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Messaging the Mission: Developing and Implementing a Messaging Strategy for the Mission Statement of Monticello Christian Church

A Thesis Project Report Submitted to

the Faculty of the John W. Rawlings School of Divinity

in Candidacy for the Degree of

Doctor of Ministry

by

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Liberty University John W. Rawlings School of Divinity

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THE DOCTOR OF MINISTRY THESIS PROJECT ABSTRACT

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This DMIN thesis project focuses on the inherent need to strategically message the mission statement of the Monticello Christian Church to its leaders, thus preparing them to relay it to the congregation for greater unity in fulfilling the *misso Dei.* With a focus on the educational training model, the study examines how the application of acquired knowledge empowers a church body to embrace a singular missional purpose. The training sessions were designed to help leaders utilize their cognitive and spiritual gifts to comprehend the depth and width of the missional message statement and adeptly communicate it to others. The research methods included training sessions on these topics and implementation phases in which the leaders were tasked with messaging the mission statement message and the *missio Dei* to the congregation. A research group of twelve leaders participated in the sessions. Qualitative evaluation measures utilizing inductive research models displayed successful fulfillment of the training sessions. The outcomes revealed new and essential information for future research and investigation into how missional messages are transmitted to congregations and the community. This project found inspiration from the Great Commission, the Great Commandment, and the *missio Dei.* The thesis explores how effective messaging strategies and collaboration among church leaders can influence the depth of knowledge and lead to increased unity under one mission purpose. It also delves into how effective communication strategies contribute to church growth, promote biblical and local missions, and foster unified efforts for the advancement of God's Kingdom.

Keywords: *missio Dei,* Mission Statement, Collaboration, Unity, Adaptation to change, Messaging techniques, Communication methods, Transformation.

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Abbreviations (if needed)

DMIN   *Doctor of Ministry*

DOC   *Disciples of Christ*

GOCN   *Gospel and Our Culture Network's*

MCC   *Monticello Christian Church*

MVV   *Mission, Vision, and Values*

WCC   *World Council of Churches*

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Introduction

The Monticello Christian Church has a long history of ministering to the needs of people living in White County, Indiana. Throughout its history, a series of pastors and leadership teams who endeavored to guide their congregants and follow the teachings of the Word of God have led the church. Each of these pastors employed their unique theological approaches to convey the message of the Bible, and the church has remained steadfast in its commitment to presenting the inerrant Word of God and upholding the tenets of biblical doctrine. The current mission statement of this organization is to "Welcome all people to experience the love of Jesus Christ." In the summer of 2023, the organization revised this statement, changing the previous statement to "Love Jesus, Love People. The organization's leadership desired to craft a statement that would convey a profound and meaningful message to those in search of the love and compassion of Christ.

Paul's exposition in Romans 8:5-6 urges believers to heed the Word of God and exemplify the Spirits' leading in all their actions. Paul writes, "Those who live according to the flesh have their minds set on what the flesh desires; but those who live in accordance with the Spirit have their minds on what the Spirit desires." The Monticello Christian Church needs to follow its mission statement guided by the Spirit and also embrace the broader mission statement of God as expressed in the *missio Dei*. Guided by the Holy Spirit, the church should teach the Bible and follow its mission statement and foundational principles of God to guide its members. In fulfilling its broader purpose, the church should be guided by this mission statement, which promises to demonstrate an understanding of living, acting, and sharing the love of Christ.

The missional activities of the church have varied according to the views and perspectives of the leadership, congregation, and committees in charge of these service areas. Considering recent pastoral changes, the ramifications of the pandemic, and the introduction of a fresh leadership team, the church is currently encountering a challenge in understanding and communicating its missional purpose (mission statement and meaning) to the leaders and congregation. Consequently, the ability to provide clear guidance towards fulfilling the greater *missio Dei* has become compromised. Without a clearly understood and communicated mission statement, this non-denominational church struggles with its direction, context, and guiding principles. Naaeke reports, "The mission statement of an association is a rhetorical text that outlines the institution's reason to exist, the values that guide its operation, and the stakeholders being served."[1]

A well-rounded communication strategy for a mission statement is vital to any organization. It serves as a unifying force for the congregation and leadership team and offers a broader context for evangelism and sharing the Word. When an organization effectively communicates its mission statement, it can clearly express its values and goals in a robust manner. Regarding effective leadership's impact on the transforming church, Tim Sensing writes, "More than that, being pastorally sensitive to your context to facilitate the transformation of the community into the image of Christ is the primary reason for being in ministry in the first place." To effectively communicate the church's mission and actively participate in God's

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[1] Anthony Naaeke, "The Rhetoric of Mission, Leadership, and Motivation: Communicating Strategically to Sustain African Diaspora Associations," *Gender & Behaviour* 17, no. 4 (2019): 14320, https://go.openathens.net/redirector/liberty.edu?url=https://www.proquest.com/scholarly-journals/rhetoric-mission-leadership-motivation/docview/2445578148/se-2.

mission, it is crucial to develop a strong messaging strategy for the mission statement that empowers the MCC.

Ministry Context

Monticello Christian Church (MCC) holds a significant place in the history of Monticello, Indiana. [2] In 1887, the church, established by Reverend J. O. Smith after a series of meetings with current attendees, joined the ecclesiastical community as Monticello Christian Church. Comprising 134 members, the early Monticello Christian Church was at the corner of Marion and Main Street and served as a beacon of hope and faith for the community. In 1901, a devastating fire destroyed the original church's structure. However, the church members rallied and rebuilt the church on Bluff Street two years later. The building continues to stand today, and developers have transformed it into Tower Apartments. By 1915, the church had grown to around 250 congregants and jointly chose to join the Disciples of Christ denomination. The church remained steadfast in the community throughout the next five decades, with a growing assembly and community integration. The Monticello Christian Church Disciples of Christ remained an essential institution in the community, offering spiritual guidance and comfort to its members and participants. In 1968, the church moved to accommodate its flourishing congregation and purchased the Monticello Speedway Track grounds to build a modern facility. MCC (Monticello Christian Church) established the new facility at the Gordon and Airport Road intersection. Erected with a state-of-the-art A-frame sanctuary, a large fellowship hall, and Sunday school rooms, this new structure continues as a community architectural pinnacle.

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[2] Historical information was gathered from the MCC library, which holds many documents and information dating back to the church's founding. All materials are available to the public.

Today, the church remains in this location, providing its members with the services and resources to meet their growing spiritual requirements.

In 1968, five primary denominations in the city served the bulk of believers in the rural community, the MCC (Monticello Christian Church) Disciples of Christ (DOC) being one. The MCC was fortunate to have three ministers who each pastored the congregation for over a decade, instilling a sense of resilience and consistency as core values of their discipleship. The congregation embraced the DOC denomination, hosting events that attracted diverse visitors from the surrounding area to their church with enthusiasm.

In 2000, a younger minister entered the church following the retirement of the former minister of sixteen years. During this pastorate's early and middling years, the congregation grew to an attendance of three hundred and fifty people within four services. These attendance numbers lasted eight to ten years and gradually decreased after 2015. Historically, the church withdrew from the DOC denomination in 2011 due to congregant disagreements over the DOC denomination's lack of assertion for total submission to the Inerrant Word. While some suggest that certain members of the congregation believed financial considerations motivated the change in denomination, the congregation continued to exhibit unwavering faith and commitment to the church and its leadership. A notable group of individuals expressed considerable discontent with this resolution and felt compelled to sever ties with the congregation.

When the congregation withdrew from the DOC denomination in 2011, specific channels of communication and affiliation were no longer accessible, resulting in a sense of disconnection for some members. No other coexisting organizations replaced these affiliations, and the church was then a stand-alone congregation with few outside sources. This aspect likely has affected how the church approaches its mission, communities, and connections relative to the lack of a

guiding organizational structure. For several years, the church organization appeared to function in a manner consistent with models of appointed leadership, albeit elected by the congregation. This structure functioned until disparities in leadership and theological concerns came to bear, causing disdain and disagreements that required adaptation and compromise versus a static approach to a transforming organization.

Despite the church's change to a non-denominational status, some members still expressed loyalty to the DOC denomination, which added to the complex dynamics within the church community. The church's MVV played a significant role in the DOC, causing the development of a new MVV and strategic plan. In addition, the scarcity of information that was accessible through the DOC has resulted in a lack of theological and worldview knowledge and understanding. This knowledge was available but not as readily obtainable and, therefore, primarily came from the pulpit. The further disruption of the pandemic exacerbated this issue, hindering effective communication and distribution of essential information, including the mission statement. These factors complicate discussions and decisions concerning the church, obfuscating its missional purpose. The clarity of the church's overall mission and its relevance to the *missio dei* are essential components for this church to move forward and flourish for God and His people. [3]

After this minister's retirement in 2020, a junior minister answered the call to serve this church. A sense of confusion and disdain among the staff and congregants was notable partly due to a disjointed leadership transition and the ongoing pandemic.[4] This lack of smooth transition

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[3] Craig Ott, *The Church on Mission: A Biblical Vision for Transformation among All People* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Publishing Group, 2019), 1, Kindle Edition.

[4] The factes of noticable confusion and disdain were reported to this researcher by several congregants in the successive months and years. The accounts were not relayed by leadership but by congregants who quiered this researcher in casual converation since the 2020 change in leadership.

also left the congregants and leadership in precarious positions, needing clarification on how to continue without the benefit of a transition plan and the differing leadership styles of both ministers. With prior transitions in the DOC denomination, specific plans concerning interim pastors, transitioning, and church unity existed.

The MCC congregation comprises several legacy families that trace their lineage back five generations. The church has solidified its place and has been a part of the local community for a long time. This element exhibits positive and negative attributes: while generational families contribute to maintaining the church, some longer-present traditions pose challenges in adapting and implementing new concepts. Once affiliated with the DOC denomination, some individuals have highlighted disparities between the nondenominational status and the ecclesiastical practices of the church. Despite the cordial relationship among the congregation, the disparities in the church's purpose, mission, and structure have proven to be a significant obstacle to its unity, growth, and outreach efforts.[5] MCC's average age per membership roll is fifty-six. The lack of younger families in services has been a concern for many years, but the retirement community in the county continues to attend and find MCC its home. The church community has identified itself as a long-standing home for believers in the community and sees themselves as a family.

MCC offers five services, including one on Saturday evening, three on Sunday, and an online Sunday service. The congregations in each service are separate and distinct owing to the times and worship design. The cumulative attendance on an average weekend is one hundred eight five. Historically, organizers put these services in place when attendance was high;

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[5] W. Jay Moon, "Growing and Declining Churches Face Different Challenges: A Statistical Analysis of the Top Ten Challenges Facing Churches Study," *Great Commission Research Journal* 15, no. 1 (2023): 33.

however, the congregants in each service do not desire to unite as one, and several have voiced powerful desires to leave the church if service times changed or united. This complexity results in congregants who once acted more unified being more isolated, furthering the lack of a common purpose other than in worship. The lack of willingness to join one or two significant bodies of worship also offers perspective and context regarding the lack of central purpose and the stasis of the church body.

Apart from the four weekly worship services and Sunday School, adults have access to a diverse selection of weekly and monthly options, including online Bible study, service groups, women's ministry, in-house Bible studies, recreational groups for the elderly, and children's ministry through the daycare preschool program. The church Elders handle visitation and administering communion to those homebound or in nursing facilities bi-weekly. Due to the lack of interest and participation from younger families and young adults in past programming, there are currently no activities or younger participants, although plans for the summer of 2024 continue in the Christian Education department.

In the past, the church gained a reputation as the "food church" for regularly providing dinners to the congregation and community. However, this facet has decreased since the pandemic due to the loss of people who can fulfill and complete these tasks regularly; they now occur semi-annually or as an opportunity arises. The profits from these dinners fund the mission program and provide for community needs. The church also has committees dedicated to providing funeral dinners and supporting those confined at home who require food, supplies, and additional care while recuperating.

The MCC provides a five-day-a-week daycare-pre-school and aftercare children's ministry, which has a population of approximately one hundred children. Twenty-five full-time

and part-time staff members make up the program, including a director, an assistant director, a curriculum director, and classroom teachers. The program bases the curriculum for the children on Christian principles and follows the educational standards set by the school system for fundamental education.

Many families enrolled in the daycare ministry are unchurched or affiliated with other religious organizations, including the educators and support staff. Despite the daycare ministry's remarkable growth and recognition as a top-rated program in White County in the past two years, it has been a point of contention for those who hold the view that the families' non-attendance at weekly services and lack of connection to the church proper diminish its relevance to the church's mission, finances, and overall intent. This perspective contradicts the m*issio Dei* and God's calling to care for all of His children. The daycare ministry maintains its financial sustainability and contributes to the church monthly, but the church still needs to embrace its overall perspective, ministry, and outreach efforts. The program has emerged as a community asset amidst the scarcity of childcare facilities in the area; thus, incorporating this vital program into the church's evangelism initiatives is a crucial aim of the evangelism/membership committee's 2024 plan.

The MCC upholds the inerrant Word of God unwaveringly, earning it the reputation of a "Bible-preaching church." The congregants see themselves as "simple Christians"[6] who desire to worship weekly and show the love of Christ. This term has been used more widely of late, signifying some hesitation by congregants to delve deeper into the missional context of the

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[6] The term "simple Christian" is a term often voiced by congregants to describe themselves in relationship to how and why they worship and serve God. This term is not a comment meant to minimize, minimize, dismiss or call out those noting this description; it is merely meant as a descriptor of some parishioners spiritual identity.

missio Dei and the mission statement. It is essential not to disregard this term as it outlines a

broader context for how the church sees itself interacting with God, each other, and the

community. Thirty to fifty people out of one hundred eighty-five participating members

wholeheartedly engage in volunteerism in the church. The MCC's leadership structure comprises

six committees with chairpersons caring for the church's direct needs. Besides the lead pastor,

the church also has a lay pastor, an Outreach Ministries Director, a board of elders consisting of

twelve members, and a general board comprising 12 to 15 individuals, some of whom hold

multiple roles. Committee and board positions rotate every three years to avoid burnout and train

new leaders. The board president changes yearly, and all persons involved follow the church

constitution and bylaws.

Families, retirees, and rural community residents make up the MCC congregation. The

median income is $60,327.00, and as of 2021, the population numbered 24, 651.[7] Significantly,

many people work in larger cities in the south of Monticello, where jobs are more lucrative and

available. Drug abuse and poverty are pervasive issues in the smaller towns surrounding

Monticello. Despite the obstacles, White County, Indiana, has a significant religious presence,

with seventeen distinct denominations and numerous small churches in its rural regions. Major

denominations in White County include Methodist, Lutheran, Catholic, Church of God, Baptist,

Church of Christ, Disciples of Christ, Presbyterian, Bethel and Nazarene. The rural areas also

have smaller churches that are off-shoots of churches that have split and begun new

congregations or older small county parishes. Most churches in the city proclaim weekly

attendance of between 50 and 150 participants.[8]

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[7] US Census Bureau report, White County, Indiana - Census Bureau Profile, 2020.

[8] White County Indiana Ministerial Association.

The town of Monticello, located in White County, earns its reputation as a summer resort town because of its lakes and amusement park. It functions as a bedroom community to Tippecanoe County, where larger cities are located and includes Purdue University. Although some younger persons may live in White County due to the lower cost of living, census data from 2020[9] show those persons may be more likely to "play and work" in a larger, more diverse city such as Tippecanoe County to the south. Interestingly, students in the Twin Lakes School system are increasing; however, few churches in the area report not seeing growth in new, younger parishioners attending with any regular frequency, despite the seventeen denominations operating in the county and numerous small churches that are nondenominational.[10] The population's unique characteristics may affect the MCC's outreach strategies, influencing its effectiveness in promoting God's work within the church and community. These aspects may offer potential avenues for additional evangelism initiatives.[11]

A variety of denominations, such as Baptist, Lutheran, Methodist, Presbyterian, Church of Christ, Church of God, and Catholic, come together at the Monticello Christian Church in the White County area. The diverse congregation of the non-denominational church has presented both advantages and difficulties, with each member contributing distinct perceptions and experiences. The church's openness to people with various beliefs and backgrounds is an admirable trait that fosters inclusivity and a sense of community. It also necessitates heightened sensitivity and understanding to ensure everyone feels welcomed and valued and understands the

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[9] US Census Bureau report, White County, Indiana - Census Bureau Profile, 2020.

[10] Stacker.com, https://stacker.com/indiana/white-county/most-popular-religious-groups-white-county, 2020.

[11] Edward Moody Jr., "The Top Ten Challenges Facing Churches in 2023," *Great Commission Research Journal* 15, no. 1 (2023): 23.

church's general tenets, beliefs, policies, mission, vision, and values (MVV). A prevailing

challenge is ensuring hospitality to this diverse population while remaining true to the biblical

and missional elements of the church.

Reviewing past leadership challenges and dynamics creates an intriguing scenario. The

previous ministers' leadership styles were diverse and encompassed pragmatic, dogmatic,

transactional, transformational, and relational approaches. These leadership styles have had a

profound and enduring effect on the church's self-perception as a community of believers and

functioning collectively.[12] Notably, the dogmatic-transformational leadership style was widely

accepted by most congregants because of its effectiveness in promoting prosperity and growth.

The retirement of the former minister presented the church with situational complexities,

requiring it to adapt to a new relational leadership approach; this transition occurred in the

absence of a more extended transition period amidst the pandemic.

A lack of widespread understanding of their importance compounds the church's limited

scope and knowledge of its MVVs. The previous mission statement was very brief, and most

people in the congregation were not familiar with the MVV. The church did not adequately

explain the importance of the MVV framework and how the mission statement activities could

affect the leaders and congregation. In addition, an apparent absence of mission-based education

and expertise results in an unstructured approach to how the church views itself and its mission.

Certain congregation members have faced challenges in embracing innovative and

unconventional ideas and methods, especially in outward growth and evangelism. The ongoing

complexities make it challenging to align the church's mission statement and the *missio Dei*, as

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[12] Cameron T. Bishop, Nina Esaki & Melanie E. Taub, "Learning to Be a Leader Worth
Following," *Human Service Organizations: Management, Leadership & Governance* (2023): 2.

well as determine how the church can move forward without taking a more proactive approach in these areas of ministry.

The difficulties faced by the church concerning its leaders and congregants present substantial challenges to accomplishing its mission and fulfilling its divine mission. These challenges have created confusion and ambiguity among congregants, hindering the church's ability to provide clear guidance and undermining its effectiveness. Addressing this issue is crucial to ensuring that the church's mission message is clear, consistent, and effective in conveying its missional purpose and the continuity of the church.[13] The church must prioritize and invest in educating its members about the significance of the MVV framework and the relevance of organizational structure to the church's growth and development. A mission statement is one of the cornerstones of nonprofit communication plans, both internally and externally.[14] This DMIN project aims to establish a messaging strategy that will facilitate the dissemination of information, provide education, and ensure the successful execution of the mission statement.[15]

As the church engages in ongoing study and comprehension of the *missio Dei* and deepens its understanding of its mission statement, it is expected to see notable enhancements in the cohesion of its congregation by working under a unified purpose.[16] By recognizing and aligning with God's mission, the church is better equipped to function within the community and

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[13] Aubrey Malphurs, *Ministry Nuts and Bolst: What They Don't Teach Pastors in Seminary,* 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Publications, 2019), 106.

[14] Weiting Tao, Zongchao Cathy Li, Zifei Fay Chen, Yi Grace Ji, "Public responses to nonprofit social media messages: The roles of message features and cause involvement," *Public Relations Review* 47 (2021): 102038.

[15] Naaeke, *The Rhetoric of Mission*, 14320.

[16] Russel N. Small, *Church Revitalization: A Pastoral Guide to Church Renewal* (Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Publications, 2023), 27, ProQuest Ebook Central.

in service of God. This profound understanding of the mission statement and missional purpose allows the church to operate with greater clarity and purpose, leading to more focused and impactful efforts.[17] By bringing together the various congregation members around a shared understanding of the mission, the church can better leverage each individual's unique talents and strengths, resulting in a stronger, more unified church community (Ephesians 4:1-6 New International Version). Discussions in Bible studies regarding these challenges release thoughts from some congregants that a unified body of believers with such diversity in beliefs is impossible. However, when reminded of the passage from Ephesians 2:19, "Consequently, you are no longer foreigners and strangers, but fellow citizens with God's people and also members of His household," they appear to hear and see the possibilities within the contexts of God's Word. Philippians 2: 1-11 declares the need for Christians to be image bearers of Christ's love, humility, and a spirit of one mind. These scriptures are a small selection of instances that urge the church to embark upon a course of action that entails cultivating a Christ-like disposition in terms of both mindset and conduct, with the ultimate aim of serving others through united missional purposes.

As the church understands and communicates its shared mission and purpose, it becomes more capable of engaging with the broader community. By living and acting on the mission, the church can become a catalyst of positive change, bringing the love and care of Christ to those in need in the church and outside the congregation. Ultimately, this more detailed and intentional approach to mission and community engagement can transform the church, community, and world.Through this educational process, the church can enhance its continuity and unity by

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[17] Lorelei Ortiz, "Leveraging the organizational mission statement to communicate identity, distinctiveness, and purpose to primary and secondary stakeholders during COVID-19," *Journal of Strategy and Management* 15 no. 2, (2022): 234, DOI 10.1108/JSMA-04-2021-0085.

exploring the mission statement, purpose, and their relevance to the *misso Dei*. As a result, the

church will function more effectively in the community and for God.

Fig. A. A Timeline History of Monticello Christian Church

1887 - The First Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) began at a revival meeting in White County.

1903 - The second church building was a grand brick structure built on Bluff St. This building served the congregation until 1968.

1927–The building expanded with an extensive state-of-the-art Christian Education wing for the rapidly growing children's ministry and Sunday School.

1940 -The church recorded its largest adult Sunday School class, as the Men's Class had 156 in attendance on Easter.

1968 - The congregation moved to the current facility at 105 Gordon Road and renamed the church the Monticello Christian Church.

1982 - 5.5 acres of land five miles northeast of the town was donated to the church as a campground, Centarbor.

May 2000–Rev. Chris Dodson arrived following Rev. Don Arterburn, who had faithfully served the church for 15 years.

2006 - A daycare ministry and preschool began with 65 children currently enrolled.

2011 - With the concern that the Disciples of Christ denomination was not asserting loyalty to the Holy Bible, the congregation withdrew from the denomination and is now a non-denominational congregation.

2014–Due to increased youth numbers, a youth facility adjacent to the church building was proposed, agreed upon, and completed. It was suggested to be the new Sunday School rooms for children and a recreation area for church events and groups.

2019–Rev. Chris Dobson retired, and the church hired Rev. Benji Riddle to assume the lead pastor position. As Rev Riddle was a much younger man, the church hoped to bring freshness and vitality to the congregation and programming. Dobson left shortly after retirement, and his departure in the pandemic era could have contributed to some of the congregants' confusion, discord, and strife.

2020–The pandemic resulted in several congregant deaths. Online services were adopted, and the church functioned in a maintenance capacity until resuming in-person services in late 2021.

2021- present - The church struggles with leadership issues from the board of directors and a loss of servants due to the pandemic and subsequent impacts. A thorough pastoral transition did not occur, leaving the congregation stifled and disorganized regarding the church's direction, purpose, and mission. The current leadership team and lead pastor continue to work to bring continuity and unity to the body of believers.

Problem Presented

The mission statement of Monticello Christian Church (MCC) proclaims, "To provide all individuals with the opportunity to experience the love of Jesus Christ," documented in official church records. However, this mission statement is not widely recognized among the church's leadership or congregation. When there is no straightforward way to communicate a mission statement, it can lead to confusion and uncertainty regarding the church's purpose, how it relates to the *missio Dei*, and how sharing it can provide a unified church body. In addition, the absence of a clear messaging strategy for the church's mission statement has led to disagreements among the non-denominational congregants on missional concerns and church body priorities. This absence has led to a disparity in the guiding direction for the church's understanding of the church's mission and subsequent actions. Despite establishing an initial mission statement in 2011 and a subsequent update in the summer of 2023, there has been a persistent lack of knowledge and awareness within the church and its members regarding the comprehension and familiarity of this statement. This issue has remained relevant for the past twenty-two years. Combined with a lack of knowledge of the mission statement is a lack of understanding of how the mission statement would affect the church's movement toward serving others, interacting with the *missio Dei,* and bringing about increased unity of the church under one missional

purpose. The problem at the Monticello Christian Church is the lack of a messaging strategy to effectively communicate and implement the church's mission statement to leaders and congregants, resulting in a lack of unity for one missional purpose.

Purpose Statement

The purpose for this DMIN action research project is to create and implement a messaging strategy that conveys the church's missional purpose. Conveying the church's mission is essential for believers to understand and act on the missional and church tenets.[18] Difficulty comprehending a church's mission statement can create confusion and impede cooperation, resulting in misunderstandings regarding the church's functions, tenets, and goals. The church body must grasp and comprehend its mission statement to ensure effective communication and collaboration between its members. To prioritize and reinforce the mission statement, the primary aim of this study is to introduce and execute efficient communication methods with the leadership of the Monticello Christian Church. By doing so, the objective is to facilitate the clear expression of the missional statement and its correlation with the *missio Dei* while fostering a more cohesive congregation united by a common purpose. The central focus relies on pinpointing and implementing the most efficient and effective message transmission methods, facilitating the mission statement's dissemination and prioritization.

It is crucial that the entire leadership team and congregation are fully aware of and understand the mission statement and work collaboratively towards achieving the set goals. The

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[18] Small, *Church Revitalization*, 26.

messaging strategy includes clarity of the mission statement, competency in understanding, cooperation concerning leadership support, and engaging in and enabling effective message communication. The mission statement, "MCC welcomes all people to experience the love of Jesus Christ." This statement allows for broad opportunities for the church to work within and outside the existing congregation.

Specific purposes of this research include but are not limited to the following:

1. Investigate current messaging strategies relevant to non-denominational churches.

2. Compare and contrast messaging strategies and methods utilized in various scholarly and ecclesiastic organizations for effectiveness.

3. Analyze messaging and communication strategies currently effective in churches as research indicates.

4. Design and deploy the most effective strategies for creating a specific messaging strategy for the MCC mission statement.

5. Utilize the four "C" components to actualize and operationalize the messaging strategy outlined in the training: Clarity, Competency, Cooperation, and Communication.

Basic Assumptions

The researcher of this project is the Outreach Ministries Director at the MCC and regularly interacts with all leadership and most congregation members. This project was formulated after numerous conversations with several individuals to assist the MCC in communicating its mission statement and aligning itself with the *missio Dei.* The project

endeavors to assist in effectively conveying the MCC's mission statement and educating its

audience about its mission for God. The researcher presupposes all participants possess

fundamental knowledge regarding the church's organizational structure, planning, information

sharing, and the need to understand the essential tenets of God's plan for the church (Matthew

28, NIV). Assumptions also include participants with basic cognitive faculties and the ability to

read, write at a sixth-grade level, and interact in a Christ-like manner. Throughout the study and

project, it is assumed that participants will faithfully pray concerning their interactions and the

progress of the project. This researcher also assumes that all participants will honor their promise

to participate until the conclusion, excluding illness or crisis.

As the project progresses, all participants are expected to actively engage in discussions

and training to bring the messaging strategy for the mission statement to fruition. As a crucial

project component, all participants must submit pre and post-project surveys to assess the

project's overall effectiveness. The goal of this initiative is to enable leaders to successfully

share information with team members and committees, who will then disseminate it to the

broader congregation through a strategic messaging approach. By doing so, the project seeks to

foster greater comprehension and inspire more action-oriented work in line with the mission of

God.

Definitions

This DMIN research project concerns itself with the strategy of messaging a mission

statement for the Monticello Christian Church. As Christ is the guiding light in Christian life, the

mission statement guides the church on its journey to fulfill His mission. This messaging strategy

provides a pathway for the church to understand and share the mission statement in a manner that

allows all to hear the Good News. The definitions used in this proposal are as follows and offer

the reader clarity and perspective toward the goal of this mission.

Aged Based Stereotypes. Stereotypes are preconceived ideas or beliefs commonly

associated with a specific group, often ingrained in the language, literature, and media.

Stereotypes can perpetuate harmful biases that negatively affect both individuals and

communities. "Stereotypes of aging include assumptions and generalizations about how people

at or over a certain age *should* behave, and what they are likely to experience, without regard for

individual differences or unique circumstances."Age-based stereotypes are beliefs or ideas based

on preconceptions concerning age, aging, and abilities.

Clarity. A clear understanding or lack of ambiguity in the mission statement ensures that

each member will grasp the information offered in an organized manner. The MCC mission

statement and missio Dei for this project are primarily unknown, inhibiting the clarity of

purpose, meaning, and possibilities as crucial elements. In this project, all parties achieve clarity

when they fully comprehend the subject matter and possess a thorough understanding of these

ideas.

Collaborative Community. Collaborative cultures are a central solution for the future of

teaching and learning.[19] Building a collaborative atmosphere entails reflecting on whether

promoting collaborative organizational culture is the responsibility of individual schools or

whether it extends beyond the school walls.[20] In collaborative cultures, working together

encompasses all, including leaders, followers, parents, and individuals from various belief

systems and generations. Collaboration and communities are essential for goal achievement and

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[19] Azorín, and M. Fullan, *Leading new,* 133.

[20] Azorín, and M. Fullan, *Leading new,* 139.

ensuring that others view the Christian walk as a community of like-minded people, not a divisive group.

Collective Good. As the congregation looks at unity, it is essential to investigate the "collective good" versus the benefits of one or a small group. Hence, this definition is necessary for guiding the meanings of the various concepts in this project. "collective deliberation, cooperation, and coordination among various societal actors and institutions. Some people may have different preferences or values about what constitutes a collective good and how much they are willing to contribute or sacrifice for it."[21] Investigating and applying the concept of the collective good can also reveal what is suitable for all or good for the body of believers in a Christian setting. This term can apply to many domains and service areas; however, this proposal will be utilized in a sacred setting, noting what is good for the whole body of believers in the MCC. This term is subjective and applies only to the proposal offered.

