

Our Mission Field --Pastor's Corner/September 2022

“The mission of the Church is to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world. Local churches and extension ministries provide the most significant arena through which disciple-making occurs.” -2016 UMC Book of Discipline, Paragraph 120

God is present in this community by the numerous opportunities of growth that are available based upon the spectrum of individuals and churches present in the area. The reign of God, which is done through Christ and the Spirit, pinpoints unity and relationship with neighbors. In our community, God is using the church to be the hands and feet of Christ.

God is calling for Monticello and Bethel to develop relationships, extend hospitality and outreach along with being a living witness for God. By being incarnational, the community will see the essence of the triune God at work as the church participates in the Missio Dei.

What is the Missio Dei? The Missio Dei elevates mission from the level of human activities, rightly showing mission as being participation in something which God is already doing. We can consider it the “sending of God.”

Mission is bigger than our community of faith and is part of cosmic salvation. As those become broken and separated, it is up to us to help those wounded by sin and let God do the ultimate healing. Mostly, we think of the mission being only done by clergy and some key leaders, but it involves everyone in the church body.

Our relationship with our neighbor defines the church as we try to perfect the Missio Dei.

Throughout the Old Testament, mission is identified among actions of God, significant people empowered by the Spirit, and how the Spirit restores community. The Old Testament offers a holistic way of mission through God's actions and God's empowerment of God's people for mission.

Creation is the first sign of God in mission, where God creates humanity in God's image. We see leadership, wisdom, and insights from many such as Moses, Solomon, and Isaiah.

Mission is exemplified in the New Testament through God's reign in the ministry of Jesus along with the disciples and the early Church. The New Testament reflects various theologies of mission, such as being the light of the world and salt of the earth. Jesus' central mission is the future and present and speaking to the margins like the poor, children, and widows.

How many are leaving the church today and not showing God to their community or the world around them? Many see the church today as a hypocritical, unloving system and says that they have enough trouble, and adding the church is one more thing that they must deal with so God nor discipleship or fellowship is thrown out of the window. That also leaves the mission field empty that we are called to enter from the command from Christ.

+Pastor Ben