**Research for Christian ministry CMN020L011S**

**Mini Research Project: How the church is involving in mission?**

**Introduction**

This Mini-Research Project is intended to be a pilot project for my dissertation on the MA Christian Ministry course. My working title for the dissertation is, *"What are the dynamics and factors of growing migrant churches in the UK".* My research question for this research is "How churches are involving in mission? Therefore, the interview questions then aim to help answer this mini-research project. The aim of this research to examine the practice of church ministry in mission. However, considering the pandemic circumstances, I cannot interview face to face.

Nevertheless, I kindly prefer to interview on telephone and zoom meeting. The interviewee person is mature enough to give me their personal and church experience about the mission. My purpose in this research is to find and get an additional foundational tool for my further studies. How is church and mission running together:- to do this mini-research project will give a clue.

**Method and Methodology**

The interview will be held in the area of South West London churches, how the mission is exercised in different ways. For this research, I chose five different church denomination Pastors and ministers. The denomination of churches is Baptist, Methodist, Ethiopian Pentecostal church, an Anglican church, and reformed church. All are having a different tradition of practising ministry and mission. Those pastors and ministers who are participating in this interview are acting online.

**Research Interview Questions**

The interview question which addressed in this mini-research project is:

**How is the church involving in mission?**

The mission of the church is non stop still Christ coming because God needs to save or bring people through Christ to Him. Mission is beyond statement however most church has a good written statemt about mission and put in their office. Mission comes through love, without love it’s impossible even to think about it. Mission by itself costs money, time and energy. Some ministers like to discuss about mission, and easy to teach as well. Nevertheless, while a mission asks them time, money or energy they could be flee, and don’t want to pay any price. Without costs including self-sacrificial nobody exercised mission. Mission is a tradition of living in the activity of God's purpose and serving the community in the name of God. Therefore, this mini-research project tries to explore and understand the practice and tradition of church ministers responding to the mission. Many professionals are in a better position to see what is going on in missions around the world. Missionaries, evangelists, church and missionary leaders, at home and abroad, and many others around the world, represent Christ. My perspective comes from working with local churches in Ethiopia from 1994 to 2014. I involved dozens of missional works. Most churches recently diverted from looking outside to focus on building. The competition is not about God's agenda instead of the architecture of their building. From this perspective, I see the gaps and several times thinking about church mission. After I came to the UK in 2014, my observation is being to opposite from home. From my knowledge, no matter the numbers, churches in London are trying to be exercising in mission. For instance, the implicit plan of Fulham Baptist church annual retreat program has been a mission. Last year in summer, twice I was participating in Evangelism with Ethiopian Christian fellowship church at London Holland Park. The primary purpose of that trip was not different activities instead of sharing the love of Christ for others. I see the same activities in 2019 summer church trip in Southampton when the black African church is worshipping in the side of the beach. Music and dancing were attractive and massive people watching and enjoying their activities. Besides this, I saw a one to one evangelism. So, the different church has its own experience in mission. For some, church mission means to preach the gospel outdoors and others, exercising mission by helping people who have not accommodation and daily foods. I do not think the interpretation of the mission could be understood in separate ways. For me, the mission is a full package like hospitality and sharing the love of Christ in every circumstances.

**Reflexivity**

This research project is driven by my ministry experience in the past three decades. I involved many missionary activities in my life. Therefore, this mini research is mainly coming through my knowledge. In my thought, nothing is a priority than a mission for the church. I am a part of a Pentecostal church and minister. So, I aware that, how the church mainly focused on mission. For instance, share the word of God, help those in need and to show love are some practical ministry in the mission among many.

Mission is a continuity of Gods work. The pressures of keeping up with the internal needs of the church consume most of the energy and time of ministerial leadership. A congregation, organised primarily around developing and maintaining its own inner life, becoming a mission movement is simply not possible unless there is a radical shift from "cultures of membership to cultures of discipleship." The culture of discipleship is fundamentally a way of being, a way of life. Consequently, a call to mission is primarily a call to a "turn around" stance. It is a call for a fundamental reorientation of the church to be an "inside-out church." It does not detach itself quickly from the "culture of membership" that consumes much of the energy and attention of its ministerial and lay leadership to meet the needs of its members.

