

TRANSFORMING COMMUNITIES AND MAKING DISCIPLES OF JESUS
THROUGH THE PRACTICES OF NEIGHBORLINESS:
APPRENTICESHIP IN THE WAYS OF PARISH LIFE
FOR THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY

by

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ABSTRACT

*TRANSFORMING COMMUNITIES AND MAKING DISCIPLES OF JESUS
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The Christian Church in North America has struggled to understand Christian discipleship and spiritual formation since the death of Christendom. This thesis reports the results of transformative, mixed-methods project which utilized a modified Participatory Action Research design to create a learning community that sought to apprentice participants from St. Saviour's Anglican Church in practices of neighborliness. The learning community included four significant projects in the parish that included practices of neighborliness. These included Messy Church, a refugee sponsorship project, a concert project, and a project around persons at risk for social isolation. The results showed the effectiveness of the creation of a learning community through participation in the learning community formed by these practices.

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Soli Deo Gloria!

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ART	Action Research Team
BCP	Book of Common Prayer
GWCTD	Guess Who's Coming to Dinner
NRSV	New Revised Standard Version
PAR	Participatory Action Research
RCL	Revised Common Lectionary
SPSS	Statistical Package for the Social Sciences

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CHAPTER ONE

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

The Research Topic

In 2012, St. Saviour's Anglican Church conducted some informal research to test their assumptions about what their neighbors knew about their congregation.¹ They conducted interviews with random people on the street and inside local businesses. The interviews were recorded on video and later edited for length, then shown to members of the congregation. Congregational members were surprised by what they saw. Not even half of those interviewed were able to recognize the name of the congregation. Of those who recognized the name, many were not able to identify which of the churches in the neighborhood was St. Saviour's. When the building was pointed out, some said that they had always thought that church was closed. Some people reported memories of attending an event such as a wedding or funeral in the church and others recalled having attended scouting programs. The members of St. Saviour's were shocked by what they saw and heard on the video, since they always thought of themselves as a neighborhood church.

In some ways, St. Saviour's has always been a neighborhood church. Most of the people who attend St. Saviour's live in the immediate or adjoining neighborhoods of the church building. Many walk to church. Still the evidence of the interviews seemed to suggest a disconnect between the neighborhood and the congregation.

¹ Pseudonyms are used in this thesis for all proper names of persons and places. St. Saviour's is an Anglican parish situated in a Canadian urban neighborhood in Ontario.

St. Saviour's has been working hard to reconnect with the neighborhood. They undertook a further research project in partnership with other local churches in order to identify needs in the neighborhood. Out of that research, the congregation began a *Messy Church* worship service that was designed to meet the needs of socially isolated young families that were moving into the neighborhood in large numbers.²

This congregation has also been working to connect with other socially isolated persons in the neighborhood, especially persons with various disabilities, including mental illness. Community meals and a community bible study held in a local group home are bringing neighbors together, both inside the church building and out in the neighborhood.

The congregation is also making a connection with local musicians and audiences. The parish was approached by local musicians asking if the church's worship space could be used for concerts. The recent acquisition of a grand piano and the excellent natural acoustics of the church made for a great location for classical chamber music. The congregation's concert project has developed quickly beyond the dreams and hopes of all involved. St. Saviour's was the venue for the Classical Music Showcase for the 2015 Juno Awards.³ The concert project is helping St. Saviour's to connect with the neighborhood in new ways, especially as they leverage the opportunity to include in audiences their other new friends who are at risk of social isolation through poverty or disability.

² Messy Church is a worship service designed for the whole family together, with crafts, art, Bible stories, drama, singing, and a meal. Messy Church happens at St. Saviour's on the third Thursday of every month.

³ The Juno Awards are Canada's premiere music awards program (they may be described as the Canadian equivalent of the Grammy Awards).

St. Saviour Anglican Church's turn toward the neighborhood is rooted in Christian spirituality, the Anglican parish tradition, and particularly Jesus' invitation to love our neighbors. As the rector and parish priest in the parish, I have witnessed how the journey thus far has been meaningful and has kindled a desire to grow deeper in *neighborliness*. Still, I wonder what it might mean for us to move beyond a few programs and to learn to engage more deeply in the practices of neighborliness in our daily lives.

Research Question

My primary research question is this:

How might a Participatory Action Research intervention, which utilizes a learning community to engage in the Christian practices of neighborliness, help the members of St. Saviour's Anglican Church engage more fully in God's mission in their corporate gatherings and daily lives?

Description of Variables

A *Participatory Action Research* project (PAR) employing a *learning community* to explore well-defined practices of neighborliness is the primary *independent variable* in this project. The practices themselves were defined and developed by a PAR Leadership Team. The PAR Leadership Team worked together with volunteer participants to create a learning community that apprenticed participants in the practices of neighborliness.

The primary dependent variable in this project is the congregation's missional engagement in the neighborhood—which is what I am calling *neighborliness*—both in the daily lives of individual congregation members and in the life of the congregation gathered. I am considering the expressions of neighborliness in daily life, and in congregational life, as two necessary aspects of the one dependent variable, the congregation's overall missional engagement in the neighborhood.

I define *neighborliness* as a practiced spirituality that corresponds to the fact that God is interested in the flourishing of persons and communities. Neighborliness includes some of the practices as outlined by Dorothy Bass and others in works such as *Practicing our Faith*.⁴ I am thinking in particular of practices such as hospitality, friendship, shaping communities, forgiveness, healing, works of mercy, raising children, and others.

Neighborliness also includes practices of *citizenship* that contribute towards the common good as outlined by authors such as Walter Brueggemann, Miroslav Volf, Robert Bellah, Gary M. Simpson, John McKnight, and Peter Block.⁵ Practices may be engaged in with community partners, such as other neighbours, neighborhood associations, neighborhood churches, and other organizations.

I have hoped to find that a learning community will lead participants into a deeper understanding of our Christian vocation as neighbors and increased participation in the *missio Dei in vicinia*, the mission of God in the neighborhood. The type of learning that I have in mind here involves discipleship in the form of apprenticeship: that is, learning that is intensely practical.⁶

⁴ Dorothy C. Bass, ed. *Practicing Our Faith: A Way of Life for a Searching People*, 2nd, Kindle ed. (San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 2010).

⁵ Walter Brueggemann, *Journey to the Common Good*, Kindle ed. (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2010); Miroslav Volf, *A Public Faith: How Followers of Christ Should Serve the Common Good*, Kindle ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Brazos Press, 2011); Robert N. Bellah et al., *The Good Society*, Kindle ed. (New York, NY: Vintage Books, 1991); Gary M. Simpson, "God in Global Civil Society," (Unpublished manuscript, Luther Seminary, St. Paul, MN, 2008); Peter Block and John P. McKnight, *The Abundant Community: Awakening the Power of Families and Neighborhoods* (San Francisco, CA: Berrett-Koehler, 2010).