Communication. Members of successful group interactions must not only function as a cohesive group but must also possess adequate communication skills to accomplish that goal. Communication skills include, but are not limited to, personal rapport, the ability to exchange information, and seeing interactions as two-way systems through which humans exchange information. Communication abilities and gifts, though individualized, are techniques for expressing ideas, thoughts, and feelings through personal interactions.

Communication Strategy. Although communication is a human attribute and daily task, a communication strategy encompasses various methods, means, and elements to capture the meaning desired in any message. "Communication is technically an account of how human

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[21] "Collective Behaviour," *Oxford Reference,*
https://www.oxfordreference.com/view/10.1093/oi/authority.20110803095623977.

beings use semiotic systems, especially language, to symbolize their interactive thinking, speaking, and bodily practices, i.e., behavior as culture."[22] A communication strategy is essential when applying methods and means of informing and describing concepts to others. Research on communication methods and strategies is vast and entails verbal, nonverbal, ethnic, language, syntax, dialect, and situational considerations.

Cooperation. Working together in a manner that encourages a sense of teamwork and one unified purpose is the essence of cooperation. Although not all participants may agree one hundred percent, willingly working as one group toward an agreed goal is an example of cooperation. As seen in the Gospels, the Apostles often did not see eye-to-eye but cooperated to ally to further Jesus' Word. Group cooperation frequently entails diverse individuals bringing their unique perspectives to the table, which can be utilized to achieve a shared objective; thus, cooperation is vital for the project's success. As participants and leaders cooperate in their collaborative efforts, participants will display behaviors such as listening actively, thinking objectively, and acting following Christ-like values, which is an essential factor. Cooperation is working jointly toward the same end; as this project depends on the joint action of each member, each member must hear, see, and act in concert with one another.

Dogmatic Leadership. Highly dogmatic individuals tend to isolate their beliefs and disbeliefs, with little room for integrating new information. In contrast, individuals with low dogmatism are more open to possibilities and potential for further details.[23] Rokeach defines dogmatism as "a relatively closed cognitive organization of beliefs and disbeliefs about reality,

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[22] Richard L. Lanigan, Paul Cobley, and Peter Schulz (eds.), "Information Theories," *Theories and Models of Communication, Handbooks of Communication Science* 22, (Berlin, Germany; Boston, USA: De Gruyter Mouton, 2012-2019): 58-83, [Chapter 4] ISBN: 978-3-11-024044-3.

[23] A. Brown, and A. Prudente, "Dogmatism and Learning" *Encyclopedia of the Sciences of Learning,* (Boston, MA: Springer, 2012), 1, https://doi-org.ezproxy.liberty.edu/10.1007/978-1-4419-1428-6_855.

organized around a central set of beliefs about absolute authority which, in turn, provide a framework for patterns of intolerance and qualified tolerance toward others."[24] Open-minded individuals tend to have a lower level of dogmatism, while closed-minded individuals tend to have a higher level of dogmatism. Being open-minded allows individuals to consider different perspectives and ideas, while being closed-minded limits their abilities.

Elders. Elders in the MCC hold the highest spiritual responsibility in the church, in concert with the lead pastor. They are responsible for supervising the pastor, shepherding the church flock, directing leadership teams, and directly assisting in making decisions about the church's constitution and bylaws. Elders are also responsible for delivering the Sacraments to those who cannot attend and administering those Sacraments each service. MCC elders may also be asked to provide bereavement services, attend to the dying and ill, and provide funeral or wedding ceremony assistance to the lead pastor. Elders of the MCC are viewed as holding positions of spiritual holiness, self-awareness, and the ability to speak the Word of God to others as requested or needed with grace, humility, and honor to God and others.

Generational Issues. Generational issues can be defined as generational differences, complexities of the characteristics among generations, and the facets that each generation brings to relationships. Issues may stem from misperceptions, misunderstandings, unmatched verbalizations, communication styles, beliefs, worldviews, and life experiences. These generational issues have an extensive list of elements that help or hinder relationships and are a topic of extensive research.

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[24] M. Rokeach, "The nature and meaning of dogmatism," *Psychological Review 61* (1954): 195.

Heterogeneity. Understanding each individual's diverse personality, culture, and components is crucial for effective communication. Within this framework, "cultural heterogeneity refers to differences in cultural identity related to class, ethnicity, language, traditions, religion, sense of place, and many other cultural aspects. These differences can make it difficult for people to communicate, trust, and cooperate."[25] Within a sacred setting, leaders can serve the church's mission more effectively by understanding and appreciating the diverse identities of those under their care. Without such attention, the church risks neglecting certain congregants' needs, perceptions, and aspirations if it fails to acknowledge and consider these diverse identities. This could fail to provide a fulfilling spiritual experience for all individuals, essential for fostering a supportive and inclusive community.

Innovation. Innovation is about helping organizations grow. Growth is often measured in terms of turnover and profit but can also occur in knowledge, human experience, efficiency, and quality. Innovation involves making changes to something established by introducing something new. As such, it can be radical or incremental and applied to any organization's products, processes, or services. This change can happen at all organizational levels, from management teams to departments and even the individual. "Innovation is the creation of value by using relevant knowledge and resources to convert an idea into a new product, process, or practice or improvements in an existing product, process, or practice. Innovation strategy is an

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[25] *Dartmouth College Library*, https://sesmad.dartmouth.edu/studies/364.

organization's relative emphasis on diverse innovations and the associated pattern of resource

allocation, in alignment with its strategy at the corporate and business unit levels."[26]

Leadership Styles. Leadership styles are techniques and behaviors that influence,

motivate, and manage a team. By selecting a leadership style, managers can create and execute

plans and strategies to achieve their objectives while considering stakeholders' needs and team

welfare. The style a leader adopts or exhibits plays a critical role in shaping the nature of

interactions with their team and in building relationships. Effective leaders can possess diverse

leadership styles that motivate and empower their teams, thus enhancing their prospects for

success. Ineffective leaders may exhibit styles incompatible with leading success or collaborative

relationships.[27] Although there is much debate surrounding various leadership styles and their

names, they continue to be a prominent topic of research discussion and need to be considered in

managing organizations.[28]

Leadership Teams. Leadership teams are those in positions of authority that supervise or

otherwise direct people under their supervision and work as one unit to serve, solve, remediate,

or discuss programs, issues, or problems related to the organization. The persons and teams at the

MCC are responsible for the financial, spiritual, physical, administrative, community outreach,

world outreach, elder care outreach, musical, evangelistic, and ministerial concerns of the

church. Vetted by the lead pastor and general board chairperson, the congregation elects these

[26] Rajan Varadarajan, *Innovation and Strategy Review of Marketing Research* 15, (2018): 143, Emerald Publishing, SSN: 1548-6435/doi:10.1108/S1548-643520180000015007.

[27] S. Kjellström, K. Stålne, & O. Törnblom, "Six ways of understanding leadership development: An exploration of increasing complexity," *Leadership*" 16 no. 4, (2020): 437, https://doi-org.ezproxy.liberty.edu/10.1177/1742715020926731.

[28] Kjellström, Stålne, & Törnblom, *Six Ways*, 436.

positions biyearly. The church is a congregational-run organization with leaders authorized to

serve and supervise these areas. The leadership team consists of fifteen to twenty MCC members

who have demonstrated faithful Christ-like behaviors.

Messaging Strategies. Businesses commonly use messaging strategies to inform corporate

personnel, stakeholders, and consumers. The messaging strategy is essential to the overall strategic

plan and is widely known as part of a marketing strategy. In the sacred setting, messaging strategies

may be utilized similarly to communicate mission statements and other needed information to the

congregation and to improve knowledge and awareness of the church's purpose relating to the

misso Dei.

> Creating a marketing strategy is not a single event. When deciding on a
> message strategy, organizations must consider the audience, the objectives of the
> promotion, the media, and the budget. Identify customers' needs. Engage in
> meaningful communications with customers regularly. Create offerings that are the
> result of meticulous market research. Pursue advertising, promotional, and public
> relations campaigns that lead to continued successful exchanges between the
> company and its customers.[29]

Messaging strategies may include various methods for expressing thoughts, ideas, and

concepts to a group, groups, or people where desired.

Missio Dei. The *missio Dei* encompasses the church's role as a part of God's ongoing

work.[30] *Missio Dei* is a Latin theological term that is translated as "God's sending;"[31] the

church's mission is a subset of a larger whole mission of God's sending, first to Himself through

Christ and then to the world for the redemption of all humanity. The *missio Dei* encompasses the

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[29] "Principles of Marketing," *University of Minnesota* is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 4.0 International License, except where otherwise noted, (2015): 461.

[30] Christian J. Anderson, "Beginning at the beginning: Reading *missio Dei* from the start of the Bible," *Missiology* 45, no. 4, (2017): 414.

[31] Stéphanie Dietrich, "God's Mission as a Call for Transforming Unity," *International Review of Mission* 107, no. 2, (December 2018): 380, **https://doi.org/10.1111/irom.12237**.

church's role as a part of God's ongoing work.[32] Therefore, the church's mission is a component

of a greater collective mission, which is a part of God's work in the world. The historical roots of

missio Dei are deeply embedded in Augustine's works, with Aquinas later employing this

terminology to illustrate the Triune God's actions - specifically, the Father sending the Son and

the Son sending the Spirit. More recently, Karl Barth expounded on this concept in a 1932

publication, positing that the genuine church mission is a response to God's mission and that

responsibility for the mission belongs to God.[33] Hartenstein's work[34] was instrumental in

popularizing the concept of *missio Dei*, which was used to distinguish the Divine mission from

the church's mission, referred to as *missio ecclesiae*.[35] "However, it was at the 1952 Willingen

meeting of the International Missionary Council that the concept of *missio Dei* was fleshed out in

detail. The term *missio Dei* was not actually used at the Willingen meeting though Hartenstein

used it in his summary of the conference."[36]

Mission

It is crucial to mention the distinctions of mission to prevent confusion about the church's

intentions. Therefore, these various definitions have been directly taken from Webster's

Dictionary[37] to comprehensively define the meaning of mission, which will clarify the

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[32] Christian J. Anderson, "Beginning at the beginning: Reading *missio Dei* from the start of the Bible," *Missiology* 45, no. 4, (2017): 414.

[33] Ibid.

[34] Ibid.

[35] Anderson, *Beginning at the beginning*, 414.

[36] *Wycliffe Global Alliance*, Copyright 2023.

[37] *The Merriam-Webster Dictionary, New Edition*, (Cleveland, OH: The World Publishing Company, 2022), Mission definition & Meaning, https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/mission.

discussion. The word mission entails multiple categories and parts of grammar, as follows,

according to Webster.

1. A specific task with a person or group
2. A definite military task
3. Preestablished self-imposed objective or purpose
4. A calling or vocation
5. Body of persons sent to perform a service or carry on an activity
6. A ministry commissioned by a religious organization to propagate its faith or carry out humanitarian work
7. Organized missionary work
8. To send or entrust with a mission
9. A style relating to that used in early Spanish missions of the southwest US
10. A style of heavy oak furniture
11. In faith communities, the word mission is often associated with missionary service or activities that entail giving to others.

Mission Statement. Mission statements are at the heart of a strategic plan or move that

enables progress, reviews, and innovation. Croneberger describes the mission statement as "A

short written description of the aims of business, charity, government, or public organizations."[38]

Most statements help define the immediate goal and focus on the plan. Most leaders can then

disseminate this information to their teams to keep them on task and achieve their goals. "It is the

"do" process to create a positive culture and can be the thing that moves all else forward."[39]

Missional Activities. The alignment of missional activities with an organization's mission

statement is crucial for promoting its core purpose. Furthermore, these activities must reflect the

missio Dei, a testament to God's ultimate purpose. Missional activities also include the themes of

missional discipleship as an essential goal toward ensuring that missional activities are

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[38] Jen Croneberger, Vision, Mission And Purpose: The Difference," *Forbes Coaches Council* (Mar 4, 2020): 1.

[39] Croneberger, *Vision, Mission And Purpose*, 1.

undertaken. Becoming a disciple through experiential identity formation is known as missional discipleship. This DMIN research project aims to devise a messaging strategy for the Monticello Christian Church while fostering discipleship through comprehending and articulating the missional statement and its underlying principles. As Christ is the guiding light in Christian life, the mission statement guides the church on its journey to fulfill His mission. This messaging strategy provides a pathway for the church to understand and share the mission statement in a manner that allows all to hear the Good News.

Multigenerational. The term "multigenerational" refers to approaches that focus on three or more generations of a family. "Transgenerational" and "intergenerational" are also sometimes used.[40] Multigenerational theorists believe individuals can break negative patterns and form healthier relationships by acknowledging and resolving emotional reactions toward their parents. This suggests that past experiences can influence present behavior, even without conscious awareness.[41] This facet of the relationship is essential in determining proper strategies for messaging delivery, acceptance, and how others might relay messages based on prior life experiences. To effectively communicate with multigenerational congregations, it is essential to consider the messaging approach carefully and ensure that it resonates with all community members. Multigenerational social constructs present interesting group dynamics and enable the sharing of different generational tenets and facts. Although some research may lend itself to an intergenerational focus, this document will only note the facets of multigenerational elements in the discussion.

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[40] Elizabeth Skowron and Jessica Farrar, https://www.taylorfrancis.com/chapters/edit/10.4324/9780203123584-9/multigenerational-family-systems-elizabeth-skowron-jessica-farrar, 2015, 159, RoutledgeeBook ISBN9780203123584.

[41] Skowron and Farrar, *Multigenerational,* 159.

Nondenominational. Non-denominational refers to individuals who report no denominational preference but report affiliation with a religion. Likewise, a non-denominational church will host a myriad of persons from either other denominations or the unchurched who have had no prior experience of affiliation with a particular religious denomination.[42] Non-denominational congregations may comprise persons from numerous religious denominations, those not affiliated with a religion, or those pursuing a religious center.

Pragmatic Leadership. Pragmatic leadership focuses on practical solutions and outcomes rather than ideology or theory. From a pragmatic standpoint, a shift towards relationality can reorient the focus of leadership practice from individuals to interconnected processes. This approach accentuates the importance of contextualized connections and interdependencies for effectiveness. The pragmatist proposes to reorient the assessment of theories around their capacity to solve human problems.[43]

Relational Leadership. Relational leadership is characterized by a relational ontology that views leadership as an ongoing sequence of events, perceptions, and processes that occur naturally. These relational events and processes are driven by a desire to evolve the individual, group, or organization and enhance their effectiveness by developing relationships. This desire is an integral part of the ongoing evolutionary process. The perspective of the process encourages

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[42] Daniel Suh, and Raymond Russell, "Non-Affiliation, Non-Denominationalism, Religious Switching, and Denominational Switching: Longitudinal Analysis of the Effects on Religiosity," *Review of Religious Research* 57, no. 1 (2015): 25–41, http://www.jstor.org/stable/43920078.

[43] Diane Ruwhiu and Malcolm Cone, "Pragmatic Leadership: A Return to Wisdom," *Journal of Management and Organization* 19, no. 1 (2013): 29.

us to perceive and experience leadership within ourselves subjectively rather than observing it objectively from an external viewpoint.[44]

Relationship Alignment. Individuals carry perspectives based on a constructed set of life experiences and concepts. These perspectives can often result in misaligning relational issues and conflicts, thus requiring realignment to communicate and work together. "Constructed in relationships, under plural possibilities ranging from inter-individual (entitative) or mutual (processual) constructions."[45] This philosophy indicates that all relationships fall under an alignment constructed from mutual agreement or individual agreement. Some alignments may be cooperative and engaging, whereas other relationships may fall under toxicity. Regardless of the description, relationship alignment is a natural process observed in all connected persons.

Transformational Leadership. Transformational leadership encourages and motivates followers to surpass expectations while addressing their needs. This leadership approach nurtures an individual's sense of ownership and commitment by establishing an atmosphere that fosters personal and professional growth, leading to improved performance and success.[46] Transformational leadership behavior can boost people's self-efficacy, commitment, fairness, situational perception, trust, and identification with the leader. Transformational leadership is a powerful tool that inspires individuals to believe in their abilities to achieve tasks and overcome obstacles. This leadership style can foster a sense of unity and empowerment within a group,

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[44] Martin Wood and Mark Dibben, "Leadership as Relational Process," *Process Studies* 44, no. 1 (2015): i, DOI: 10.2307/44798050.

[45] C. Sklaveniti, and A. Farazmand, (eds), "Relational Leadership Theory" *Global Encyclopedia of Public Administration, Public Policy, and Governance* (Cham, Switzerland: Springer, 2014), 1-5, https://doi-org.ezproxy.liberty.edu/10.1007/978-3-319-31816-5_2196-1, 1-5.

[46] B. P. Ellen, A. Farazmand, eds., "Transformational Leadership," *Global Encyclopedia of Public Administration, Public Policy, and Governance* (Cham, Switzerland: Springer, 2013), 1-5, https://doi-org.ezproxy.liberty.edu/10.1007/978-3-319-31816-5_1343-1.

allowing them to work together towards a common goal with confidence and resilience. "One of these is transformational leadership, whose essence is to make leaders able to inspire followers to "' produce far beyond what is expected of them," and changes function as change agents by themselves. Improvement in numerous ways regarding organization, leader, followers, and adaptive problem solving is highly emphasized."[47]

Unity. Christ spoke of unity many times in the New Testament; Paul wrote the epistles on the premise that unity among believers would help bring the Good News to the diaspora. The basis for Christianity is to view the unified relationship between the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Today, unity refers to the ability to unite with others. Unity can also be described as oneness in a group of persons acting and responding similarly in a belief system.[48] "Unity involves the fundamental recognition of the other in her/his difference, recognizing the diversity between human beings and churches."[49] As creations of the Father, recognizing our togetherness as one under His name is unity, the oneness that believers worldwide covet and work to achieve.

Limitations

Any absenteeism due to illness or other necessary activities of the participants is unpredictable in this study and is beyond the control of this researcher. Other limitations include participants' biases, perceptions, and presentation responses to the given material and training.

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[47] T. Reunanen, J. Kaitonen, "Different Roles in Leadership Styles in Modern Organization," Kantola, J., Barath, T., Nazir, S., Andre, T. (eds), *Advances in Human Factors, Business Management, Training and Education*, (Cham, Switzerland: Springer, 2017), 254, https://doi-org.ezproxy.liberty.edu/10.1007/978-3-319-42070-7_24.

[48] Dietrich, *God's Mission,* 380.

[49] Ibid.

As personal bias is a formidable variable, this researcher will use leadership methods emphasizing collaboration and cooperation in each training session, including empathy, relational styles, and transformational relating and leadership styles. The training program is expected to enhance the probability of comprehending the information and successfully promoting the mission statement by implementing various presentation methods.

As everyone undertakes the project and study, they bring a unique understanding and perceptibility to the training; however, some differentiation in comprehension will require material remediation from this researcher.

Delimitations

This research project will only encompass messaging methods and strategies that enable and equip leaders to relay the MCC's mission statement to the congregants effectively. The study will involve twelve members of the leadership team, including Elders and chairpersons listed on the leadership team, regardless of age, sex, or marital status. This study is limited to leaders who acknowledge a desire for change in the church and profess investment in the adaptation and change process. As a result of ongoing disagreements within the church, it may be necessary to exclude some leaders who impart dissenting views on the current pastor to ensure that the primary study group focuses on the tasks at hand and not on personal issues. This exclusion will also assist participants in feeling free to express their creative aspirations and ideas. This delimitation aims to foster an environment that supports and encourages the development of new

and innovative ideas. Although it is worth noting that dissenting opinions may widen the sample basis, for this study, it would prove harmful to the results intended.

This study lasts eight weeks; four weeks are devoted to training, and four will be committed to implementing the project. During this study, the participants will receive specialized training through a weekly training program, including a workbook, video, and oral presentations. This training aims to enhance the understanding of the church's mission statement, its relevance to the *missio Dei*, and how to communicate it effectively. This study is limited to the materials the researcher will provide to ensure compatibility with the study, consistency in the information offered, and reliability of the research methodology. Weekly sessions will occur each Sunday, and all participants will have agreed to participate in the study. Only this researcher will introduce the messaging strategy as part of the training program and provide well-defined explanations of the church's mission statement, interaction with the *missio Dei,* and its impact on the church. This study will only include information related to defining the elements involved and developing a messaging strategy for the MCC's mission statement. This research endeavor is limited to instructing and delineating communication strategies, communication elements, and messaging theological references while concurrently identifying effective methods for achieving the objectives of the MCC mission statement.

This study and project will occur over eight weeks, each Sunday of the month, for 90 minutes per session. This study is not broad or generalized and is specific to training leaders concerning the messaging of the MCC's mission statement and its relationship to the *missio Dei* to congregants and other leaders in the church.

Thesis Statement

The church's mission statement delineates the objectives of God's divine mission and the strategies employed to accomplish them. The Monticello Christian Church's mission statement is currently in existence as a paper document with little dissemination to the leadership or congregation; despite its importance, it has not been widely shared or acknowledged. This gap in knowledge and subsequent messaging of the mission statement has resulted in mixed concepts concerning what the church hopes to accomplish for God and how it prepares to achieve that goal.

The Monticello Christian Church is experiencing a dynamic transformation, and the mission statement must direct its missional purpose. To this end, this project endeavors to support church leaders in comprehending the mission statement so that the church can clearly understand its mission for God. Historically, the Monticello Christian Church has described itself as a local, rural community church with little need to form a strategy or follow a strategic plan; therefore, many documents, such as the mission statement, have been dormant and unused. Sam Rainer noted, "The past is the hero, not Jesus. People are more upset when something is out of place in their heritage room than they are with knowing their neighbors are lost."[50] Due to a change in denominational status, the MCC church evolved into a non-denominational institution with many belief systems.[51] The local church community has experienced considerable shifts

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[50] Sam Rainer, *The Church Revitalization Checklist: A Hopeful and Practical Guide for Leading Your Congregation to a Brighter Tomorrow*, (Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale Publishers, 2021), 59.

[51] The timing of the actual pastoral change came and transpired during a particularly difficult time for the church. The prior move to a nondenominational church occurred with the former pastor and was a facet of contention for many parishioners. Subsequently, the church was left with little formal direction or sense of purpose because of unresolved issues and accompanying grief. The pandemic and subsequent changes to worship, attendance and illness, added to this sense of confusion and disdain for many congregants. Although the nondenominational status attracted others to the church, the myriad of belief systems left unattended, and the lack of knowledge of an overall mission/purpose left the body in a state much like some Israelites wandering in

since the pandemic, including a change in pastoral leadership during the pandemic. This left an

inexperienced but enthusiastic pastor to guide the congregation, which was already facing

challenges. Given these events, the church must adopt a more organized and concentrated

approach to establish its mission and purpose. Enhancing the knowledge and comprehension of

the mission statement is a primary step toward fostering an improved unified purpose of the body

and, thus, pivotal in efforts to serve God and the community. This research project will

encompass facets of various messaging methods and strategies, as well as elements involved in

the messaging methods to effectively relay the mission statement of Monticello Christian Church

to leaders and congregants.

Much research has focused on various message deployments related to industry, human

resources, and healthcare. However, there is a dearth of information on specific messaging

models for missional statements in churches.[52] The current research has revealed specific sectors

and institutions that can provide insightful perspectives on formulating a messaging strategy for

the Monticello Christian Church mission statement and effective messaging techniques and

methods. The methodologies have been developed and adapted to facilitate communication

between the leadership and the congregation of Monticello Christian Church. The goal is to

convey the mission statement more effectively and equip leaders with communication techniques

that foster collaboration and unity of purpose for the church's mission to God. Integrating

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the desert. Following the change in leadership to a less dogmatic style and a more relational leadership model, the team has encountered difficulties in reaching effective collaboration due to the new focus on relationship building and team collaboration. The absence of a clear mission statement has further complicated these issues. The leadership team and congregation will benefit from clarifying, and understanding the mission statement to address these challenges and to provide more precise direction and alignment.

[52] Ron Ashkenas, and Brook Manville, *Harvard Business Review Leaders Handbook* (Boston, MA: Harvard Business Review Press, 2019), 38, Ebook.

knowledge facilitates a shared understanding of the organization's purpose among all stakeholders, resulting in increased engagement and commitment to achieving the church's mission for God and the church community.[53] As the Monticello Christian Church clarifies and implements a clear strategy for communicating the mission statement, there will be an increased unity around the missional purpose of the church.

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[53] Malphurs, *Ministry Nuts and Bolts,* 106.

CHAPTER 2: CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

In designing a Doctor of Ministry Leadership research-action project that contributes to the existing body of knowledge in a novel and scholarly manner, it is necessary to report what has already been presented in the research. This process involves judicious reading and assessing relevant information from various scholarly resources to obtain the most recent and pertinent research. This literature review analyzes current research on messaging strategies and identifies gaps to determine the most effective approach for developing and implementing a messaging strategy for the mission statement of the Christian Church. Designing a messaging strategy will solve only half of the problems observed; the second half is implementing the strategy. "Churches do not decline because training is unavailable; they decline because the leaders cannot implement what they already know."[1] Rainer emphatically explores this topic and aligns it with the need for implementation and success of this project.

The beliefs held in a non-denominational church vary; however, the mission statement is the central focus upon which all congregants and leaders build the church's purpose and, thus, its ministry to God.[2] When the church (MCC) lacks a known mission statement, the missional purpose is lost in organizational functions. Implementing a missional purpose hinges on disseminating the mission statement, which serves as a driving force for action. The historical aspects of this church body have evolved in part because of pressing societal and community changes. In addition, transitioning from a structured denomination to a non-denominational

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[1] Rainer, *The Church Revitalization*, 44.

[2] Pieter Hendrik Johannes Labuschagne, "The LIMM Mode l: Paradigm for Missiological Research," *Ecclesial Futures*, 4, no. 2 (2023), 80, DOI: 10.54195/ef13329 DOI: 10.54195/ef13329.

structure has proven challenging for new organizational structures within the church, with the mission statement being a primary example. The mission statement was first formulated following the departure from the denomination. However, the previous pastor and leadership team did not underscore or convey detailed information about its importance, thus leaving a multi-belief congregation with no central mission focus or direction. During the summer of 2023, the leadership team developed a new, albeit brief, mission statement, which was utilized for this project. Although this mission statement has no definable or measurable objective, the tenets of helping others see the love of Jesus is a formidable quest. During the coming year, the leadership team has vowed to revisit the current mission statement to revise and clarify if any changes are needed. This revision will not occur until after the completion and review of this project and will not affect the project's outcome of learning and communicating skills.

Despite the outward appearance of unity within the congregation, underlying divisions and discrepancies in beliefs and mission-related systems prevent the church body from working together toward a common and known goal for God. "The church has lost a sense of mission and is generally disheartened at the state of affairs. A renovation will require structural changes in the church, fresh vision, and capable leadership."[3] As indicated by Small, a crucial requirement for this church is to cultivate a renewed sense of mission and a fresh perspective, essential for effectively ministering to those in their vicinity.

When communicated effectively, this mission statement messaging strategy will empower the leadership to engage effectively with the various components of the church, thereby nurturing cooperation and harmonious alignment toward a shared objective. The messaging

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[3] Small, *Church Revitalization,* 16.

strategy is inclusive for leadership and congregants alike; this strategy will be utilized for dissemination inwardly and outwardly as the church seeks to align with the *missio Dei* and follow God's commands.[4]

Throughout this process, scholarly research includes current research while investigating historical themes, programs, and strategies. This historical evidence will enhance the review by providing a broad lens through which to design, plan, and implement messaging strategies. Current and historical information, programs, and strategies were utilized during this research process to assist in developing a salient and comprehensive messaging and communication strategy. This DMIN action-oriented project centers on thorough scholarly research incorporating current and historical themes, programs, and strategies. Drawing on historical and biblical evidence provides valuable insights into the evolution of messaging strategies and the factors that have shaped them over time. In this regard, examining the historical context of messaging strategies, particularly the political, social, and cultural factors that influence their development, is essential. By doing so, it is possible to understand how messaging strategies have evolved and adapted and how those methods will assist in meeting the needs of this project and the church. Utilizing the available evidence, this researcher can adopt a more nuanced approach to designing, planning, and executing messaging strategies tailored to the specific needs and preferences of MCC leaders and congregants. The ultimate objective is to create teaching and messaging strategies that resonate with participants and achieve the desired outcomes meaningfully and with impact.

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[4] Sadiri Joy Tira and Juliet Lee Uytanlet, eds., *A Hybrid World: Diaspora, Hybridity, and Missio Dei*, (Littleton, CO: William Carey Publishing, 2020), 26.

Literature Review

The need to develop a messaging strategy for the mission statement in the MCC is tenable. Although a stated mission exists, church leadership and congregations have little knowledge and cannot follow and share it within the congregation and community. A lack of knowledge or ability to effectively communicate with a mission statement has led to uncertainty within the church community. However, many voice a disparity of attention to it, evoking a substantial difference in their church life. The lead ministry and this researcher are highly aware of this frame of reference and attempt to address it through this project.

Current research has proven that communicating crucial information to the congregation cultivates a unified and collaborative faith community while providing a solid foundation for the ministry to thrive. When formulating a messaging strategy for a church community, it is imperative to consider five fundamental components: interpersonal relationships and alignment within the church, communication styles and needs, collaborative methods and efforts, adaptation to change, and leadership requirements. When striving for a cohesive and effective strategy to engage the church body, it is paramount to consider all relevant factors thoroughly. This strategy and implementation involves identifying and addressing the potential distractions of leaders or needs before and after devising a comprehensive plan. These measures are essential for ensuring success and garnering a positive reception from all parties involved.

