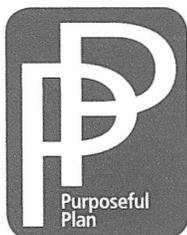




**Mennonite
Church
USA**

A SUMMARY OF

Our Purposeful Plan



Joining God's kingdom project: What is God doing in the world and how can we be part of it? That is the key question for a missional church.

God sent Jesus into the world to announce and launch a new order which he called "the kingdom of God." God's shalom project reaches into the hearts of women and men and across cultural and national boundaries.

Jesus is the center of our faith. Authentic Christian community is the center of our lives. Reconciliation is the center of our work. God intends that the church be a sign, instrument and foretaste of the kingdom.

How: God works in many ways and can't be hemmed in. God often takes us by surprise. But a primary way God's new order breaks in is through small (and sometimes large) groups of people gathered around the sin-forgiving, enemy-loving, bread-breaking Jesus. People who pledge their allegiance to Jesus and let their individual and corporate lives be shaped and transformed. In their life together, in small and big ways, these groups of people live into the future God intends for everyone.

Who: "As the Father sent me, so I send you." Jesus spoke these words to his original disciples and he still speaks them to us today. Mennonite Church USA is a sent people. Not just a select few who are specially commissioned and set apart, but every member and every congregation is sent to bear witness in word and deed to God's love, healing and hope which changes lives and transforms our world.



Above. Jerry and Lori Acosta and their family. The Acostas are giving leadership to Iglesia Manos de Cristo, an Hispanic church plant in Wichita, Ks.

What: Through prayerful planning, the Executive Board is charting a direction and setting goals for our church that grow out of our sense of call and vision. The churchwide delegates at Pittsburgh 2011 affirmed a Missional Vision and Purposeful Plan that will guide our whole church. Since we are shaped by the questions we ask, our vision and plan is guided by the following six questions:

Part one – Our Missional Vision

1. Who is God calling us to become as a people?
2. Where is God calling us to go?
3. What are the signposts to show we are on God's chosen path for us?

Part two—The Purposeful Plan

4. Where are we now on this journey?
5. What circumstances might cause us to make adjustments to our goals along the way?
6. What are the next steps on the path?



The delegates at the Pittsburgh Convention affirmed **seven churchwide priorities** as outlined in brief below, to undergird and guide our work. The first three priorities express the core of congregational life from an Anabaptist perspective. The additional four priorities identify areas for special emphasis over the next ten years, particularly through churchwide agencies and the national conference. In each of these areas we have identified key goals to pursue.

Seven churchwide priorities

1. Christian Formation. This priority reflects the various ways that Jesus is the center of our faith. Missional churches read scripture in such a way that it helps form them into the image of Jesus Christ.

2. Christian Community. This priority reflects the communal, organic nature of the body of Christ. Missional congregations worship together, extend hospitality, practice scriptural discernment, cultivate Christ-centered unity, and learn to agree and disagree in love.

3. Holistic Christian Witness. This priority reflects the various ways that reconciliation is the center of our mission. Missional church express their faith through evangelism, church planting, Christian service, justice and peace.

4. Stewardship. This priority reflects our commitment to surrender all that we have for the sake of

God's reign. Missional churches cultivate whole-life stewardship, care for creation, and practice mutual aid.

5. Leadership Development. This priority reflects our commitment to develop leaders at all levels of the church. Missional churches help all of their members reach their potential as they follow God's call.

6. Undoing Racism and Advancing Intercultural Transformation. Missional churches seek to dismantle individual and systemic racism, develop intercultural competence, heal racial divisions, and value all the gifts of God's diverse people.

7. Church-to-Church Relationships. This priority reflects our desire to learn and grow through interaction with other Christian fellowships. Missional churches learn from others who share commitments to live under God's reign.

When: We anticipate that the Purposeful Plan will guide us for the next ten years. However, we intend to keep the document living and fluid. We plan to discuss and review it regularly to make sure it reflects what God is calling us to do along the way. There will be an ongoing feedback loop, with delegate engagement at each biennial session, and at times in between.

Where: You can find a full copy of the Missional Vision and Purposeful Plan online at <http://www.mennoniteusa.org/purposefulplan>

How: We are praying for God's grace and help to carry out the vision, the purpose and the plan.

We encourage each congregation, area conference, or church agency to—

- Work through the document section by section
- Ask the six questions about your own church or agency
- Study the missional traits and signposts of the faithful church
- Embrace the seven priorities, adapting goals that are suitable to your context
- Wrestle with the polarities that reflect faithful church life
- Share with others what you are learning

