect. I have got a lot of experience on that.
- Speaker: Another thing and I don't think that the Support Team that I think we as European American decedents in our little church of everybody needs a lot more education and empathy to people that are not from central Europe that we need more indication and understanding that these are the people immigrating to this country. It's not the people that came in the late 1800s or the early 1900s, it's an all different type of people immigrating and it behooves us not necessarily to build our church but to understand the people better and develop more empathy with them.
- Speaker: A way you can do that might be showing the connection even from Brazil and Southern American to Central Europe if there is one - like these guys even who came from Europe over here, you know, --
- Speaker: That's a good point.
- Speaker: Even their languages, the European language, help Portuguese from Portugal themselves.
- Speaker: Very closely related to Spanish.
- Moderator: Alright, the third area we are going to look at is the door to door outreach visits. And the support team ratings of the importance of door to door outreach visits, the ratings decrease by 12%. In the rating of personal attitude towards door to door visits, the ratings for the support team decreased by almost 18%. Were there aspects of your participation or the implementation of the mission trip that may have contributed to this.

Speaker: I need clarification.

Moderator: So for support team members that did the survey, from January to October their view of the importance of door to door outreach went down, decreased by 12%. Their personal attitude when they rank themselves one to five on how they personally felt toward that, that decreased by almost 18%. So there is a significant decrease in the view of the importance and own attitude towards that and I am wondering if there is anything in connection with the mission trip that may have been a contributing factor to that.

Speaker: I don't think it has anything to do with mission trip.

Speaker: The one question I have it probably does have anything to do with Support Team, but has the door to door visits resulted in new people coming to Christ. We never hear, we see new faces in church but so far the ones that I have seen have all had children in the preschool or the kindergarten.

Speaker: Yeah I guess you don't hear about the effectiveness of that and sometimes you don't know, it could be bringing people to Christ. You are planting the seed, you don't know what happens right. I had some people that I work with who have come here and have been visited by the team and were very welcomed, felt very welcomed in our church. They choose not to, but they were impressed that we followed up and the person is going through a crisis right now with family and she thinks back to that visit, she really does. That doesn't mean, you know, bringing them to Christ doesn't mean they have to go here, correct.

Speaker: And we would never know if they went to some other church.

Speaker: And I just happen to work with them, so I am just –

Speaker: You know, it would be nice to know if we gained a couple of members, you know, kind of like to their own horn, to our outreach team, hey you are doing a good job. It worked.

Speaker: This is – outreach evangelism - door to door right.

Moderator: Yes.

Speaker: Okay. And it stated on the part of XXXXX, that their purpose is not to get people to our church. And what isn't stated is that their purpose is get people into heaven. Okay, and if you not going to until judgment day. So the question is – The Lutheran Church, the Lutheran Hour used to say bringing Christ to the nations. In the middle of that they decided to change their tune and change it from bringing Christ to the nations to bringing to the, bringing to the Christ

to the nation and the nations to the Church and I believe that the outreach needs to include that. If it isn't doing that, it needs to include that, because if you don't get, if people don't get to church how are they going to grow spiritually. Now they don't have come to our church that's true, but it's likely that they will go to the one that cares about them.

Speaker: Does the outreach team do follow up visits – they go door to door on this block?

Moderator: And they also do, anyone that comes to different events that we have contact information that is gathered, they also to those people. And if there is a indicated follow up they follow up with that.

Speaker: Okay, I think maybe it might be good to, you know, you know, if you do this block this year maybe two years from that go back and do that same block and just see if the people have, have joined a church.

Speaker: I want to be careful that I didn't run the program down, because I am invested I believe.

Speaker: Yeah I don't think that Brazil mission trip had really anything to do with the door to door -- I think they are two different areas right.

Moderator: Looking at the follow up question, if there is something that could have been done in terms of the mission trip that maybe would have communicated a more importance or a better attitude towards door to door outreach.

Speaker: I think they are apples and oranges. That's how I view it, I am not sure how everyone else views it.

Speaker: And I don't think it has one maybe you can do it.

Speaker: The one thing you can't do in that excuse the expression, toot your horn and let the community know what St. Lucas is doing

Speaker: I don't think the mission trip would be considered door to door would it.

Speaker: No, no.

Speaker: Like if we are doing Brazil let the community know that we did that, because they'd probably think that's great.

