

## **Community Engagement in our CMAs:**

**Toward an authentic encounter with  
your neighborhood**

## **Learning Outcomes**

At the conclusion of the training the participants

- Will understand what a missional theology of a community means;
- Will have greater assurance of how to use socio-demographic data to engage a neighbourhood;
- Will have a greater vision and compassion for the community and can pray for it;

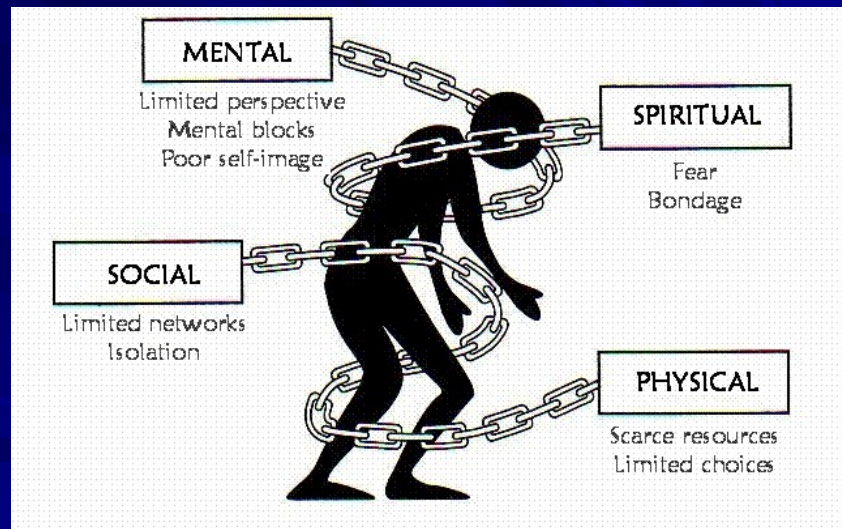
## The Big Idea

It is not that the church has a mission but that the mission of God has a church

## Some key terms

1. A perspective on personhood
2. Community engagement
3. A parable
4. Christian mission and witness

## Global Approach



## Community Engagement

We define this as journeying in community to express aspirations, discover assets, name limitations and generate solutions for the peace and well-being of individuals, families and their neighbourhoods

SHALOM

שלום



# A parable



## What is mission?

Mission is the embodiment by the whole community of the followers of Jesus of the whole task of God in their specific context for the sake of the whole world. "Mission is the church sent into the world to love, to serve, to preach, to heal, to liberate."

## Christian witness

Witnessing to Jesus and all his teachings includes that set of contextual, intentional initiatives of the community of followers of Jesus within the mission of God to demonstrate in word and deed the offer that God gives to everyone to change one's way of living and follow Jesus in community in every area of life as Lord.

## Question for the table groups

What is the biggest change that you have experienced in your neighbourhood in the past decade?

## Tools to better understand your neighbourhood

1. Transect study
2. Semi-directed interviews
3. Community exegesis – see pages 16 -20 of « Reading your Canadian Community ».

## Question for the table groups

What are the greatest strengths in your neighbourhood and how might your congregation build on them for the peace and welfare of the community?

Bearing witness to Jesus and all his teachings in word and deed in our neighborhoods

Principle:

The local congregation as the entity that interprets the triune God to the neighbourhood



## Four aspects of urban life

- ❑ Religion is alive and well in Canada
- ❑ Spirituality is at the root of all beliefs
- ❑ Content of beliefs is not divorced from the socio-cultural changes in our culture
- ❑ Divided social landscape is touching every aspect of urban life

## Secularity

The conditions of belief over the past 500 years in the western world have been irrevocably altered.

“The great invention of the West was that of an immanent order in Nature, whose working could be systematically explained on its own terms, leaving open to the question whether the whole order had a deeper significance and whether if it did, we should infer a transcendent Creator beyond it.”

Charles Taylor, 2007, page 15.

“...the life of the buffered individual, instrumentally effective in secular time, created the practical context within which self-sufficiency of this immanent realm could become a matter of experience... we come to understand our lives as taking place with a self-sufficient immanent order...(that) can slough off the transcendent.”

Charles Taylor, 2007, page 543.

## What does secularity look like in Canada? In Québec?

▪ Attend church regularly	20-25%	15%
▪ World religions	10%	4%
▪ No religious affiliation	20-25%	12%
▪ Secularity	40-50%	70%

## Question for the table groups

What is one thing that your congregation can do in the next month to come out of your shell and bear witness to Jesus and all his teachings in word and deed?

# What is a missional community?

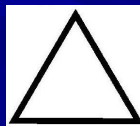
4-12 people who meet regularly to grow together as disciples of Jesus, recognizing Him as Lord of their lives and of their city as they pursue God's mission where they live or where they work.

The aim of the group revolves around facets:

# A missional community?

At the heart of each group:

Mission: community engagement



Life together in the Spirit

Interaction with the Scriptures

# Key Indicators of a Transformed City

What would a city look like that has been transformed by Jesus Christ and his kingdom values?



## The vision

The comprehensiveness of the mission of the Church in the city requires the proclamation of the gospel, the planting and nurture of congregations, and the application of the principles of Christ's lordship to all areas of community life. It means concern for all that is city, even for the cosmos above and beneath the city, from the quality of the air people breathe to the purity of the water in the river and canals.

## The vision

Following Jesus in the city means getting serious about issues like good schools, responsible government, sanitation and clean streets, fairness in the marketplace and justice in the courts. It means working to eliminate squalor slums and every depressing condition that dishonours God by degrading human life. Once urban disciples see the big picture of what it means to be citizens of the Kingdom in the cities as they are, they begin to work from a new and enlarged perspective. Obedience to King Jesus takes them to every nook and cranny of city life. They find the challenges innumerable and the cost often high. But they know that while the dark powers are awesome, God's rule is greater and its advance is worth every sacrifice.