

What is “Mission?”

The root meaning of the word is “sending.” The biblical sense is best conveyed in John 20:21 [CEB]: “As my Father sent me, so I am sending you.”

Thus, mission entails:

One who sends;

Those who are sent;

The purpose for which this sending happens.

Biblically informed mission understands and confesses that:

God is the one who sends;

God’s called and gathered people are those who are sent;

God’s desire to bring about the healing of the creation is the purpose of this sending. Salvation through the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ is the purpose and outcome of God’s mission.

God’s mission defines and interprets the vocation, purpose, and action of God’s called and gathered people, who are the Church. The apostolic mission, from Easter onward, has been the gathering, equipping and sending of called communities of witnesses. The “local community” is the primary agency of God’s saving mission in the world.

- “Mission” is the most comprehensive way of interpreting what it means to be a follower of Jesus Christ and to serve him as his witnesses.
- The gathered life of the church is its first form of witness; as a community, it is to display to the world the meaning of the gospel by the way it lives out its calling: “Most important, live together in a manner worthy of Christ’s gospel” (Phil 1:11 CEB).
- Witness” also defines the Christian life of each follower of Jesus; each Christian is a sent one, and the gathered life of the community is the primary way in which Christian witnesses are prepared for their calling in the world. “You will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth” (Acts 1:8 CEB).

[Proposed to the Mission and Outreach Committee of Nassau Presbyterian Church, November 2018, by Darrell Guder.]