In order to maximize the chances of success and ensure that the efforts are well received by all parties involved, it is essential to proactively identify and address potential obstacles such as individual complexities, communication styles, belief systems, and considerations from various age groups. Only by taking these steps can one guarantee the effectiveness of their

efforts. Although one hundred percent approval is not the intended goal of this research, it is hoped that by providing a comprehensive messaging strategy, the church body might accept and further act upon the missional tenets involved as a unified body of Christ.[5] As written in John 14:12, "Anyone who believes in me will do the same works I have done, and even greater works because I am going to be with the Father;" John's words from Jesus embody the expectations of Christ regarding the missional work carried out by MCC.

The mission statement messaging strategy also allows the church to identify and align with the *missio Dei,* enabling the power and wisdom of God to shine forth more clearly.[6] God calls Christians to act and not simply wait for those in need to come into the church to receive His love. John 13: 35, "By this, all people will know that you are my disciples if you love one another." The mission statement for the Monticello Christian Church proposes this action, but it has little footing in the action-oriented phase of God's commands without being widely known. In Romans 2:1-29, NIV, Paul expresses apprehension that the Jewish believers may be failing to grasp the essence of the gospel message if they do not recognize the significance of the believer's actions in the new covenant, which is established through Jesus' resurrection and the creation of a new reality. Likewise, if believers in the MCC leadership and congregation are not aware of or believe in the mission statement, they are missing the mission from God, the *missio Dei,* and the point of serving God. He joins all into His love, power, and redemption through the New Message. MCC leaders must then learn, understand, and communicate this vital mission within and outside the church community to help bring fulfillment of His message to others. This

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[5] N. Niemandt, "Introduction in Missional Leadership,*" HTS Religion & Society Series* 7, (2019): 36, https://doi.org/10.4102/aosis. BK108.01.

[6] Mary Albert Darling, Anthony Campolo, and Don Golden, C*onnecting Like Jesus: Practices for Healing, Teaching, and Preaching* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2019), 18.

project is a physical fulfillment and a learned action and understanding to align the church with God's message. God calls humanity to use the mind, heart, soul, and behaviors to bring these messages to fruition through the Holy Spirit and man's obedient actions.

The research indicated within this literature review will highlight current resources, including strategies, methods, adaptive concerns, collaborative and leadership needs, change, and the fundamental constituents of communication processes.

Creating a messaging plan requires comprehensive analysis and evaluation of these critical aspects. Through thorough research, reliable strategy design, and recommendations, additional insights can result in optimal results. Aubrey Malphurs notes, "The strategy is action-oriented, not intention-oriented. A plan is exactly that— an action plan."[7] Leaders and administrators use two approaches to achieve the ministry's goals and objectives. Leaders focus on developing strategies to accomplish their goals, whereas administrators create plans to outline their goals and objectives. A plan is the blueprint that sets forth the objectives and goals, while a strategy is the action taken to accomplish these goals and objectives.[8] The DMIN project proposes the design of the strategy and puts the strategy into motion as an action-oriented plan.

<div align="center">Relationships and Alignment</div>

Designing an effective messaging plan can be daunting and intricate and requires thoughtful consideration of various components and factors. The critical aspects to consider are the dynamics between the intended audience, necessary communication channels, and

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[7] Malphurs, *Ministry Nuts and Bolts,* 107.

[8] Malphurs, *Ministry Nuts and Bolts*, 107.

synchronization of individuals and groups within those relationships to achieve optimal results.[9]

Studies have shown that acknowledging and adapting to a target audience's distinct features and

attributes are crucial for effective communication.[10] This adaptation includes understanding their

perspectives, beliefs, preferences, generational differences, language proficiency, and cognitive

abilities;[11] doing so can effectively convey and share the message with the intended recipients.

To achieve this goal, developing a communication strategy that understands how different

communication approaches can impact the target audience and groups is crucial.[12]

Ashkenas and Manville recommended involving a broad spectrum of individuals within

the organization during the design phase to ensure higher acceptance and sustainability.[13] This

approach enhances the likelihood of successful implementation and fosters a sense of ownership

and commitment among those involved. Therefore, it is essential to incorporate diverse

perspectives and expertise during the design phase to ensure a well-rounded and effective result

that includes all levels of leadership in the church. This component of aligning diverse

perspectives is also needed to foster a sense of involvement in the process and to gain insight

into how various people understand and convey the intended message.[14] When the church body

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[9] Nicole Pfeffermann, *New Leadership in Strategy and Communication: Shifting Perspective on Innovation, Leadership and System Design* (Cham, Switzerland: Springer, 2020), 141, ISBN 978-3-030-19680-6 ISBN 978-3-030-19681-3 (eBook), https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-19681-3.

[10] James Everhart, *Brand Vision: The Clear Line of Sight Aligning Business Strategy and Marketing Tactics* (New York, NY: Business Expert Press, 2022), 104, ProQuest.

[11] Betteke Van Ruler, "Communication Theory: An Underrated Pillar on Which Strategic Communication Rests," *International Journal of Strategic Communication* 12, no. 4, (2018): 368, DOI: 10.1080/1553118X.2018.1452240.

[12] Michael J. Urick, *The Generation Myth: How to Improve Intergenerational Relationships in the Workplace* (New York, NY: Business Expert Press, 2019), 72, ProQuest.

[13] Ron Ashkenas and Brook Manville, *Harvard Business Review Leaders Handbook* (Boston, MA: Harvard Business Review Press, 2019), 38.

[14] Ashkenas and Manville, *Harvard*, 38.

works in a unified manner, the message potentially has more strength and ability to spread to the outer reaches of the community. "When each ministry and every member pull together in the same direction, then you begin doing church as a team."[15]

The church must prioritize identifying and aligning its members' needs and values to enhance its mission-statement messaging strategy. This approach will enable the church to function as a cohesive body of Christ, displaying the love of Christ and bolstering its ability to serve the community effectively.[16] Exhibiting the love of Christ within the intended message in the church encourages the church to align more closely with the *misso Dei* and the successful love in acts of service to others. Dallas Willard indicates that the church was created for discipleship; therefore, as a church, we are to disciple the world.[17] Christians may advance the Word of God in various activities and places. As a body of believers, the opportunities are endless to advance the *missio Dei* in every area of life." People, created in the image of God, were created to communicate, be in relationship, and honor Him by doing so. Living isolated and without a community and relationships goes against God's intentions for humanity. Countless connected actions are involved even in basic tasks such as waking up and getting ready for the day. Millions of neural and physiological components are in constant communication, forming a seamless network that underpins our existence. This state of connectivity is evident in the multifaceted nature of daily life, which encompasses cognitive, physical, and psychosocial

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[15] Wayne Cordeiro, *Doing Church As a Team: The Miracle of Teamwork and How It Transforms Churches* (Bloomington MN: Bethany House Publishers, 2022), 155, Kindle.

[16] Cordeiro, *Doing Church*, 145.

[17] Dallas Willard, forward to Keith Meyer, *Whole Life Transformation: Becoming the Change Your Church Needs* (Downers Grove, Ill.: IVP Books, 2010), 12.

aspects.[18] Even the most basic activities, such as awakening and preparing for the day, are replete

with countless connected actions. Throughout our thoughts, interactions, and actions, we

experience this integrated connectivity as an indispensable aspect of our daily lives, reflecting

the interconnected nature of the human experience. "Put another way, we have an intense desire,

built-in through thousands of years of evolution, to exist in community, and central to such an

existence is our need to communicate."[19]

William Mancini notes, "Is it more important to preserve the intimacy of the fellowship

or to unsettle that familiarity and warmth to add the next outsider?"[20] The intimacy of the current

fellowship is hampered by noted disparities and disagreements on the missional purpose of the

church. However, as the community changes and the congregation becomes more diverse, the

pressing need for an acknowledged and known mission statement is paramount. The mission

statement and pursuant alignment toward a common mission will offer this diverse population a

focus point and communal goal. Alignment and a shared focus remain distinct and are a starting

point toward increasing the unification of this church body and its work for the *missio Dei*.

Collaboration and Unity

Nicole Pfeffermann reports a compelling description concerning the necessity of

collaborating and connecting through shared information to assist those in congregant settings in

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[18] Isabella Backman, *Revealing Communications Between Brain and Body*, (New Haven, CT: Yale School of Medicine) March 16, 2022, https://medicine.yale.edu/news-article/revealing-communications-between-brain-and-body/.

[19] Pfeffermann, Nicole. *New Leadership in Strategy and Communication : Shifting Perspective on Innovation, Leadership, and System Design*. Cham, Switzerland: Springer, 2020, ISBN 978-3-030-19680-6 ISBN 978-3-030-19681-3 (eBook). 141.

[20] William Mancini, *Future Church* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Publishing, 2020), 26.

maintaining a sense of community, "Put another way, we have an intense desire, built-in through thousands of years of evolution, to exist in community, and central to such an existence is our need to communicate."[21] The MCC congregation faces the challenges of not having a central, known mission statement and a deficit in the collaborative community. The mission statement design invites all who follow Jesus to experience His love through the church; yet, without this mission statement being widely known or expressed, it falls short of being able to minister effectively. The disparities in a common belief or mission for the church that is widely known have resulted in some congregants being left to their own belief devices, which have become divisions in the church.

These challenges have led to the formation of fragmented groups within the congregation, each with unique viewpoints and preferences but no unifying goal or mission to unite them. Harrington et al. described the need for constructive, collaborative organizations to avoid friction and to be mutually invested in quality and quantity versus choosing sides. Constructive congregations choose to preserve their core values and increase their progress.[22] The necessity for collaboration in grasping and disseminating MCC's mission statement is undeniable and evident. As the research indicates, collaboration does not occur without cooperation, and consensus for both is crucial for progress.[23] The *missio Dei* calls for His children to work for the good of His creation, all to work together for the good of creation.

Furthermore, individuals and communities persist in their will to collaborate and persist when instilled with the hope that change and collaboration will improve their individual lives and

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[21] Pfeffermann, *Communication,* 141.

[22] Jim Harrington, Mike Bonem, and James Furr, *Leading Congregational Change* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2020), 94.

[23] Cueva, I*nspiring Others,* 145.

those of all who come after them.[24] "More importantly, clarity about the church's mission is critical in aligning the church with God's mission and purposes for his people in this world."[25] When the path is known, the effectiveness of collaboration grows and spreads, enabling motivation, inspiration, and collective spirit. The mission statement may live abundantly and actively with this collaborative and God-inspired spirit.[26]

Darling agrees that people outside the church should observe congregational behaviors and say, "See how they love one another! See how they live in harmony with one another— I want to be a part of this body of believers!"[27] If this behavior is not apparent, what is the church doing in terms of teaching collaboration and unity in Christ? In as much as Christians posture and crave unity, shallow pits of self-centeredness and destructive relationships cloud Christ-like actions.[28]

Working together towards a common goal is the key to a thriving church community. When every ministry and member unites their efforts and works in harmony, an individual or a small group working alone cannot achieve a powerful constructive collaboration.[29] The impact of this collaborative effort is exponential, and the benefits of community and caring for one another can be seen in both individual and church-wide growth. The author highlights the importance of working together as a team, emphasizing that two people working towards the same objective

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[24] Sarah Koshy, *Beyond Missio Dei* (New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan, 2022), 12, Kindle Edition.

[25] Ott, *The Church on Mission,* 1.

[26] Cueva, *Inspiring Others*, 149.

[27] Darling, Anthony Campolo, and Don Golden, C*onnecting Like Jesus,* 20.

[28] Darling, et al., *Connecting Like Jesus*, 20.

[29] Richard Nobel, *On Mission Together*, (Beaver Falls, PA: Falls City Press, 2019), 183.

can achieve more than twice the effort of a single person and that the power of synergy is unleashed when three or more people work together in a spirit of unity.[30]

Embracing the ideas of collaboration enables each person to feel a part of a larger whole; it pulls together those feeling disenfranchised and those within the church who may have different viewpoints.[31] In unity and collaboration, the self-centered portrayals of humankind can be made whole and made in the image of God, as the humanistic need for collaboration and community is inherent in human beings.[32] Although humanity is fallible, through Jesus Christ, God makes this unity of the body and spirit available and accomplished through His grace and love. The church body must grasp the individual and collective need for these relationships and unity for the church to obey and follow God's will. Effective collaboration in relationships necessitates a combination of spiritual practices and communication skills. While communication skills are crucial for transforming relationships, even sincere followers of Jesus may struggle without them. Spiritual practices play a critical role in nurturing relationships, and effective communication is essential for translating intentions into actions.

Nevertheless, merely having knowledge and skills training is insufficient to transform relationships, regardless of how well supported by good communicators, good Christians, or promising research. To truly transform relationships, the training must demonstrate a deep and active engagement with the power of the Holy Spirit. The spiritual preparedness to connect with others is crucial in this regard. As the Apostle Paul wrote in 1 Corinthians 13:1, "We can speak with the tongues of mortals and angels." However, without the spiritual dynamic of love, it is

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[30] Cordeiro, *Doing Church As a Team*, 151.

[31] Van Ruler, *Communication Theory*, 368.

[32] Darling, et al., *Connecting Like Jesus,* 18.

impossible to communicate the transforming message and mission of Jesus to others. The Holy

Spirit's presence in our lives sustains our capacity to love and fulfill the "love one another"

relational principles found throughout the scripture.[33]

<div align="center">Communication Techniques</div>

It is imperative to consider the various perspectives on communication and how they may

be modified to foster transparent comprehension and successful communication to optimize the

efficacy of a messaging approach directed toward both congregation leaders and members. This

investigation examines individual and collective perspectives on organizational communication

and communication theories.[34] Betteke reports, "When communication helps to move the

organization's mission forward in a purposeful way, we may speak of strategic

communication."[35] As indicated in his article, many communication scholars contend that

communication can only be deemed "strategic" if it aims to advance an organization's mission.

Scholars also posit that the strategic nature of communication determines its purpose of

enhancing the organization's mission.[36] With this nature of communication, the messaging

strategy must consider the tenets it is supposed to propose and its intended ultimate goals. The

messaging strategy for MCC must contain these communication elements as the vehicles for the

strategy, not the reason.[37] As vehicles of increased understanding between a diverse population

of believers, the communication strategy is a method in and of itself within the messaging

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[33] Darling et al., *Connecting Like Jesus*, 25.

[34] Urick, *Generation,* 72.

[35] Van Ruler, *Communication Theory*, 372.

[36] Van Ruler, *Communication Theory*, 373.

[37] Van Ruler, *Communication Theory*, 373.

strategy. Therefore, as various modes of communication and reasons for miscommunication between believers occur, the strategy design must investigate and include the modes that will agree with strategic communication in moving the church body toward a unified knowledge of MCC's mission statement.

The synthesis of designing a communication strategy that envelops the various generational and individual belief systems is considerable. This synthesis includes the need for a method that incorporates all requisite and perceived needs to relay the mission statement message. "A communication strategy is critical to success because it is the vehicle that supports vision, leadership, and execution. It will enhance brand value and mission/alignment for employees and is essential to business success."[38] Leadership and congregants must be able to comprehend and thus relay the mission statement to others in a meaningful and understandable manner to enable the mission statement to achieve its goal of furthering God's kingdom.

At MCC, it is apparent through observation that age-based stereotypes contribute to miscommunication more than generational differences. This observation highlights the importance of avoiding assumptions and biases based on age and instead focusing on clear and effective communication strategies to bridge potential gaps. Recognizing and addressing these stereotypes can promote a more inclusive and productive working environment for all team members.[39] Although the congregation is a multigenerational church body, the average age is 54; this average is determined by the church's role and current membership statistics. These biased perceptions can create unnecessary barriers and misunderstandings that hinder effective and strategic communication. Recognizing and addressing these biases is essential to foster more

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[38] Pfeffermann, *Communication,* v.

[39] Urick, *Generation*, 72.

open and productive communication across generations.[40] Therefore, this segment discusses

generational theory as a preferred lens to identify and describe the different generations and

interactions.

Seibel suggests that the concept of intergenerational ministry in the church is not new.[41]

He reports that those of differing generations "seek to engage with the particular social, cultural,

and historical circumstances that impact the daily lives of the members of rising generations."[42]

Generational concerns regarding communication can help or hinder the collaborative

communication process. Generative relationships can foster mutuality, community and enhance

the overall well-being of all individuals involved.[43] "It is a development in the adult's life away

from focusing on the self to a focus on the well-being of other people, especially the younger

generations."[44] These age spectrums can add vitality and perspective or, if unattended, may lead

to increased messaging confusion and poor adherence to the intended goals.[45] Questions may

arise that indicate the need or desire to interact with other generations; are these interactions

socially acceptable, and what is the benefit or gain?[46] When a clear and concise message is

introduced, these questions may be alleviated, and all concerned can function as a collaborative

body under Christ for the mission.[47]

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[40] Urick, *Generation* 98.

[41] Cory Seibel, *The Generative Church Global Conversations about Investing in Emerging Generations* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2019), 66, Kindle Edition.

[42] Seibel, *Generative Church*, 65.

[43] Seibel, *Generative Church,* 29.

[44] Seibel, *Generative Church,* 29.

[45] Urick, *Generation* 92.

[46] Nerina Jansen, *Generation Theory* (Johannesburg, South Africa: McGraw-Hill, 1974), 10.

[47] Everhart, *Brand Vision*, 11.

Pfeffermann emphasizes the significance of good communication in achieving change and fostering awareness at every stage. Individuals with a vested interest in a particular objective are more inclined to actively and positively engage with others. This investment, in turn, tends to result in a more productive outcome.[48] Conversely, the absence of individual investment and ineffective communication of objectives can result in confusion, stifle creativity, and lead to disengagement.[49] "A key challenge for leading people towards innovation outcomes is closing the gap between ineffective and effective communication interactions for all those involved."[50] Regarding intergenerational communication, certain younger interviewees have endeavored to reach out to their older colleagues at work via phone instead of text messages, as they perceive this to be the preferred mode of communication for their senior counterparts. Through this adaptation of their communication style, younger generation members strive to preempt any conflicts arising from misconceptions about their communication abilities.[51]

Other key factors to address regarding the communication strategy involve socioeconomic and cultural elements. Rural Indiana congregants at MCC possess a stoic and reserved persona that many feel is a heritage to embolden. These personas have individual dialects, manners of communicating, and manners of propriety that some from outside the local community may not understand. This communication facet is essential in designing the messaging strategy as propriety is not something every congregant sees as necessary, and thus, divisions have occurred due to these issues. Generational communication issues are also at the forefront of communicating the mission statement through a messaging strategy. Mutuality

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[48] Pfeffermann, *Communication*, 145-146.

[49] Pfeffermann, *Communication*, 146.

[50] Pfefferman, *Communication*, 146.

[51] Urick, *Generation,* 92.

between participants, collaboration, shared experiences, and bi-directional teaching can mitigate these gaps and differences and enable a cohesive collaboration. [52]

As a five-generation church body, there have been significant disparities between available modes of communication, the use of these modes, and communication voices that differ with each generational preference. Some congregants view any mode of communication other than face-to-face as insincere, while others voice a desire for more technological methods of information sharing. As the messaging strategy develops, these considerations will result in a mixed methods approach to messaging to best reach all congregants in a suitable manner.

Designing a messaging strategy that addresses these issues also must consider that the whole church body must be the goal. In this instance, social media influencers introduce the idea that individuals communicating their stories and relaying their thoughts allows a deeper investment in the communication process, thus furthering the goal.

Perspectives

Perspective refers to an individual's point of view or frame of reference through which they interpret or see the world around them. It helps humans shape how they see the world, events, and understanding. Given this definition, perspectives, in general, are essential in contributing to the messaging strategy through a lens by which the mission statement of the church and the *missio Dei* are perceived by leaders of MCC and communicated to the congregation. The congregation's social, economic, and cultural differences are crucial to

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[52] Allan G. Harkness, "Intergenerational Christian Education: Reclaiming a Significant Educational Strategy in Christian Faith Communities," PhD diss., Murdoch University, 1996. ———. "Intergenerational Education for an Intergenerational Church?" *Religious Education* 93 (1998): 431–47.

discussing perspective. The rural Indiana of MCC element adds a unique perspective to the discussion on how the church's mission statement is seen, heard, and enacted.

Historically, except for overseas missions, the church has displayed an inward perspective on how it portrays and acts on a purposeful mission for the church. Long before a mission statement was developed, the need for a mission statement was perceived as being too academic or industrial for the small Indiana community.[53] Upon the former pastor proclaiming the need, a short mission statement was unveiled to the congregation; albeit a tagline, it sufficed for the time being. In this case, the perspective concerned the need for something that appeared as a mission statement but was short enough for the congregation to recall and recite, which it did not, due to no influencing elements imparted to leadership. It was established on written material, but few knew its existence or meaning. The mission statement also did not fulfill the requirements of a complete mission statement with definable goals; however, it suited the needs at that time in church history. Thus, confusion and a dearth of knowledge concerning the mission statement's tenets exist, partly due to perspectives at the time of its creation that are not changing to meet the current situation. In this case, perspectives resulted in completing a task (mission statement developed) but not relayed meaningfully; perspective also played into this scenario as the need for this statement did not seem paramount to the more prominent leadership or congregation.

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[53] This information was commonly spoken in the church, thus the writer's knowledge. 20 years ago, when the first mission statement was postured to many, it appeared as if something the pastor wanted to do and not a needed item that was vital for the church. As the new mission statement was redeveloped this summer, many still hold the same thoughts that mission statements are "on paper only" items and do not significantly affect the church's functioning. This dissertation is to assist leadership members to see the significance and feel how purposeful service and stated missions can lead to clarity, change, and unity in the church body.

The Apostle Paul's prevalence in biblical history is well known and revered as he evangelized and taught various groups of people in the diaspora, a prime example of how perspective can alter a person's messaging.[54] Paul was born in Rome and grew up immersed in the Jewish faith. He became well-known for being a Pharisee and persecuting Jewish Christians. However, after his conversion, he remained firmly in Christ and evangelized throughout the diaspora. Paul's diverse experiences gave him various perspectives from which to deliver his message.[55] He maintained Christ's message while adapting the context to suit his audience. Not only did his vast array of travels widen his perspectives, but his conversion broadened his perspective on Christ and God's mission for the world, salvation, and redemption. The examples of Paul and Simon Peter are noteworthy as they demonstrate how the transformation of perspectives can change hearts and souls. This widened perspective is imperative in MCC addressing the mission statement and its messaging strategy to the larger congregation. When leaders grasp and effectively perceive and communicate the message, they broaden its impact, thus changing hearts and souls for Christ.

It is challenging for leaders in the church to effectively communicate the mission statement to the congregation without a clear articulation of the statement from the leadership.

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[54] E. P. Sanders, *Paul, and Palestinian Judaism*, (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1977), 35-52.

[55] Ibid. E. P. Sanders writes compelling literature on Paul as does N. T. Wright. These two authors were the primary sources for proving and indicating the need for perspectives to be included in the literature review. Paul's education, experience, and ability to utilize contextual and perspective inferences when preaching set the bar high for all others after his tenure. Perspective and contextual references dictates that in many areas of life especially living and faith, it is essential to continually remember that how scenarios are viewed from one perspective may not be that of another. This facet of communicating the messaging strategy for the mission statement of MCC is one that will be pointed out and stressed to leaders. Learning, as Paul so aptly demonstrated, how to communicate to various people who may not possess the same views is critical both for understanding the message of the mission statement and for creating unity of the church through a common purpose.

Despite a documented mission statement, the leaders lack awareness regarding its essential

elements, scope, and method of disseminating it to the church members. Therefore, teaching

leadership how personal and group perspectives influence this concept and process is essential.[56]

It is worth acknowledging that uncertainty in perspectives can catalyze constructive

transformation and individual advancement. Learning a new perspective can allow leaders to

grapple with perceived bias, static beliefs, and outdated thought processes. However, employing

essential critical thinking techniques like introspection and logical analysis can enable leaders to

grasp new perspectives, thus altering the narrative, in this case, concerning the mission statement

and the message.

Attempting to change views can significantly alter perspectives and allow fear and doubt

to enter the transformational process. "At the same time, doubt can provide a gateway to

transformation. It is often through doubt that we can change who we are, what we believe, and

how we act. While critical thinking and transformative learning theorists have noted the

importance of working through and resolving states of doubt, there has been less emphasis on

arousing states of doubt."[57] However, as Christians, faith is tantamount to belief. However, when

doubt enters in, instead of viewing it as a negative attribute or occurrence, doubt can be utilized

for transformative ends if viewed in the context of perspective altering for a positive outcome.

In working to investigate new perspectives, foundational skills are improved; Gordon

notes that the possibility for intellectual and personal growth is limited without the ability to

[56] J. Southworth, "Bridging critical thinking and transformative learning: The role of perspective-taking," *Theory and Research in Education,* 45-46, https://doi.org/10.1177/14778785221090853.

[57] Southworth, *Bridging*, 45-46.

bring ourselves from a confirmed belief to a position of doubt.[58] Some theologians posture that

the Apostle Thomas, known for doubting Christ upon His resurrection, displayed his lack of

understanding and a lack of ability to perceive the changes rather than simply dismissing Jesus.[59]

John Powell noted, "A person can grow only as much as his horizon allows."[60] This quote

summarizes how perspective can profoundly affect the manners in which humans live, think, and

imagine the world around them. Understanding the undercurrents and nuances others inhabit and

the influences that bring them to where they are is part of humanity's successful mystery.

Learning about perception in individuals is one of those vast mysteries that will bring about a

greater sense of understanding and, hopefully, better communication for all.

Adaptation to Change

Messaging strategies require investigation to change the voices, methods, and systems for

knowledge already in place. While familiarity can foster a sense of comfort and camaraderie, it

can also lead to a lack of progress and innovation. To succeed in new endeavors, embracing

change and carefully evaluating established organizational practices is essential. Adapting to the

change process can help ensure that goals and missions come to fruition effectively and

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[58] Guy Golan, Jordan Morehouse & Ashley E. English, "Building Relationships with the Faithful: examining church communicators' perceptions of social media influencers in their OPR strategy," *Journal of Public Relations Research* 33, no. 4, (2021): 254, DOI:0.1080/1062726X.2021.2011729.

[59] Chris Carter, *Overcoming Doubt, Lessons from Doubting Thomas*, (Christ's Church Bible Study, Roswell, NM: March 28, 2023). Carter's Bible study captured the essence of how a commonly voiced theme for someone could be different depending on the perspective taken. Thomas's doubting could have been seen as a sign of deep faith, rather than the weak faith he is sometimes portrayed to have possessed. Contemplative doubt is different than doubt from fear or disdain; contemplative doubt leans toward a process of thinking through something to arrive at a solution. Much like transformational resurrection Powell speaks of (ft. n. 112): it can be through our contemplative doubt that true resurrection of our spirits and souls are born, thus taking us to a newer, higher level of being.

[60] John Powell, *Why am I afraid to Love,"* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishers, 1967).

efficiently. Creating a messaging plan that changes the current state, even if it affects the improvement process, could be met with resistance and discomfort among the members. To reduce the disruption or minimize its impact, involving as many stakeholders as possible in the process is crucial to understanding the essence of the change. This creation and implementation will enable a smooth flow of positive outcomes. Adaptation is a process that involves the utilization of existing knowledge or resources to make them suitable for new purposes or altered circumstances. It is a crucial skill that enables individuals to thrive in various environments and situations.

In situations where adaptability is not promoted or embraced, disarray may ensue, leading to a multitude of challenges, including chaos. Margaret Wheatley has written extensively about the perils of allowing an organization to descend into chaos; she recognizes that while turmoil can lead to new developments and synthesis, it is essential to implement suitable adjustments to harness its potential.

> Everything that held it together–its beliefs, meanings, and structures–no longer works now that the environment has changed. And so the system falls apart. It descends into chaos and finally reaches a bifurcation point where it has two choices: Either it can reorganize using new beliefs and structures that work well in the changed environment. Or it can insist on the old ways, fail to reorganize itself, and die. Both rebirth and death are possible as an outcome of the passage through chaos.[61]

On the other hand, innovation typically entails introducing novel concepts, strategies, or products. This process involves the creation of something new or the improvement of an existing idea or product. There is a noticeable distinction between adapting, innovating, and transforming in church life. Adapting is often linked to technical modifications, whereas transformation and

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[61] Margaret J. Wheatley, *Leadership and the New Science : Discovering Order in a Chaotic World*, (Oakland, CA: Berrett-Koehler Publishers, Incorporated, 2006), 54, *ProQuest Ebook Central*, https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/liberty/detail.action?docID=483764. .

innovation require adaptive changes. Technical adjustments are usually straightforward, with a

clear solution; they are less intricate and often involve a single problem, and resolution of more

complex issues requires time, patience, and discernment.[62]

Adaptive and transformative changes require a more extensive and complex approach, as

they often involve multiple interrelated problems that must be addressed simultaneously.

Adaptation is a vital process that involves utilizing existing knowledge and resources to tackle

novel challenges. This adaptation facet entails applying familiar concepts and principles to new

situations. To adapt successfully, one must possess a thorough comprehension of the

fundamental principles and concepts that govern a specific system or process. Adaptation and

transformative measures will precede in the MCC circumstance as learning and messaging the

mission statement is new. By contrast, innovation requires thinking creatively and exploring new

possibilities. It involves taking risks and experimenting with innovative ideas and approaches.

Wheatley reports a theory that amidst group apprehension, it is essential to acknowledge a

universally recognized truth: People collaborate to achieve more remarkable feats, not lesser

ones; underlying every inclination towards organization lies an expectation that by unifying with

others, we can accomplish meaningful, unattainable objectives in isolation.[63] This theory aligns

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[62] Wheatley, *Leadership*, 53-55.

[63] Wheatley, *Leadership*, 53-55.

with the workings of the Trinity, Christ, and the *missio Dei*; humanity works together in a unified manner to achieve His works for His glory.