Moderator: Alright, the next area of ministry, providing resources such food money, grocery vouchers et cetera for those in need. In the support team rating of the importance of providing resources for those in need the ratings decrease by

about 7.5%. Is there anything in the participation in the mission trip that may have contributed to that decrease?

Speaker: I certainly hope not.

Speaker: Decrease in what again?

Moderator: In the, in the perceived important of providing resources for those in need for the achieving to the purpose of the church. So, for the mission of the church the perception is that there is a decreased understanding of the importance of providing resources to those in need, food money grocery vouchers and such.

Speaker: I know I don't see any correlation.

Moderator: The flip side of that is could something have been done that would have made a positive correlation between the mission trip and people's understanding of the importance of that activity.

Speaker: Maybe providing resources, like we could have brought resources down to the people of Brazil, because I don't think we did that, did we? So it don't have to be like food and money, but maybe it's just like a little toy that some kids could play with that, we're relatively cheaper, just anything that shows that we care.

Moderator: The second portion of this ministry area is that the support team ratings of personal attitude towards providing resources for those in need increased by 6%. Were there any aspects of your participation as Support Team members that may have contributed to that increased personal attitude toward providing resources for those in need.

Speaker: I think seeing that final presentation on really how poor those people were and there's people that poor here too and I think that might have increased the importance of

Speaker: I think that's a big thing.

Moderator: Any other thoughts? The fifth area of ministry is community service projects. In the support team's rating of the importance of community serving projects, the ratings decreased by more than 6.5%. Were there any aspects of the mission trip that may have contributed to that decrease?

Speaker: What do you mean community servant projects?

Moderator: Well I didn't define it, so it's whatever you interpret that – community serving projects, that's what the statement on the survey, so however you interpreted that.

Speaker: That would be like going to work in a food bank or something.

Speaker: And it went down?

Moderator: It went down by a little bit more than 6.5%.

Speaker: I would think that would have more to do on personal circumstances.

Speaker: I remember filling it out in a -- still think that I think that -- I don't really think we do much in that line.

Moderator: What the survey said is rank the importance of the following for achieving the mission and it has 12 ministries listed, and you rank them from one to five, five being very important and one being not important at all, and this was one of the 12.

Speaker: Can you repeat that question?

Moderator: The Support Team's rating of the importance of community serving projects for the purpose of the church, decreased by 6.5%. Were there aspects that may have led to that decrease in the importance of community serving projects?

Speaker: That are related to the --

Moderator: The mission trip.

Speaker: No, not that I could fathom.

Moderator: Is there anything that you think could have been done in conjunction --

Speaker: That was however a serving project wasn't it?

Speaker: Something that could have done I guess had the Mission Team and the Support Team kind of do I guess you call a practice run, by maybe going to the food bank and serving food that way or something along those lines.

Moderator: Any other thoughts - things that could have been done to increase the perceived importance of community serving projects?

Speaker: I think we felt comfortable about the role of community service projects that we do here. Feed My People, that ministry, collecting glasses for those that

need them, those kind of things and we've kind of been at a standstill at what we do, nothing new has been done in a while.

Speaker: Time for the parish nurses to lead us to --

Speaker: Yeah we need to step up a little more.

Speaker: This is a servant project that many people don't even know about and it's done by members of the church. I go along with XXXXX and I go get a haircut while she goes and at Mount Olive, it was originally a project of the Parish Nurse Program, and it was purposely an outreach program. And they had another one at that time that was connected directly to the neighboring church here, a catholic church. Yeah, and it was also blood pressure, what do you call that, health fair?

Speaker: Health fair, yeah

Speaker: Yeah, but its not being done anymore, so that one, but the other one is still being done.

Speaker: While you get your haircut.

Speaker: Yeah but that is -- so it's not -- the only important thing about that is that it can't be perceived as important if nobody knows about it.

Speaker: We need an education here and it's not just the support members it's everybody in the demographics and the -- what can be done.

Speaker: When we started the Paris Nurse Program, we did a survey on what the needs were. And we did kind of the same thing what do you perceive, what are you willing to help with, stuff like that. And that's probably what this church kind of needs to do for --

Speaker: Yeah. So for me the point there would have been again letting people know what you are doing. This would be internalizing, our people don't know what is being done.