⁶ I am indebted to John P. Bowen for the insight of thinking of discipleship as apprenticeship. John is a member of St. Saviour's and has spoken of apprenticing in the school of Jesus in preaching in the parish. See also John P. Bowen, *Green Shoots out of Dry Ground: Growing a New Future for the Church in Canada*

There are a number of intervening variables that may have an effect upon the relationship between the independent and dependent variables. The research findings have been analyzed with these variables to test their effect. These variables include gender, age, income level, church background, neighborhood of residence, frequency of worship attendance, education level, length of time as a congregational member, length of time living in the same neighborhood, and prior experience in a discipleship group.

Importance of this Research

The Gospel According to Luke tells the story of a religious scholar who tested Jesus with the question, “What must I do to inherit eternal life?” (Luke 10:25).⁷ Jesus responded by asking the scholar what the religious tradition had to say on the matter. The scholar responded, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength, and with all your mind; and your neighbor as yourself” (Luke 10:27). Jesus affirmed the scholar’s answer. However, when Luke tells his readers that the scholar pressed the matter further, asking Jesus, “Who is my neighbor?” (Luke 10:29), that question provided the opportunity for Jesus to answer with what is known as “The Parable of the Good Samaritan.”

Jesus speaks to the practice of neighborliness in this biblical passage. The question of what it means to love the neighbor continues to be an important question for

Kindle ed. (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2013), loc. 299-420. See also Dwight J. Zscheile, *The Agile Church: Spirit-Led Innovation in an Uncertain Age*, Kindle ed. (New York, NY: Morehouse Publishing, 2014), loc. 309-313.

⁷ All scripture quotations, unless otherwise noted, are from National Council of the Churches of Christ in the United States of America, *The Holy Bible Containing the Old and New Testaments with the Apocryphal/ Deuterocanonical Books: New Revised Standard Version* (Iowa Falls, IA: World Bible Publishers, 1989).

those seeking to be followers of Jesus. Who are our neighbors and what does it mean to love them? The practices of neighborliness help us to explore answers to these questions and to join with God in the *missio Dei*.

This research is important for the people of St. Saviour's Anglican Church in their missional turn towards the neighborhood as they rediscover their vocation as persons and as a community called to the practices of neighborliness. Within the particular neighborhood, and within the particular relationships that are possible there, neighborliness will take a particular shape. It is expected that individuals and the community will grow in the neighborliness expressed in the particular practices that are explored through this research.

I hope that the wider church will benefit from this research as it contributes to the wider conversation regarding the church's participation in the *missio Dei*. God's reign is often understood to have universal effect and cosmic significance. The manner in which God's reign comes to the local level is sometimes overlooked. I believe that the *missio Dei in vicinia* is a concept that needs to be considered.

The word "parish" shares the same origin as the word "parochial." The shared root of these words in the Greek *par* implies a relationship characterized by mutuality. Ironically, however, the word "parochial" has come to carry a meaning that is contrary. Its synonyms are "insular, petty, sectarian, biased, bigoted, inward-looking, limited, narrow, prejudiced, shallow, and small-minded."⁸ While the word "parish" speaks to a neighborly reality, the word "parochial" points in the opposite direction. Local churches

⁸ "Oxford Dictionaries," www.oxforddictionaries.com (accessed November 1, 2013). s.v. "parish" and "parochial."

can play an important role within the *missio Dei in vicinia*, but too often, that opportunity is lost where they exist not as a parish in the best sense of that word, but as parochialisms.⁹

This research project is also important to me as the rector of the parish as I seek to exercise leadership within the congregation.¹⁰ This research project helps me as a leader of the congregation, and of the wider church, to explore how congregations can be led into more meaningful engagement with God's mission in the neighborhoods where they have been planted. I describe something of my own journey in this conversation, along with the parish history, in chapter 2.

Theoretical Lenses

In chapter 3, I explore a number of theoretical lenses that inform this research. I introduce each of these briefly below.

Learning, Discipleship, and Christian Formation

Faith Development Theory

I begin with a number of theories related to learning and faith development and by highlighting the conversation between James Fowler, who wrote the seminal text on the topic of faith development, and Craig Dykstra, an influential theorist who has worked on issues of learning and faith development, and who has had a significant influence in the Missional Church Conversation. I accept Dykstra's definition of faith as the "appropriate

⁹ See Nancy Tatom Ammerman and Arthur Emery Farnsley, *Congregation & Community* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1997), 357.

¹⁰ The title *rector*, sometimes also, *incumbent*, is common Anglican usage to denote the lead priest appointed by the bishop to serve in the parish.

and intentional participation in the redemptive activity of God.”¹¹ This, in turn allows me to accept the definition of faith development put forth by Dwight Zscheile, who argues that Christian spiritual formation refers to the “intentional communal process of growing in our relationship with God and becoming conformed to Christ through the power of the Holy Spirit, for the sake of the world.”¹²

Learning Community

The concept of *learning community* arose out of robust research in the field of education. Educators seeking to improve the school system began creating learning communities that sought to make students, teachers, and administrators, all learners together. The concepts behind learning community have been taken into other forms of organizations. Many are finding that healthy organizations are learning organizations.

There is a strong relationship between the practice of learning community in education and the method of PAR. PAR has been one of the effective tools for creating learning communities in educational settings. Educators who have used PAR and its results to inform their teaching report greater job satisfaction.¹³ Authors who write from an organizational and business leadership perspective, such as Peter Drucker and Steven

¹¹ Craig R. Dykstra, “What Is Faith?,” in *Faith Development and Fowler*, ed. Craig R. Dykstra and Sharon Daloz Parks (Birmingham, AL: Religious Education Press, 1986), 55., emphasis his.

¹² Dwight J. Zscheile, “A Missional Theology of Spiritual Formation,” in *Cultivating Sent Communities: Missional Spiritual Formation*, ed. Dwight J. Zscheile (Grand Rapids, MI: W.B. Eerdmans Pub. Co., 2012), 7.

¹³ Stephen P. Gordon, *Collaborative Action Research: Developing Professional Learning Communities*, Adobe Digital ed. (New York, NY: Teachers College Press, 2008), 112.

Covey, have lauded the effects of learning community in the private and nonprofit sectors.¹⁴

I have also drawn upon the work of Dwight Zscheile whose definition of spiritual formation helps us to understand the fit between learning community and faith development. Zscheile suggests that the church is an intentional learning community.¹⁵

Apprenticeship: Learning through Practice

I suggest that one of the learning methods of Christian formation and discipleship is apprenticeship. I explore the learning model of apprenticeship in a number of ways. I point out that such learning through practice involves a different sort of knowledge than the sort of codified knowledge often privileged in academia. Apprenticeship normally involves some learning of codified knowledge, but its strength is helping learners in applying such knowledge in real-life situations.