As noted earlier, the MCC congregation and past leadership have taken few risks and have not been open to the latest ideas and approaches in the ministry. Combining these approaches to ensure the dispersion of the mission statement will be challenging and rewarding as it comes to fruition. As the adaptation to change and transformative powers of God are realized, the *missio Dei* and the accompanying church mission can hope to become a substantial and salient portion of the church's foundation.

Adaptation and transformation are essential skills for success in today's rapidly changing world and church communities.[64] While these elements are valuable, they require different approaches and strategies. By understanding the differences in and embracing these processes, individuals can develop the skills they need to thrive in the environment.[65]

Christianity is a faith that prioritizes transformation and renewal, seeking to bring about deep and lasting change in the lives of its adherents. At the core of this transformative process is the church's role, which is called to serve as an agent of change, working to help its members grow and develop spiritually. However, when discussions of change and transformation arise, particularly concerning church structure, organizational plans, or internal issues, these

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[64] Wheatley, *Leadership,* 55-56.

[65] Kay Kotan, *Being The Church in a Post-Pandemic World* (Knoxville, Tennessee: marketsquarebooks.com, 2021), 35, 37933 ISBN: 978-1-950899-22-7.

conversations can sometimes lead to disruptions within the church community. This disruption is partly due to change being difficult and uncomfortable, and some members may feel threatened or resistant to altering longstanding traditions or practices. Despite these challenges, the church must continue prioritizing transformation and growth, recognizing that change is essential to the Christian journey. Christ entered this world seeking radical change for humanity. He changed the world through his crucifixion and resurrection, the world's largest transformative event in history. By embracing the teachings of Christ and adopting a compassionate, understanding, and receptive attitude towards all members of the community, the church can foster a spiritually enriching and vibrant environment for its congregation. Achievement of this new attitude may be empowered by encouraging open dialogue and actively engaging in discussions to promote unity and understanding among all members. Christ calls forth for Christians to follow His example and strive to create a welcoming and loving environment that allows every individual to thrive and feel valued.[66] The mission statement of MCC also mandates these actions and values, and while these modifications to typical modes of interaction may result in a more knowledgeable and organized institution, the factors of limited adaptability to change are not unfamiliar concepts to churches or humanity. "If transformation is the dynamic of our mission, and God's glory is both the source and goal of our mission, then the church in the power of the Spirit is God's primary mission instrument in this age."[67] The church is responsible for spreading the gospel message of transformation, which allows it to embody this spiritual growth and personal

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[66] Ott, *The Church on Mission, 1*9.

[67] Ott, *The Church on Mission*, 21.

change.[68] This transformation is an essential source of God's work through the Holy Spirit and, when embraced, can promote and assist the church body's adaptation to change.[69]

Gary Comer agrees with the transformative power of God as his writing details the links between the purpose of God lived out and fulfilled by His people. As individuals and members of a faith community, it is vital to have a comprehensive understanding of the diverse ways God expresses love and grace. Churches such as the MCC are God's ambassadors, and leadership must focus on the appropriate goals for the church. Tod Bolsinger expresses the alignment of priorities: "Genuine leadership must be focused on a vision beyond the profit, success, or even survival of the institution. It must be focused on the needs of real people in the real world."[70] Developing a strategic messaging plan that considers these transformative aspects will facilitate individuals' embrace of the transformative power of God; in doing so, the mission statement will positively impact the dissemination of the Good News and the effective fulfillment of the MCC's mission statement.[71]

Leadership

There is tension among the leadership at MCC due to disagreements about the missional purpose of the church. Under the guise of each of these viewpoints is a lack of basic understanding of what the actual, written mission statement of the church indicates and how it is used to further God's kingdom. Research is crucially needed to provide valuable insights into

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[68] Small, *Church Revitalization*, 70.

[69] Ott, *The Church on Mission*, 19.

[70] Tod E. Bolsinger, *Tempered Resilience: How Leaders Are Formed in the Crucible of Change,* (Downers Grove, IL*:* InterVarsity Press, 2020), 15, Kindle Edition.

[71] Koshy, *Beyond,* 27.

communicating organizational structures, church missional purpose, and how that information interacts with the missio Dei. This investigation has the potential to facilitate and enlighten leadership decision-making procedures, offer clarity pertaining to the church's purpose, and unify the church around a collective aim, which are all instrumental in tackling the burgeoning challenges confronting the church in the current era.[72]

Leaders are not only trendsetters but can be culture busters, enabling the congregation and those they lead to work together, collaborate, and communicate in a caring and responsive manner.When individuals at the helm of affairs in contentious circumstances put aside their differences and collaborate smoothly, it proves advantageous for the collective and reflects God's love. This agreement allows the group to operate with the confidence that they are guided by leaders who prioritize the collective good of the church over individual differences.[73] Leaders can motivate or calm those under their guidance, depending on their leadership style and objectives. Those who strive to unite their congregation by providing innovative perspectives and forward-thinking visions of the church's mission can help the community transcend personal biases and prioritize the common good.[74]

To thrive, religious institutions must remain open to continuous transformation processes. These facets bring a readiness to assist the congregants in adapting and improving responses to new concepts and environments. New strategies may falter without this type of leadership, leaving the congregation in a free-fall of direction.[75] Introducing the messaging strategy design,

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[72] Cordeiro, *Doing Church,* 161.

[73] Cordeiro, *Doing Church,* 149.

[74] Niemandt, *Introduction in Missional Leadership*, 34.

[75] Martín Carbajo Núñez, " Revitalizing Religious Life Today: Ethical Challenges and Leadership, *Carthaginensia* 37, no. 71 (2021): 154, ISSN: 0213-4381 e-ISSN: 2605-3012.

leaders in MCC must view this as an innovation to embrace and disperse throughout the body of believers and consider its impact on the general knowledge base and *misso Dei.* The *missio Dei* and the church's mission statement require an answer to why the church does what it does. If the why is unknown or acknowledged, the questions of how and when become insignificant. God created leaders to dream and hope; if leaders grasp these concepts, the direction of the church can be closer to fulfillment, and the *missio Dei* will be actualized in the MCC congregation.[76]

Churches, like any other type of organization, confront a multitude of challenges. Among these challenges is the conflict between the institutional structures and individual members. Effective leadership is crucial to addressing these challenges in the context of church organizational affairs. Hence, this underscores the vital role of an organizational leader and emphasizes the significance of possessing a precise comprehension of organizational leadership. This conclusion establishes a direct relationship between the organization and its administration.[77] "The crucial function of an organizational leader involves the ability to conceptualize and comprehend the current state of the organization, and subsequently, to effectively manage the situation in a way that ensures its longevity and sustainability into the future."[78] The leadership of MCC is expected to comprehend and internalize the concepts that will shape the church's future. Without a thorough understanding and strategic direction from the leadership, the congregation may lack a clear sense of purpose and drift aimlessly in multiple directions.

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[76] Núñez, *Revitalization,* 158.

[77] Magezi, V., Sichula, O.P. & Nanthambwe, "The organizational life cycle principles applied to leadership practices in growing churches,' *Theologia Viatorum* 47, no. 1 (2023): e1, https://doi.org/10.4102/tv.v47i1. https://theologiaviatorum.org/index.php/tv.

[78] V. Magezi, et al., *The Organizational Life*, e1.

The objective of this project is to encourage the leadership of the church to participate in missional education and training, with the aim of establishing a definitive connection between God's mission and the mission of the church. The trajectory of an organization's success or failure hinges on the effectiveness of its learning and developmental processes. This facet applies equally to ecclesiastical organizations, where the ability of leaders to guide, mentor, and empower their teams can have a profound impact on the overall outcome. The importance of such leadership cannot be overstated, as it shapes the organization's culture, morale, and direction.[79] When the executives of MCC undertake these educational and mission-oriented learning expeditions, their aptitude for guiding the institution and its worshippers toward unity will undoubtedly prove invaluable as they reflect God's love and glory.

Missio Dei

The term *missio Dei* means "sending," or the sending of God by God. God became the first missionary as he created the world, then sent Christ, and finally will send Christ again to redeem and reclaim His creation. Whitworth notes the *missio Dei* is "comprehensive when understood in the light of a God, who, being the creative force that brought all that we know and understood into existence, purposefully participates in and with that creation to fulfill a purpose."[80]Throughout time, there has been agreement and disagreement on how the *missio Dei* interacts within the world—the twentieth century marked a transformation in missiological theory, as it moved from being solely the responsibility of the church to a divine activity meant

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[79] V. Magezi, et al., *The Organizational Life*, 3.

[80] David Martin Whitworth, *Missio Dei and the Means of Grace: A Theology of Participation* (Eugene, OR: Pickwick Publications, Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2019), 140, Kindle Edition.

for all and extending an invitation for all to engage in it.[81] The various concepts and ideation

concerning how the *missio Dei* interacts within the world are seemingly divided into two camps

of discussion between the evangelical and ecumenical theologians. "So, while the two camps

were both using the term mission," they had a totally different understanding of mission."[82]

"David Bosch's missional hermeneutic, using it as an entry point into his understanding of the

biblical foundation of mission."[83]

Bosch's case for the true definition of *missio Dei* bears significance for this project as it

directs MCC toward its definition of mission and how the church acts and reacts in God's world.

"Through the *missio Dei*, we become part of God's family, witnessing and participating in God's

work of saving and reconciling people to him. *Missio Dei* is God's mission, which becomes our

mission."[84] Whether ecumenical or evangelical, the MCC must utilize its mission statement to

further God's sending in the church and outside the church walls. Bosch argues that there are no

objectively known rules of mission that Scripture offers to define missions; however, reading the

New Testament, no church can see itself separated from missions or missiology if they follow

the successful Commandment. Bosch notes, "A faithful reading of the New Testament prevents

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[81] Whitworth, *Missio Dei,* 154.

[82] Seung-Oh, *An Alternative Mission Paradigm*, 8-10.

[83] *The Free Library*. S.v. The biblical narrative of the *missio Dei*: analysis of the interpretive framework of David Bosch's missional hermeneutic." David J. Bosch, *Witness to the World* (London: Marshall, Morgan & Scott, 1980), 40 referenced in this article is a renowned scholar. He describes the parity and differences in this classic volume and is well known for his theories and exegesis on mission topics. "David Bosch's missional hermeneutic, using it as an entry point into his understanding of the biblical foundation of mission," https://www.thefreelibrary.com/The+biblical+narrative+of+the+missio+Dei%3a+analysis+of+the...-a0261080607.

[84] *Ecclesial Futures* 2023 – Volume 4 – Issue 2 ARTICLE 74 Ecclesial Futures – DOI: 10.54195/ef13329 DOI: 10.54195/ef13329 The LIMM Mode"l: Paradigm for Missiological Research" Pieter Hendrik Johannes Labuschagne. Pg.80.

any church in any historical context from seeing itself apart from the missionary enterprise, for the history and theology of early Christianity are, first, 'mission history' and 'mission theology."[85] As noted by N.T. Wright, the Apostle Paul and his fellow missionaries, "were much more concerned with the "Kingdom of God," that was happening on earth and would ultimately come to fruition, "on earth as in heaven" with Christ's return.[86] The concept of concerning ourselves with making an earthly definable difference, sending the messages of God internally and subsequently externally, likens itself to the early Christian's perception of their mission. As this project indicates, the "God's sending" aspect must come from within MCC. "It is about the vocational framework in which humans are called to reflect God's image in the world and about the rescue operation whereby God has, through Jesus, set humans free to do exactly that."[87]

This project's definition must concern itself with MCC's mission statement, its communication by leadership, and its relationship to the *missio Dei*. The vocational framework that Wright reports must lead and inspire the leaders to consume this likeness of Christ and use this to encourage others in this endeavor. This vocational communication effort and strategy will equip the leaders to take the message to the congregation in hopes of unity and multiplication.

The term *missio Dei* encompasses both the ecumenical and evangelical aspects of God's messaging, emphasizing the classical concept of sending and the social implications of

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[85] David Bosch, *Transforming Mission: Paradigm Shifts in Theology of Mission* (Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books, 1991), pp. 9, 15. Bosch describes the facets of mission and perceptions of what mission "should" be which is still true today. The differentiation of the two camps appears to only have influence with those who have a need to theoretically separate the two. The statement concerning unity is the most salient point; God desires unity within His creation, as noted in the Bible many times. Therefore, for this document, unity will be the inspiration and the mission message that is taught to leaders will consist of the basic tenets of the *missio De*i and not from any one certain perspective.

[86] N. T. Wright, *Paul, A Biography* (New York, NY: HarperCollins, 2005), 105, Kindle Edition.

[87] N.T. Wright, *Paul,* 408.

messaging to promote unity among believers. Bosch proclaims that the Bible is the most

prominent illustration and definer of the *missio Dei* and, above all, "A search for unity should

motivate us toward a mutual and faithful hermeneutic."[88] Given these tenets, the sending for

unity in God's creation for MCC must begin within the church's leadership so that it may "be

with the hearts of men" (Romans 10:10 American Standard Version) and then dispersed to the

broader congregation.

Theological Foundations

The theological foundation is crucial to this project as it depends on understanding God's

mission, the *missio Dei*, first and then yoking it to the church's mission statement. The core

tenets of theological principles empower leaders to perceive the mission statement as an integral

component of God's broader aspirations for His sovereign domain, transcending its mere

classification as a doctrinal precept within the church. Throughout the Old and New Testaments,

prophets, significant figures, and Christ exalted God's mission. The Bible's most direct and

understood mission statement is the successful Commission Christ gave to the world in Mathew

28:16-20. Christ established a clear foundation in the successful Commission from which

churches and humanity could share and thus spread the Good News concerning God's purposes.

George Peters denotes this mission, "We may conclude that the triune God in His very being as

Spirit, light and love is an outgoing God, a missionary God, ever sending Himself in benevolent

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[88] The Free Library. S.v. *The biblical narrative of the missio Dei.n.p.*

relations to mankind, ever searching in love to bestow Himself in blessings upon mankind, and ever spending Himself in successful sacrifice to make man's salvation possible."[89] This foundational outpouring of God's love for humanity and Christ's explanation and commandment allows leaders to grasp and thus collaboratively spread God's love and salvation for all.

Embarking on the journey to align the church's mission statement with the *missio Dei* harkens to the tenets and journey of God's people in Deuteronomy 1:6-18. Wright notes, "For God's pilgrim people, moments come when God says, "long enough." There is a boundary to cross, a new phase to enter."[90] The church enters a new phase of discipleship as it begins the process of understanding, hearing, and relaying the mission statement to those in its congregation and community. Mark 16:15 interjects the need for the people to spread Christ's news: "And He said to them, Go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation." The missional themes run throughout Paul's speeches in every land visited. Romans 10:15, "How will they preach unless they are sent? As it is written, 'How beautiful are the feet of those who bring the good news of good things!' Throughout the Pauline gospels, Paul seeks ways to encourage the Jews and Gentiles to leave their biases and seek the Word of Christ. These missional calls from Paul are poignant reminders that today's church must reach out to persons of every life circumstance to fulfill the calls set before us as Christians. Romans 8:14 signifies, "For those who are led by the Spirit of God are the children of God;" led by the Spirit, Christians are called missionally to share the love of Christ to be His image bearers.

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[89] George W. Peters, *A Biblical Theology of Missions*, (Chicago, IL: Moody Press, 1972), 72.

[90] Christopher J. H. Wright, *Deuteronomy, "*Understanding the Bible Commentary Series," (Ada, MI: Baker Publishing Group, 1994), 24, Kindle Edition.

These verses are not simply coined phrases from resolute followers; they are words from Christ spoken and revered and meant to bring unity. "The Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many (Mk 10:45)."[91] In these Scriptures, the foundation for messaging God's mission is expressed. "The Church has given us the Bible and is an agent of mission. But if the mission is God's, the Church and the Bible are the results of his doing."[92] God's actions in His creation must be understood, shared, and multiplied.

<center>The Message</center>

The *missio Dei* for the church is the mission and message of redemption for humanity through the living, loving, and proclaiming of the gospel. The *missio Dei,* "God's sending," refers to God's successful mission to restore humanity to Himself and His call to humanity (Matthew 28: 18-20). God's first *missio Dei* to humanity was to "fill the earth and subdue it." The divine objective of God is to establish and bring a new heaven and earth, which holds immense significance in the context of the church's mission statement. Thus, it is essential to possess a thorough comprehension of this message in order to communicate it effectively to others.

Missio Dei is a Latin phrase used to describe the singular mission of God, which is to "send." Since the fall of humanity (Gen 3) and to save the lost in humanity (Luke 10:10),[93] God set this plan in motion as He laid creations' foundation to reconcile the world to himself through

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[91] Peters, *A Biblical Theology of Missions,* 72.

[92] Pauline Hoggarth, Fergus Macdonald, Bill Mitchell, and Knud Jørgensen, eds., *The Bible in Mission,* (Oxford, UK.: Regum Books, 2013), 16, *ISBN*: 978-1-908355-42-3.

[93] Linda P. Saunders, ed., "Missio Dei as the Grand Narrative in the Epistle to the Hebrews," Chapter 2, *Reading Hebrews Missiologically*, (Littleton, CO: William Cary Publishers, 2023), 23.

the redemptive work of Christ and the sacrifice of His Son (2 Cor 5: 18-19).[94] This message from God is fluid throughout the texts of the Bible. "Driven by the *missio Dei* and His sacrificial love, Jesus emptied himself to become one of us, Isa. 7.14; 8:8; Mt. 1.22-23; 28.20; Jn 1.14; 3.16; Phil. 1 & 2; Rev. 21.3."[95] Ezekiel recognizes this message and expresses his belief in theological themes as he offers 'glory to God' in 1:28, 3:11, 10:4, and 44:4. "Chief among the theological themes are God's holiness and sovereignty. God's purpose of glorious triumph is closely related so that all may "know that I am God."[96] Viewing these texts from a theological viewpoint, the message of God, as told by the prophets, is clear, concise, and unmistakably Holy. God's expression of His desires for humanity is to save, reconcile to Himself, and redeem.

The Scriptures offer an array of exhortations and explanations that convey the foundational truths that God, through Christ, sought to impart. The message, presented constructively and empoweringly, encourages everyone to understand the *misso Dei* and Christ's redemptive work. Therefore, as this project seeks to impart the church mission in the same salient manner, it is imperative to follow the example set by God through Christ. Integrating the theological perspectives embedded in the *missio Dei* into the church's mission statement will deepen leaders' understanding, enabling them to teach others, thus shaping the congregation's beliefs and actions around a common message, a unified purpose.

Messaging Contexts

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[94] Saunders, *Missio Dei*, 23.

[95] Pieter Hendrik Johannes Labuschagne, *Ecclesial Futures,* "Paradigm for Missiological Research" 2, no. 4, (2023), 84, DOI: 10.54195/ef13329 DOI: 10.54195/ef13329.

[96] John McArthur, "Ezekiel," *McArthur Bible Commentary*, (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 2005), 893.

There is vast evidence of Paul's contextualization of Christ's message throughout the Pauline letters and Epistles. Paul tailored his messages to each land's cultural nuances and fostered a better understanding and broader dissemination of the Good News. Biblically, the message remained constant and unwavering, but how the message was delivered changed according to the audience and specific culture. In Acts 13:13-43, Paul shared the Good News with believers of the Way, while in Acts 21: 27-22, he spoke the same message but in different tones with an angry, hostile Jewish group. Luke also utilizes contextualization in Acts 16: 1-18, describing Paul's encounters with a cloth seller and a slave woman. Paul did not hesitate to look past their life situations but cast upon them with the eyes of Christ to reaffirm the story of Christ. Moreover, Paul's continual and poignant yet contextualized message to the Roman population read throughout Romans 8 is the essence of his calling to Christ and a redeemed world. The critical significance of these events affirms that although Paul faced a myriad of ethnicities and socioeconomic and political underpinnings, his message remained the same: teach, live, and believe that Christ is the Lord of Lords.

The implications of contextualized messaging for today's church lie in its ability to effectively communicate the message while adapting to diverse audiences' cultural nuances and idiosyncrasies. This approach embodies Paul's steadfast devotion to the message while demonstrating his deep appreciation for the differences and uniqueness of individuals, beliefs, statuses, and cultures. Adapting and contextualizing messaging to achieve individual churches' mission statements, specifically MCC, is essential. Paul tailored his message to suit the cultural nuances of different lands to foster a better understanding and broader dissemination of God's

mission.[97] Paul's demonstration of clear, concise, and compelling messaging enabled him to relay God's message poignantly, regardless of the audience. Perhaps one of the greatest biblical orators, Paul's gifts, skills, and talents allowed God's message to reach peoples of many lands. These skills of relaying messages or information can be God-given and learned through ardent attention to the needs of the audience and community.[98] "It is humbling because it reminds us that we are not the initiators of the mission but only secondary messengers and participants. It is reassuring because it reminds us that we are part of the greatest mission of all, with Christ at its center."[99]

As MCC leaders learn these skills and are reminded that it is a part of this successful mission, they will also learn to implement and manifest the mission and *missio Dei* messages to the congregation. It is essential for churches, including MCC, to craft their mission statement messaging in adaptable and contextually relevant ways to ensure that the message can be understood and appreciated by its recipients, regardless of their beliefs. By doing so, churches can effectively communicate their message and connect with individuals meaningfully, promoting greater understanding and empathy among diverse communities. The MCC mission statement inhabits the ability to increase God's kingdom and fulfill it through love and mercy. Therefore, as it is essential to communicate effectively with all God's children, the mission statement requires servants to send this message in a salient manner. Clear and effective communication is critical, and attention to cultural and audience needs remains vital to ensure cogent message delivery.

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[97] Clark Nunnelly, *Pauls' Contextualization in His Speeches*,"(March 24, 2022), 2, Fellowshipdenver.org.

[98] Ibid.

[99] Labuschagne, *Ecclesial Futures,* 83.

Methods of Messaging

Many historical and biblical texts reveal that messages were dispersed through word of mouth, small gatherings, and scrolls passed from town to town.[100] In light of the diaspora, it became necessary for readers of specific scrolls and texts to possess a certain level of education that would enable them to grasp the message and relay it to others. As a result, personal communication emerged as the most commonly employed method of message delivery. Some prophets, such as Isaiah and Ezekiel, obtained their messages through direct revelation from God (Isaiah 43:19; Ezekiel 2:1) and passed them on to others. The scriptures of the Old and New Testaments illustrate the dissemination of divine messages to the diaspora through various means, such as the prophets, Christ, and other anointed individuals. This message delivery was crucial in conveying God's supreme authority to the scattered populations.

Consequently, the communication the prophets and Christ offered was divine in origin, purpose, and designated recipients. As recorded in Deuteronomy 5:27, the Israelites implore Moses to "hear all that the Lord our God will say" and then convey it to them; God guarantees that those 'who have ears to hear' will listen and obey (Matthew 13:9-16). Paul was known for delivering his message frequently in various settings, allowing him to connect with individuals who might have otherwise been unreachable. Throughout his travels and life as a Jew in Greek surroundings in Rome, he employed various communication methods. These channels were crucial in conveying God's sovereign authority to the diaspora.[101] Christ urged humanity to

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[100] Christopher C, H. Cook, *Hearing Voices, Demonic and Divine: Scientific and Theological Perspectives*, chapter 3, (Oxon, UK: Routledge, 2019), 60.

[101] McArthur, *Bible Commentary*, 810.

follow the same practice through the successful Commission, parables, and His Word. Despite the temporal distance and various methods, the Divine message remains unaltered, consistent, and enduring.

The communication strategy for this research project will encompass a range of communication methods, including one-on-one conversations, small group discussions, and correspondence, which are reminiscent of the early Christian churches. By employing these techniques, which will also incorporate contemporary technology, the aim is to amplify the dissemination of information on a broader and more prompt basis, thereby augmenting the likelihood of more individuals becoming knowledgeable about both the divine message and the mission statement of MCC. Today, like in the Scripture, the mission statement messaging will use common methods and language to effectively and efficiently convey God's mission to all willing to listen. This aligns with the *missio Dei*, emphasizing the importance of conveying the church's mission statement to all individuals, and employing adaptable and diverse messaging, much like the methods used in biblical times. As Ezekiel and Isaiah relayed messages from God to the people, communication began with the sovereign God and flowed outwardly. This messaging method is not only holy but "it appears that his communication *firstly* starts with the reality: the place they find themselves in. In this reality, the prophet *secondly* receives a word that he claims has much higher authority. These are the words of YHWH."[102] The words of the *missio Dei* and the corresponding mission statement of the MCC extort the words of God by

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[102] Johan Serfontein and Wilhelm J. Wessels, "Communicating amidst reality: Ezekiel's communication as a response to his reality," *Verbum Eccles,* 35, no. 1 (2014):1-8, http://www.scielo.org.za/scielo.php?script=sci_arttext&pid=S2074-77052014000100033&lng=en&nrm=iso>. ISSN 2074-7705.

flowing out of scripture into the minds and hearts of man and the greater populous for utilization of and in His Kingdom.

Theoretical Foundations

This study will employ the phrases and foundations of messaging and communication techniques to describe the theoretical means of transmitting messages through various channels. This course of action is predicated on the extensive growth of communication, interpretation, and information technology in recent years, thus rendering the utilization of the terms mentioned above superfluous. "Communication is technically an account of how human beings use semiotic systems, especially language, to symbolize their interactive thinking, speaking, and bodily practices, i.e., behavior as culture."[103] Given these dynamics, the messaging strategies designed to assist in delivering timely and essential information are given priority in terms of their application to sacred settings, settings that work with small groups, and strategies that employ messaging methods aimed at general but poignant dispersed. Again, these parameters are crucial in determining and describing the procedures due to the vast number of messaging strategies available today.

Strategies

Many popular websites such as Forbes, LinkedIn, and Mediaboom provide many "how to design the messaging strategy" articles and blogs. Although much of the information is practical and applicable, this strategy will utilize more scholarly information to add a higher efficacy to the study. Today's messaging strategies depend on media and virtual advertising; this project

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[103] Lanigan, *Information Theories*, 65.

study uses explicitly human interaction to further the message, thus increasing the personal

aspect of this design. In addition, successful messaging designs in today's social environment

concern advertising and marketing designs; these designs, though aimed at a similar audience,

are not necessarily aimed at producing the same ends and, therefore, will not be referred to or

utilized. Drawing upon the theoretical foundations of communication and organizational

structures is crucial to devising and implementing an effective communication strategy. By

integrating these components, the strategy is tailored to meet the specific goals and objectives of

the MCC. The chosen approach incorporates the essential elements required for success, such as

clear communication channels, compelling messaging, and a well-coordinated team. The

organizational mission aligns with the mission statement of *missio Dei* and MCC; this alignment

is demonstrated through the consistent and cohesive use of the abovementioned messaging

methods.

In addition, the strategy's design should consider the target audience's unique

characteristics, such as their preferences, needs, and expectations. This will enable the

organization to craft messages that resonate with the audience and are more likely to elicit a

positive response. By incorporating audience insights into the communication strategy, the

organization can enhance its credibility and increase the effectiveness of its messaging. Overall,

designing and implementing a successful communication strategy requires a comprehensive

understanding of the theoretical underpinnings of communication and organizational structures.

By leveraging these concepts, the organization can develop a strategy that is effective and

aligned with its goals and objectives.

Utilizing human interactions to further MCC's mission statement is critical and adds to

the dearth of research in sacred settings for messaging strategies. Although media and

advertising are popular in many venues regarding messaging strategies, adding human interactions changes and adds to the specific research design. This adaptation of messaging designs likens itself to how Christ taught and messaged. As the human element is a novel approach to messaging strategies of today, it is profuse in history and significant in the Bible.

Theoretical messaging strategies have an extensive history and biography in social, health, and industrial settings. Chief among theoretical messaging strategies are those that deal with specific information that teaches, informs, rates, flatters, and projects goods to audiences. These messages may be in the form of posters, advertisements, company logos, and tag lines and are meant to offer a glimpse of what the perceived item is or says to the consumer. Gupta et al. recognized the impact of messaging on health communication, "Strategic communication informs, educates, and influences. In addressing varied health and development issues, more targeted communication strategies are designed to make optimum use of available resources to achieve the planned results in each context."[104] The team of researchers in this noted study found that messaging for behavioral change required different strategies than advertising a product. To enable behavioral change, messages must embrace "the process of engagement and empowerment as the key precursor to bringing about the positive change."[105] Personal engagement was touted as the primary element in the successful outcomes of messaging for health concerns, especially in the 1980s AIDS crisis and, recently, the Covid pandemic.[106] As

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[104] Deepak Gupta, Jai Prakash Narain, and S. J. Yadav, "Strategic Communication in Health and Development: Concepts: Applications and Programming," *Journal of Health Management* 23, no. 1 (2021): 96, DOI: 10.1177/0972063421994943 journals.sagepub.com/home/jhm.

[105] Gupta et al., *Strategic,* 97.

[106] Gupta et al., *Strategic*, 97.

indicated in these strategies, personal engagement made the difference; similarly, this study will use personal engagement on a 1:1 basis to herald the message.

<div align="center">Models</div>

Moskowitz et al. describe the messaging strategy utilized in the automobile industry to identify and rate consumer preferences related to car branding. The research team discovered, "One key approach analyses what is already known about a product or service to create a profile for optimum positioning."[107] This finding indicates that in industry, "What is difficult, however, is the mapping of general category membership to the specific action that one should take with a particular brand."[108] These findings suggest that although people may be aware of the brand (church), positioning in the market, i.e., what it offers, may indicate its market share. In the case of MCC, the market share and messaging strategy concerns God's mission, potentially filling the hearts of all humanity. In contrast, being a nondenominational church, the belief systems (product positions) may appear loose and inconsistent. Therefore, it is even more essential for the church to identify and message the mission statement clearly and succinctly to distinguish and delineate the purpose.