A primary practising Christian ministry could be held equal horizontally and vertically. To elaborate more, to make disciples inside the church, and outreach ministry as well. How ever, I doubt the church could be doing side by side. On my further research project, the data will be included. Thinking and living missional means seeing all life as a way to commit to God's mission. To contest this, a researcher I allowed the conversation to flow freely and impulsively and only intervened minimally to introduce interview questions and keep the discussion going. I am also aware that this same strongness and weakness will be ostensible when analysing and summarising the findings.

**Data Analysis**

**Mission**

The First interview question that I asked was How does your church understand mission? An interviewee person answered from the understanding and experience of the church. Jesus said in the gospel of (Matthew chapter 28: verse 19-20), "Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you". In London, we are in a position which is relatively unique in that people from "all nations" come to this city. London, and Fulham which is to the West of London's centre, are very cosmopolitan and diverse. Our understanding of mission for our church follows on from the commissioning by Jesus of His followers. We open our doors to everyone from every nation. We set no conditions for people who enter our church and are served by us. We hospitalised out to our community with love and practical assistance.

The work of mission and church is derived from Matthew 28:19–20). On the foundation of the great commission, Jesus instructed disciples to continue his work and share the good news and the love of God to the whole of humanity. Therefore, this work and tradition are continued today by missions. The focus of the church is primarily to be a missional church as Jesus said that, "the Spirit of the Lord is on me because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to set the oppressed free, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favour". The idea is quite clear to get an answer to the question of Why Christ Came to Earth? From the described people by Jesus, such as poor, blind, prisoners, the patient is giving us a clue for what looks like our mission. My claim is that how churches like to go such kind of people who are living among the community?

The church, and those in it, must: share the Word of God, and help those in need. Like the purpose of Jesus is coming as he mentions "The Spirit of the Lord is on me because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to see". The mission of the church could be three things. Firstly, the church has a message, which is that God has saved his people through Christ. Secondly, the church is created and will see a result of the good news. Thirdly, from the perspective of mission, to show practical love for the community and build an ethical society.

The word 'Go' indicates that the world is unreached by the gospel. In my investigation, the most straightforward job is to invite people into the congregation. Notably, some Pentecostal churches spent a lot of many for printing leaflets and posters, instead of going to unreached areas.

Mission and can work simply through evangelism. Moreover, the practical mission could be held to enter into communities to show the love of Christ, especially for those who are neglecting.

The second interviews that I raised Do we have biblical evidence about church mission? If so, could you briefly explain? What we do speaks more clearly of what we say and demonstrates the truth of what we believe. In (Matthew chapter 5: verese13-16 ) Jesus told us that by what we do we must be the examWorldove for the world: "13 You are the salt of the earth; but if the salt has become tasteless, how can it become salt next? It is no extra longer good for anything except to be thrown and trampled by men. 14 You Worldight of the world. A city on a hill cannot be hidden; 15 No one lights a lamp and puts it under a basket, but in the chandelier, and it gives light to everyone in the house. 16 Let your light shine before men so that they can see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven. Jesus' examples of "salt" and "light" in Matthew 5: 13-16 indicate that the church must be committed to all life, not just limited to "preaching and praising" on Sundays.

The use of Salt acts as a preservative. The church must serve as a preservative against spiritual and moral corruption. Salt also gives it flavour; the church must provide the feeling of eternal life and the foretaste of heaven in a bland and challenging world.

For both reasons, "the church must be" rubbed "into culture just as, in Jesus' day, salt was rubbed into meat to preserve and season it], penetrating every aspect of life and preserving and spicing up society We live. However, two words of warning: Christians are often so busy constructing visible institutions, buildings and retreat centres and places for communion that we are in danger of becoming pillars of salt. TWorldnot for the world to see How glorious our institutWorldnstead, the world should feel our presence in their midst. Moreover, second, we must be careful not to lose our salinity. To be preserve, salt needs to keep its quality and character intact.

From my knowledge, we have much scriptural evident about church mission however one of the interviewees replies thatIn the book of (Acts chapter 2: verse 42-47) the writer Luke records the fact that, "They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and prayer. Everyone was filled with awe at the many wonders and signs performed by the apostles. Majority believers were living together and had everything that they had was in common. They sold property and possessions to give to anyone who had need. As their ritual acts frequently, they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, praising God and enjoying the favour of all the people.

Moreover, the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved." We can do no less. The results of our endeavours are an increase in church membership of 33% to date.

The mission and purpose of the church are found in service and outreach to those outside the church.