The learning that happens in the field matches the theoretical with the practical and pairs apprentices with experienced masters in the craft. Mentors are normally those who engage with the mentored over a long period of time, such as an entire career and normally informal relationships. Coaches, on the other hand, are usually more formal

¹⁴ Steven Covey, “Three Roles of the Leader in the New Paradigm,” in *The Leader of the Future: New Visions, Strategies, and Practices for the Next Era*, ed. Frances Hesselbein, Marshall Goldsmith, and Richard Beckhard, The Drucker Foundation Future Series (San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 1996), 149; Peter F. Drucker, *Managing for the Future: The 1990s and Beyond* (New York, NY: Tuman Talley Books/Dutton, 1992), 108.

¹⁵ Zscheile, “A Missional Theology of Spiritual Formation,” 7.

relationships, negotiated to focus on specific goals. In either case, studies have shown that the relationship between apprentice and master is vital to the learning process.¹⁶

One of the great benefits of apprenticeship is the situational learning that it provides. Apprentices learn as they interact in the field. New knowledge is accessed alongside previous knowledge. Apprentices move towards expertise as they learn how to make decisions, assess a situation, and discern how to address it. Michael Eraut's work on professional practices of decision-making supports the framework for missional discernment put forward by Craig Van Gelder and grounded in the concept of communicative reason advanced by Jürgen Habermas and critical social theory.¹⁷

I also look at the theory of *situated learning* in relation to apprenticeship. From this theory we receive the concept of the *community of practice*. This is a way of thinking about learning and the social dimensions in which it occurs. Etienne Wenger argues that in the relationship of participation, "the social and the individual constitute each other."¹⁸

Learning citizenship is another important concept for the framework I am building. It asserts that there is a moral and ethical dimension to our membership in learning communities of practice. Each person, shaped by unique learning experiences,

¹⁶ Marianne van Woerkom, "Learning through Practice," in *Learning through Practice: Models, Traditions, Orientations and Approaches*, ed. Stephen Billett, Professional and Practice-Based Learning, PDF ed. (New York, NY: Springer, 2010), 257.

¹⁷ Craig Van Gelder, "The Hermeneutics of Leading in Mission," *Journal of Religious Leadership* 3, no. 1 and 2, Spring 2004 and Fall 2004 (2004); Michael Eraut, "Knowledge, Working Practices, and Learning," in *Learning through Practice: Models, Traditions, Orientations and Approaches*, ed. Stephen Billett, Professional and Practice-Based Learning (New York, NY: Springer, 2010), 44.

¹⁸ Etienne Wenger, "Communities of Practice and Social Learning: The Career of a Concept," in *Social Learning Systems and Communities of Practice*, ed. Chris Blackmore, PDF ed. (New York, NY: Springer, 2010), 508.

has a unique perspective to offer any community. How we steward our unique gift relates to responsible citizenship.

Critical Social Theory

Critical social theory is concerned with the imbalances of power that exist within the real-life situations of ordinary people and the mega-systems of the market economy, the political state, and the public sphere of civil society institutions, and the emerging global civil society. I begin by tracing something of the history of critical social theory as I find it helpful for understanding the approach. I arrive at the work of Jürgen Habermas and his paradigm of communicative action and reason that “seeks to reconstruct the essential features of a life together free of domination.”¹⁹ Communicative action is oriented toward creating normative agreement. It arises from creating understanding and agreement, as well as the social coordination and integration of action that follows from communicatively achieved agreements.²⁰

I move next to Gary Simpson’s proposal for Christian congregations to be public companions in civil society. Simpson relies on Habermas and critical social theory for his proposal. Simpson’s is a call for the missional engagement of congregations as a radical immersion in the pluralist and ambiguous place of today’s society. Simpson argues that the church has much to learn in the communicative give and take, but also much to offer, as we work against colonizing effects of money and power.²¹

¹⁹ Jürgen Habermas and Peter Dews, *Autonomy and Solidarity: Interviews with Jürgen Habermas*, Revised ed. (London: Verso, 1992), 193-194.

²⁰ Gary M. Simpson, *Critical Social Theory: Prophetic Reason, Civil Society, and Christian Imagination*, Kindle ed. (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2002), loc. 1296-1302.

²¹ *Ibid.*, loc. 1805-1809.

The concept of *transformative learning* arises out of critical social theory.

Transformative learning stresses critical reflection and thinking with the goal of freeing students to be free critical thinkers. In transformative learning, *habits of mind* and *points of view* are transformed by communicative processes.

Neighborhoods and Neighborliness

In the final section of chapter 3, I look at a number of concepts related to neighborhoods and neighborliness. The *New Urbanism* is a neo-traditional urban design movement that seems to hold a great deal of promise for promoting the common good in neighborhoods. New Urbanism focuses on the built environment and such matters as walkability, connectivity, diversity, urban design, density, transportation, sustainability, and quality of life.²² Eric O. Jacobsen, Vincent Rougeau, and Willis Jenkins are cited as Christian theologians who support the tenets of New Urbanism.²³ John McKnight and Peter Block are clearly influenced by New Urbanism in their book, *The Abundant Community*.²⁴ I review McKnight's and Block's "seven elements of satisfaction" as a way to explore what neighbors can accomplish when working together in the neighborhood. These seven elements are: (1) health; (2) safety and security; (3) the

²² "New Urbanism," Alexandria, VA: NewUrbanism.org, <http://www.newurbanism.org/> (accessed June 9, 2016).

²³ Eric O. Jacobsen, *Sidewalks in the Kingdom: New Urbanism and the Christian Faith* (Grand Rapids, MI: Brazos Press, 2003); Vincent D. Rougeau, "Property Law: Catholic Social Thought and the New Urbanism: A Shared Vision to Confront the Problem of Urban Sprawl?," in *Recovering Self-Evident Truths: Catholic Perspectives on American Law*, ed. Michael A. Scaperlanda and Teresa S. Collett (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 2007); Willis Jenkins, "Neighborhood Ethics: Christianity, Urbanism, and Homelessness," *Anglican Theological Review* 91, no. 4 (2009).

²⁴ Block and McKnight, *The Abundant Community*.

environment; (4) resilient community; (5) food and food security; (6) raising children; and (7) care. Neighborhoods have an important role in promoting the common good.

I explore the concept of “social capital” as a way of understanding the currency on which neighborhoods operate. Social capital involves the social relations between people that serve to enable members of society to work together to accomplish collective goals. I show that churches are gifted in creating social capital and argue that they need to be responsible stewards of the social capital they create and hold.

Finally, at the end of chapter 3 and the section on neighborhoods, I briefly relate this work to global issues. The adage “think globally, act locally” speaks to this reality. As Gary Simpson points out, local action and solidarity with civil society institutions have a way of subverting the colonizing effects of the mega-systems of the market economy and political state.

These theoretical lenses and literature come together to begin to shape an orienting framework for the project. The concepts of spiritual formation, learning theory, critical social theory, and neighborhoods come together. Spiritual formation speaks to the change being sought in the project. Learning theory and critical social theory speak to the methods being employed. Theories around neighborhoods speak to the context of change, provide imagination for how change occurs, and promote the common good.