Moskowitz et al. also describe the need for segmented analysis of consumer preferences. This study was an in-depth messaging and marketing analysis to determine

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[107] Moskowitz, Howard, Barbara Itty, Carly Fink, and Jeffrey Ewald. "Deconstructing Automobile Messaging: Clues to Brand Strategy." *Journal of Database Marketing* 10, no. 3 (04, 2003): 200, https://go.openathens.net/redirector/liberty.edu?url=https://www.proquest.com/scholarly-journals/deconstructing-automobile-messaging-clues-brand/docview/233337681/se-2.

[108] Moskowitz, *Deconstructing*, 203.

consumer preferences in car branding, which included variables such as car style, interior, exterior, and features in the car. Comparatively, the mission statement of MCC could hold these variables as well; discovering the components involved in the mission statement will undoubtedly influence how and why the missional purpose is messaged to whom it is shared. In the study, the messages utilized brand marketing to determine likes and dislikes and rated them accordingly. In this DMIN action-oriented study, the mission statement will be taught and practiced. As leaders implement the informational strategy to message the mission, more information will evolve concerning how the message is received and shared.

Similar to how marketing in the automobile industry performs, the mission statement strategy will involve messaging from a human perspective and not simply from branding advertisements or media. The specific differences between this study and the project lie in the human aspect of messaging versus media or advertising metrics. The analysis will result from human-to-human interventions and not simply media.

Heleta et al. report, "Communication in marketing includes all formal and informal conversations that lead to meaningful and timely information exchange between buyers and sellers (Ranjbarian & Berari, 2009).[109] Ranjnarian and Berari note, "One of the main objectives of a company is retaining the customers because loyal customers will commit to being loyal to a company and buying the product or services

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[109] E. Heleta Švrakic, & M. Arslanagic-Kalajdžic, " How Do Brand Communication and Brand Personality Shape Consumer Loyalty?" *Economic and Business Review* 25, no. 2 (2023), 119, https://doi.org/10.15458/2335-4216.1321.

offered in the future."[110] Applicable to the study at hand, these findings suggest that products offered are as crucial in messaging as is the message, making the product of this study the love of God through His mission. Therefore, all messages must employ the distinct and dynamic of the gospel and His love.

<div align="center">Communicating strategy</div>

The communication strategies in research hold critical information to assist this strategy evolve. Although there is a shortage of messaging strategies outside the church's sacred setting, scholarly articles, books, and communication strategies are aimed explicitly at mission statements and the *missio Dei.* This section will highlight communication and missional strategies that speak directly to the messaging design and its foundational purposes. These strategies display the foundations for the messaging design in this study and will offer salient research to enhance this messaging strategy. Foundations that have proved effective and scrutinized by scholarly tenets portend to be the best practice to model this strategy from and against. As these theoretical models and evidence are adapted and modified to fit the MCC church strategy needs, they will prove essential in providing foundational support for the design.

The "Organon Model of Human Communication" developed by Karl Bühler[111] is rooted in Plato's assertion in the Cratylus that language is a valuable instrument for conveying

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[110] Endang Ruswanti and Widiyanti Permata Lestai " The Effect of Relationship Marketing Towards Consumer's Loyalty Mediated by Relationship Quality, (Case study in Priority Bank in Niaga). *DeReMa Jurnal Manajemen* 11 no. 2 (September 2016): 192.

[111] Lanigan, In*formation Theories*, 65.

information about objects. This approach builds linguistic science into the logical foundation that

might combine the object being a mission statement and a tangible object. The mission

statement, therefore, is seen as a tangible subject to be described, held, and conveyed to others.
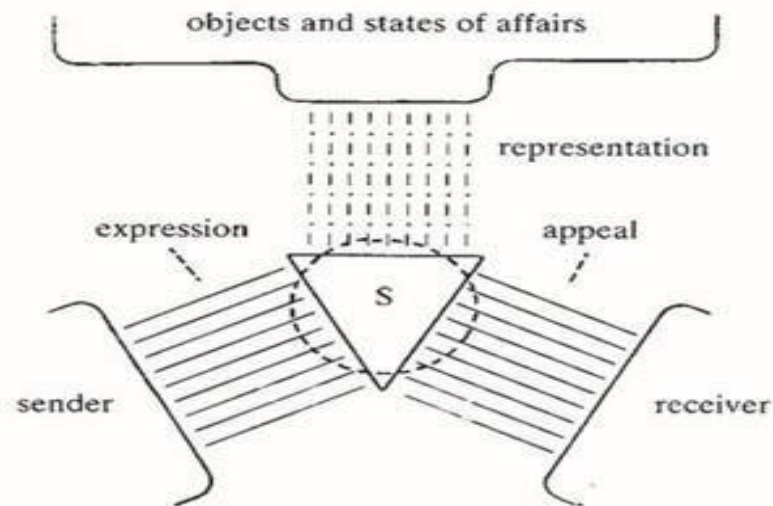

Fig. A.

This representation of the communication method of Bühlers explains how different

elements hear, see, perceive, and receive messages about objects, in this case, the mission

statement. All three variable factors enter how the message is received, as shown above in

Fig. A. How the message is received depends on all three elements.

> The circle in the middle symbolizes the concrete acoustic phenomenon. Three variable factors give it the rank of a sign [= s] in three different manners. The sides of the inscribed triangle symbolize these three factors. In one way, the triangle encloses less than the circle (thus illustrating the principle of abstractive relevance). In another way, it goes beyond the circle to indicate that what is given to the senses always receives an apperceptive complement. The parallel lines symbolize the semantic functions of the (complex) language sign [= s]. It is a *symbol* by virtue of its coordination with objects and states of affairs, a *symptom* (*Anzeichen, indicium:* index) by its dependence on the sender, whose inner state it expresses, and a *signal* by virtue of its appeal to the hearer, whose inner or outer behavior it directs as do other communicative signs.[112]

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[112] Lanigan, *Information Theories*, 65.

Christ was very aware of these three factors as He told parables often using examples that held tangible, known, common appeal or quality and salient aspects. These factors assisted His message to be easily heard and absorbed by His listeners. An example of this messaging method by Christ is the parable of the lamp in Matt 5:14-16. The object was His message of encouragement for others to see their value on earth, giving successful glory to the Father in heaven. Using a lamp was a common tool, a need, a calling to their hearts. The phrase in Matt 5:14-16 that exemplifies this, "it gives light to everyone in the house…let your light shine before others….so that it may glorify your Father in heaven," would have given the receiver a representative feeling of warmth and reassurance, it would have also appealed to their sense of common need and finally, it would have utilized the expression of glorifying God in their acts.

In order to successfully convey the mission statement and messaging strategy of MCC, it is crucial to incorporate elements of appeal, sensory stimulation, and visual and auditory factors, as previously demonstrated. Additionally, fostering a sense of belonging among believers can be achieved through inclusive language and relatable imagery. This approach will increase engagement with the messaging and promote a sense of unity and shared purpose among the members of MCC. Indeed, some participants may whist at the prospect of sharing and messaging the message statement as it may disturb the status quo. However, as Bryan Rose ascertains, "Articulating a compelling picture of God's better future and aligning everything in your church toward this calling does not have to be complicated."[113] It is hoped that through increasing education and overall knowledge concerning the fundamental importance of helping the church body and God, this strategy may be heard by those with 'ears to hear.' Crafting a well-crafted

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[113] Bryan Rose, "5 Keys to Cast (and Sustain) a Vibrant Vision for Your Church," *Insights /Church Life Ministry, Lifeway Research* 202, (Feb. 2023).

statement is an integral component in fostering mutual comprehension. It is imperative to

guarantee that all individuals meant to receive the message are in sync and concur on its intended

meaning and implication. Doing so makes the message more coherent and influential, as does the

cooperation and interplay of all parties involved in listening, receiving, and acting upon the

messages. Preparing the statement for delivery is a critical factor in achieving shared

interpretation. It is essential to ensure that all intended recipients of the message are on the same

page, agreeing on its shared intent and interpretation; when these factors are aligned, the message

becomes more consistent and impactful. As an example of this concept, the Bible serves as an

ideal model. Despite variations in translations, the entire inerrant work remains constant,

reflecting the steadfast nature of its creator, God.

     Organizational identity within the methodology of messaging the mission statement is

paramount.[114] Organizational identity asks the same salient questions of the organizations, such

as who are we, why are we, and what do we plan to do? Best practices report that every

institution develops a solid organizational identity and strategy to convey its mission.[115] It entails

effectively communicating the organization's values, culture, and beliefs through various

mediums such as culture, media, and the environment. A well-conceived messaging strategy for

mission statements considers the requirements and interests of stakeholders, leaders, and

congregants, which are essential for creating a positive impression of the organization.[116] "The

first understanding of the concept of mission defines it as the essence of a business—what

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[114] Ortiz, *Leveraging*, 236.

[115] Daniel Cochran, Fred R. David, and C. Kendrick Gibson, "A Framework for developing an effective Mission Statement," *Journal of Business Strategies* 25, no. 2 (October 15, 2008): 27, https://jbs-ojs-shsu.tdl.org/jbs/article/view/133.

[116] Ortiz, *Leveraging,* 237.

primarily characterizes its identity— which often goes beyond making a specific product or providing a specific service." Alegre et al. contend that using mission statements encourages the organizational identity to have a broader impact than those without. They also determined that it is a widely used strategic tool emphasizing an organization's uniqueness and identity. In the early 1980s, there was a growing recognition among academics, managers, and consultants that organizations needed to formulate strategies for mission statements explicitly. Since then, mission statements have become an increasingly popular strategic tool for organizations to communicate their values, purpose, and goals. [117]

Ray and Bastons[118] report the following significant findings regarding three essential components of successful mission statements. "We can explain many cases of mission development failure by considering the consistency of the mission in three dimensions. Based on these dimensions, we have identified three forms of consistency: authenticity, integrity, and coherence."[119] Authenticity is described in this article as when a company's mission is authentic or inauthentic. An authentic mission is when the company's formal mission aligns with the true intentions of the individuals, also known as the motivational mission. Consistency involves aligning the formal and motivational mission of a company. The degree of alignment determines the authenticity of the mission and is expressed by how well members internalize the formal

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[117] Inés Alegre, Jasmina Berbegal-Mirabent, Adrián Guerrero, and Marta Mas-Machuca, "The Real Mission of the Mission Statement: A Systematic Review of the Literature," *Journal of Management & Organization* 24, no. 4 (2018): 456.

[118] Carlos Rey, and Miquel Bastons. "Three Dimensions of Effective Mission Implementation." *Long Range Planning 51*, no. 4 (2018): 582-583, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.lrp.2017.07.002.

[119] Carlos Rey, and Miquel Bastons. "Three Dimensions of Effective Mission Implementation." *Long Range Planning 51*, no. 4 (2018): 582-583, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.lrp.2017.07.002.

statement. Consistency between a mission's motivational and dynamic dimensions gives it

integrity; this depends on how well people's motivations align with their daily operations and

processes.

Moreover, finally, the degree of alignment between the practical and declared missions

defines the coherence of the mission. "The three dimensions are necessary to understand a

mission as a whole."[120] Mission integrity can break down due to a lack of motivation or forcing

individuals to do something that does not motivate them. "Analyzing the mission's coherence

across three dimensions can explain why many development efforts fail. Three types of

consistency can be identified based on these dimensions."[121] The following diagram illustrates

the three dimensions of this process described.

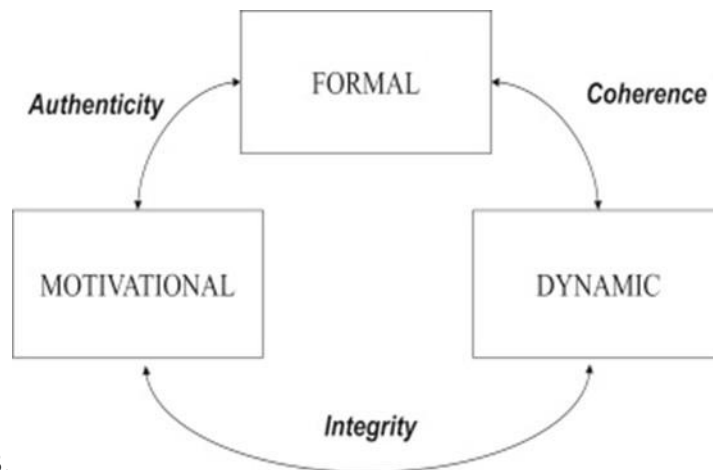Fig. B.

As shown in the Ministry Context section, a church body that struggles with all three

quadrants, transforming ideas and motivations, and increasing participation may be daunting;

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[120] Carlos Rey, and Miquel Bastons. "Three Dimensions of Effective Mission Implementation." *Long Range Planning 51*, no. 4 (2018): 582-584, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.lrp.2017.07.002.

[121] Ibid., 583.

however, given compelling leadership and reason, the church body will stand a higher success rate. MCC leadership has compelling reasons and motivations to undertake this process to assist the church in communicating the missional message to serve God better. The messaging content, methods, and strategies rely heavily on the above three components for the success of the transformative process.

<div align="center">Transformation</div>

As leaders seek to unify and incorporate transformational missional leadership into the framework of missional spirituality, they must understand the development of richness, which adds to the life of the body. "The church is missional. The church is in a permanent state of mission. Mission is at the heart of what it means to be the church. Mission precedes the church and calls the church into being to serve God's purposes in the world. "[122] Simply following organizational structures will not deliver or impart the wholeness of the missional statement or the greater mission of God. These facets must be employed in the very spirituality of leadership. Transformational leadership from the church's primary leaders can utilize the following models to further the understanding of the dynamic interplay between spiritual guidance and the development of missional congregations. As a cornerstone, transformational missional leadership propels the church towards a renewed commitment to God's mission in the world.[123] It encompasses the visionary and inspirational capacities to guide congregations through change, fostering a missional ethos that is both adaptive and impactful. Van Gelder asserts that in

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[122] Nelus Niemandt, *Dutch Reformed Church Paper*, South Africa, 2.

[123] Jeppe Bach Nikolajsen, "Missional Church," *International Review of Mission* 102, no. 2 (2013): 259-276.

understanding the transformative power of the *missio Dei*, leaders find God "as a creating God who also creates the church through the Spirit who calls, gathers, and sends the church into the world to participate in God's mission."[124] This thought aligns with Neimandt, Michael W. Goheen, and Allan Roxburgh, who report that the church is rooted in the theological insights of the Gospel and Our Culture Network (GOCN).[125] Enhanced by Jeppe Bach Nikolajsen's insights, the concept of missional integration and the practical application of the missio Dei recognizes the significant role of leadership in fostering a dynamic and thriving missional spirituality.[126] As we explore the synergy between transformational leadership and missional spirituality, we uncover a powerful catalyst for congregational growth and engagement with the ever-evolving cultural landscape. These models exemplify the greater integration of spirit and person, soul and mind, communication and thought. All these components are necessary in learning to communicate an understandable and actionable mission statement.

To fully comprehend why some organizations are successful and others are not, *Start with Why* by Simon Sinek introduces the 'Golden Circle Theory.'[127] According to Sinek, the theory is focused on the underlying justifications for organizational actions rather than the particular actions themselves. For mission-driven organizations, such as religious institutions, that aim to impact people's lives positively, this theory provides a valuable means of comprehending the mission statement and its underlying significance.

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[124] Craig Van Gelder, *Ministry of the Missional Church: A Community Led by the Spirit* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2007), 18.

[125] Missional Church Network, "History of Missional Church," 60, https://www.missionalchurchnetwork.com/history-of-missional-church.

[126] Missional Church Network, 60.

[127] Simon Sinek, *Start with Why: How Great Leaders Inspire Everyone to Take Action* (London: Penguin Business, 2019), 7-10.

The Golden Circle has three layers: the what, the how, and the why. The outside layer is what an organization does; the middle layer is how it does what it does; and the inner layer is why an organization does what it does. Most people know what they do, but very few know why they do it. Most organizations think from the outside in, but most successful organizations think from the inside out. Apple and Nike are examples of companies that start with why. Apple doesn't just sell successful computers and other electronics; they sell a lifestyle. It's the same with Nike. They don't just sell shoes; they sell athleticism. For consumers to be invested in what an organization does, the main focus needs to be on why it does what it does.[128]

In comparison, a comprehensive analysis of Professor Nelus Niemandt's perspectives on missional leadership and congregational development notes a profound emphasis on the transformative nature of missional leadership.[129] Niemandt contends that transformation serves as the driving force for both personal and institutional growth within the framework of developing missional congregations.[130] Niemandt's paper poignantly articulates how transformative leadership acts as the catalyst for change, commencing with the leader's internal metamorphosis and extending to the entire church and its surrounding context.[131] "Mission provokes in us a renewed awareness that the Holy Spirit meets us, challenges us at all levels of life, and brings newness and change to the places and times of our personal and collective journeys."[132]

A central tenet of Niemandt's philosophy is the pivotal role of the congregational minister or pastor in embodying the spirituality, values, practices, and habits indicative of a missional lifestyle.[133] Niemandt emphasizes that the leader's life is a testament to the missional

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[128] Sinek, *Start with Why, 7-10.*

[129] Nelus, Niemandt, "Developing Missional Congregations," Paper presented at the Council for World Mission Africa Region Assembly, 5.

[130] Nelus Niemandt, "Developing Missional Congregations," Paper presented at the Council for World Mission Africa Region Assembly, 7.

[131] Neimandt, *Developing Missional,* 4.

[132] Ibid., 3

[133] Ibid., 4

calling, influencing the leadership team and the congregation.[134] This process, termed "missional conversion," necessitates a profound shift in individuals toward embracing a missional calling and vision.[135] In his address to the World Council of Churches, he notes that missional leadership in churches is a matter of doing, not merely being. Missional leadership requires an embodiment of the leadership, whether lay persons or clergy.[136] Living a life in the presence of God, practicing spiritual disciplines, and discerning one's missional vocation become central aspects of this transformative journey. This model can be utilized to transcend the primary pastor and integrate into the whole of leadership in the church. One leader is significant, but the entire leadership, trained in more profound spirituality, meaning, and depth of the missional purpose, will undoubtedly be more robust. Nehemiah, successful leader as he was, knew that to accomplish the task at hand, he needed to gather, inform, teach, and disperse leaders who would not only collaborate with him but for God and, in doing so, spread the message of hope, accomplishment and ultimate faith in God. The same is true for the church today; if primary leaders encourage other leaders through discipling or teaching, the result can be tenfold what they may do alone.

Niemandt challenges the conventional dichotomy between leaders and followers, positing that the church's core identity lies in discipleship. According to Niemandt, the leader's inner transformation involves recognizing that leadership is a church function and that the church's identity is discipleship.[137] This paradigm shift dissolves traditional divisions, emphasizing shared

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[134] Niemandt, *Developing Missional*, 4-6.

[135] Niemandt, *Developing Missional,* 3-7.

[136] Niemandt*, Developing Missional, 4-6.*

[137] Niemandt, *Developing Missional*, 4-6.

values derived from intensive, relational interactions among congregation members. Success in

this organic and relational leadership model is contingent upon continuous and intensive

communication.[138]

Central to the concept of missional leadership, Niemandt emphasizes the significance of

discernment. In his perspective, a missional church is a community of believers called by the

Holy Spirit who are embarking on a journey of discernment. This journey commences with

discernment, the process's first and most critical step. This step involves interpreting the signs of

the times, heeding God's call attentively, and collectively discerning the missional vocation of

the congregation.[139] Niemandt stresses that discernment is essential for participating in God's

mission, requiring the church to be constantly on the move with a spirituality of pilgrims.

Niemandt elucidates that missional spirituality, a transformative spirituality, forms the

foundation for a missional leader's role as a spiritual guide. This spirituality is portrayed as

imperative in the journey of transformation. Niemandt emphasizes that missional spirituality is

not distinct from ordinary spirituality but is an inherent aspect of being a disciple of Jesus. The

distinction between missional spirituality and missionary spirituality emphasizes a

comprehensive perspective of spirituality as a way of life rooted in faith, hope, and love.[140]

The development of missional leaders and congregations outlines essential competencies

for missional leaders. The following are the capabilities required for effective leadership in a

missional context: dynamic leadership, the ability to reconstruct language structures through

missional hermeneutics, a coherent missional language, facilitation of cultural change, and the

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[138] Niemandt, *Developing Missional*, 64-65.

[139] 64-65.

[140] Niemandt, *Developing Missional*, 64-65.

role of a spiritual guide grounded in missional spirituality. Envisioned as bridge-builders, missional leadership empowers leadership at all levels, cultivates missional habits, embraces newcomers, and fosters a culture of experimentation and risk-taking.[141]

Missional Spirituality

Transitioning from the foundational insights of Nelus Niemandt, which emphasized the transformative nature of missional leadership and the significance of discernment and spirituality, the researcher delves into the nuanced dimensions of missional spirituality through the lens of Jeppe Bach Nikolajsen's analysis of the Gospel and Our Culture Network's (GOCN) theological work as posited by the World Council of Churches (WCC), a missional church is distinguished by a transformative spirituality that not only imparts meaning to individual lives but also invigorates and propels the collective journey of the faith community.[142] Nikolajsen's exploration of the GOCN's theological framework aligns with and expands upon this perspective, shedding light on crucial aspects of missional spirituality.[143]

Within this comprehensive understanding, Nikolajsen's examination of missional spirituality begins with the foundational concept of *missio Dei*. The emphasis placed by the GOCN on the triune God as the origin of the mission resonates with Nikolajsen's insights, stressing the intrinsic connection between God's mission and the church's role as a contrasting community in the world.[144] This alignment highlights the fundamental duality in God's action,

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[141] Niemandt, *Developing Missional*, 64.

[142] World Council of Churches, *Together towards Life: Mission and Evangelism in Changing Landscapes*. 2013, 57.

[143] World Council, *Together*, 72.

[144] World Council, *Together*, 72.

manifested through Christ, the church, and the fallen world. Nikolajsen's bicultural emphasis, akin to that of the GOCN, underscores the importance of mastering both secular and Christian languages, embodying the chosen identity of the church. Using communication and relational skills is essential for successfully implementing this model in a local context. Without these skills, the model may struggle to gain traction and prove effective in practical application. As such, it is crucial to consider the importance of these skills in developing and implementing the model.[145] Encouraging leaders to communicate the mission statement effectively to everyone, regardless of culture, can bolster the leadership team and the church's mission.

Nikolajsen navigates the GOCN's perspective on Western culture as a mission field. This perspective aligns seamlessly with the GOCN's mission to stimulate the church's witness in Western culture, acknowledging the challenges presented by the breakdown of old Christendom. Nikolajsen's integration of Douglas John Hall's insights into this paradigm shift emphasizes its significance in revitalizing the church amid a changing cultural landscape.[146]

Nikolajsen's synthesis of the GOCN's theological work enriches the study's theoretical framework by providing a deeper understanding of missional spirituality's transformative dynamics. This interplay between Niemandt's emphasis on leadership and Nikolajsen's exploration of spirituality contributes to the overarching goal of comprehensively unraveling the intersections of communication strategies, leadership, and spirituality within the context of developing missional congregations. The nuanced strategy this study profits from is the practical recommendations by Cuartas to mobilize believers in local and global contexts.

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[145] World Council of Churches, *Together*, 72.

[146] World Council of Churches. *Together,* 72.

Mobilizing the Mission

Transitioning from the exploration of missional spirituality through the perspectives of

Niemandt and Nikolajsen, the focus shifts to the practical recommendations put forth by Cuartas

to mobilize believers in both local and global contexts. Building on the foundational insights of

transformative leadership and spirituality, Cuartas offers tangible steps for missional pastors and

leaders to empower other leaders to service. Cuartas emphasizes the importance of embodying a

missional posture and adapting to local cultures while remaining rooted in biblical principles.[147]

The practical recommendations resonate with Niemandt's call for internal transformation and

align with Nikolajsen's focus on biculturalism and engaging with diverse cultures.

Cuartas' first recommendation encourages believers to recognize the divine purpose in

their specific churches, cities, and neighborhoods, fostering a kingdom-oriented perspective.[148]

This recommendation aligns with Niemandt's emphasis on recognizing leadership as a church

function and Nikolajsen's call to understand the church's task within the world. The focus on

being God's ambassador in local communities echoes Niemandt's concept of missional

conversion and Nikolajsen's idea of the church as a contrasting community.

Furthermore, Cuartas underscores the importance of embracing ethnic diversity, echoing

Nikolajsen's emphasis on the GOCN's view of diversity as a gift from God. Cuartas calls for

avoiding ethnic labeling and stereotyping, resonating with Nikolajsen's bicultural emphasis and

the GOCN's mission to stimulate the church's witness in Western culture.[149]

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[147] Victor H. Cuartas, "How to Lead a Missional Church that Expands God's Kingdom," The Pneuma Review: *The Journal of Ministry Resources and Theology for Pentecostal and Charismatic Ministries and Leaders* 14, no. 1 (Winter 2011), 77.

[148] Cuartas, *How to Lead*, 77.

[149] Cuartas, *How to Lead*, 77.

The principle of unity, a powerful theme in Cuartas' recommendations, aligns with Niemandt's emphasis on unity within the church, highlighting the consequences of not walking in unity as detrimental to reaching those in need of the Gospel.[150] Cuartas' call for intentional partnership and collaboration echoes Niemandt's bridge-building role of missional leaders, emphasizing that unity is not optional for expanding God's kingdom.

Additionally, Cuartas emphasizes the significance of prayer and intercession, aligning with Niemandt's view of missional leaders as those who teach and practice prayer. Cuartas' recognition of the transformative power of prayer resonates with Niemandt's concept of discernment as the first step in mission and the need for missional spirituality rooted in faith, hope, and love.[151]

Like Niemandt and Nikolajsen, Cuartas underscores the transformative power of intentional actions in local and global contexts. The call to recognize the divine purpose in specific cities and neighborhoods resonates with Niemandt's emphasis on discernment and the transformative nature of missional leadership.[152] Additionally, Cuartas's focus on embracing ethnic diversity and fostering unity aligns with Nikolajsen's exploration of biculturalism and the GOCN's mission to stimulate the church's witness in Western culture.[153] This multifaceted theoretical approach, incorporating insights from Niemandt, Nikolajsen, and Cuartas, enriches our understanding of the complex dynamics of cultivating missional congregations.[154]

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[150] Cuartas, *How to Lead*, 77.

[151] Cuartas, *How to Lead*, 77.

[152] Cuartas, *How to Lead*, 64.

[153] Cuartas, *How to Lead,* 72.

[154] Cuartas, *How to Lead,*77.

Moreover, these practical recommendations align seamlessly with the Organon Model of Human Communication,[155] emphasizing the intricate interplay between intentional messaging, leadership strategies, and the spiritual dimension within the development of missional congregations. The Organon Model highlights the importance of effective communication strategies as a crucial component in fostering unity, embracing diversity, and realizing the transformative potential inherent in intentional actions. This alignment reinforces the interconnectedness of communication strategies, leadership, spirituality, and active engagement within the broader theoretical framework, contributing to a comprehensive understanding of the dynamics essential for developing and mobilizing missional congregations.

The movement for congregations to embrace the missional message involves reconciling church groups to Christ rather than simply associating with familiar people. While familiarity is positive, it can also create separate church communities that challenge a Christ-centered church identity.[156] These separate identities can interfere with the creation of church unity and a united purpose. In *Ambassadors of Reconciliation,* the authors posit, "At the core of *missio Dei* lies God's initiative to enact reconciliation between himself and humanity, culminating in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ."[157] This model of church movement to one common identity through reconciliation is possible only when the body recognizes the essential focus for the church on Christ and His redemptive, reconciliatory powers and not on individuals. Church

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[155] Karl Bühler, *Theory of Language: The Representational Function of Language,* (Amsterdam, Netherlands: John Benjamins Publishing Company, 2011), xxii-xxiii, ISBN 9789027211828.

[156] Geoff Hart, Michael Ortiz, and Manuel Bohm, *Ambassadors of Reconciliation* (Littleton, CO: William Carey Publishing 2023), 113.

[157] Geoff Hart, Michael Ortiz, and Manuel Bohm, *Ambassadors of Reconciliation* (Littleton, CO: William Carey Publishing 2023), 113.

bodies that do not inherently grasp this concept may remain in a stasis pattern, lacking not only

missional understanding and growth but missing the God-given point of the resurrection.

Churches are called by God to move within and outside the church walls, demonstrating the

reconciliatory power in the mission by exhibiting the principles and ways of living taught by

Christ. Disseminating the mission statement to congregations establishes channels for facilitating

the advancement of this initiative by imparting and elucidating the fundamental requisites for its

progression. The MCC mission statement messaging and incorporation is called to contain and

exhibit the key elements highlighted by these authors while also drawing upon, adapting, and

implementing the strategies observed in the cited models. The use of any model is subject to the

context and purpose of the task at hand, and it may not be possible to find a single model suitable

for all situations. However, specific models can provide empirical and observational examples

that may be adapted to fit the specific needs of the MCC mission statement messaging strategy.

Conclusion

The literature review discusses various components that influence the design of the

mission statement strategy. Communication, perceptions, adaptation to change, leadership styles,

and how the *missio Dei* interacts within the constructs of a mission statement each succinctly

knit this project together as an action-oriented research study. The theoretical and theological

frameworks delineated how each historical and contemporary fact elucidates the project's

feasibility and lends credence to its existence. Through the iterations within this document, the

research will lead to a strategic plan that will respond to the needs of the problem, purpose, and

thesis statements. As MCC has no messaging strategy for the church's mission statement, this

plan will aim to develop and implement such a plan for leaders to learn and then pass on the information to the larger congregation through personal interactions. This messaging strategy training will employ personal interactions as the primary training method and encourage novel, personal interactions for the messaging strategy. The novel approach taken for this training and implementation relies on the ability of leaders to undertake this endeavor with complete faith that God and the Holy Spirit will interact with them as they progress in sharing His Word and the church's mission with others, resulting in a more knowledgeable and unified congregation under one missional purpose.