Speaker: One other thing that could be done is your lay ministers maybe could support a mission group that they choose the mission to do, plan some, throughout the year, but pretty much has to come from congregation, that would be something though. I guess it would fall into lay ministry and then they could plan, okay this is our goals as far as that goes and try to get people more involved. Press releases also, I've got press release forms somewhere.

- Moderator: In the Support Team's rating a personal attitude towards community serving projects, not the importance but personal attitude, the Support Team's ratings increased by 13%, were there any aspects of participation in the mission trip that may have contributed to that increase of personal attitude towards community serving projects?
- Speaker: Just witnessing what you guys had done in Brazil. Kind of brought it home and --
- Speaker: Oh wow, that really did happen, I mean it really was worth it, I mean everyone wants to see a return on their investment and I think we saw the return.
- Speaker: And even the change in our members that went, you know, we did go down there but a lot of them came back with, you know, it was a great experience for them too.
- Speaker: How did that show itself, the change? I am not keeping up with those members, I don't know much about it.
- Moderator: Can you write that question down and we'll get back to it, well, so that I'm not recording my voice. There are a lot of good things that we can talk about there.
- Speaker: Okay. I understand.
- Moderator: So anything else on the increase in positive personal attitude towards community serving projects?
- Speaker: I think success begets success, so what -- you know, we saw something successful, hey we can do this, well maybe we can replicate that here in our community.
- Speaker: Seeing how many people got up on -- at the lectern talking about their experiences and brought them to tears, very moving.
- Moderator: All right, the last area of ministry is living the Christian life in the workplace or school. In the support team's rating of the importance of living a Christian life in the workplace or school, the ratings decreased by almost 18%. In the rating of personal attitude towards that decreased but just slightly. Can you suggest anything that could have been done in conjunction with the mission trip that would have increased the perceived importance and/or personal attitude towards living a Christian life in the workplace, anything in conjunction with the mission trip?

Speaker: Shocking

Speaker: I mean this should be like, you know, the top – top importance all the way around anyway because –

Speaker: Caught us all on a bad day.

Speaker: People watch us, this is how we live and –

Speaker: When was the questionnaire sent out–

Speaker: The initial follow-up on this sent in October.

Speaker: And when was the second one done?

Speaker: That was the second one done. The first one was done in January of 2011.

Speaker: Okay before the trip?

Speaker: Yeah before the trip and the other one was done after the trip and after the presentation.

Speaker: Shocking.

Speaker: In the workplace, okay. More and more of us are retired. So I don't have a work place – or is that not true.

Speaker: I think that sometimes it's hard to live a Christina life in the workplace, you know, and it is, you know, you have lots of stress with people, yeah, but I don't think there's anything with the mission trip. You got to be with that.

Speaker: I don't see that at all.

Speaker: And you – maybe that had do with people who weren't really looking at a question, if there is anything to do with mission trip.

Moderator: Is there anything that could have been done in conjunction with the mission trip that maybe would have had an opposite effect, would have increased or kept it from going lower?

Speaker: I guess a lot of times with our work and our other life we try to keep them separate, you know, it's hard to combine them sometimes. I know people walk out of my office thinking 'She's a Christian?'

Moderator: All right with that I'll just ask if there are any thoughts or comments on the mission trip, on outreach that you think maybe relevant to the overall discussion we've been having today.

Speaker: On outreach in general?

Moderator: Outreach in general –

Speaker: Not – just unrelated.

Moderator: It can be unrelated.

Speaker: Be unrelated to the mission trip?

Moderator: It can be unrelated to the mission trip.

Speaker: Okay, I think a lot of it on the – knowing the needs, what's out there, and having that brought home to people I think that's one of the important things.

Speaker: Goals and expectations I think need to be – like XXXX was not aware of what the goal of the door to door, goals and expectations probably need to be better presented to the congregation.

Speaker: Churches that are impressing me these days are the ones that have language groups services – Timothy has more than one additional language speaking service, besides English. Mount Olive although it's not a growing church yet has a – one service where both, two languages are used - Vietnamese and English in the one service. The idea is they're reaching to those – to those groups that aren't Brazil but they are outreach. Our –looks to me like our closest group would be bulk of the people who came from Bosnia but I'm not sure of this anymore because I've been watching –

Speaker: And there's a lot of different dialects with that group, lot of different dialects, maybe we should bring back that Slovak service.