Theological Frames and Biblical Perspectives

I build on the orienting framework in chapter 4 by adding theological frames and biblical perspectives to the theoretical lenses provided in chapter 3. I explore the theological concepts of the *missio Dei*; perichoresis, and participation in God; the kingdom of God and the common good; the parish; and Christian practice. In terms of

biblical perspectives, I look at neighborliness in Luke 9 and 10; Jesus' teaching ministry in Mark; and discipleship in John as participation in God.

The *Missio Dei*

Karl Barth was one of the first theologians of the twentieth century to articulate that mission is first an activity of God and has to do with the very nature of God.²⁵ The concept of *missio Dei* recalls that God has a mission in the world and that God is the primary agent of that mission. The *missio Dei* moves the world towards its *telos* in the kingdom of God and is carried out in a manner in keeping with God's own nature and that kingdom.

Perichoresis and Participation in God

Perichoresis speaks to the relationality of God and the mutuality and integrity of relationships with the Holy Trinity. An understanding of discipleship as *participation in God*—or what the Orthodox tradition speaks of as *deification*—relies on the fact of this relationality and God's generosity in sharing the divine life.

The Kingdom of God and the Common Good

The *kingdom of God* and the *common good* are not identical to each other, but are complimentary concepts. The kingdom of God is the end to which the *missio Dei* moves, an eschatological future and present reality that includes the healing of the entire cosmos. The common good is one of the ways that the reign of God is made manifest in the world in the here and now. I cite Walter Brueggemann who argues that *neighborhood* is key to

²⁵ David Jacobus Bosch, *Transforming Mission: Paradigm Shifts in Theology of Mission*, American Society of Missiology Series; No. 16 (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1991), 399.

the common good.²⁶ Miroslav Volf argues that Christians need to believe and live as though God is relevant and fundamental to human flourishing as they engage with culture for the common good.²⁷

The Parish

In the theological discussion of neighborhood, I begin by looking at a concept I have termed, the *missio Dei in vicinia*. This emphasis remembers that God is particularly interested in the flourishing of persons and communities and this is uniquely expressed in local contexts. This concept draws from Scott Fredrickson's insight that congregations, as *persons*, are perichoretically related to their local neighborhood.²⁸ This concept takes note that God is at work in unique and particular ways in each local context.

My discussion of a *theology of place* draws primarily on the work of John Inge and Craig Bartholomew.²⁹ Both of these authors speak about the eclipse of place in modernity, but the hopeful recovery of the place of place in more recent theological developments. Inge and Bartholomew cite others, such as Brian Walsh and Steven Bouma-Prediger, who point to realities of homelessness and placelessness as basic realities for most people in Western society.³⁰ Walter Brueggemann's seminal text, *The*

²⁶ Brueggemann, *Journey to the Common Good*, 29.

²⁷ Volf, *A Public Faith*, 73, 93.

²⁸ Scott Fredrickson, "The Missional Congregation in Context," in *The Missional Church in Context: Helping Congregations Develop Contextual Ministry*, ed. Craig Van Gelder, Kindle ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Pub. Co., 2007).

²⁹ John Inge, *A Christian Theology of Place* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2003); Craig G. Bartholomew, *Where Mortals Dwell: A Christian View of Place for Today* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2011).

³⁰ Steven Bouma-Prediger and Brian J. Walsh, *Beyond Homelessness: Christian Faith in a Culture of Displacement* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Pub., 2008).

Land: Place as Gift, Promise and Challenge in Biblical Faith, speaks to the central role that land (and place) plays in the Old Testament.³¹ W.D. Davies', *The Gospel and the Land*, establishes the fact that place takes on a new meaning in the New Testament with the incarnation of God in the person of Jesus Christ.³² The discussion of the theology of place concludes with a discussion of place in the sacramental tradition.³³ I conclude with a theological reflection and critique of the New Urbanism movement and the limited value of concern for the built environment without concern for a community of virtue.

Within my discussion of neighborhoods, I include a section on *contextual theology* in order to emphasize that the theological enterprise is undertaken in the context of neighborhoods and the *missio Dei in vicinia*. I draw on Steven Bevan's, *Models of Contextuality*, and Van Gelder's, *The Missional Church in Context*.

I close the theological section on neighborhood with a discussion of the Anglican parish tradition and the proposal by the authors Sparks, Soerens, and Friesen, for the renewal of this way of being the congregation in the neighborhood, participating in the *missio Dei in vicinia*.³⁴

³¹ Walter Brueggemann, *The Land: Place as Gift, Promise, and Challenge in Biblical Faith*, Overtures to Biblical Theology, 2nd, Kindle ed. (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2003).

³² W. D. Davies, *The Gospel and the Land: Early Christianity and Jewish Territorial Doctrine* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1974).

³³ I draw on the work of Pope Paul VI, "The Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World: Gaudium et Spes," The Vatican, 1967, http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/vat-ii_cons_19651207_gaudium-et-spes_en.html; William Temple, *Nature, Man and God* (London: Macmillan and Company, 1935); Rowan Williams, *On Christian Theology*, Challenges in Contemporary Theology (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 2000).

³⁴ Paul Sparks, Tim Soerens, and Dwight J. Friesen, *The New Parish: How Neighborhood Churches Are Transforming Mission, Discipleship and Community*, Kindle ed. (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2014).

Christian Practice

The final section in the theological half of chapter 4 looks at the body of work around Christian practice. I review the foundational work of Alistair MacIntyre in *After Virtue: A Study of Moral Theology*.³⁵ I draw on the work of Dorothy Bass, Craig Dykstra, and others who have contributed to the Christian practices discussion.³⁶ Bass and Dykstra define Christian practices as those that “address fundamental needs and conditions through concrete human acts.”³⁷ I look specifically at the practice of hospitality drawing on the work of Ana María Pineda, Amos Yong, Paul Murray, and Stephanie Spellers.³⁸

Neighborliness in Luke’s Gospel

I also examine three particular biblical perspectives in chapter 4. The first explores the theme of neighborliness in Luke 9-10. This passage follows Jesus’ own journey with his disciples as he sets out to go to Jerusalem to complete his redemptive work in this death, resurrection, and ascension. Key passages in this section of Luke’s gospel include the journey through Samaritan country, questions about discipleship, the

³⁵ Alasdair C. MacIntyre, *After Virtue: A Study in Moral Theory*, 3rd, Kindle ed. (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2007).

³⁶ See Bass, *Practicing Our Faith*; Miroslav Volf and Dorothy C. Bass, (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2002); Paul Miller, “A Theory of Christian Practices,” *Touchstone* 30, no. 2; Bonnie J. Miller-McLemore, *In the Midst of Chaos: Caring for Children as Spiritual Practice*, The Practices of Faith Series, Kindle ed. (San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass); Benjamin T. Conner, *Practicing Witness: A Missional Vision of Christian Practices*, Kindle ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: W.B. Eerdmans).

³⁷ Bass, *Practicing Our Faith*, loc. 572-573.