Although the issues at MCC are somewhat problematic, this strategic messaging plan will attempt to alleviate and inform the MCC leaders of how the mission statement can serve as a valuable and directive tool to share the church's missional purpose, thus improving unity and sharing a common ecclesiastical goal.

Throughout its history, the MCC has faced numerous challenges that have threatened to erode its foundations. These challenges include a decline in attendance, changes in pastoral leadership, and concerns regarding generational differences. While the congregation has been able to manage these issues, there is a palpable tension within the church regarding its purpose and how it fits within the diverse nondenominational congregation. The presence of varying belief systems, communication differences, generational issues, and relational challenges has also contributed to discord and misunderstanding, further complicating the church's mission and understanding of its purpose for God. Despite these challenges and lack of clarity and effective communication of the mission statement, the MCC congregation remains committed to its faith, seeking ways to overcome these obstacles, continuing to serve others and follow Christ together.

MCC requires the development of a messaging strategy for its leadership to fulfill its divine mission of ministering to others through a unifying and well-known mission statement. MCC's theological tenets and constitution align with God's Word; however, acting and offering others this knowledge falls short; thus, there is an urgent need to teach leadership how to understand, communicate, and demonstrate God's call to a designated, messaged mission statement. Messaging strategies vary depending upon the above factors as well as the overall purpose of the message. As this messaging strategy is implemented, the design will continue to be refined and will encompass speaking to the broader community about the mission and purpose of MCC. Messaging strategies that encourage innovation and creativity while upholding the *missio Dei* will more likely speak to the needs of the MCC congregation and have the potential to make a more significant impact.[158] To create a messaging plan that truly embodies the values of MCC, one must consider an array of essential elements; this calls for integrating diverse communication strategies and theories, carefully selecting engagement styles tailored to the target audience, considering relationships and alignment factors, and identifying leadership responsibilities that will effectively convey the message in alignment with the chosen methods.[159]

By thoughtfully considering all of these factors, it is possible to create a messaging plan that is both effective and impactful, accurately reflecting MCC's core values and mission. Learning the mission statement of MCC and the *missio Dei* will assist the leadership in leading and disseminating information to the larger congregation. Leaders can enhance their ability to

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[158] Mary T. Lederleitner, "Navigating Leadership Challenges in a Polycentric World," *Transformation* 38, no. 3, (2021): 251, https://doi.org/10.1177/02653788211030304.

[159] Urick, *Generation,* 92.

convey the mission statement effectively by undergoing training that enables them to comprehend, interpret, and communicate it effectively. Such training can equip them with the necessary knowledge and skills to articulate the mission statement accurately. Darling et al. describe communication in this manner, "We affirm that the meaningful, fulfilling, unifying relationships God intended before the beginning of time are truly possible. When Jesus communicated, he did so in ways that consistently connected him to his audience."[160] Learning how to communicate the missional message as leaders enables them to effectively touch the lives of others and follow in the footsteps of Christ. Matthew 28:18-20 encourages humanity to make disciples and share His love and message; although present, the mission statement for MCC needs this messaging strategy to share His love and message with others actively.

As the implementation of this messaging strategy unfolds, the iterative refinement of the design will be pivotal. This iterative process also involves continuous evaluation and adjustment, ensuring the messaging plan remains adaptive and responsive to the church's dynamic needs and the ever-changing landscape of communication technologies. By embracing an agile approach, MCC can proactively address emerging challenges and capitalize on new opportunities for outreach and engagement.

Ongoing research should meticulously consider the church's diverse populations and cultural nuances, tailoring messages to resonate authentically with each unique segment. This diligent approach ensures that the messaging remains relevant, relatable, and culturally sensitive, fostering a deeper connection with the audience. It is essential to incorporate the latest information and delve into the most effective methods to ensure that this endeavor effectively

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[160] Darling et al., *Connecting Like Jesus*, 22.

disseminates the timeless message of God. By doing so, the church can extend its reach to a wider audience, positively impacting more lives within the church and the broader community.

Further investigation is indispensable to enhance the methodology employed to promote the church's endeavors. The current research must consider the diverse populations and cultural nuances present within the church to effectively deliver the message to the intended audience while preserving the authenticity and urgency of the message. It is of utmost importance to incorporate current and relevant information and delve into the most effective methods to ensure that this endeavor effectively disseminates the message of God; by doing so, the church can reach a wider audience and positively impact more lives in the church community.

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

Introduction

This chapter presents a detailed overview of the intervention design, outlining the systematic approach employed to implement the research study in the field. This chapter provides a comprehensive understanding of the intervention design and identify the data to be collected. This section offers a comprehensive guide to executing the study, focusing on participant descriptions, demographics, strategies, training, and implementation structure. This section outlines training as a foundational step toward the implementation phase, including planned collaborative activities and the research's logistical aspects. Detailed procedures for participant engagement and the inclusion of critical appendices provide a clear roadmap for executing the intervention, ensuring a sound and ethically guided field research endeavor. The training materials incorporate a range of visual aids and multimedia components. Specifically, the training leverages integrated experiences such as PowerPoint presentations, participant workbooks, and educational videos, offering a comprehensive and engaging learning environment. The Intervention Design serves as a critical bridge between the theoretical framework and the practical execution of the study, underscoring the commitment to methodological rigor and the pursuit of actionable insights.

Intervention Design

Purpose

The intervention design aims to increase the knowledge and understanding of the mission statement to identified members of the leadership team and Elders. The focus will be on specific

communication methods to ensure accurate and faithful conveyance of the message and mission statement. Participants are required to spread the message and mission statement to individuals and ministry leaders for whom they are responsible.

The leadership team comprises fifteen to twenty leaders in various church capacities: financial, missionary, evangelism, administrative, property, community outreach, elder outreach, worship direction, musical direction, membership, general operations, and Christian education. The Elders comprise twelve persons positioned to uphold the spiritual tenets of the Word of God and the church constitution and to supervise and uphold the pastor and the leadership team. The Elders function as adjuncts to the lead pastor and offer various services with the pastor when called up, such as bereavement, illness, dying, and visitation; they also offer the Sacraments of communion each week in services. These two bodies of leaders are the primary decision-makers of the church and lead the congregation; they are elected every two years by congregational vote.

This DMIN action-oriented project aims to involve the leadership team and Elders in study and implementation, expecting these individuals will support the mission and aim of the project in helping the church comprehend and convey MCC's mission statement. Furthermore, this project is hoped to foster greater unity and a deeper connection to God's purpose. As noted in the literature by Alegre et al.,[1] an effective mission statement plays a crucial role in guiding an organization and ensuring alignment with its purpose. The intervention seeks to address the identified need for increased knowledge and awareness of the mission statement within this leadership group, aligning with the findings of Ortiz,[2] who emphasizes the role of the

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[1] Alegre, Inés, Jasmina Berbegal-Mirabent, Adrián Guerrero, and Marta Mas-Machuca. "The Real Mission of the Mission Statement: A Systematic Review of the Literature." *Journal of Management & Organization* 24, no. 4 (2018): 456.

[2] Ortiz, *Leveraging*, 237.

organizational mission statement in communicating identity, distinctiveness, and purpose, especially during challenging times like the COVID-19 pandemic. The interventions will teach, demonstrate, practice, and evaluate the strategy's efficacy and measure its effectiveness. This process involves a comprehensive analysis of the study's design and execution to assess the impact of the interventions. It is essential to ensure that the study's objectives and desired outcomes are completed.

The intervention equips the Elders and leadership members with the tools to communicate the mission statement adeptly, drawing inspiration from the principles outlined in *Connecting Like Jesus*.[3] The multifaceted approach, including oral presentations, video training, and workbooks, aligns with best practices in leadership development, as discussed by Bishop et al.[4], emphasizing the importance of leaders worth following. In summary, the intervention is strategically designed to empower those in leadership positions with the knowledge and skills needed to amplify the awareness and articulation of the MCC mission statement, aligning with both scholarly literature and the specific context and needs of the church.

Tasks

To enhance the Monticello Christian Church's (MCC) commitment to its mission, this intervention design outlines a multifaceted approach to deepening the understanding and effective communication of its mission statement among its leadership, with a focus on the

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[3] Darling et al., *Lead Like Jesus,* 22-24.

[4] Cameron T. Bishop, Nina Esaki, and Melanie E. Taub. "Learning to Be a Leader Worth Following." *Human Service Organizations: Management, Leadership & Governance* (2023): 1-12.

leadership team and Elders. The following tasks' purposes are to foster a deep understanding and dedication to the church's mission statement, which is in line with its theological principles and constitution. These activities aim to facilitate effective communication and implementation of the mission statement among participants in the congregation. Through targeted training, knowledge assessments, teaching, communication practice, feedback mechanisms, and collaborative planning, participants will deepen their knowledge of theological tenets and how the *missio Dei* connects everyone to God. Doing so will create a ripple effect, impacting the broader MCC community in a constructive manner, reinforcing the church's commitment to its mission, and generating unity under a shared missional purpose.

A pre-training knowledge assessment will be administered to assess the baseline understanding of the mission statement and associated information for the study to measure the training effectiveness. This assessment will be repeated post-training to quantify the knowledge gained during the intervention. A crucial aspect of the intervention involves empowering leaders to spread the acquired knowledge to their respective groups within the congregation. Their effectiveness in articulating the mission statement will be monitored and evaluated to ensure successful knowledge transfer.

Weekly feedback sessions will facilitate open communication and provide a safe environment for reviewing and remediating skills. These sessions will provide insights into challenges, valuable reflections, and overall experiences teaching the mission statement and its messaging components. The feedback gathered will help to refine the training approach and materials for future training and continuous improvement.

Collaborative group discussions will enhance the weekly training sessions by offering opportunities to solve difficult communication situations, answer skills needs, and provide

additional development activities. The aim is to align these initiatives with the mission statement while considering cultural nuances for effective communication and engagement. Following the completion of the intervention, a comprehensive evaluation will be conducted to assess the overall impact on the learned and exhibited understanding of the mission statement and the broader congregation's awareness. This evaluation will provide valuable insights into the success of the intervention and areas for further improvement.

<div align="center">Timeline</div>

This researcher has designated the semester of February 2024 as the target timeframe for implementing this project, as it aligns with the church calendar and the ongoing new leader training. Project realization dates will first depend upon Institutional Review Board approval. To obtain Institutional Review Board approval, the researcher must complete the computer-based Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative and submit an approved prospectus. The Institutional Review Board will review the application, prospectus, and any additional documents, such as questionnaires, and either grant approval or modify the application. This researcher's Institutional Review Board approval can be found in the Appendix.

The intervention design for MCC will occur over an eight-week timeline, allowing four weeks for intensive instruction and four weeks for implementation, remediation, and skill evaluation. The intervention design carefully integrates training sessions, teaching, practice, implementation, and collaborative planning for congregational outreach. This comprehensive plan is structured to facilitate knowledge transfer and practical application among the church's leadership.

This researcher is coordinating with the Lead Pastor, Rev. Benji Riddle, who has been a mentor and support during this process. The 2024 New Year promises to bring several changes to the church. He has stated it would be an ideal time in the church schedule and is planning to begin this study since leadership teams will initiate new policies, procedures, and onboarding training in January.

Upon submitting the project to the IRB for approval, this researcher will notify Rev. Riddle and the leadership team. Upon approval of the project, this researcher will begin implementing it by meeting with Rev. Riddle and key leaders to begin the interview process for participation in the study.

This 60-minute training program is scheduled every Friday at 11:00 a.m. in the church library/conference room. The room is approved for this research study at the designated time. The researcher will provide snacks and serve them during sessions. This study format takes a lunch-and-learn approach, which allows for nourishment and a congenial atmosphere. As all leaders are previously known to each other, it is expected that the environment will be friendly and warm for discussion and learning.

The study commences with personal interviews of each participant to assess willingness, knowledge, and availability for scheduled training. The first session will include a pre-training knowledge assessment, establishing a baseline for the leaders' understanding of the mission statement, the *missio Dei,* and communication skills. Weeks two through four incorporate teaching and practice sessions, encouraging leaders to learn and practice newfound knowledge within the training group. This practical application reinforces the learning process and ensures active engagement. Weeks five through eight include participant implementation, focus group discussion, and planning sessions focusing on congregational outreach initiatives aligned with

the mission statement. These sessions acknowledge the significance of cultural, relational, and generational nuances for effective communication and dissemination of the mission. Upon the conclusion of the eight-week training program, a post-training knowledge assessment is administered in the eighth week to evaluate knowledge retention. A specialized focus group session is conducted during this period to provide participants with constructive feedback and facilitate reflection on their learning and implementation experiences.

The study timeline, included in the session outline and the participant workbook, is easy to read for participant planning and designed to accommodate the busy schedules and commitments of the MCC leadership team. In conclusion, the results promise to yield a more profound connection between the mission statement, the missional purpose of MCC, leadership, and the congregation and provide interventions to equip and multiply the missional ministry.

Place

The intervention activities will occur in the MCC library conference room. This dedicated space provides an optimal environment for immersive learning and collaborative discussions, aligning with contemporary literature on effective organizational training. The library is a joint meeting room in the church with ample seating, table space, and audio, video, and presentation space. Although there is no need for childcare in the leadership team at present, should this arise out of family need, this researcher will recruit a childcare provider from the in-house Daycare program to assist with the childcare needs. The church has childcare space available and staff willing to perform extra duties; therefore, this need is without issue.

This location provides a conducive environment for focused training sessions. The library at MCC offers a comfortable and quiet setting, fostering an atmosphere conducive to learning

and discussion. Participants can engage in the training comfortably and effectively by utilizing this familiar and central space within the church premises.

Participation Eligibility and Screening

The eligibility criteria for individuals participating in this study are: participants must hold the position of leader within the MCC fellowship and express a willingness to engage in the project actively. Additionally, they should demonstrate an awareness of the need for increased knowledge and understanding regarding the church's mission statement. Prospective participants must be open to gaining this knowledge through specific and targeted methods, such as oral presentations, video training, and workbooks. Participants should be both able and willing to utilize the knowledge they gain to instruct the groups they are responsible for, contributing to the multiplication of awareness and the effective articulation of the mission statement, thereby creating a heightened sense of unity for the church.

The interview process will serve as a time to screen participants for time conflicts or issues beyond this researcher's control. The interviewing involves acknowledging their faith in God, adhering to confidentiality in the session, and demonstrating Christ-like actions and mindset. Given that all twelve leaders meet these criteria, they are considered suitable participants for this study.

Participant Population

The participant population for this study comprises one group, with a maximum enrollment of 12 participants, who are Elders or hold primary leadership positions within the MCC fellowship. Participants have been vetted by the church as faithful followers of Christ,

spiritually sound, and able to guide and direct the church in matters of spiritual wholeness and commitment to the messages of Christ and the Bible. Recruitment will be conducted personally, directly reaching out to the identified participants. Participant interviewing will begin upon approval of the IRB and the required training for this study.

Ethical Considerations and Confidentiality

The intervention design is firmly anchored in ethical considerations and confidentiality to safeguard participants' well-being and maintain the integrity of the study. Before participation, each participant will give a consent form via email or printed, depending on their preference. These forms align with recognized ethical research standards. The consent will cover the nature of the study, procedures, risks and benefits, identity protection, and how to withdraw from the research. As noted, the participants will be notified that they can remove themselves without repercussions. This transparent consent process will effectively communicate the study's purpose, procedures, and potential risks and benefits while underscoring the voluntary nature of participation. To ensure confidentiality, stringent measures will be implemented to safeguard participants' identities and responses throughout the intervention. Pseudonyms will be systematically assigned to participants, preserving their contributions' anonymity and safeguarding the confidentiality of sensitive information. Stringent data storage practices will be applied, limiting access solely to authorized personnel. The study will meticulously adhere to MCC's and Liberty University's ethical guidelines, reflecting a steadfast commitment to upholding the church's and University's values and respecting participants' autonomy. The rigorous adherence to established ethical principles will be pivotal, emphasizing transparency, respect, and the participants' overall well-being. All confidentiality will also bind the researcher

during and after this study, and responses during groups will only be subject to the purposes of this study and not for any other purpose.

Steps for Training

The structured training process for MCC leaders ensures a comprehensive and engaging learning experience. The initial step involves interviewing participants to determine their acceptance of the study. Subsequent to the interview process, participants will be required to sign the informed consent form, underscoring their voluntary involvement and understanding of the study's purpose and procedures. Following this, participants will receive all necessary training materials encompassing written resources, video content, and workbooks, contributing to a multifaceted learning approach.

Active and collaborative participation in the training sessions is a crucial aspect of the process. Leaders will attend each session punctually and actively engage in the learning process. This engagement involves asking questions, participating in discussions, and reflecting on provided questions to enhance their understanding, aligning with the participatory approach recommended by Darling et al.[5] The unique feature of this training relies on the dynamic facilitation and the collaboration of leaders to unify under one purpose and thus learn how to pass that on to congregants effectively. Leaders gaining a working understanding of the power of collaboration and unification under one purpose is the ultimate success factor in this study.

Another vital element of the training involves the completion of pre-and post-tests, as well as evaluating the participants' comprehension of the MCC mission statement and its alignment with the *Missio Dei*. This assessment serves as a measure of the training's impact and

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[5] Darling et al., *Connecting Like Jesus,* 22.

effectiveness. Additionally, participants will be assigned workbooks containing exercises and activities that reinforce their understanding of the MCC mission statement and facilitate the integration of this knowledge with the *missio Dei*, as outlined by Ortiz.[6]

The ultimate objective of the training is for participants to share their newfound knowledge with others within and outside the congregation. This knowledge-sharing component aims to multiply awareness within the congregation concerning the MCC mission statement and its connection to the m*issio Dei and* enable multiplication through increased message sharing.

During Week 1, titled "Understanding MCC's Mission Statement," the session will begin with participant and facilitator introductions and an in-depth introduction to the study and workbook. Following this initial step, the session will transition to administering a pretest concerning the MCC mission statement and the *missio Dei*. The pretest serves as a diagnostic tool and a foundation for tailoring subsequent training sessions to address specific knowledge gaps identified during this initial assessment. This sequential approach ensures that the participants formally express their willingness to engage in the training before delving into their baseline knowledge diagnostic assessment.

During week one, PowerPoint and oral presentations and several instructional components are listed in the workbook. The session also includes reflective discussion on the significance of aligning with God's mission, fostering open dialogue and collaborative exploration among the leadership team. Week 1 serves as a pivotal starting point, introducing key concepts and initiating a continual self-assessment and improvement process for leaders at MCC.

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[6] Ortiz, *Leveraging the Organizational*, 237-238.

In Week 2, "In-Depth Look at MCC's Missional Purpose," participants will engage in a series of targeted interactive activities to facilitate a comprehensive understanding of the components of the MCC mission statement. The session will commence with a brief overview, followed by a guided activity and video presentation, facilitating small-group discussions. This discussion will encourage participants to analyze and interpret the wording and significance of individual elements in the mission statement. Discussion and collaborative problem-solving will enhance engagement among participants. The session will conclude with a plenary discussion, allowing participants to share insights from the activities and clarify any questions or concerns. These activities aim to create a vibrant and participatory learning experience, ensuring that participants grasp the nuances of the mission statement in a practical and applicable manner.

In the third week of the training program, "Interfacing the Missional Purpose for Greater Unity," participants will explore the theological foundations of the *missio Dei* and its direct correlation with the MCC mission statement. This pivotal week seeks to deepen the participants' comprehension of how the church's mission intricately links with God's overarching purpose. The program begins with a comprehensive presentation on the theological roots of *missio Dei*, unraveling historical perspectives and fundamental theological concepts. The learning plan also lists central themes such as God's redemptive plan, holistic salvation, and the Church's role in God's mission.

Each week, the program involves a crucial aspect of comparative analysis, wherein participants systematically evaluate and compare the essential components of the MCC mission statement with the foundational tenets of *missio Dei*. This systematic analysis helps to understand and explore how these concepts interact, thus providing new insights and perspectives to participants. Group discussions will dominate the discussions, including

theological reflection sessions and engaging with excerpts from essential texts related to *missio Dei* as listed in the resource portion of the workbook. These reflections serve as a basis for later discussions on the practical implications of the MCC mission. Furthermore, group discussions will provide a platform for participants to share insights gained from the comparative analysis, allowing them to express perspectives on how the MCC mission statement aligns or may require adjustments considering *missio Dei.*

This immersive forum aims to fortify the participants' theological foundations for the mission statement, offering a robust framework for understanding and aligning the MCC mission with the broader *missio Dei*. The interactive activities to encourage thoughtful engagement and facilitate meaningful discussions among the leadership will foster a deeper connection between the church leadership and the overarching mission of God.

Week 4, " Communication, Alignment, and Challenges," will focus on practical applications and implementation, providing participants with valuable insights through real-world examples. Communication issues and barriers, as well as components that impact communicating the missional purpose, such as relational, generational, and adaptive challenges, are included in the syllabus. The sessions will engage participants in role-playing scenarios, actual or fictitious, specifically designed to enhance their communication skills related to the MCC mission statement. Participants will experience various case studies that reflect the complexities of aligning church activities with the *missio Dei*. Through these practical exercises, participants can apply the theoretical knowledge gained in previous sessions to real-life situations, fostering a deeper understanding of the practical implications of the mission statement. The role-playing scenarios will allow participants to refine their communication

strategies, ensuring effective articulation of the church's mission and fostering alignment with God's mission.

In Weeks 5-8, "Implementation Sessions," the focus will shift towards implementing the information gained by interacting with congregational members. Leaders who have participated in the prior sessions will apply the knowledge they acquired by effectively conveying the missional purpose to specific church community members. This communication should be conducted with sensitivity and clearly articulate the missional message for the selected members. Leaders will be offered four primary messaging techniques: personal social media, personal interactions, cards or mail, or small groups. Should the participants introduce any novel messaging approaches in this study, the researcher will consider them with due diligence. During this implementation period, participants will be requested to share their preferred messaging strategy and report weekly on the progress, success, or failure during weekly group discussions. These findings will be maintained throughout the implementation phase and analyzed and reported at the conclusion for evaluative data. At the conclusion of the project, these results will be shared among the group and the general board for possible utilization in the church's strategic plan. Reverend Benjamin Riddle has alerted this researcher of his intentions to utilize this information in his yearly plan and proposals to help message the mission statement to improve unity in the church. Participants will continue to meet weekly at the designated times for debriefing, remediation of training, and to discuss challenges and solutions to communication. Each session in weeks 5 through 8 will provide ample time for group reflection, prayer, and dealing with concerns participants may have encountered in the implementation phase.

In week eight, participants will participate in a general focus group to delineate ongoing concerns, victories, and suggestions for the study. In the final session, a post-test will be

administered to evaluate the participant's comprehension of the mission statement, spiritual

progress, and communication proficiency in conveying the message. This evaluation process is

crucial for gauging the effectiveness of the intervention and identifying areas for improvement;

at the conclusion of this study, the researcher will collect all data and analyze the results.

Following the evaluation, participants and the lead pastor will discuss strategies for sharing the

knowledge they have gained within the broader congregation. The study emphasizes developing

practical approaches to articulate the mission statement effectively and encourage a collective

understanding among church members. This final week will be a capstone to the training,

ensuring that participants acquire knowledge and actively contribute to disseminating and

reinforcing the church's mission. In addition to improving the mission statement's knowledge,

awareness, and messaging, spiritual growth among the participants is expected as they reach

from their known comfort zones and into new positions of communicating God's Word and

desires for the church. During the implementation phases, a significant focus will include

encouraging participants to relay and share how God moves within their lives and duties in this

research endeavor. As the participants share their spiritual growth experiences, the Holy Spirit is

expected to continue to move through their intellect, personhood, and will to express His will for

this endeavor.

Resources

The training program will utilize several resources to ensure its effectiveness and

participants' engagement. A pre-and post-test and an eight-week student-style paperback

workbook will be administered to assess and subsequently teach participants about the MCC

mission statement and the *missio Dei*. This assessment and workbook combination will serve as

valuable tools in gauging the impact of the training and the extent to which participants have

absorbed the fundamental teachings. The workbook, designed for note-taking and reflection,

provides participants with a tangible reference for ongoing study and application of the training

content. Additionally, selected educational videos from the MCC video library and internet

resources will complement the training sessions, providing a multimedia dimension to the

learning experience. These videos will cover topics related to the importance of church missions,

communication styles, messaging methods, and those aligning with the program's objectives.

These resources contribute to a comprehensive and engaging training experience, fostering a

deeper understanding and articulation of the MCC mission statement, its connection to the *missio*

Dei, and the opportunity to create unity in the church by participating in this messaging research

endeavor.

<div align="center">Data Collection Tools and Protocols</div>

The data collection tools and protocols for this study captured the insights and responses

of the participants and ensured a thorough and accurate assessment of the training program's

impact. Protocols from Liberty University and the IRB will be followed per the instructions and

ethical considerations dictated.

The primary tools include a comprehensive pre and post-test, an eight-week paperback

workbook, a written recording of discussion groups and interviews, and participant observations

and comments during training sessions. The pre and post-tests will be administered at the

beginning and end of the training program to measure participants' baseline knowledge and track

changes throughout the intervention. This structured assessment includes questions that align

with the critical components of the MCC mission statement and the *missio Dei.* Training and

interviews will be recorded as part of the research methodology to ensure the reliability and

accuracy of the information gathered. However, understanding the importance of respecting the privacy and confidentiality of participants, this methodology element will proceed upon obtaining their explicit permission. This process will help capture all the details discussed during the sessions and enable a comprehensive, efficient, and reliable data analysis.

The eight-week workbook is a supplementary data collection tool, allowing participants to record notes, reflections, and responses to the training content. The workbook is structured to coincide with the weekly training sessions, providing participants with a guided framework for engagement and facilitating a deeper understanding of the material. During training sessions, the researcher will conduct and gather participant observations to capture qualitative data on participants' interactions, engagement levels, and overall responses to the training. The researcher will document these observations, providing valuable context and insights into the participants' experiences. The researcher will diligently record observations of group discussions and comments throughout the training sessions and any changes in attitudes, perceptions, relationships, and communication styles to further this research endeavor. This researcher will gather information during and after the four-week implementation phase regarding how participants messaged the mission statement to congregants and the corresponding responses. Participants will be expected to report weekly during group discussions on their progress in these endeavors; this researcher will offer them support for any material or spiritual support needed during this implementation period. If individuals have innovative or unconventional techniques for communication, the researcher will take these into account when introducing the messaging methods during the implementation phase of the project.

A consent form (IRB) will also ensure that participants are fully informed about the study's purpose and willingly agree to participate. This form will outline the study's objectives,

the nature of participation, and the assurance of confidentiality. Combining these data collection

tools and protocols aims to create a comprehensive and triangulated understanding of the

participants' knowledge acquisition, engagement, and overall experience throughout the training

program.

Evaluation Procedures

A reasonable integration of qualitative methodologies characterizes the evaluative

framework underpinning this phenomenological study. It seeks to assess the efficacy of the

training program's impact on participants' comprehension of the MCC mission statement and the

missio Dei. Although this thesis project identifies a specific goal of increasing participant

knowledge and communication skills related to conveying the mission statement, this research

method also seeks to allow the data to uncover new processes needed to teach, assimilate, and

convey the information provided in the training.

Process coding utilized for the comments, remarks, and workbook includes reading

comments, assigning codes, searching for personal quotes and participant experiences, and

preparing the end report, which is complete with graphs and narrative analysis. The study will

include a rigorous analysis of pre-and post-test scores, information collected from the workbook

responses, and discussion inquiries, affording a lens to discern the extent of knowledge

acquisition over the training regimen. The assessments and information collected will reveal

changes in participants' understanding and help evaluate the mission statement's effectiveness.

Utilizing a constructivist grounded theory approach,[7] this research endeavors to extend the thesis

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[7] Kathy Charmaz, "The Power of Ocnstructivist Grounded Theory for Critical Inquiry*" Qualitative Inquiry*, 23, 1 (2017), 34.

by offering data that will facilitate more in-depth analysis and uncover novel insights that will

undoubtedly warrant further investigation.

The qualitative facet of the inductive evaluation will manifest through participant

observations and discussions recorded during the training sessions and any subsequent project

discussions. Information will also be collected and analyzed from the participants' workbooks

and collated into data collections until categorical qualities have been exhausted for analysis.

This qualitative strand aims to encapsulate the nuanced dynamics of participant interaction,

engagement levels, and overall responsiveness to the program's content, as well as provide

insight into the success of methods of communication provided in training. Moreover, the

infusion of open-ended inquiries within the workbook's post-test and reflective prompts will

furnish an avenue for eliciting rich qualitative data on participants' subjective perceptions and

experiential dimensions. This culmination of data will impart to this researcher critical

information to further assist leaders in effectively messaging the mission statement of MCC, thus

encouraging a unified purpose for God.

To fortify the methodological underpinnings of this qualitative evaluative design,

scholarly tenets from the works of Bishop et al.[8] and Ortiz[9] are judiciously incorporated. The

evaluation aspires to deliver a comprehensive and nuanced elucidation of the training program's

outcomes by drawing from their erudition in assessing the efficacy of interventions and

harmonizing organizational communication with mission statements. Through the triangulation

of qualitative data, these evaluative initiatives endeavor to furnish scholarly insights that

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[8] Bishop, *Learning to Be a Leader*, 4.

[9] Ortiz, *Leveraging the Organizational*, 237.

transcend the immediate context, thereby advancing the broader discourse of the messaging of mission statements in ecclesiastical settings.