Speaker: Most of those people, I found out, we go down to the hometown buffet and almost every time I can hear them talking in English but they have a brogue, and I can pick up German anytime. So I talk to them and yeah they almost all came via Germany to get here. And they all talk German. They don't know, they don't necessarily know a lot of German but enough that they can get by because they have to. And I don't know that that's important for us but for me it could be, so I can handle them.

Speaker: Going with his toot your own horn thing, maybe it'd be a good idea to have kind of a Brazil mission trip like table or not a PowerPoint presentation but

just like something they can visibly see at the Easter extravaganza like maybe a table with the couple of desserts – like a science fair project of Brazil mission trip, this is what we did.

Speaker: Yeah along with that, it's really an outreach event, that is probably our biggest outreach event, is maybe have some displays up, of what we do here at St. Lucas and we have a tri-board, the parish here had a tri-board, you know, develop some stuff – Men's Club, Ladies Guild. You know, that people can, yeah people that you can, that you connect too.

Speaker: I got another one, this is related to getting the information to the community and that would be if we ask the community what their, the people that are in the community what their background is – in other words a community survey not to win them for Christ but find out what, what they are, who they are. And then as a result of that the positive result as I see it would be somebody cares.

Speaker: Who they are and ask what their needs are too, I mean we have to be specific with areas of ministry.

Moderator: Any other thoughts.

Speaker: Send out survey to the community to ask them what kind of programs would they be interested in attending if we would have them. If there is anything that we could do, that might interest them.

Speaker: Nothing interests people less than an empty church.

Speaker: Yeah I can imagine.

Speaker: We would be better off to have services in here than out there. We probably would still have a bad, people get a bad impression that we are using the building, but we're not filling it and that doesn't look good. What I am suggesting is not that we close down. There is something wrong with our inward growth if we are not having attendance at church and I might mention communion because if they don't go to church they probably not going to communion either. And then of course my main concern would be Bible class, because it's my main interest, but and Sunday school. If you, if whatever we could to make that, to improve that, to make it more happen more with our members because that's not --and there's some problems we can't do anything about with regard to that but there must be some things we can do.

Speaker: It will be interesting to see how the community perceives us, as a Slovak Lutheran church or a Lutheran church with a Slovak heritage. I wonder if that's still a problem.

Speaker: Or just that church in the corner that has good food in November.

Speaker: And September.

Speaker: In other words the survey, could include that in it too.

Moderator: Any other thoughts? Well, thank you for your time, that will be very helpful for my project. I really appreciate you taking the time to spend and give your honest feedback and if you think of anything else that you like to share with us, feel free to let me know.

Congregation Small Group Transcript

Moderator: I want to thank you for agreeing to participate in this small group discussion concerning the outreach surveys that were completed this past year. We'll spend approximately an hour looking at the results of the survey and discussing possible contributing factors to those results. I will tape our conversation and it will be transcribed for the sake of my research. However your names will be not used in any documentation. In order to keep your answers confidential, I will not refer to you by name I will simply indicate to you if you appear to have something to say.

As we proceed I will present the results for six specific areas of the survey one at a time, I will then ask a few questions concerning those results. There is no right or wrong answers, I am simply seeking your observations and opinions. And again these results are for the entire congregation that filled out the survey.

And the first area of ministry we are going to look at is assisting immigrant groups, in the rating of the importance of assisting immigrant groups for achieving the mission of the church, the ratings increased by 9.3%, that means a 9.3% increase in the view of its importance from the survey in the January

Speaker: After the --

Moderator: Yeah so the -- for the survey in January to the survey in October there is an increase of 9.3% on the view of the importance. In the rating of personal attitude towards assisting immigrant groups, the ratings increased by 5.9%. Are there any aspects of the mission trip that may have contributed to this change in understanding or attitude of the congregation? So anything that we did in connection with the mission trip that may have led people to have a higher sense of the importance of assisting immigrating groups or a higher personal attitude, a more positive personal attitude towards assisting immigrant groups.

Speaker: I would think that you probably have met the people who were involved in the mission trip and probably talked to the different members and maybe just by that experience of them telling what occurred on the trip, it may have increased people's awareness or desire to become more active in this aspect. That was the first thing that came to my mind.