³⁸ Ana Maria Pineda, “Hospitality,” in *Practicing Our Faith: A Way of Life for a Searching People*, ed. Dorothy C. Bass, 2nd, Kindle ed. (San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 2010); Amos Yong, *Hospitality and the Other: Pentecost, Christian Practices, and the Neighbor* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2008); Paul D. Murray and Luca Badini Confalonieri, *Receptive Ecumenism and the Call to Catholic Learning: Exploring a Way for Contemporary Ecumenism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008); Stephanie Spellers, *Radical Welcome: Embracing God, the Other, and the Spirit of Transformation*, Kindle ed. (New York, NY: Church Publishing, 2006). See also, *Salam Neighbor*, directed by Zach Ingrasci and Chris Temple, Film on DVD, (1001 Media Group, Living on One, 2015).

definition of neighbor, in the Parable of the Good Neighbor, and the breaking down of ethnic, religious, and gender boundaries.

Jesus' Teaching Ministry in Mark

I trace two important themes in the Gospel of Mark. I begin by looking at the theme of apprenticeship in Jesus' teaching ministry in Mark 1:14-45. I also find the theme of learning community in Jesus' various teaching methods described in Mark 8-10. Jesus' teaching emphasis in these passages is not primarily about the disciples imitating him, as much as it is about the reign of God, and imitation of the Father.

Discipleship in John as Participation in God

Finally, I conclude the literature review by examining the theme discipleship as participation in God as found in the texts from John's Gospel appointed in the Revised Common Lectionary for the Sundays after Easter in Year C. These include: John 20:19-31; 21:1-19; 13:31-35; 14:23-29; 17:20-26; 14:8-17. In dealing with each of these passages I show that God is creating a people who participate with God in the *missio Dei*, and who are accompanied and filled with the neighboring Spirit (Paraclete), to continue the ministry of Jesus, embodying God's life of love and love in their own love of God and neighbor.

Research Methodology

A brief introduction and explanation of the research methodology is in order. This thesis project employed a transformative mixed methods approach with a modified Participatory Action Research (PAR) design. Transformative mixed methods collect both quantitative and qualitative data in order to gain an understanding of both breadth and

depth of what is happening in the system studied. This methodology is *transformative* in the sense that it seeks to promote positive change in the system. A typical PAR design involves the population studied in the research design, which involves the development of interventions designed to create positive change. The PAR employed in this project was *modified* in the sense only a sample of the population were engaged in planning and implementing the research design, along with its intervention; this sample group acted as the PAR Leadership Team. The population studied in this project were the adult members of the congregation of St. Saviour's Anglican church.

The modified PAR design included a baseline questionnaire, collecting quantitative data, and three baseline interviews, providing qualitative data. The PAR Leadership Team then decided on the main intervention of creating a learning community to apprentice members of St. Saviour's church in practices of neighborliness. The PAR Leadership Team also decided on four main projects and activities of the parish which, together with the instruments for data collection would provide the opportunities for learning. The four main projects and activities were: (1) a refugee sponsorship program; (2) a concert project; (3) a project to build community among persons at risk for social isolations; and (4) Messy Church. Four focus groups were conducted around each of these projects or activities, each generating qualitative data and providing learning opportunities. Several end-line interviews were conducted providing the opportunity for comparison with the baseline. The end-line questionnaire corresponded generally to the baseline and also gathered data describing levels of participation in the intervention. All of the instruments were field-tested with cohort colleagues and volunteers from a neighboring parish.

The quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics, specifically, paired and independent t-tests. The qualitative data were analyzed using the method outlined by Charmaz who calls for two main phases of coding where the initial phase of examining each word, line, or segment is followed by a focused, selective phase that draws together significant or frequent codes “to sort, synthesize, integrate, and organize large amounts of data.”³⁹ Focused codes were clustered together by themes in axial codes and the relationship between axial codes was described with a layer of theoretical coding.

I chose this methodology and design because of its strengths from creating positive change. As I discuss below, there was also a great deal in the literature regarding education to commend the use of this method. In chapter 5, where I discuss this methodology in detail, I also describe how this methodology accords with basic theological commitments of the Christian faith. The questionnaires, interview, and focus group protocols can be found in the appendices.

Quantitative Data

Survey questions asking for quantitative responses were pre-coded. From these data, I report descriptive statistics, including the total number in the sample (N), frequency, percentage, and mean, where appropriate. I also use inferential statistics, specifically paired and independent t-tests, for analyzing the baseline and end-line questionnaires. These measures provide analysis that determines if, in fact, statistically significant results shows change has occurred in participants’ practices of neighborliness.

³⁹ Kathy Charmaz, *Constructing Grounded Theory* (London: Sage, 2014), 115.

Qualitative Data

I analyzed the qualitative data utilizing the layers of coding described by Kathy Charmaz in her book, *Constructing Grounded Theory*.⁴⁰ Charmaz calls for two main phases of coding where the initial phase of examining each word, line, or segment is followed by a focused, selective phase that draws together significant or frequent codes “to sort, synthesize, integrate, and organize large amounts of data.”⁴¹

My own line-by-line coding, as Charmaz suggests, gave me starting points for my data, without determining its content. This phase of coding also allowed me to generate *in vivo* codes, drawn directly from the language of the participants.⁴² The initial phase of coding was followed by focused coding which involves clustering *in vivo* codes into larger categories. Axial coding further clustered focused codes, and the final theoretical coding explained the relationships between the axial codes.

The questionnaires included some open-ended questions designed to capture a limited amount of qualitative data. In the questionnaires, I coded open-ended questions that asked for categorical responses in questionnaires according to those categories.

Other Matters

In this section, I list several key terms that arise in this research, along with a short definition of each. I then provide a summary of how I dealt with the ethical

⁴⁰ Ibid. While I use this method for coding, this project does not rely upon Grounded Theory.

⁴¹ Ibid., 115.

⁴² Ibid., 117.

considerations arise in such research along with the principles and parameters that guided me in this project.

Key Terms

Several key terms arise in the course of this discussion. Some of these key terms are listed and defined below.

Action Research Team (ART). In a typical PAR, the Action Research Team is a group of persons who participate in the work of planning and implementing Participatory Action Research. Typically the entire population studied will participate in the ART.

Apprenticeship. Apprenticeship is both a model of education and Christian discipleship. As an educational model, it classically focuses on training practitioners mostly with hands-on, on-the-job training. As an educational approach, it is commonly employed in the skilled trades and professions. It is sometimes argued that Jesus employed an apprenticeship model in the training of his disciples. Apprenticeship is discussed in this project in chapter 3 under Spiritual Formation and Learning Theory.

Citizenship. I use the word “citizenship,” in this project, to refer to a category of practices related to participation in the neighborhood, city, or nation, for the sake of the common good. More than mere membership, citizenship denotes an active participation with others in the social architecture needed for healthy communities and human flourishing.

