

MC 502: BECOMING A MISSIONAL CHURCH (4 units). Charles Van Engen, Professor of Biblical Theology of Mission; Online Facilitation by Dr. Elaine Vaden, Adjunct Professor in History and Religions.

DESCRIPTION:

This course will introduce the students to the wide range of issues and skills related to the complex interdisciplinary processes involved in creating and implementing a philosophy of ministry and missional strategy for a local church. The course will enable the leaders of the church to shape a congregation toward becoming lovingly open to ministry in the world and intentionally involved in mission in its communities, nation, denomination, and world in a ripple effect of dynamic church life.

RELEVANCE FOR MINISTRY:

Some of the most urgent questions facing North American congregations **and westernized churches around the world** today have to do with their reason-for-being, relevance, purpose, **authenticity as ambassadors of Christ**, role in ministry, and missional intention in the midst of increasing cultural and religious diversity in their local communities. Congregationally-based missiology seeks to provide the tools of missiology for defining the rationale, priorities, and methods for a local congregation to be in mission in its context. Assigned readings and discussion will be geared to encouraging and facilitating the student to accomplish the central task of the course, which involves the writing of a 25-page mission statement for a local congregation, including the plans and strategies necessary for implementation. The five parts of the mission statement coincide with the five major cognate disciplines of missiology that are examined as to their contribution toward shaping a pastoral missiology.

COURSE FORMAT:

The class will be conducted on the Internet using a 10-week lesson program aligned with Fuller's academic calendar. Each week students and the instructor will interact with the material examining key themes and characteristics of modern/postmodern culture through journaling, threaded discussions, and web-based research.

REQUIRED READING:

- **Introduction to the Missionary Nature of the Church:**
Charles Van Engen. *God's Missionary People: Rethinking the Purpose of the Local Congregation*. (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1991,1993,1995).
- **Understanding the Importance of Context to Mission:**
Paul Hiebert. *Anthropological Reflections on Missiological Issues* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1994); **OR**,
_____. *Anthropological Insights for Missionaries* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1985).
- **How to Minister Effectively in the Local Church:**
Lingenfelter and Mayers. *Ministering Cross-Culturally: An Incarnational Model for Personal Relationships* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1986); **OR**,
Eddie Gibbs. *Church Next: Quantum Changes in How We Do Ministry* (Downers Grove: IVP, 2000).
- **Doing Mission Globally:**
Aubrey Malphurs. *Planting Growing Church for the 21st Century* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1998); **OR**,
Hiebert and Meneses. *Incarnational Ministry: Planting Churches in Band, Tribal, Peasant, and Urban Societies* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1996).
- **Developing a Biblical Theology of Mission:**
Lesslie Newbigin. *Open Secret* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans,1978, 1995); **OR**,
Orlando Costas. *Christ Outside the Gate: Mission Beyond Christendom* (sometimes sold as - *Christ Outside the Gate: A New Place of Salvation*) (Maryknoll: Orbis, 1982). If students have read any one of the above books, they will choose substitute texts from a bibliography provided in class. (Some books may be out of print.)

ASSIGNMENTS:

1. Weekly Threaded Discussions, Journaling, Web surfing and research.
2. Five book reviews.
3. Each student will develop a 25-page statement of mission for a local congregation. The statement of mission will describe the nature of the congregation being studied; the anthropological, cultural, historical setting of the church; issues related to Christian response to other religions; an analysis of the internal, external, and systemic potential of the local congregation to reach out in mission in specific socio-cultural contexts locally and globally; and the biblical and theological motivations, meaning and implications of mission for the local church.

PREREQUISITES: This course is only available to those who are accepted into the MA in Global Leadership.

RELATIONSHIP TO CURRICULUM: A required course for the Cohort portion of the MA in Global Leadership. *NO AUDITORS.*

FINAL EXAM: None.

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