Speaker: You probably made people think more about what our church could do outside of our own group here, the congregation.

Speaker: I think it made us more aware of the issues that the immigrants may have and their needs.

Speaker: So to me -- I think it's helped us to think outside the box. Basically that's what everybody said, you know, talking to people in the church, basically here you are looking at a bigger picture other than the congregation, here you are looking outside of it.

Moderator: What I'll do, you don't have to comment on every question if you feel that you have something to say -- say it, if you don't, you don't have to. Once I get a sense that no one else has anything to comment on a question, I will move on to the next question or I may ask is there anything else on that and if there is nothing, then we'll move on. Okay.

Speaker: That's accepted.

Speaker: Meeting, meeting the other people on Brazil and becoming acquainted with them made me more aware of the whole situation down there, they need help.

Moderator: Anything else on assisting immigrant groups?

Alright the second area of ministry that we are going to about is building long-term relationships with those that are outside of the church. So in the rating of the importance of building long-term relationships with those outside of the church, the ratings increased slightly, nothing of significance. In the ratings of personal attitude towards building long-term relations with those outside of church, the ratings in general increase by 2.5%. Can you suggest anything that could have been done in conjunction with the mission trip that would have increased the sense of importance or personal attitude towards building long term relationships? So something that wasn't done that maybe would have been helpful in making this area of ministry seem more important or help people to have a better attitude towards building long-term relationships outside of the church.

Speaker: Was there a communication problem when you were down there, they talked Portuguese, was there a communication problem or a cultural problem that you couldn't --

Moderator: We had translators with us and a number of people down there spoke English as well. And I knew enough Portuguese to get by if we needed it.

Speaker: That really wasn't a problem then?

Moderator: No.

Speaker: And I think that's kind of hard to build long-term relationships, so I don't know maybe we have to think more about how we can do that, because there

is big interest when you are going on a trip like that, but to sustain it I don't know how we can do that.

Speaker: I think in the past we've always had projects that have come up and we never really spent any long times on that, it's always been kind of jumping from this to that and it's going to be something I guess that we need to work on sustaining a focus on a goal that maybe when we do move on to something we just don't pull – drop this but we continue to nurture, keep it, you know, keep it, keep it out in front of the people so that they, this hasn't been forgotten, we may have moved on to this but let's, you know, let's keep this in mind and how we may improve this. I think that's something that happened in the past that we need to work on it as far as sustaining interest of current project.

Moderator: Anything else on building long term relationships with those outside of the church?

Alright, the next area then is door-to-door outreach visits. We have a team that does door-to-door outreach visits. In the rating of importance of that for achieving the purpose of the church the ratings increased slightly, just again a small increase on the importance. In the ratings of personal attitude towards door-to-door visits, the ratings decreased slightly. So again it wasn't a significant movement and it was just very slight in both directions - so basically statistically pretty much remained the same. Can you suggest anything that we could have done in conjunction with the mission trip that would have increased people sense of importance of those door-to-door visits or would have given them a better attitude towards doing those door-to-door visits?

Speaker: My personal view is that I don't think there is a lot of value. Just knowing if somebody knocks on my door, my reaction to him is negative. So my own personal thing is I don't really like door-to-door.

Speaker: I do know that XXXXXX as far as what she does her – her canvassing she does basically follow up and as far as – she doesn't really do cold calls, it's people who have said that they wouldn't mind or have made a notation of at least some kind of an interest for a visit. So I don't often -- I mean one of the things was trying to assemble the trip was when you did your presentation did we really do anything as far as letting people outside of the church know that we are doing it. Maybe if we were, make people aware, you know, kind of do that a blanket kind of thing, hey we are having a, on Thursday we are having a presentation about our last mission trip to show you, you know, what we are doing.

Speaker: I have a feeling people will say, so what it's not of my interest.

Speaker: Well, you know, that's, we don't know until we try, but at least to let some know we are active that, I was arguing something, you know, we are just not trying to keep it the status quo.

Speaker: You don't know who you are going to find unless you go there, you don't know if they might be lost they don't know, they might need the comfort of the church and you just don't know. You know, you might just come upon a one person that needed you that day, we just don't know.