Christian practices. Dorothy Bass and her coauthors define practices as “those shared activities that address fundamental needs of humanity and the rest of creation and

that, woven together, form a way of life.”⁴³ I define *Christian* practice as a kind of *belief-in-action* that comprises a faithful life, one that understands the needs of the world, and responds, in concrete and distinct practices.⁴⁴ “Christian practices are things Christian people do together over time in response to and in the light of God’s active presence for the life of the world in Christ Jesus.”⁴⁵

Discipleship. Discipleship is an idea basic to the Christian faith and Christian formation. During his ministry, Jesus called people to follow him. These followers of Jesus were his disciples. Within first century Judaism, itinerant rabbis (teachers) would often have followers who were their disciples (students). Christians consider themselves Jesus’ followers, disciples, or students, and as such, the church can be thought of as the school of Jesus.⁴⁶ As I speak about *discipleship* in this project, I speak of students who are apprentices in the practices of Christian faith, within the “trade school” of the church.⁴⁷

Learning community. The learning community is a concept and strategy popular in the field of education. In this project, the formation of a learning community was the fundamental intervention proposed. I hoped that the entire congregation would grow in neighborliness, and participate as a learning community.

⁴³ Bass, *Practicing Our Faith*, loc. 409-410.

⁴⁴ Philip D. Kenneson et al., *The Shape of Our Lives*, Getting Your Feet Wet (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2008), 65.

⁴⁵ Bass, *Practicing Our Faith*, 552-553.

⁴⁶ I am indebted to John P. Bowen for this insight. See Bowen, *Green Shoots out of Dry Ground*, loc. 288.

⁴⁷ Ibid.

Missional Church Conversation. In many ways, the Missional Church Conversation began in earnest with the publication of *Missional Church* in 1998.⁴⁸ One of the key insights of that book was that mission means *sending* and that God is a sending God.⁴⁹ *Missional Church* grew out of a three-year study conducted by the Gospel and Culture Network and built on important work by missiologists such as Bosch and Newbigin.⁵⁰ Other key insights from the mission of Church conversation include: (1) that God is a missionary God who sends the church into the world; (2) that God's mission in the world is related to the reign (kingdom) of God; (3) that the mission of church is an incarnational (versus an attractional) ministry sent to engage a postmodern, post-Christendom globalized context; and, (4) that the internal life of the mission of church focuses on every believer living as a disciple engaging in mission.⁵¹ The Missional Church Conversation continues where these insights and their significance for the future of the church continue to be explored. In its own way, this project is part of this conversation.

Neighborhood. There seems to be no precise definition of *neighborhood* among social scientists. The meaning of the word speaks to those who dwell near and share a common bond. I define neighborhood as the place where we live our lives. As such, there

⁴⁸ Darrell L. Guder, ed. *Missional Church: A Vision for the Sending of the Church in North America*, Gospel and Our Culture Series (Grand Rapids, MI: W.B. Eerdmans Pub., 1998); "The Epistle to Diogenetus," <http://www.earlychristianwritings.com/text/diogenetus-roberts.html> (accessed September 15, 2013).

⁴⁹ Guder, *Missional Church*, 3.

⁵⁰ Bosch, *Transforming Mission*; Lesslie Newbigin, *The Gospel in a Pluralist Society* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1989).

⁵¹ Craig Van Gelder and Dwight J. Zscheile, *The Missional Church in Perspective: Mapping Trends and Shaping the Conversation*, The Missional Network (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2011), 3-4.

is an expanding characteristic to our sense of neighborhood, which includes not only the streets on which we find our homes, but where we work, shop, play, and worship. In this project, I generally use the word “neighborhood” to describe a local geographic vicinity. I also use the word to describe a network of relationships within the same. I speak about the neighborhood near St. Saviour’s Church, as well as the vicinities close to where members of the parish live. I also describe the neighborhood as a sphere of God’s mission.

Neighborliness. I have defined neighborliness as a practiced spirituality that corresponds to the fact that God is interested in the flourishing of persons and communities. As such, neighborliness might include such practices as hospitality, friendship, forgiveness, and citizenship.

Parish. The word “parish” normally refers to an ecclesiastical district, normally with its own church and clergy. In some ways, the parish historic meaning of the word, “parish,” is synonymous with the neighborhood. The word “parish” may also refer to the people of the local church, or to the local church itself.

Participatory action research intervention. As part of this PAR project, the significant intervention will be the creation of a learning community that will apprentice practices of neighborliness. Within this intervention, the project will undertake to apprentice members of the Learning Community in at least four distinct practices. Each of these four will be a PAR intervention itself.

PAR Leadership Team. The PAR Leadership Team fulfilled the role of the ART in a typical PAR. In the research design described below, I explain that the PAR Leadership Team is was a representative group drawn from the population being

researched. Like a typical ART, the PAR Leadership Team participated in planning and implementing the PAR intervention.

Transformative Mixed Methods. Transformative Mixed Methods is a description of the research methodology that supports PAR. It is transformative because it seeks positive change within the system. It is a mixed-methods approach, because it employs both quantitative and qualitative analysis.

Ethical Considerations

Several ethical considerations shaped this project including some pertaining specifically to myself as the primary researcher, and others which pertained to other participants. I discuss these in turn below.

Researcher

I paid special attention to my role as the primary researcher with the PAR process. I strove at all times to remember that PAR involves egalitarian participation by the community in order to transform its situation for the better. The focus was on empowering people to make their own change, to gain and use their own knowledge. As the primary researcher in this project, I sought to remain mindful of my own temptation to drive the change that I may desire to see.

I am not, however, merely a social-science researcher working with St. Saviour's Church. I also happen to be the rector and parish priest.⁵² As rector I have a special leadership role in the parish and am part of the system. Within this PAR project, it is

⁵² The *rector* is the priest who is appointed, normally by the diocesan bishop, to be in charge of a parish.

perfectly reasonable for me to have influence on the direction of change; however, I needed to tend to the potential that my power in the system could displace the voice and influence of others.

Participants and Data

Participation in this project was voluntary and all participants were free to conclude their participation at any time. Pseudonyms are used in all reported data. Survey responses, audio and video recordings, transcripts, journals, memos, and codebooks are stored in password protected computer files or in locked cabinets. All data will be destroyed three years following the submission of this thesis, or on May 31, 2020. The benefits of participating in this study will pertain to the findings. Participants did not receive any other benefit beyond the growth in neighborliness that accrued. Participation, or lack of participation, has in no way affected the pastoral relationship between potential participants as parishioners, and myself as their priest.

Institutional Review Board (IRB)

A research proposal outlining this project, with the appropriate accompanying materials, was submitted to the Luther Seminary Institutional Review Board (IRB), which exists to ensure ethical and responsible treatment of human subjects involved in research conducted through Luther Seminary. Information from the Luther Seminary IRB website explains, “Luther Seminary accepts three historic documents, the Nuremburg Code (1949), the Helsinki Declaration (1964), and the Belmont Report (1979) as

expressing the general philosophical and ethical foundation of the IRB.”⁵³ The three key requirements for the ethical conduct of human subject research which are established in the Belmont Report include, (1) *respect for persons* (involving a recognition of the personal dignity and autonomy of individuals, and special protection of those persons with diminished autonomy); (2) *benefice* (entailing an obligation to protect persons from harm by maximizing anticipated benefits and minimizing possible risks of harm); and (3) *justice* (requiring that the benefits and burdens of research be distributed fairly).⁵⁴ The research conducted conformed to these ethical requirements in all respects.