The church's "Great Commission" is found in the gospel of (Matthew chapter 28: verese18-20: 18). Furthermore, Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, "All authority has been given to me in heaven and on earth. Verse 19 Go, then, and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, Part of the fulfilment of the "Great Commission" is to establish new local churches. The church is not only the universal fellowship of believers in Christ but also consists of local fellowships. The pattern recorded in the book of Acts is that believers preached the gospel in different places; they disciplined new believers, strengthening them in faith; and then established local churches (see Acts 14: 21-23).

Any organisation, business, including a church, have their annual plans. The mission is bottom from the least of the plan in some churches. However, I ask my employe interviews like, What kind of plan have you for mission in your church? We traditionally review mission at our AGM. It is in the AGM that we review what has been done and make plans to do more. Currently, we are seeking to help the world the third world or developing countries. We help a Pastor in Ethiopia and another in India. Up until recently, we helped a Pastor in Romania. Our help comes in the form of prayer and some, limited financial assistance. In 2020 we plan to double the number of PastoLockdownnd, once lockdown is finished, to send out more missionary's withy Through Faith Missions.

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**What methods does the church follow on missions?** Our church supports and has sent out a missionary to Kuala Lumpur in Malaysia. She is a Special Needs Teacher working in a school for special needs students which at evenings and weekends is also a church. We encourage (Send out) church members to experience the mission field through an organisation called 'Through Faith Missions'. Missions typically last from 3 days to 14 days. (Luke 9:1-6) Eight years ago our church was asked to open doors every Wednesday evening, for five months a year from November to Easter, as a Winter Night Shelter  under the auspices of West London Churches Homeless Concern, now Glass Door, and we did so for four years, servings hundreds of hot meals and providing shelter, warmth and welcome for hundreds of homeless men and women. Eight years ago it was identified that the homeless had access to free food every day of the week except Sunday and while it was not possible to serve them on Sunday's we decided to offer them a hot breakfast on a Monday morning. We were still doing this up until the moment of Lockdown. These days we serve what we can at the Manse door.

**What significant obstacles have affected church mission?** Our church mission is uncomplicated and straightforward, and so obstacles are few. That said, once it becomes known that a church is willing to help people, the demand for help increases and helpless people gravitate to that church. In the winter, we have a constant demand for sleeping bags, sleeping mats and even tents. This is expensive, and funds are limited. Some church members, because of a lack of understanding, are reluctant to help. They were saying that we get many donations from non-church members who are willing to donate their old winter coats, sound footwear, and even food.

**Our Church Members full participants in mission?** Many church members support church missions with prayer. Some support our missions directly with money and even their efforts. They are saying that there are a significant number of church members who support the church on a Sunday and appear to do nothing for the rest of the week. They can be persuaded to take part in missions such as the local food bank and recently The Christmas Shoebox Appeal from Samaritan's Purse.

**What feedback do you have in the work of the mission?** The Homeless men and women come and use the services that we provide and say little, but they keep on coming to Lockdownntil the lockdown, their numbers were increasing. Our neighbours often complain about the number of bedraggled men and women who loiter around the church open front door on Monday mornings. Some church members complain too, but they are in the minority. Several church members give of their time, their talents and their finances to support the church missions. We get a lot of feedback, all good, from NGO's and our local authority.

**What are the unique features of your church mission from other denominations?** We are not unique. We simply cannot be unique because we follow biblical principles, and ever since the first Apostles in Acts chapter 2, churches have been following those principles. However, we are a Baptist church, and therefore our aim is to bring people to faith in Jesus Christ and baptise them. It needs time and energy to fill and heat our baptismal pool, but we are willing to do it on almost any occasion in order to facilitate a new member of God's Kingdom. It is widely known amongst local churches and even wider afield that Fulham Baptist Church is willing to let other churches baptise in our baptismal pool free of charge and all for the glory of God.

1. How does your church understand the mission?

Our church understands the gospel of Jesus Christ mission, by helping people in their needs, visiting and praying for the sick in care homes, prisoners, and homeless people and drug addicts in hostels. We also spread the gospel around the streets in London. The long term plan could be to send missionaries to different parts of the world.

1. Do we have biblical evidence about church mission? If so, could you briefly explain?

Yes, we do have biblical evidence, Jesus said in Mark16:15 "Go into the entire world and preach the good news to all creation, whoever believes and is baptised will be saved. Acts 2:38-41 when peter preached to the crowd on the Pentecost day, warned and pleaded with them to repent and baptised those who accepted his message were baptised, and about 3500 people were saved.