Speaker: I think XXXXX summed it up real good, you don't know unless you really, unless you try. XXXXX is right a lot of times when people knock on your door, you got a negative attitude as soon as you open the door, you don't want to be distributed. But you let your presence - that we got church here, what we do, - you let that be known, and that's value in there, certainly you are not going to catch everybody bring them too, but if you just get the one person like you are talking about and you bring that person into the fold, that's worth it. So I get it, you know I understand what XXXXX means.

Speaker: Yeah we didn't mean if you are just going on doing a cold call, whom you are not going to get a probably a favorable response.

Speaker: I admire the people giving all the time to do it, but I just don't like it myself.

Moderator: Anything else on the door-to-door outreach?

There are two questions on the next area. The first, the next area is providing resources such as food or money or grocery vouchers for those who need, most notably in our church we have our helping hands fund and so in rating the importance of providing resources for those who need, the ratings decreased by more than 7%, so people thought that was less important from the second survey than they did on the first. In rating of personal attitude, the ratings just decreased slightly, so again statistically not a significant amount. Was there anything done in within the mission trip that may have contributed to that decrease in the sense of importance of providing for those in need?

Speaker: I don't think anything concerning the mission trip. I mean that I am here more than the rest of you and I am aware of some of the problems that have did arise due to this some of the people we have coming in here, they have gotten smart. They follow parents in when they open the door and let parents in for the kids, and lot of people have heard these stories so that might be one of the causes that the favorability towards this project has fallen. I think people think it's a worthwhile effort it's just that there is the security problem and let's face it, the people who are now coming are becoming very aggressive. They want help and they want it now, they are not willing to wait the five days, five to ten days that takes XXXXXX to process and send all this and I think that's

probably one of the reasons of favorability towards the program has gone down, but I don't think the mission trip contributed at all to that --

Speaker: Well, I think that maybe some people after the mission or before the mission trip thought we should take care of own people in St. Louis rather than somebody thousands of miles away. And on a personal note, I think our system takes too long. If I'm hungry today – to wait six days is an awful long time. No, I think there would be some way we can carefully give it to them the day they needed it. That's why I think they feel we should take care of our own rather than people of distance.

Moderator: In terms of looking at the opposite if we had wanted to give a greater sense importance to a program like providing resources to those in need, is there anything that we could have done in connection with the mission trip that would have given people a greater sense of importance or a more positive attitude towards providing for those in need, something that we did not do in connection with the mission trip that we could have?

Speaker: You mean while you were there or as it pertains to St. Lucas.

Moderator: It could have been in the planning, while we were here, while we were over there in Brazil after we came back, is there anything in any of those stages of the trip that we could have done that would have given people in general a greater sense of the importance of providing for those in need, or a better attitude, a more positive attitude towards helping those that are in need.

Speaker: Well, one of the things well as far as – again this ties into what the presentation you did afterwards is we didn't charge for that but maybe would say, hey, when you come in bring a can good or a food supply or when we did the concert and during the fundraising - it's like a greater work we are asking people for a few things but just the kind of again it shows that were we are active and that we do have more than one area of we are trying to administrate people in. That's one of the things are coming that came to mind --

Moderator: And, when I asked that question is there anything that could have done, that's open to any interpretation that is an example of something if we have done that it could have affected in a positive way this particular area of ministry so I appreciate that.

Speaker: I wasn't aware of the helping hands program how long that we done that, I know we have the food pantry that we can bring canned goods too, and I know in the past that people would come in way back with XXXXX I use to hear things they come in and they want money now and I am sure that still goes on.

Speaker: And I think XXXXXX probably have been actively doing this for ten or maybe 12 years.

Moderator: It was while XXXXXX was still here.

Speaker: He actually kind of, he kind of started off because of him having people come on a regular basis and XXXXXX kind of started it because we found out that one time he had probably had given away XXXXXXXX his own money, XXXXXX did it kind of a hey this is something that Thrivent is kind of actively doing, tell me how much you are putting out and we will reimburse you shouldn't have to come out of your pocket so those kind of off shoot of that.

Speaker: Well, the way that I feel like you were saying people here need things and don't take me, don't take this wrong but going over to Brazil, where so many people in St. Louis that really need help. I have a sister for example not saying you need to help her, but I just even family members that struggle almost make you feel guilty when you yourself are doing all right, you know what I mean?