Chapters

This first chapter of the thesis provides an introduction to the thesis of the whole, its research topic, the importance of this research, and an introduction to the theoretical lenses, theological frames, and biblical perspectives that will be picked up detail. This introduction has also broadly outlined the methodology of this research and other matters of interest.

Chapter Two: Historical Background sets this research in the context of St. Saviour’s Anglican Church and its urban context in Southern Ontario. In this chapter, I describe something of the history of neighborliness of St. Saviour’s and the city and neighborhood in which it is located. I go on to outline some of the formal and informal ecclesiology of St. Saviour’s that informs its understanding of vocation in the neighborhood. I then locate St. Saviour’s sense of disconnect with its neighborhood

⁵³ Luther Seminary, “Institutional Review Board: Luther Seminary,” St. Paul, MN, 2015, <http://www.luthersem.edu/irb/> (accessed July 9, 2015).

⁵⁴ Ibid.

within the larger historical context of the church in North America. Finally, I speak about my own journey as a parish priest in addressing these questions.

Chapters three, four, and five, each in turn, discuss the literature and theoretical lenses, theological frames, biblical perspectives, and methodology that I have already briefly outlined and introduced in this chapter. In *chapter 6*, I provide the research results and interpret them as I have described above in describing methodology.

Finally, I provide a number of conclusions, as well as theological and theoretical reflections in *chapter 7*. Having outlined the plan of this thesis project, I return now to the historical context in which this research has taken place.

CHAPTER TWO

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

It is hoped that this project contributes to an understanding of congregations and their missional engagement within local neighborhoods. This thesis is primarily, however, about one local church located within a particular neighborhood, within a particular city, each with their own particular histories and experience. St. Saviour's Anglican Church is located within a west downtown neighborhood of the city of Wellington in southern Ontario. Since missional engagement should always be contextual, it will be helpful to begin here with an account of the historical context of the parish and neighborhood.

A Parish History

History can be told through the interconnected stories that come together in the life of the *parish*.¹ The neighborhood itself has its own history as does the parish church of St. Saviour's.

The Neighborhood

St. Saviour's is located in a downtown neighborhood of a city that developed around heavy industry. Often thought of as a dirty and gritty city, Wellington has a

¹ I use the word "parish" here in the sense of neighborhood, and a sphere where God's mission is unfolding.

number of appealing attributes. Wellington is a compassionate place. This is evidenced by the fact that Wellington has highest rate of volunteerism of any city in Canada.² One civic leader told me, “This may be one of the few places where people they will give you the shirt off their back, but you better be prepared to listen to them bitch about it.”³ One theory that has been advanced to explain why this is the gritty city with a heart is related to its labor history.

Two significant moments are worth mentioning. The first dates to the year 1872 when an international movement seeking to win workers a nine-hour day had its beginnings in Wellington. Railroad workers organized strikes that quickly spread across Canada, then to the United Kingdom, and the United States. Typographical workers in Wellington, Toronto, and Montreal joined the railroad workers. Soon workers in many different industries were on strike in various cities around the world demanding nine-hour days. The solidarity of the movement was vitally important since, in this era, workers did not have the legal right to organize, let alone strike. Massive demonstrations in Wellington in May and June of 1872 forced the federal government to back down from bringing criminal charges against the leaders of the movement. Despite the momentum gained, the movement essentially failed by July of that same year. Although a nine-hour workday did not become a reality at this time, the movement was successful in asserting worker’s aspirations. Within a year the Canadian Labor Union (CLU) was formed. The CLU was possible only because working-class activists won major concessions

² This information can be found on the Wellington Community Foundation website. For reasons of confidentiality I do not provide a full citation.

³ From a conversation with John Richardson (pseudonym), the mayor of the City of Wellington’s chief of staff.

immediately after the demise of the Nine Hour Movement of 1872, including the limited right to associate in trade unions, the repeal of repressive legislation, and the passage of laws strengthening workers' opportunities for action against employers. Workers in Wellington learned that there was much that could be accomplished by working together.

The second significant event involves the SteelCor strike of 1946. Wellington was well known by the end of World War II for its heavy industries producing steel, rubber, appliances, and munitions. During the course of the war, workers made enormous sacrifices to allow the industrial machine to feed the war. By the end of the conflict, however, workers felt they deserved a better deal. SteelCor, Canada's largest steel producer had made record profits.⁴ Workers continued, however, without rights to collective bargaining, grievance, or seniority systems. Poor wages and dangerous working conditions continued to be problematic. Workers organized by forming Local 1005 of the United Steelworkers of America (USWA), but SteelCor refused to recognize the union. The SteelCor president, Hugh Hilton, had stated that he would "fight the unions until my dying breath."⁵ He was determined to maintain industrial the relations of the 1930s, where unions were non-existent, wages poor, holidays almost unheard of, and steady employment never assured.⁶

Striking workers at SteelCor were asking for a raise of 19.5 cents per hour, which would have brought the total average wage to 84 cents per hour and weekly income of \$33.60. This was still two dollars below what the Toronto Welfare Council had stated

⁴ I do not provide a full citation for Stone's book because of reasons of confidentiality.

⁵ Wayne Lewchuck, Geoffrey Rockwell, and Robert Storey's article appears on the website of the local university. For reasons of confidentiality, I do not provide a full citation.

⁶ Ibid.

was required for the most basic requirements of a family of five. Steelworkers gained the sympathies of many other Wellington citizens.⁷

The eighty-one day strike that ensued was ugly. The company attempted to bring workers through the picket lines using diesel trains and violence erupted. Workers who crossed the picket lines sometimes had the word “scab” spray-painted on the outside of their homes. Colorful stories describe the company’s attempts to bring workers into the plant by air and by water. The union pressed aircraft into service so that unarmed “dog-fights” took place over the harbor. The union employed an old rum-running vessel, “the Whisper,” to maintain the embargo by water.⁸

Historian Craig Heron says that everyone in the city knew someone on strike as workers from Westinghouse, Firestone, and the local newspaper, also went on strike in sympathy.⁹ Heron said that the strike “drew a great deal of community participation.”¹⁰ Many neighbors from across the city came out and donated their time and their food. There were dances and even a wedding on the SteelCor picket line. Pete Seeger showed up and sang at one point.¹¹ A local nightclub owner, Frank Tunney, created a ring on a rented flat-bed truck and brought wrestling heroes into town for the entertainment of the strikers. Worker’s wives and children were often seen at the picket lines jeering the

⁷ Mark McNeil’s article appears on the website of the local newspaper. For reasons of confidentiality, I do not provide a full citation.

⁸ As stated above, I do not provide a full citation of for this source.

⁹ As stated above, I do not provide a full citation of for this source.

¹⁰ As stated above, I do not provide a full citation of for this source.

