

The Local Meeting/Church as a Missional Community
Some Queries to Consider & Act On
By Colin Saxton

Who are we called to be?

- *What is mission (purpose or reason for existing) as a faith community?*
- *What values (common commitments by which we will live, work, play together) will shape and guide our life together?*
- *What is God's vision (an artist rendition of us faithfully living out our mission) for us as a community...discerned in light of our understanding of scripture, the leading of the Spirit, and our understanding of Friends testimonies?*

Where are we?

- *What is the specific geographic, social, cultural context in which we are located? What are the needs of the people around us? What issues are unique to our community?*

When are we?

- *What is going on during this season of our history? What changes/issues/opportunities can we see appearing on the horizon?*

What has God called us to do in our culture context/community?

- *With our shared vision in mind... to what ministry is God calling us in this particular time and place? What is the "point" of this faith community? How do our unique gifts, call and God-given concerns intersect with the needs that are around us? How do our strengths, our passion, and our call match the opportunities at this time?*

What barriers/resistance confronts us?

- *Do our forms, relationships, and programs have integrity with our stated focus?*
- *What internal and external obstacles stand in the way of us pursuing our missional call?*

What changes in our structure, organization, leadership, or self-understanding need to occur in order to free us to act on our common mission and vision as a church?

In an effort to either overcome barriers or to move in new directions, what changes must we make in our community? Who do we give the responsibility and authority to make these decisions? To initiate changes? Some specific areas to consider:

- *Functional structures—matching our organizational infrastructure to our size and identity. Are we a family, pastoral, program or corporate sized church? Does our size, complexity or vision require new or different organizational support or change?*
- *Facility—Are there specific needs? Required maintenance, expansion/changes required?*
- *Staff/Volunteer needs—Are released staff focused in areas of need? Are roles clearly defined & commonly understood? Is additional staff needed? Do we train and release volunteers to serve in meaningful and manageable ways that match their gifts and passion?*
- *Growth—Do we assess how/if newcomers are welcomed into and integrated into the community? Do we desire to grow? If so, what keeps us from growth?*
- *Budget—Do we evaluate how/if our budget reflects our intended priorities? Is it adequate and appropriately divided for us to carry out our intended ministry?*
- *Ministry Planning—Do we have an intentional plan to discerning God's priorities/plans for our community?*

What outcomes/indicators can we use to evaluate our faithfulness?

- *As we prayerfully implement our strategic initiatives, do we have a plan to evaluate how faithful and fruitful we are being?*

Do we give thanks and celebrate what God is doing in and through us?

- *Do we give thanks for the gifts and resources we are given?*
- *Do we express gratitude for the ministry we are called to carry out?*
- *Do we celebrate the way Christ is using us?*