CHAPTER 4: RESULTS

Introduction

The present research project focused on designing and implementing a messaging strategy for the Monticello Christian church's mission statement to its leadership team members and Elders. Specifically, the aim was to educate leaders about the mission statement's tenets, how it relates to the *missio Dei*, and how to communicate this message to the larger congregation effectively. This study functions on the premise that although it is designed and implemented by human influence, God and His authority vested by the Holy Spirit anoints this study to bring it to fruition.

Discussion

Initially, some participants expressed skepticism regarding the capacity of the mission statement and the *missio Dei* to facilitate a missional purpose change within the church culture. However, as the training continued, they developed a stronger sense of personal conviction and insights into the church's missional purpose. As the study began, the results appeared dour as the participants were required to learn about terms such as mission statements, the *missio Dei,* communication techniques, and adaptation to change. The assertion from study participants that acquiring new knowledge was problematic or unimportant was prevalent; yet, as the weeks of training advanced, the data indicated a noticeable enhancement in comprehension and awareness of the MCC mission statement, as well as related novel concepts and information.

Data from group discussions and workbook notations also indicated shifts in attitudinal, perceptual, and cognitive insights and how those insights could assist in fostering change. The participants also displayed a marked increase in their connection to the *missio Dei* and how it

could help the church prosper in the missional purpose set forth. The study immersion led to many furtive discussions that implemented positive change and possibility thinking and communication among members. Consequently, they gained a deeper understanding of the *missio Dei* and the interconnectedness of the mission statement within the faith community. The implementation results display a varied outcome, as discussed.

The mission statement messaging educational training was a resounding success. However, as the implementation sessions progressed, the implementation phase of the messaging encountered increasing difficulties. Some of the challenges arose from critical remarks made by congregants toward participants, and indications of limited understanding of discipleship surfaced. Some participants described feeling too shy or not possessing the proper skills to communicate the deeper meanings of the statement to others. Despite the presence of participants offering numerous noteworthy ideas to spread the statement during the implementation phase, it appeared that some of these explicitly centered around the Lead Pastor and the researcher (Outreach Ministry Director) rather than adopting a more inclusive approach involving multiple parishioners and a multiplication effort. The participants were willing to offer ideas and distinguish methods to communicate the mission statement in the congregation; however, some participants reported thinking it was "a job for the Pastor." The relevance of this factor becomes evident within the context of this research project, as it exemplifies a situation in which the leaders, who were initially bestowed with the authority to convey the message personally, relinquished that authority in the face of mounting difficulties. The relinquishing of this authority to message was due to several variables, including ineffective responses from congregants that sometimes bordered on insulting the leaders, feelings of shyness or feelings and fears of being overbearing, and concerns about being too forceful or domineering in their interactions with

fellow congregants. It is unclear whether or not these actions were real, imagined, exaggerated, or actual. However, these factors remain essential parts of the reported data set. Understanding a more profound sense of discipleship may also be a root cause for these hesitations; most of the leaders are physically active in the church but voice overall uncomfortable feelings regarding speaking to others on more profound issues. Future research will delve into the topics of discipleship training and other needs that require attention.

Leon Coetsee wrote a compelling article on the facets of change in organizations. He posits that the elements involved are not distinct dichotomies but rather a continuous spectrum from which to gather knowledge and gain a deeper comprehension of the process for participants, ultimately leading to a more favorable outcome.[1] The research on organizational change by Coetsee presents vital perspectives, such as the psychology and causes of change habits, events, and anticipated results from the strategies employed. The aspects Coetsee identifies are evident in this research with regard to how individuals engage in, perceive, and either resolve or withdraw from the process.[2] Although participants initially expressed eagerness to learn and implement, their enthusiasm waned as the implementation phase continued, as did their actions to fully engage in the implementation phase of the project.

The results of this study displayed an increasing understanding of the MCC Mission Statement and its connection to the *missio Dei* with each training session conducted. The data presented in Table 1 revealed that four individuals demonstrated a pessimistic viewpoint regarding the training, the importance of mission statements, and their capacity to understand

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[1] Coetsee, Leon D., "From Resistance to Commitment." *Public Administration Quarterly* 23 (1999): 204.

[2] Coetsee, Leon D., "From Resistance to Commitment." *Public Administration Quarterly* 23 (1999): 204.

and implement the messaging strategy. However, with individualized attention provided during the classes and supplementary guidance throughout the learning modules, these individuals exhibited a significant improvement in their knowledge, awareness, and communication skills, which enabled them to convey the MCC mission statement. At the onset of the training program, a cluster of individuals classified as 'questioning' in the table can be attributed to their uncertainties regarding their goals, skills, and the prerequisites of the training. However, as the training program progressed, these individuals exhibited significant improvement in their abilities and felt adequacy in messaging the mission statement. By the end of the fourth session, the majority of participants had become quite proficient in the group study sessions in conveying the mission statement. Those who expressed positive remarks demonstrated their eagerness to acquire knowledge, ability to collaborate, and enthusiasm for participating in the proposed study. It is essential to acknowledge that all participants willingly volunteered for this study, and despite a few expressing negative views, they all exhibited enthusiasm in aiding MCC's mission statement messaging research. Upon completing a comprehensive examination of the study results, six key elements were determined to be influential factors in the emergence of "pessimistic and questioning" remarks.

The analysis must take into account these crucial issues, as they can be addressed by means of pre-training and the augmentation of knowledge for subsequent investigations. By adopting a proactive stance, it is possible to reduce the impact of these components and achieve more favorable results. Listed below are the six reasons:

a. Anxiety
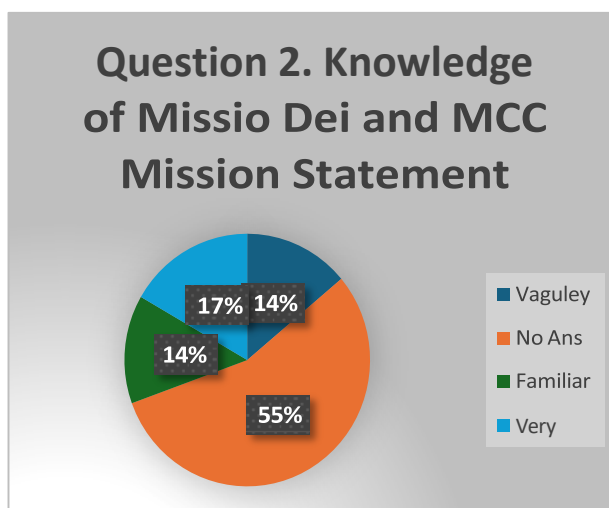b. Lack of confidence
c. Lack of knowledge
d. Personal bias

e. Questionable commitment to the tasks and study
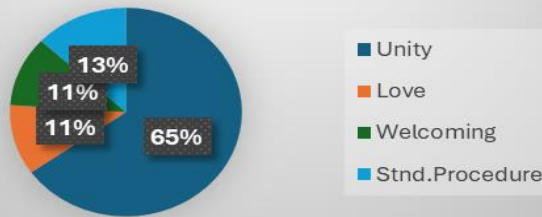f. Inability to fully comprehend the information and associated tasks

      Training modules also included question-and-answer periods, which garnered supportive comments and results from most participants. As seen in each session's charts listed below, the positive comments grew while the pessimistic and questioning comments decreased. The achievement of overall success can be attributed partially to the collegial relationships that were cultivated within the group. The discussions were person-focused and characterized by a supportive learning environment, which contributed to the overall success of the training portions of this research study. The following data describes the comments in surveys, discussions, learning sessions, and post-survey.

Figures 1-5. Graphs on Interview questions and comments

Questionnaire Results from Initial Session of Mission Statement Training

Question 1. Purpose of Mission Statement.

- Church Goal
- Lead to Christ
- Love ea other
- Welcome others

10% 10%
10%
70%

Question 2. Knowledge of Missio Dei and MCC Mission Statement

- Vaguley
- No Ans
- Familiar
- Very

17% 14%
14%
55%

Question 3. Why communication matters

Question 4. Alignment of Missio Dei and Mission Statement
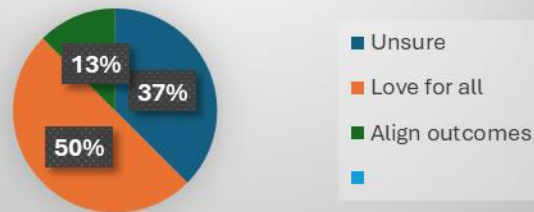
Question 5. Components of MCC Mission Statement

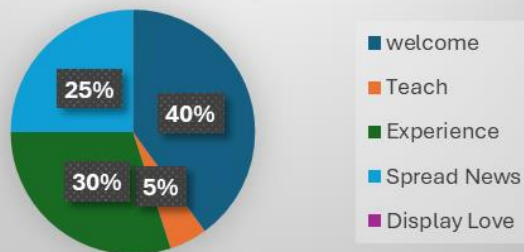Table 1. Collective Results Group Training and Implementation

Session #		Positive	Questioning	Pessimistic
1	**Introduction**	7	9	4
2	**Purpose**	13	11	3
3	**Interfacing**	14	9	4
4	**Communicating**	9	3	0
5	**Implementing**	8	2	2
6	**Implementing**	10	1	1
7	**Implementing**	6	4	2
8	**Implementing Conclusion**	8	2	2

Table 2. **Comments of Group discussions during training sessions 1-4.**

	Session #	Understand	Questioning	Pessimistic
1	**Introduction 1**	7	9	4
2	**Definitions 2**	13	11	3
3	**Interfacing 3**	14	9	4
4	**Communication 4**	9	3	0

Table 3. Comments of Group Implementation training sessions 5-8

Session #	Met	Partially	Unmet
Session 5	8	2	2
Session 6	10	1	1
Session 7	6	4	2
Session 8	8	2	2

Figure 6 . Summary of comments sessions 1-8

Participant Comments from Training and Implementation Sessions 1-8
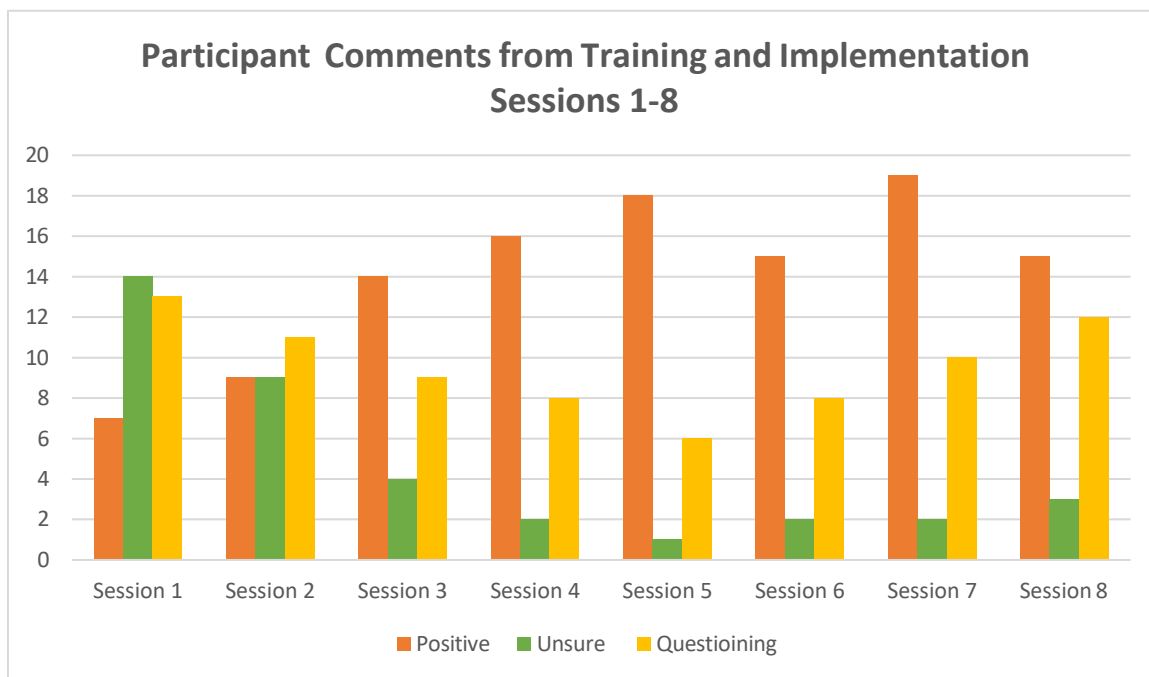
Data Analysis

The data depicted in the graphs reveal a notable improvement from the inception of training sessions to the culmination of session 4. Nonetheless, sessions 5-8 exhibit disparities in the actualization and execution of the mission statement messaging approach. These discrepancies are primarily due to the fact that although the participants were still engaged in the process, they acknowledged that achieving a complete church body "buy-in" will necessitate time to assimilate, educate, and assist the congregation in fully embracing the mission statement. Indeed, the training sessions for the messaging strategy from 1-4 were highly effective; however, the implementation stages from 5-8 appeared to be inconsistent. Although these aspects were captivating and merited further examination, it became evident that conveying the mission

statement to all proved to be quite challenging at times for the leaders. The section of the paper

delving into the ministry context disclosed that this church had traditionally been resistant to

change. Although the church leadership had requested congregants to carefully reflect on and

accept the revised mission statement, the diverse range of opinions expressed suggested that a

more comprehensive strategy would be essential to execute this process effectively.

The pre-test data from this study revealed that participants generally provided positive

feedback; however, their understanding of the mission statement and missio Dei was limited.

The post-test results, as well as the data from the training sessions, showed a substantial

improvement in these areas. The application of the inductive inquiry process facilitated the

analysis of the discussion, workbook, and group discussion data (comments), which were

subsequently classified into three subcategories: Positive, Questioning, and Pessimistic. These

categories represent both the knowledge base and the variations in attitudes. Similarly, the

implicational data from the implementation stages were analyzed using three categories, Met,

Partially, and Unmet, to describe the measures.

According to the charts presented earlier, the descriptors demonstrate a significant

improvement in the knowledge and understanding bases. However, the implementation of this

knowledge varied. As previously mentioned, this data indicates that although the participants felt

confident in the classroom setting regarding their knowledge, attempting to educate the

congregation proved to be a challenge. The participants expressed feelings of frustration,

inadequacy, and patience, ultimately concluding that educating the congregation was a task

better suited for the Pastor, Outreach Ministry Director, and administrative staff.

The educational model employed in this study demonstrates promising effectiveness.

Designed to encompass various aspects of the mission statement and missio Dei, the model

successfully facilitated comprehension and understanding. According to the data, the implementation phase necessitates a more extensive and long-term plan to achieve its intended objectives.

The findings of the data showcase several themes, including a substantial number of favorable comments, a limited quantity of inquisitive comments, and a minimal number of pessimistic remarks. When examining the implementation phase of this study, the feedback varied based on the individual, the method they employed, and their perspective on the effectiveness of the messaging. This research delved into the extensive process of devising a messaging strategy that would allow leaders to serve as change agents for the church body. Alongside the training elements, discrepancies were uncovered in domains such as individual outlooks, personal prejudices, theological considerations, and a general deficiency in self-assurance when it comes to engaging with a broader audience outside of the study cohort. It is essential to acknowledge that the aspects under examination in the research study were not part of the initial interview process. Future research should consider these factors, such as personal profiles and viewpoints, to gain a deeper understanding of how to empower congregational leaders to convey their messages effectively to the broader church community.

Summary of Results

The results of this study revealed a transformative journey for the leadership team members and Elders at Monticello Christian Church (MCC). Initially, some participants expressed skepticism about the mission statement's ability to effect a missional purpose change within the church culture. However, as the training progressed, there was a noticeable shift in their understanding and appreciation of the mission statement and the missio Dei. This was

evidenced by a significant enhancement in their knowledge, awareness, and communication skills, which empowered them to effectively convey the MCC mission statement to the larger congregation.

Group discussions and workbook notations indicated a positive change in participants' attitudes, perceptions, and cognitive insights. The participants' connection to the missio Dei deepened, facilitating a stronger alignment with the church's missional purpose. Despite initial challenges, such as anxiety and lack of confidence, the participants demonstrated substantial growth in their ability to understand and implement the messaging strategy. This growth was further evidenced by the supportive comments and results from the question-and-answer periods included in the training modules, which contributed to the overall success of the study.

The educational training sessions were highly effective, with most participants becoming proficient in conveying the mission statement by the end of the program. However, the implementation phase faced challenges, including critical remarks from congregants and participants' feelings of inadequacy in communicating the mission's deeper meanings. These difficulties highlighted the need for a more inclusive approach involving multiple parishioners rather than relying solely on the Lead Pastor and Outreach Ministry Director. Despite these obstacles, the study's findings underscore the importance of continued efforts in discipleship training and the need to address personal biases and theological considerations to fully empower church leaders in their roles as change agents.

To summarize this chapter, this study demonstrated a marked improvement in the leadership team's understanding and communication of MCC's mission statement. The positive shifts in attitudes and perceptions, along with the challenges faced during the implementation phase, offer valuable insights for future efforts. By addressing the identified issues and fostering

a supportive learning environment, MCC can continue to build on this foundation, ultimately

leading to a more cohesive and mission-driven church community.

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION

Introduction

Messaging the mission statement for Monticello Christian Church is a strategy designed to bring heightened awareness, education, meaning, and purpose to the MCC's mission statement and purpose, thus enabling unity for the church as it functions under one missional purpose. This project included leaders finding new awareness in learning to grasp new concepts, change old perceptions, and communicate on broader avenues. As the leaders involved progressed through the various learning and implementation steps, this researcher reminded them that change is inherent in Christian formation and transformation, both individually and for the church body. God calls humanity to transform for His glory and the growth of His Kingdom; therefore, as the MCC leaders underwent this study and implementation process, they were reminded that the process is not merely for human endeavors but for God's creation. 1 John 3:14: "We know that we have passed out of death into life because we love the brothers and sisters. The one who does not love remains in death."

Research Implications

Garnering support for change in a congregation contently set in stasis is not a task for the spiritually weak leader. Throughout this research project, the presenting issue has been a lack of knowledge and a disparity in how some church leaders and congregants view a need to expand their knowledge and view the mission statement and why it holds successful promise for God's Kingdom. Stasis is a metaphorical element of apathy, a subject yet to be discussed and would be held for further discussions and research.

Contentment and stasis appear to be breeding grounds for apathy in congregations until they realize the walls have fallen around them, as found in this study. As indicated by the results, despite some progress in comprehending the mission statement and the *missio Dei*, the study participants faced ongoing challenges in dealing with personal biases, fully grasping God's mission, and effectively conveying a broader outward-focused mission as opposed to the previously inward-focused church approach.

The implications of these research findings extend to the ongoing training of leadership teams within religious and other organizations. The study demonstrated the need for additional information and education to enable leaders to effectively adapt to change, support others, and confidently share knowledge with their peers. One such educational approach could involve discipleship programs that provide both knowledge and practice. Furthermore, as churches and organizations delineate mission statements and missional purposes, these findings can inform and provide insight into marketing and congregant knowledge of the church and polity and improve the overall understanding of church tenets. Through the acquisition of new knowledge, the church cultivates a stronger sense of identity, enabling a more seamless adaptation to change.

The results of the study indicated that although the participants were able to observe some positive changes in the church congregation, their attitudes and behaviors had little impact on the overall outcomes of the study regarding congregational acceptance. Moreover, the congregation is unaccustomed to learning new ways of thinking about how they serve the world outside of the church. The leaders reported having experienced a notable lack of enthusiasm from the intended audience. Since the primary objective of the study was to facilitate leaders in achieving a more profound understanding and communication techniques that could lead to

potential improvements in the church by messaging the mission statement, the leaders found themselves dismayed at times by this lackluster reception. As the primary objective of the study was to design and implement a messaging strategy related to the mission statement mobility, the observed trend of apathy among those who received the message was noteworthy. This facet was evidenced by the participants' accounts in group discussions and their responses in the workbooks. The secondary results revealed a detrimental impact that stagnation might have on the church's ability to actively participate in God's mission, both within and beyond its walls. However, the study revealed that merely a fraction of the recipients who had received the message of the mission statement were able to comprehend its depth and significance. The findings of the study reveal that the church must embrace an innovative and evolving approach in its mission strategy to ensure its active participation in God's mission and to maintain its relevance in contemporary society while keeping to biblical principles.

The implications of this study are extensive and serve as only the beginning of further exploration. Khaw et al. report, "Practitioners are likely to be able to effectively diagnose and improve the willingness to change when they understand the need for change."[1] Through this research process, it has been increasingly evident that the need for change is noticeable, but thewillingness and known abilities to engage fully in its execution are uncertain.

Since the message will be discussed through sermon series, classes, and discussions, the research must continue to drive the church towards the full manifestation of advancing God's Kingdom on earth rather than simply waiting for heaven. Interestingly, some of the comments

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[1] Khai Wah Khaw, Alhamzah Alnoor, Hadi AL-Abrrow, Victor Tiberius, Yuvaraj Ganesan, Nadia A. Atshan, " Reactions towards organizational change: a systematic literature review," *Current Psychology* (2023) 42:19137–19138, https://doi.org/10.1007/s12144-022-03070-6

expressed a sense of unrest, combined with disdain, confusion, and dissatisfaction, all while

asking, "Why is someone not doing something about this?" and "Why isn't our church growing

in unity?" As Gavin Adams writes, "Change moves people from a state of known to a place of

unknown. Known is comfortable, and the unknown is far from it."[2] This study has led to

questions from congregants concerning the need to change paradigms or systems, with some

asking, "Why do we need to change? What is wrong with the way things are now?" These

verbalizations and lack of comprehension of the need for a deeper theological understanding of

the *missio Dei* must continue to be a dogmatic theme if the church is to maintain and prosper.

Despite the abundance of research on this topic in motivational journals, investigations have

recently commenced regarding sacred settings. However, old habits and thought processes

appear to take precedence unless faced with dire consequences.[3]

Ever present in this study appeared to be the attitude of "I want to do what I have been

doing for years, so why should I change?" The perspective mentioned above and sense of stasis

position the possible actions of the Holy Spirit through Christ in a precarious situation. Christ's

mission was to bring about a significant transformation in the existing state of affairs. He did not

come to make us "happy and contented" but rather to challenge both leaders and followers to

bring about a change in the world for the glory of His Father, to make "heaven on earth."

The conventional discourse around what salvation, love, and mission mean offers a fertile

ground for further exploration and exegesis. If the objective is to alter the conventional

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[2] Gavin Adams, "The Difference between Change and Transformation" March 31, 2021, https://www.Gavin Adams - The Difference Between Change and Transformation.

[3] P. Pratap Kumar (2013) Resistance and Change—Religion in the Middle: Assessing the Role of Religion in Social Transformation in South Africa, Journal of Natal and Zulu History, 31:2, 116-129, DOI: 10.1080/02590123.2013.11964198.

understanding of the significance of mission statements and positive actions for churches and to demonstrate how they fulfill the *missio Dei*, the research implications give way to opportunities for growth. Gavin Adams succinctly theorizes, "This is a tension: Order produces resistance to change because change provokes disorder in the organization." The tension he refers to, if not directly met, can lead to stagnation and ultimately watching the proverbial forest burn. The parable of the sower, as recounted by Jesus, serves as a metaphor for the importance of fertile ground for seed growth. In the context of the church, this analogy emphasizes the necessity of creating an environment that is receptive to new ideas and concepts. A church community that lacks readiness or willingness to accept new ideas jeopardizes its potential for growth. The introduction of new ideas and understandings requires a receptive and prepared congregation, without which such efforts may prove fruitless. Therefore, it is crucial to cultivate an environment that is conducive to growth in order to maximize the potential for new growth and development. As the opportunities for growth and understanding present themselves, the fertile ground may make way for a more fruitful harvest of the mission statement and church unity.

A portion of the training within this research project aimed to educate, inform, and inspire innovative approaches to conveying the mission statement of the MCC. As the church continues to wrestle with the topics above of love, missions, salvation, outwardly reaching, and the meaning of the words "all people," a discerning process must continue that encourages and allows the church to realize its greater mission fully.

In order to comprehensively adapt and configure the training to a broader audience, the information and concepts presented must represent an understanding of the population, culture, and belief systems. These entities will determine the future utilization of the messaging model and more securely affect the success of the processes. Consequently, it is of utmost importance

to approach the model and training with meticulous care by carefully examining all pertinent aspects of the research, its implications, and the individuals involved. It is also critical to deliberate on the findings with a judicious and cautious approach before arriving at conclusions that might exclude options for future research.

Research Applications

It may prove advantageous for church leaders to receive supplementary training to develop comprehension of how their mission statement influences the purpose they serve in relation to God's mission on earth. This training may be a blueprint for other church leaders to invest in with the hopes of bringing more fidelity and understanding of mission statements. When training leaders to effectively comprehend and execute a mission statement, it is essential to concentrate on the learning capabilities of participants, instructional models, and cultural and theological knowledge. This research application will prove to be beneficial in organizations and religious institutions that demonstrate a solid commitment to the change process and have leadership that wholeheartedly supports transformation. The study demonstrated efficacy in enhancing participants' awareness and comprehension of the training modules. However, it is vital to note that the implementation phases may require a lengthier timeframe to facilitate a more profound understanding of the potential for change and to address obstacles that may impede progress. The expansion of this model's applications would be advantageous in realigning ecclesiastical objectives and more clearly delineating the mission-oriented goals of a church. Leaders seeking to envision transformative changes in their institutions must display an elevated awareness of the components involved, particularly when utilizing this model, as it can

be tailored to accommodate organizational needs. However, the multitude of prevailing precedents may either facilitate or hinder the intended advancements.

Gavin Adams notes, "Change makes old things better, while transformation replaces the old with the new. Transformation moves from individual behaviors to organizational beliefs, values, and culture."[4] According to the article, the notions of change and transformation impact organizations in varying ways. The implications of this study exemplify this notion, as the training and execution can result in modifications and substantial transformations when the objectives are explicitly established from the outset. Churches confronted with declining attendance and desiring to implement damage control measures may find it more advantageous to analyze the root causes rather than immediately adopting this model, which necessitates a broader and more profound transformation of systems. This realization may be appropriate for any organization that chooses to change basic systemic structures, such as mission statements, and especially those that link with higher levels of calling, such as the *missio Dei.*

Research Limitations

This study has identified specific limitations that could potentially affect the learning and comprehension processes of the mission statement for churches. The impact of these limitations may vary depending on the circumstances and population involved. Although this research took into careful consideration a variety of instructional models and possible cultural distinctions, cultural and theological differences revealed a more significant influence than initially anticipated. Although the MCC is a non-denominational church, it became evident during

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[4] Adams, "The Difference between Change and Transformation," np, https://www.Gavin Adams - The Difference Between Change and Transformation.

research training sessions that not all belief systems of participants were compatible with one another. Despite the corporate agreement among members for participation, it was clear that individual beliefs varied greatly regarding the meaning of the mission statement. The conclusions drawn from this study highlight the necessity of gaining a more profound understanding of the cultural, theological, and educational contexts in which a mission statement is disseminated to training participants and the wider public. A thorough understanding of these factors would enable the development of more effective and meaningful training programs that take into account the distinctions among the intended audience.

During the group training process, it was apparent that adaptability in messaging methods and alignment with the message are essential components for achieving success, and their recognition as critical factors is crucial for avoiding limitations that may hinder success, as seen in some of the data presented. A prime example of the adaptation process in this research training involves the following: during the training, adjustments were needed to find better accommodation of the material comprehension style for some participants. It was expected that there would be questions about the material, such as defining new words like *missio Dei* and the varied concepts of God's Kingdom; however, the lack of depth, width, and variety of knowledge bases was unexpected. The limitations of various cultural nuances and differences came to light when discerning the words of the church's mission statement; some participants voiced concerns about "love for all people." Although this tenet is throughout the New Testament, 1 John 3:14 notes, for example, "We know that we have passed out of death into life because we love the brothers and sisters. The one who does not love remains in death," some participants voiced concerns that they did not know how to love persons different than themselves. Discussions proceeded longer than anticipated around the word "all," what the word " love" means, and the

impact it might have on the church body. These discussions, on occasion, featured serious and occasionally divisive viewpoints; nevertheless, the researcher diligently strived to uphold a biblical standpoint in these circumstances. Upon the conclusion of the sessions, unanimous agreement could not be reached on this matter. However, leaders solemnly pledged to engage in prayerful reflection on the biblical imperative of Christ to exhibit love toward humanity and propagate His message of hope, grace, and mercy. This topic can be viewed as a limitation as it is especially poignant in today's society; divisions in churches are experiencing discord among believers related to those behaviors, thoughts, and dogma that dictate actions in various denominations. Through intensive discussion and prayer, these issues can be addressed and provide fertile soil, but without such, they provide a significant limitation to the research and successful mission statement messaging. The problems can be addressed in healthy manners versus ignoring, hoping to either maintain the status quo or simply 'drawing lines in the sand' without exegesis of the Holy Scripture. In addressing divisive issues, religious leaders must seek guidance from Christ's leadership and teachings. Throughout history, the early Christian community faced a diverse array of ethical, social, and political perspectives, and these challenges persist today. Therefore, it is essential to carefully consider these matters and engage in prayerful actions to promote unity and align with the church's mission statement.

Further limitations exist in the age, ethnic, and cultural factors.[5] Khaw et al. describe these findings by noting, "This resistance is the outcome of change recipients' cognitive and behavioral reactions towards change."[6] Despite accounting for these considerations, this study's results demonstrate that cultural and comprehension differences, as well as adaptation to change,

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[5] Khai Wah Khaw, et al., "Reactions Towards Organizational Change," 19138.

[6] Khai Wah Khaw, et al., "Reactions Towards Organizational Change," 19138.

are significant factors that must be considered when designing mission statement training and implementation of new systems for churches. The findings of this study highlight the need for a more nuanced approach to training design that takes into account the diversity of cultural backgrounds, theological belief systems, and knowledge represented within the church community.