Speaker: And that was comment that has been heard - that we need to do minister to our people first before we try to, I mean one of the biggest things I ever heard that happens is that we now have African countries sending missionaries to America to minister to our well not necessarily our poor, to our unchurched, to our own people who haven't been reached.

Speaker: Talk about a flip flop.

Speaker: Yeah, I mean so it kind yes there is something that we have heard that we know where we need to concentrate a little more on –

Speaker: But how do you know who really is in need and who isn't?

Speaker: Exactly, you almost go through it like Feed My People and the organization that we are connected but to kind of have a little better grasp it's only too bad that the other person doesn't here because she actually had insights of that.

Speaker: There is abuse in every program no matter what level of the program is if you look at every government program for food stamps to HUD and you are going to have abuse. You got a kind of pick your battles that you are going to win if you can't help everybody I mean it tells you in the Bible that the poor is going to always be with us, tells you in the Bible. You can't help everybody you wish you could, but you can't. XXXXXXXX was saying about help the people here in the country which is very valid, that you look at the countries in Brazil and Africa. I guess you got a kind of pick and choose. It's a hard thing to have to do, but I guess you got kind of like as a group what do we really want to do

and because you can't. You can only have so many irons in the fire no matter what it is. Yeah, not matter what it is there is always a chance for abuse, that's probably why they got a six day waiting period before they hand out money vouchers, that's what you have to do, but that's probably abuse too you are going to have the same people come back month after month.

Speaker: Yeah, that's what it is, is basically their time period is so that XXXXX can go through because he has a that people can only get a system once every six month because you do have people who are here every month and in order to help the most people you got to kind of put some kind of a limit on this to how often you can apply.

Speaker: Which is good, which is you got to do something like --

Speaker: Regulated.

Speaker: Right and taking off what you are saying about you are not knowing who the people are. Let's face it we have all been brought up in an environment where some people just start because of their pride they just won't ask for help even though they need it, especially people they know.

Moderator: Any other thoughts on providing resources for those in need?

Speaker: I think the church does a good job personally.

Speaker: Do they give them vouchers for gasoline?

Moderator: It depends on the request. They'll write checks for utilities, they'll do grocery store vouchers. I think he has done gift cards for gas stations like QT.

Speaker: He gives cards to like Target and Wal-Mart and things like that, especially during Christmas and everything else. They can at least get -- especially the kids and the family they can at least get them some small gift for Christmas. He still has a -- he tries to vary what it is out there so that it's not just one thing covers all, tries to minister to their needs.

Moderator: The fifth area of ministry is community servant projects. In the congregational rating of the importance of community servant projects, the ratings increase slightly. In the rating of personal attitude towards community servant projects, the ratings increased more than 7.5%. Were there any aspects of the mission that may have contributed to this change for the congregation?

Speaker: Again it comes back to people who have been on the trip, talking about their experiences. And let's face it, if someone gives a positive response to doing

something it's going to pique other people's interest and their willingness to at least explore the possibility of doing it.

Speaker: Well it made us all aware of the need of other people and that we should be responding those needs.

Speaker: And again I think I believe that on the whole the Mission Team the age group we went is probably -- was a good target age group. Let's face it folks, we are an older congregation and as much as we might like to help in community service projects and servant projects, we just do not have the pool to draw from. So it's not to say that we don't have the desire to do it, it's just that we don't always have the ability to do it.

Speaker: Some of us older people can't do what we'd like to do.

Speaker: Well I mean it's -- I mean we have a void here of the late 30 and 40 year olds. That's half a generation that's we really don't have here. If you -- which is our prime pool for people to have the ability and the mobility in doing things.

Moderator: All right, thinking again about community servant projects, is there anything that we could have done in conjunction with the mission trip that would have given an increased sense of the importance of or a more positive personal attitude to the general congregation. You have mentioned the effects that it can have on those that went and there are ways that we could have done things that maybe would have brought that same -- you mentioned the -- like the people that went talking, but is there something that we could have done intentionally that would have brought that learning and understanding to the congregation?

Speaker: Well, you had the movie. Yeah it was good. That covers -- it covers what you are talking about exactly. Pretty well self explanatory on that.

Speaker: It was open to questions, wasn't it when we had the movie?