1. What methods does the church follow on missions?

The Methods we use are:

Using tracts in different languages to give out to the local community Preparing a coffee afternoon for the local and school community Preparing colourful especial Christmas and Easter cards with the gospel messages Street evangelism, by dressing colourful T-shirts with Gospel messages Using a microphone to spread the gospel on the streets of London. Feeding the homeless in different occasions such as Christmas dinner, Easter lunch etc

1. What significant obstacles that affected church mission briefed explain

Misunderstanding and lack of clarity of the gospel; as a result, all church members are not fully participating.

Cultural difference: Eder, Mahber (Social gathering for a purpose)Value system: challenging to impose your own true beliefs on others. Lack of own church buildings to disciple, pray and train people unable to get access to prisons and hospitals.

1. What kind of plan you have for mission in your church?

We have long and short term plan. This can be implemented according to the season and budget. If you are interested, I can forward the copy.

1. Are churches members fully participate in mission? No
2. What feedback you have in the work of mission.

Last summer, we participated in our school building during the school Christmas fate, by preparing a hot spicy traditional dish with aromatic Ethiopian coffee ceremony. It was an excellent opportunity to talk to many parents and teachers. We sell the food, coffee and drink the money raised was given to the school. The organisers were happy and sent us a thank you message. Besides, our church rewarded our team with an informative and useful book.

1. What are the unique features of your church mission from other denomination? I think the unique features of our church mission is we involve and in people's need and in their problem to show the love of God. We also share our experience as human beings to encourage and lift their faith. Also, we help single mothers and elderly to fill forms, translate etc.
2. How your church understand the mission

ANS: We understand the mission in the light of the Great Commission. Therefore, our mission field starts in West London, and goes out unto the end of the world. Hence, we run prayer meetings scattered around west London, namely Hayes, Hounslow, and Finsbury Park. Secondly, our understanding of mission directs us to reach out Ethiopian and Eritrean immigrant population in London with the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Nevertheless, also beyond the immediate focus of the mission, we try to serve the broader community along the way. Thirdly, the essence of the mission is not limited to bring the people to Christ only but to help the poor and the needy as and when find them. The crisis caused by the pandemic COVID 19, has to lead us to give financial support to the already poor n vulnerable who are affected severely by the pandemic in Ethiopia. So we acted. This too is our mission work. We are also actively seeking to open branches by sending out as well as supporting already located minister to do church in their localities. This too is part of our mission.

1. Do we have biblical evidence about church mission? If so, could you briefly explain?

Mathew 28:18, Great Commission

Gal 2:10, Helping the poor as part of the mission

The book of acts, in general, affirms that the disciples were going from place to place planting churches.

1. What methods does the church follow on missions?

ANS:

* 1. The church has evangelism department which actively focuses on reaching out with the gospel to unchurched.
  2. The church has mission n compassion department that focuses beyond the Jerusalem/Judea/Samaria/ to the End of the World.
  3. Finding or reaching out Christin living in an area, and work around them and through them to make disciples in that locality and start bible study/prayer group with the view of forming local church.

It is being led by the Holy Spirit to start work in a particular area and act up guidance.

1. What significant obstacles that affected church mission briefed explain

ANS: The labour does not correspond to fruit easily. Too much labour but far less result in terms of conversion. Although, doing mission by itself is obedience, seeing fruit as fuel for a greater mission.

Misunderstanding by the other churches in expansion for the mission has been another obstacle. People assume mission work is the expansion of the human kingdom. Therefore, they misjudge and harbour tension and ill feelings in HIS work. Instead of blessing and releasing, they hold back things. Without realising in so doing, they are putting a kind of roadblocks along the way.

1. What kind of plan you have for mission in your church?

ANS: Church planting, Church networking, ongoing evangelism, all this backed up through prayer and mobilisation.

1. Are church members fully participate in mission?

ANS: Not all church members are fully and actively participant in all aspect of the church mission. Some are more into evangelism, and some are more into care provision, others are into prayer. However, in all aspect of church mission, more people are needed to be engaged in it. So far, the percentage is low.

1. What feedback you have in the work of mission.
2. From the community: Some appreciate, and others detest.
3. From church members: All church members support the work of evangelism and mission even though all don't get involved fully in it.
4. Other body's: Many thanks and different kind of appreciation have been received from solicitors, aid recipient bodies, ministries etc.
5. What are the unique features of your church mission from other denomination?