Certain limitations to the research conducted also include the extensive depth of training material. Given the diversity of personal perspectives, it is recommended that the training period be extended. If the objective is to equip leaders with the requisite skills to communicate their mission effectively, they must develop strong communication and reconciliation skills that enables the message to be heard. Prior to training, it is highly recommended to conduct a comprehensive survey of each individual's theological background. This approach ensures that the results obtained are reliable, accurate, and concrete. Such a proactive measure, when implemented, can help ensure that training is practical and tailored to the specific needs of each individual. In addition, communicating mission statements to congregations, especially those with minimal awareness of the existential implications, necessitates a comprehensive understanding of the topic prior to the commencement of training to enable effective transmission of the given mission.

The study suggests that certain limitations necessitate participants to be firmly established in their commitment to the study and possess an open approach to new concepts, even those that may challenge their theological beliefs, cultural background, and personal biases.

In conclusion, this study underscores the importance of recognizing the impact that cultural, theological, and personal bias may have on the outcome when designing mission statement training for churches. This study was also subject to certain limitations due to its focus

on MCC leaders aged 51 to 94. It is plausible that this age restriction may not be representative of other churches, which may have implications for discussions, training, and the necessity of pre-training or surveys. Accordingly, given the age range of the participants, the limitations of varied theological belief systems and cultural differences are comparatively restricted in scope. It is noteworthy that the ethnic diversity at MCC is nonexistent, as it is a church predominantly comprising Caucasian members. There are no individuals of other races, resulting in a lack of direct ethnic differences or linguistic diversity. While this does not directly limit the results of this study, it may have an impact on further studies in more diverse populations and studies.

Future Research

This research study offers a foundation for additional research into the potential for achieving church unity through a single, unified mission statement; it is essential to explore other factors, such as apathy, church hurt, and the underlying causes of widespread dissatisfaction, before implementing such a significant change.[7] The outcomes of this research have far-reaching implications that go beyond the confines of the church and are applicable to any organization looking to create training programs that cater to the diverse needs of its constituents. By leveraging the findings of this study, organizations can develop effective training initiatives that address the varied requirements of its diverse population.

Future research should also investigate the influence of personality traits and adaptability to change on the outcomes and level of participation that may be affected. Research studies such

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[7] Roy K. Smollan, "The multi-dimensional nature of resistance to change," *Journal of Management & Organization*, 17, No. 6, (November 2011), 828, DOI: 10.1017/S1833367200001206.

as this possess considerable potential to yield beneficial outcomes, provided that they conduct a comprehensive evaluation of the organization's readiness for change. Furthermore, it is suggested that a pre-training survey be undertaken to assess critical factors that influence participants' willingness to learn new concepts. Such an approach may yield findings that are highly relevant and impactful. The underlying reasons for this lack of willingness are undoubtedly linked to deeply ingrained prejudices, religious traumas, and conflicting theological convictions.

Moreover, factors such as congregational profiles, which encompass theological concerns, cultural biases, spiritual readiness, and the leadership's overall disposition not only to comprehend but also to initiate and see change to fruition in a successful and meaningful manner are essential considerations. These issues may arise from a number of sources, including theology, personal experiences, and cultural factors. The more profound questions for future research that emerge from this study suggest apathy, unresolved grief, church hurt, various theological belief systems, and a lack of motivation in the church require a more extensive investigation. The disparities between apathy and overall discontent in the church are essential aspects for future consideration when planning to evoke a new messaging strategy for the church's mission statement. Apathy is a strong builder of walls, and in order for any new change to have efficacy, those walls must be broken down, just as Joshua fell the walls of Jericho through God's guidance and power.

It is essential to investigate strategies that could enhance and improve the church's efforts in education, media, and pastoral preaching in order to ensure that the mission statement is being fulfilled effectively. The understanding obtained through this research may assist in shaping future endeavors to tackle these challenges and enhance the effectiveness of the church's mission

through future educational strategies and methods. Conducting a cultural-theological learning survey prior to initiating any training may prove beneficial in ensuring a more seamless process. Nevertheless, this model may not be suitable for a congregation unwilling to confront substantive interpersonal issues, adaptation to change, communication skills, and personal biases, or explore the more profound contextual matters related to faith-based systems that exist without proper in-depth investigation and training.

Conclusion

The Monticello Christian Church (MCC) has a rich history of ministering to the community of White County, Indiana, with a steadfast commitment to the inerrant Word of God and the tenets of biblical doctrine. However, recent years highlights significant challenges in communicating its mission statement and fostering a unified sense of purpose among its members. The lack of a clear messaging strategy leads to confusion and disagreements within the congregation, undermining the church's ability to effectively engage with the broader community and fulfill its mission. This DMIN action research project aims to address these challenges through developing and implementing an effective messaging strategy that aligns the church's mission statement with the broader *missio* Dei, thereby promoting unity and clarity within the church.

The historical context of MCC, including its transition from the Disciples of Christ denomination to a non-denominational status, the impacts of the pandemic, and recent leadership changes, compounds these challenges. The church's rich history and long-standing traditions, while providing a strong foundation, also pose obstacles to adopting new concepts and methods.

The diverse congregation, comprising various denominational backgrounds and generational families, adds complexity to the church's dynamics. This diversity, although a strength, requires careful and sensitive handling to ensure that the mission statement is understood and embraced by all members.

The current mission statement, revised in 2023 to "Love Jesus, Love People," aims to encapsulate the church's core values and purpose in a concise and impactful manner. However, without a well-rounded communication strategy, this mission statement remains ineffective. The study particularly underscores the importance of clarity, competency, cooperation, and effective communication in disseminating the mission statement. Investigating successful messaging strategies from various non-denominational churches and scholarly sources allows the project to design a tailored strategy for MCC that addresses its unique challenges and leverages its strengths.

Ultimately, the successful implementation of a powerful messaging strategy enablesMCC to fulfill its mission more effectively, fostering a more cohesive and unified congregation. By aligning the mission statement with the *missio* Dei, the church can enhance its engagement with the community and provide clear guidance to its members. This transformation is essential for MCC to continue its legacy of faith and service, adapting to contemporary challenges while remaining true to its foundational principles. Through this project, MCC can become a beacon of hope and faith in White County, bringing the love and compassion of Christ to all who seek it.

As with all training, in most organizations, training works when individuals are willing, open, and ready for new information to change or alter perspectives. Although initial surveys of the participants in this research indicated these tenets, it became apparent that the participants did not hold firmly to those ideologies for change. This result underscores the imperative for

conducting a meticulous evaluation of prospective research participants, encompassing their learning capabilities, personality traits, adaptability to change, and dedication to the mission and pursuit of a positive result. Furthermore, a subsequent research study needs to delve deeper into the elements of apathy, reasons for dissatisfaction, and potential approaches to mitigate these difficulties.

The findings from this study hold deeper significance for churches today, particularly in the areas of collaboration, generational differences, and the practice of listening as emphasized by Paul in scripture. The data underscores the necessity for churches to cultivate a culture of inclusivity and cooperation, recognizing the diverse backgrounds and perspectives within their congregations. Addressing generational differences with sensitivity and fostering open, respectful dialogue, churches have the capability to further strengthen their community bonds and enhance their collective mission. This study serves as a call to action for churches to prioritize effective communication and active listening, ensuring that all members feel valued and heard.

The significance of this study extends beyond MCC, serving as a beacon of hope for churches striving to navigate the complexities of modern ministry. The focus on collaboration, bridging generational gaps, and listening deeply, as Paul advocates in scripture, highlights the transformative power of effective communication and unity within the body of Christ. By embracing these principles, churches can foster environments where every voice is heard and valued, leading to richer, more meaningful community life. This study reinforces the profound impact that a clear, shared mission can have on a church's ability to serve God's kingdom, ultimately producing a bountiful harvest of faith, hope, and love.

As an embodiment of hope, the findings of this research further indicate that Monticello Christian Church (MCC) yields abundant "fruit for the harvest" in His kingdom through refining and communicating the mission of God. Through dedicated efforts in crafting a clear, compelling mission statement and messaging strategy, MCC shows its aim to inspire and mobilize its congregation towards a unified, purpose-driven future. This endeavor not only enhances the church's internal cohesion but also strengthens its outreach, drawing more individuals into the fold of God's love and purpose. By actively engaging in this process, MCC showcases its commitment to living out its mission of "Love Jesus, Love People" in tangible, impactful ways.

APPENDIX A

A Timeline History of Monticello Christian Church

1887 - The First Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) began at a revival meeting in White County.

1903 - The second church building was a grand brick structure built on Bluff St. This building served the congregation until 1968.

1927–The building expanded with an extensive state-of-the-art Christian Education wing for the rapidly growing children's ministry and Sunday School.

1940 -The church recorded its largest adult Sunday School class, as the Men's Class had 156 in attendance on Easter.

1968 - The congregation moved to the current facility at 105 Gordon Road and renamed the church the Monticello Christian Church.

1982 - 5.5 acres of land five miles northeast of the town was donated to the church as a campground, Centarbor.

May 2000–Rev. Chris Dodson arrived following Rev. Don Arterburn, who had faithfully served the church for 15 years.

2006 - A daycare ministry and preschool began with 65 children currently enrolled.

2011 - With the concern that the Disciples of Christ denomination was not asserting loyalty to the Holy Bible, the congregation withdrew from the denomination and is now a non-denominational congregation.

2014–Due to increased youth numbers, a youth facility adjacent to the church building was proposed, agreed upon, and completed. It was suggested to be the new Sunday School rooms for children and a recreation area for church events and groups.

2019–Rev. Chris Dobson retired, and the church hired Rev. Benji Riddle to assume the lead pastor position. As Rev Riddle was a much younger man, the church hoped to bring freshness and vitality to the congregation and programming. Rev. Dobson did not serve out his agreed tenure or training for Rev. Riddle and left shortly after retiring. This event resulted in confusion, discord, and strife among the congregants.

2020–The pandemic resulted in several congregant deaths. Online services were adopted, and the church functioned in a maintenance capacity until resuming in-person services in late 2021.

2021- present - The church struggles with leadership issues from the board of directors and a loss of servants due to the pandemic and subsequent impacts. A healthy pastoral transition

did not occur, leaving the congregation stifled and disorganized regarding the church's purpose and mission. The current leadership team and lead pastor continue to work to bring continuity and unity to the body of believers.

APPENDIX B

Workbook for training 2023.docx

MESSAGING THE MISSION WORKBOOK Sample

<u>**Week 1 - Introduction and Overview**</u>

Welcome to "Understanding MCC's Mission: A Training Workbook." We are delighted to embark on this eight-week journey with you to delve into the core of Monticello Christian Church's mission, its alignment with the *missio Dei,* and how this understanding will facilitate unity. This workbook facilitates your engagement, reflection, and understanding throughout the program.

<u>**Overview of the Program:**</u>

This training program will deepen your comprehension of MCC's mission statement and theological connection to the *missio Dei*. Each week unfolds with information to assist you in understanding these concepts and being able to communicate them to the congregation, which will lead to greater unity as the church works under one common purpose. This training contains purposeful content, including in-depth exploration, interactive activities, and real-world case studies. As we progress, you will have the opportunity to reflect on essential videos, participate in discussions, and apply your knowledge through engaging tasks.

<u>**We encourage you to actively participate, ask questions, and share your insights with fellow participants**</u>. Your commitment to this program fosters a richer understanding of MCC's mission and broader implications for our church body.

<u>Thank you for being a part of this transformative journey. Let us begin!</u>

Objectives for the Entire Eight-Week Program

1. Comprehensive Understanding of MCC's Mission: By the program's end, participants will thoroughly understand Monticello Christian Church's mission statement, including its essential components and underlying theological foundations.
2. Alignment with the *Missio Dei*: Participants will explore the theological connections between MCC's mission statement and the *Missio Dei*, gaining insights into how the church aligns with God's mission.
3. Church Unity: Through a deeper understanding of concepts and information gained, the participants can verbalize the missional purpose to congregants, thus creating a common purpose for the church.
4. Application of Knowledge: Through case studies, interactive activities, and real-world examples, participants will develop practical skills in applying their knowledge of the mission statement, enhancing their ability to articulate and communicate it effectively.
5. Increased Awareness and Articulation: The program aims to elevate participants' awareness of the church's mission and equip them with the skills to articulate it, fostering a shared understanding among congregational members.
6. Multiplication of Awareness: Participants will be empowered to share their knowledge with others, contributing to the multiplication of awareness and understanding of MCC's mission within the congregation.

7. Evaluation and Reflection: The final objective is to facilitate a post-test, evaluation, and reflection session to assess the program's impact, identify areas for improvement, and solidify participants' understanding of the church's mission.

Session 1.

Understanding MCC's Mission Statement

Welcome to week one of our training program, where we embark on a journey to delve deep into Monticello Christian Church's mission statement. This session will provide a comprehensive overview of the mission statement, breaking down its essential components and exploring its theological

In what ways do you see the importance of foundations?

Objective: Develop a thorough understanding of MCC's mission statement.

Session Components: Introduction: A brief welcome and introduction to the session.

Overview: An in-depth examination of each component of the mission statement.

Theological Foundations: Explore the theological basis of the mission statement and its alignment with the *Missio Dei.*

Interactive Activities: Engage in activities designed to facilitate understanding.

Discussion: Discuss the importance of aligning with God's mission.

Session 1. Continued

Reflect on the importance of church missions and its significance in the context of Monticello Christian Church.

Reflection Questions:

How does the provided video highlight the significance of the church's missional purpose?

Of aligning individual and church missions with God's overarching mission?

Additional Notes: Use this space to jot down key insights and reflections from the video, capturing thoughts that resonate with you.

Session 2.

In-Depth Look at MCC's Missional Purpose

Objective: Engage in a guided activity to critically analyze the MCC mission statement.

Guided Activity: Video example of other mission statements to compare and contrast

Read the MCC mission statement carefully.

Identify keywords or phrases that resonate with you.

Consider how each component contributes to the overall message.

Reflection Questions:

What insights did you gain from analyzing the mission statement?

How might the mission statement guide the actions and decisions of the church?

Session 2. Continued

Objective: Explore the theological foundations of the *Missio Dei.*

Theological Foundations: 1 John 5:9

Definition of *Missio Dei.* "Sending"

Historical context.

Grounding in the Trinity. Article from John G. Flett, "A Theology of *missio Dei*," *Theology in Scotland*, (CORE.ac.uk.), 69-78, n.d.

Implications for the church's missional purpose

Group discussion/ article highlights

How does the *Missio Dei* concept align with your understanding of the church mission?

How can the *Missio Dei* inform the church's actions and outreach?

Engage in an interactive activity comparing the *Missio Dei* with the MCC mission statement with group members.

Identify commonalities between the *Missio Dei* and the church's mission.

Explore potential differences and how alignment can be achieved.

Activity for session 2.

Objective: Apply *Missio Dei* principles to a real-life scenario.

Case Study Description: Read the scenario and consider how *Missio Dei* principles can guide actions, decisions, and communication.

Scenario: The Monticello Christian Church (MCC) has identified a misalignment between its mission statement and the actual practices within the congregation. Despite having a clear mission on paper, there seems to be a discrepancy in how members engage with the community. The church leadership is concerned about the potential impact on outreach efforts.

Discussion Questions:

What aspects of the current church practices indicate a misalignment with the mission statement?

How can the church leadership realign the congregation's practices with the stated mission?

What steps can be taken to ensure the mission is reflected in day-to-day activities?

Discussion Questions:

How might *Missio Dei's* principles inform the approach to the case study scenario?

In what ways can the church embody *Missio Dei* in its outreach efforts?

APPENDIX C

"A THEOLOGY OF *missio Dei*"

https://mail.google.com/mail/u/0?ui=2&ik=e47b152162&attid=0.1&permmsgid=msg-a:r-6344571785764634711&th=18bf77abbc1cc0d8&view=att&disp=inline&realattid=18bf77ab3b9eebed7c21

APPENDIX D

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR STUDY

Interview questions for study.docx

Interview Questions for Participants of Mission Statement Training and Implementation Training

1. What is your name_____

2. What position do you hold at MCC_____

3. What areas of service are you interested in at
   MCC_____

4. Are you aware of the MCC Mission Statement_____

5. Are you willing to participate in group discussions and
   presentations?_____

6. Are you willing to cooperate with others collaboratively and be sensitive to group
   confidentiality?_____

7. Are you a faithful follower of God and Christ?_____

8. Are you willing to attend all sessions and work toward unity in
   MCC_____

9. Are you willing to participate in this DMIN Action-Oriented research project for Tanetta
   Snyder_____

 10. Do you have any reservations that might disqualify you from
participating?_____

　　　　Other interview notes:

APPENDIX E

POWERPOINT PRESENTATION

Presentation for Messaging the Mission project.pptx

APPENDIX F

PRE & POST-TEST pre_and_post_test copy.docx

Questionnaire about the mission statement of MCC and the *missio Dei*

Instructions: Answer the following questions to the best of your knowledge. These questions will help assess your baseline understanding before the training begins.

- What is the primary purpose of MCC's mission statement?
- How familiar are you with the concept of *Missio Dei*?
- Why is effective communication of the mission statement critical for a church?
- What role does the church's alignment with God's mission play in the church's mission?

List three components of MCC's mission statement and briefly describe each.

1.

2.

3.

APPENDIX G

VIDEO ON THE *MISSIO DEI*

https://www.bing.com/ck/a?!&&p=51da9182919b8289JmltdHM9MTcwMDYxMTIwM
CZpZ3VpZD0yNzExZDEyZC1hNzA4LTZhYTktMTc4ZC1kZjhkYTZhMDZiYjUmaW5zaWQ
9NTIwNg&ptn=3&ver=2&hsh=3&fclid=2711d12d-a708-6aa9-178d-
df8da6a06bb5&psq=videos+on+the+missio+Dei&u=a1aHR0cHM6Ly93d3cubW9vZHljaHVyY
2gub3JnL3dhdGNoL21pc3Npby1kZWktbWUv&ntb=1

VIDEOS ON CHURCH REVITALIZATION

https://churchanswers.university/courses/church-revitalization/

VIDEOS ON ADAPTATION TO CHANGE

https://churchanswers.university/courses/church-revitalization/

APPENDIX H

VIDEOS FOR MISSION STATEMENTS, COMMUNICATION CHALLENGES

https://youtu.be/1nYaB53rT-U?si=6sqmloufGdDRAR3P

https://youtu.be/pJWPjORF2s0?si=9na9XOvaCl5lhowt

APPENDIX I

CONCEPT DIAGRAM

C:\Users\play4\OneDrive\Documents\Concept map for mission statement training.pdf
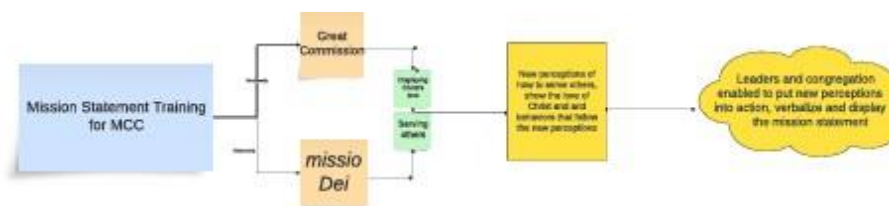
APPENDIX J

TRAINING MODULE EXAMPLE

C:\Users\play4\Downloads\Training module example for mission statement.docx

Training Module #1

Training Purpose: This seminar will acquaint the participant with the MCC Mission statement. The training will open the door to discussing how the church relays the Mission Statement inwardly and outwardly. The small group discussion after the PowerPoint lecture will include a writing activity and a Q&A session to encourage thought-provoking answers to questions on the PP presentation.

Mission Statement Training #1	
Training Type	Seminar
Training Responsible	Tanetta Snyder, MA, Outreach Ministry Director, MCC
Training #1	1. Introduction to training 2. Materials 3. Group Introductions 4. Presentation and Questions
Objectives of Training #1	• Learn the elements of this training module and expectations • Learn the Mission Statement of MCC • Discuss various meanings of the Mission Statement in small group • Learn what the missio Dei is and how it connects MCC to God
Goal	Participants can recite the Mission Statement of MCC and verbalize the meaning as it refers to the church.
Date & Time	
Logistics requirements	*What is needed?*

	• Table and chairs in a seminar format: U-shaped with the screen at the top of the room • Paper and Pens • Whiteboard with markers • Video and laptop connections • Materials and handouts for the first session

| Time (min)	Description
•	• One-hour module learning in class • One hour of homework per week/module.
Total Time for Module: 2 hours per week	

Attachments (PowerPoint Presentation, handouts, prints):

1. PowerPoint presentation for the introductory session
2. Handouts for review
3. Module schedule

Resources
- Aubrey Malphurs, *Ministry Nuts and Bolt : What They Don't Teach Pastors in Seminary,* 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Publications, 2019).
- Michael Urick, *The Generation Myth: How to Improve Intergenerational Relationships in the Workplace* (New York, NY: Business Expert Press, 2019), ProQuest.
- Wayne Cordeiro, *Doing Church As a Team: The Miracle of Teamwork and How It Transforms Churches* (Bloomington MN: Bethany House Publishers, 2022), Kindle.
- Craig Ott, *The Church on Mission: A Biblical Vision for Transformation among All People* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Publishing Group, 2019), Kindle Edition.
- William Mancini, *Future Church* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Publishing, 2020).
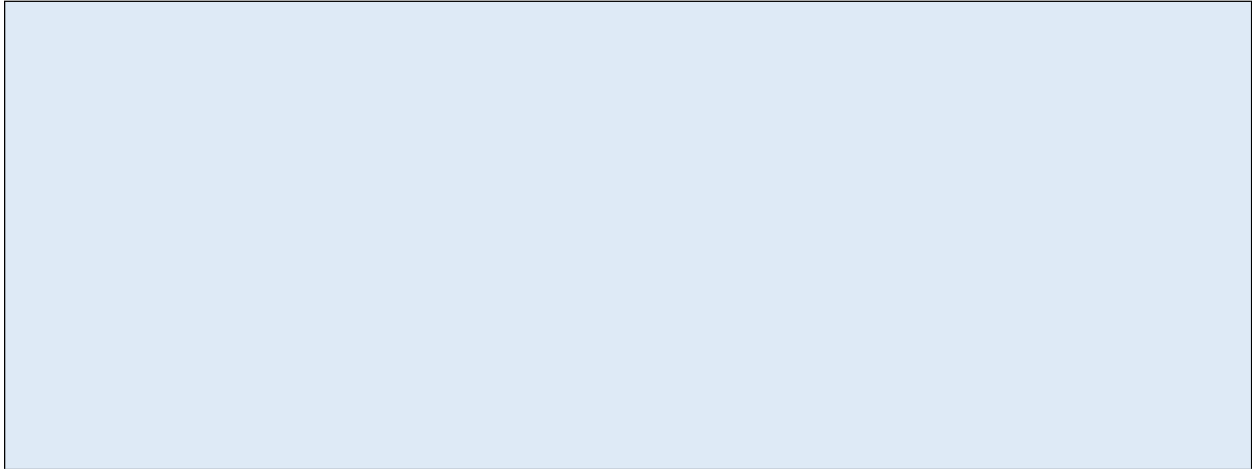
APPENDIX K

IRB FORMS

Institutional Review Board | Liberty University

https://www.liberty.edu/graduate/institutional-review-board/wp-content/uploads/sites/77/Recruitment-Template-Letter_Email.docx

https://www.liberty.edu/graduate/institutional-review-board/wp-content/uploads/sites/77/IRB-Application-Checklist-2.pdf

https://lu.app.cayuse.com/

- **IRB Assurance**

    o FWA#: 00016439; Expires 3/14/2024

- **Registration**

    o IORG#: 0006023; Expires 10/15/2023

- **Verification**

    o OHRP Website for Verification

       Consent-Template.docx

APPENDIX L

MISSION STATEMENT HANDOUT

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1rEXNA2YGXZbC2VfWsHVUVqJE9cEh5IEW/view?usp=sharing

Mission statement handout.docx

APPENDIX M

COMMUNICATION HANDOUT

1.04 Stakeholder Communication and Relationship Management Handouts.pdf (nacso.org.na)

Information sample: Formatting in handout style: did not copy as such.

MODULE 1.4, HANDOUT #1: Barriers to good communication (page 1 of 2) 1. Perceptual barriers: our perception (awareness) of an issue is determined by many factors. Even people from the same family can have different perceptions about the same issue depending on their age, gender, level of education, and societal influences. Therefore, people in the conservancy community (members and non-members) can have different perceptions, knowledge, beliefs, and opinions regarding issues relevant to the conservancy and its management and activities. 2. Language barriers: Namibians speak many different languages and, therefore, have wholly different words for things, ideas, and issues that the conservancy may wish to discuss. It is, therefore, vital that we use simple and straightforward words at all times and (if necessary) use a translator to convey critical information (verbal as well as written). 3. Cultural barriers: different Namibian ethnic groups have different cultural/traditional practices, and these may affect the way that the conservancy can communicate effectively with all members of one sub-sector of the community or another. 4. Emotional barriers: we need to be especially sensitive in the language that we use when we are dealing with controversial, contentious, or sensitive issues (such as HIV/AIDS, or poaching for bush meat, to give two examples) that can be the cause of disagreement or even open conflict among conservancy members. It is critical to maintain confidentiality at all times when dealing with personal details, yet balance this against the need to bring particular challenges to the attention of a wider audience. 5. Inappropriate body language: a communicator must be aware of his/her body language and strive to use it effectively. Using body language to enhance a message rather than undermine it is essential. It is fine to use body language to emphasize a point, but not to the extent that the audience feels that they are being alienated or judged in some way (do not point at an individual, for example, or single out a particular group–even if you are not actually criticizing them at the time). 6. Organisational barriers: a simple conservancy organizational structure will make communication easier; an overly complex structure, on the other hand, will create the potential for communication breakdown. The number of hierarchical levels should be as few as possible. 7. Physical barriers: some Namibian conservancies cover vast areas. This provides many challenges in communicating with all members of the community as people live long distances from one another and may not have access to telephones, radios, etc. 8. Gender barriers: there are many interconnecting historical, cultural, social, and educational reasons why women may be prevented from communicating freely or accessing means of communication equitably. We

should, as a conservancy, encourage the equal participation and representation of both men and women in all conservancy activities.

MODULE 1.4, HANDOUT

#1: Barriers to good communication (page 2 of 2) 9. Poor listening skills: there is a difference between 'listening' and 'hearing'. Active listening means hearing with a proper understanding of the message that is being conveyed. By asking questions, the speaker can find out whether his/her message is understood or not by the receiver in the manner that the speaker intended. Similarly, a CC should schedule satisfactory meetings with its members and stakeholders and listen carefully to problems and feedback. 10. Information overload: the CC should know how to prioritize the information it wants to communicate. It is critical not to overload any audience with unnecessary information. For example, having a meeting agenda with too many points that need to be covered in a couple of hours will not contribute to good communication, as no single issue will be dealt with in any detail due to time constraints. In this instance, the CC should choose a few central and pressing issues that must be discussed and shared with the conservancy members and leave other, less important, issues to another time. 11. Improper feedback: feedback delivered negatively is neither helpful nor constructive. A good communicator can deliver negative feedback in such a manner that it is received constructively. Constructive feedback will lead to effective and productive communication between a superior and subordinate or between the CC and the conservancy community. It is, therefore, essential to convey bad news or details of a problem in a way that opens up a dialogue about resolving a situation and controlling its effects. 12. Inappropriate communication methods: the CC should exercise care in choosing its communication medium. Simple messages can be conveyed verbally (informally as a face-to-face interaction or formally at meetings, for example). The use of written means of communication should be encouraged for delivering complex messages or instructions that require someone to act upon them. For significant messages, reminders can be given and issued in writing. 13. Literacy levels: not every congregational member can read or write or do so in the same language as other members. This will influence the strategies we use to communicate. For example, key documents should be subsequently summarised wherever possible into a poster format, using icons/illustrations instead of names/words, for display in the conservancy office. 14. Disabilities: in the congregation, there may exist people who are disabled (e.g., hearing impaired, visually or verbally challenged, etc.). Efforts must be made to accommodate these individuals wherever it is practicable to do so (i.e., using sign language interpreters or making sure that lip readers are placed close to a speaker).

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IRB APPROVAL LETTER

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February 13, 2024

Tanetta Snyder
Clifford Hartley

Re: IRB Application - IRB-FY23-24-1170 Messaging the Mission: Developing and Implementing a Messaging Strategy for the Monticello Church Mission Statement

Dear Tanetta Snyder and Clifford Hartley,

The Liberty University Institutional Review Board (IRB) has reviewed your application in accordance with the Office for Human Research Protections (OHRP) and Food and Drug Administration (FDA) regulations and finds that your study does not meet the definition of human subjects research. This means you may begin your project with the data safeguarding methods mentioned in your IRB application.

Decision: No Human Subjects Research

Explanation: Your study/project is not considered human subjects research because

(1) it will not involve the collection of identifiable, private information from or about living individuals (45 CFR
46.102).
(2) it will consist of quality improvement activities, which are not "designed to develop or contribute to generalizable knowledge" according to 45 CFR 46. 102(l).

Please note that this decision only applies to your current application. Any modifications to your protocol must be reported to the Liberty University IRB for verification of continued non-human subjects research status. You may report these changes by completing a modification submission through your Cayuse IRB account.

For a PDF of your IRB letter, click on your study number in the My Studies card on your Cayuse dashboard. Next, click the Submissions bar beside the Study Details bar on the Study Details page. Finally, click Initial under Submission Type and choose the Letters tab toward the bottom of the Submission Details page.

Also, although you are welcome to use our recruitment and consent templates, you are not required to do so. If you choose to use our documents, please replace the word research with the word project throughout both documents.

If you have any questions about this determination or need assistance in determining whether possible modifications to your protocol would change your application's status, please email us at irb@liberty.edu. Sincerely,

G. Michele Baker, PhD, CIP

Administrativ
e Chair
Research
Ethics Office