Moderator: Yeah, we did a few there and then we spread the Mission Team around in the reception afterwards so that people can questions there so --

Speaker: So I think you thought up ways, you know, informed the congregation. I don't know what else you could have done.

Moderator: Other thoughts in the area of community servant projects?

The last area was living a Christian life in the workplace or school. In the congregation's rating of the importance of living a Christian life in the workplace or school, the ratings decreased just slightly. In the rating of

personal attitude towards living a Christian life in the workplace, they increased slightly. So again statistically it pretty much didn't really change. Can you suggest anything that could have been done in conjunction with the mission trip that would have increased the sense of the importance of or personal attitude towards living a Christian life in the workplace as a tool for outreach?

Speaker: Well, I just – I mean that's interesting that that is the favorability toward that actually dropped, you would think that would be one of the prime things that you would think of as far as showing an example well how much - having Christ in your life has changed you.

Moderator: And again when I say slight, and I don't give a number, it's probably – it's definitely less than 2% but perhaps even less than – I mean it's – it might have been one lowering the rating, one number.

Speaker: Right it would be – to give you an example, if you would think that would be something that people would think of as a prime example of, you know, showing people, hey, this is what difference it has made in my life.

Speaker: Well, I think it is important to live and feel a Christian life at work or at school, but I don't know how the mission trip could have influenced your attitude on that.

Speaker: Again, the people who are really affected by that would be the people who were involved with the mission trip one way or another. I mean people – people really outside of the congregation, I really don't see that.

Moderator: The last question I'll ask is just any general thoughts or comments on the mission trip itself or on local outreach, thoughts that you may have had, things that may have been triggered from the survey, or from our conversation today that, even if it's not related to our conversation today that you think might be relevant to share?

Speaker: I think the state of the economy played a big part in all of your questions that you brought up. People as a whole, most people are hurting to a certain degree especially your younger people and they have had a -- would have affected a lot of your questions that you had about outreach program, giving money to different -- help different people, you know, people who are tightening their own buckle, you know you can't expect them to start handing the money out if they are cutting their finances or us older people who are helping our own kids, who has got families that are struggling. I mean I hate to say that but I mean it's a fact of life, it's a fact of life. People are losing their homes, they're losing their cars, and life is getting pretty hard for a lot of people.

- Speaker: And they got to take off from work, as far as the economy, the state of the economy is we're struggling to make our budget, so therefore we don't have extra money to give to programs. We have some stuff is included in our budget, but it's just there is no extra money, no extra funds to do some of the projects we perhaps like to. As far as -- you know, it's almost as if anything that we really want to do is going to have to -- the funds are going to have to come from somewhere else, we don't have to -- trying to get it. The funds are going to have to come from somewhere else to do it because we're stretched to the limits now, doing what the bare minimum what we need to do around here to keep the place active.
- Speaker: I think it's the same thing, as people look at the bulletin each week and see that we are not making our weekly budget and then would it have the attitude of what are we doing, you know, doing these things in Brazil, we're really not making it here ourselves.
- Speaker: It's scary seeing how few people come, and today it was 48 at early service, I don't know what late service is. But I know, if -- even if my own children would come that would be great. They went through Lutheran School, my daughter goes to a Christian church, I mean XXXXX goes to church but it's like good grief you know. That would be a little extra cash in our budget.
- Speaker: Yeah, like you said, this is getting our own people to show up. But I mean when you're talking numbers I mean, you'll look at what's given to you from the numbers that we have, that is really amazing.
- Speaker: I think as a whole, the mission group did a good job in showing us what the conditions are, what the needs are, but I think you all did a good job.
- Moderator: Anything else? Well I thank you for your time, good insights, it will be very helpful for me as I conclude this project.

APPENDIX I
SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION LETTER OF CONSENT

Letter of Consent

Thank you for your willingness to participate in the Outreach Survey Discussion Group. The research you are about to participate in is designed to investigate the effects of short-term mission trips on the understanding of and positive attitude towards local outreach and is being conducted by Rev. Paul R. Biber. Please be assured that any information that you provide will be held in confidence by the researcher and at no time will your name be reported along with your responses. Please understand that participation in this discussion group is voluntary and you are free to withdraw from the group at any time during the meeting.

I acknowledge that I have been informed of, and understand, the nature and purpose of this study, and freely consent to participate.

Name (Printed) _____ Date _____

Signed _____

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