ANS: I believe the uniqueness of our mission from others would enhance our readiness to act whenever necessary. In other words, less bureaucratic and eager for action. These are the features of the church leadership board. Simple, uncomplicated, spiritual unity for the Kingdom of God is the mark of our church operation. So this, I feel, is our uniqueness.

1. How your Church understand the mission

The key text for the Mission of the Church is Matthew 28:18-20.

We believe that the church’s key mission is to make disciples “Make disciples of all nations”, and to incorporate them into the family of the church “baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit”

And then to continue to grow them as disciples within the fellowship of the church “teaching them to obey everything I have commanded”

We do this not in our own strength, but through the empowering presence of God’s Spirit,

“and surely I am with you always, even until the end of the age.”

1. Do we have biblical evidence about church mission? If so, could you briefly explain?

Both the words of Jesus in Matthew 28, and the similar words in Acts 1:8 “But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.” give the commission to the church.

We see this being lived out by the New Testament church, both in Acts, but also in the epistles.

1. What methods does the Church follow on missions?

We have three main ways in which we do evangelism (though they overlap)

1. Relational evangelism3
   1. Through the relationships we have and build with family, friends and neighbours, we seek to share our lives and share the gospel.
   2. We seek to build more relationships with people. This can be organic through our natural relationships, or through ministries we run more centrally – e.g. children’s holiday clubs, toddler’s groups, youthgroups, CAP ministires etc. We never want the meeting of people to be an end in itself, but are always praying for gospel sharing opportunities with those we meet.
2. Proclamational evangelism
   1. We have events, from Sunday services, to one off evangelistic events to ongoing evangelistic courses (e.g. Christianity explored)
   2. Members of the church will also speak in other forums – e.g. school assemblies, Christian Unions, funerals, weddings etc.
   3. We make various evangelistic resources available through our website and social media.
3. Contact evangelism
   1. We sometimes have times where we seek to share the gospel directly with people we meet at various events – e.g. street parties, cold contact evangelism, whether in parks, door-to-door etc.
4. What significant obstacles that affected church mission briefed explain
   1. Our own hearts. We often want to be loved by people more than we love them enough to risk friendships by sharing the gospel
   2. Our own lack of confidence: we need to be trained to have confidence both in the gospel and in our ability to share it.
   3. The opposition of a world that hates Jesus. Sometimes we are discouraged by the rejection of the gospel.
   4. A lack of resources: we would love to have more people, time and money to invest in kingdom work.
5. What kind of plan you have for mission in your Church?
   1. Please see the answer to q3
6. Are church members fully participate in mission?
   1. As a church we are fully committed to mission (at least in theory!) We have a church covenant that every church member has signed in which we state,   
      • We promise to nurture children and young people who are in our care, to teach them the truths of God, and by a pure and loving example to seek the salvation of our family, friends and neighbours

• We commit ourselves to being ambassadors for the Kingdom of God in this city through the proclamation of the gospel and love towards all people from conception to natural death.

(See <https://www.twynholm.org/elementor-2033/> for our church covenant)

* 1. In practice there would certainly be some members of the church who are much more active in evangelism than others.

1. What feedback you have in the work of mission.
2. From community

Other than a few individuals who are hostile, and many who seem ambivalent, people generally seem to expect a church to be preaching the gospel and challenging people to think about it. As the culture becomes more and more ignorant of Christian things there seems to be an inquisitiveness that comes from newness. People think we are strange but are also quite intrigued about what makes us tick.

1. From church members

Church are always excited about hearing of evangelistic opportunities that people have had, and are generally prayerful and encouraging. We devote a reasonable amount of our time in our Sunday evening service each week praying for evangelism.

1. Other bodies

Our Fellowship of churches (the FIEC – see [www.fiec.org.uk](http://www.fiec.org.uk)) is very supportive of our mission. We also receive encouragement from the evangelical alliance, the proclamation trust, CAP and other organisations.

1. What are the unique features of your church mission compared to other denominations?

As a Baptist Church we do not believe that anyone is born a Christian, but needs to come to their own personal faith. We do not assume that the children of believers are themselves believers. Therefore we believe that the raising of our children is a key evangelistic ministry.   
We also place a strong emphasis on church membership. This, we believe, clarifies the distinction between the church and the world, helps to display more clearly the love that we have for one another, by which all people will know that we are his disciples, and focuses the mutual covenantal responsibilities we have for one another to pray, support, encourage and hold one another accountable. Again, see our church covenant for more details of those responsibilities.