¹¹ As stated above, I do not provide a full citation of for this source.

workers who crossed the lines. Heron says, “The whole community was mobilized and politicized in 1946.”¹²

The strong Italian contingent of workers, who often worked the dirtiest and most dangerous jobs in the plant, would often hold massive dinners in support of the picketers. Men and women would work together to prepare food for thousands of hungry strikers. In one night, they raised more than six thousand dollars in donations to support people with basic necessities. Local business owners offered support by extending credit and donating tons of food. Even the city’s mayor, Sam Lawrence, stood with the striking workers. Lawrence felt that democracy was on the side of the workers, many of whom were veterans of World War II who had fought for democracy overseas. Lawrence consistently refused to use the police or call upon the military to deal with the strike.¹³

The strike ended eighty-one days after it began with hard-won victories for workers. Wellington’s citizens learned that they have great power when they work together and that they have support in their community of neighbors. It is impossible to draw a causal relationship between the events of 1872 or 1946 and the state of civic engagement and neighborliness in the city of Wellington today. There is little doubt, however, that these events left their mark on this city, and that similar to those times long ago, solidarity and generosity seem to continue to be hallmarks of community life in Wellington.

¹² As stated above, I do not provide a full citation of for this source.

¹³ As stated above, I do not provide a full citation of for this source.

St. Saviour's: a Parish Church

St. Saviour's was founded in 1890, just when its local neighborhood was being established. It was planted by the nearby parish of St. Mary the Virgin, a high church, Anglo-Catholic parish in the adjoining neighborhood. The High Church, Anglo-Catholic tradition historically had greater appeal to the blue-collar and working classes. Should a new person with an address from a more affluent part of the city wander into a place like St. Saviour's, helpful parishioners would politely direct them to the local Low Church parish.

St. Saviour's is an Anglican parish in an Anglican diocese in Southern Ontario. As this parish seeks its way forward within its present context, it has inherited both formal and informal ecclesiologies that must be accounted for.

Formal Ecclesiology

The formal ecclesiology of the parish represents those formally adopted understandings of the church. These include things such as the Anglican tradition, the authorized liturgy, canons and policies of the Anglican Church of Canada and the diocese to which St. Saviour's belongs. The formal ecclesiology does not necessarily represent the lived ecclesiology of any parish. After discussing the parish's *formal* ecclesiology, I will touch also on its *informal* ecclesiology.

Anglican Tradition

Anglican polity sees the basic unit of the church as the bishop and his or her diocese. Historically, parishes were convenient geographical structures for the administration of the church, where the bishop might delegate some of his pastoral responsibilities to local clergy and permit the establishment of a church (building). The

local geographic area and community was formed into a parish and the resident clergy charged with the cure of souls.

The Thirty Nine Articles hold to the classic reformed view of the church. “The visible Church of Christ is a congregation of faithful men (*sic*), in the which the pure Word of God is preached, and the Sacraments be duly ministered according to Christ’s ordinance in all those things that of necessity are requisite to the same.”¹⁴

Anglicans have expressed their thanksgiving to God (and identity as the church) in the prayer at the conclusion of the Eucharist that says in part, “we are living members of his mystical body, which is the blessed company of all faithful people; and are also heirs through hope of thy everlasting kingdom.”¹⁵ The principle of *lex orandi, lex credendi*, so fundamental to Anglicanism, means that our theology is worked out and articulated most clearly in our liturgical texts. We are not a confessional church.

This historic legacy has resulted in a church where bishops and their clergy—those preach and administer the sacraments—together especially with their buildings in which these activities occurred, were what was thought of as “the church.” In short, Anglicans have often thought of the church in terms of clergy and buildings in relation to bishops and synods. This view is an unfortunate legacy of the past that has often left Anglicans with a not much more than an institutional understanding of the nature of the church.

¹⁴ The General Synod of the Anglican Church of Canada, *The Book of Common Prayer and Administration of the Sacraments and Other Rites and Ceremonies of the Church; Together with the Psalter as Is Appointed to Be Said or Sung in Churches and the Form and Manner of Ordaining and Consecrating of Bishops, Priests and Deacons* (Toronto, ON: Anglican Book Centre, 1962), 705.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 85.

The Second Vatican Council provided an opportunity for a renewed discussion about the nature of the church not only in Roman Catholic circles, but throughout the church, and not less within the Anglican Communion. The Liturgical Renewal Movement and broad ecumenical dialogue also provided an opportunity for reflection on the nature of the church as new rites for Baptism and the Eucharist were developed.¹⁶ In the midst of these developments, themes such as the priesthood of all believers came to the fore. In the Canadian *Book of Alternative Services*, the congregation welcomes the newly baptized, saying, “We receive you into the household of God. Confess the faith of Christ crucified, proclaim his resurrection, and share with us in his eternal priesthood.”¹⁷ The church began to move towards a more robust understanding of the whole people of God as the church.

While liturgical renewal did emphasize the priesthood of all Christians and called for greater participation of lay people in the liturgical life of the church, the shift did not go far enough. People were left with the impression that to do the *real* work of the church they would need to do the things that their priests had formerly done. The role of the people of God within the liturgy was enhanced, but that was as far as it went. Reading scripture or leading the prayers in church on a Sunday morning became the highlight of the Christian life in such a way that it disempowered the living out of a Christian vocation beyond Sunday mornings and the walls of the church. The church’s liturgical renewal had failed to grasp that the priesthood of all believers, within the mission of God,

¹⁶ The broad ecumenical dialogue that I refer to was, for example, instrumental in creating such documents as World Council of Churches. Commission on Faith and Order, *Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry*, Faith and Order Paper no. 111, Canadian ed. (Toronto, ON: Anglican Book Centre, 1983).

¹⁷ The General Synod of the Anglican Church of Canada, *The Book of Alternative Services of the Anglican Church of Canada* (Toronto, ON: Anglican Book Centre, 1985), 161.

takes place primarily in the world, in the ordinary, everyday lives of the whole people of God.

I remain concerned that in the church's desire to make Sunday morning more relevant the focus remains too much upon the liturgical life of the people gathered as somehow separate and unrelated to the worship that flows into the lived reality of the people sent into the world. I am concerned that our focus upon worship in some ways undercuts the living out of our faith in our every day, ordinary lives, when it should serve to support and form the living out of that faith.

This attitude is present at St. Saviour's where there is sometimes a sense that if only we could get our cultic worship life correct (if we could just sing the right music, pray the right prayers, find just the right balance of liturgical style), the life of the church would somehow be transformed. This is the idea that the Sunday morning is the sum total of the Christian life. This unfortunate stance undercuts the mission of the church in the neighborhood and in the world.

St. Saviour's: A Local Tradition of Mission

St. Saviour's parish mission statement says that "God calls us to help people become followers of Jesus, equipped for ministry in the church and in the world, through nurture, evangelism, worship and service."¹⁸ Our understanding of our vocation and calling has been enhanced as we continue to think about our mission as a church as a sharing in the mission of Jesus in the power of the Holy Spirit. The Five Marks of

¹⁸ The mission statement is published on the parish website. For reasons of confidentiality, I do not provide a full citation.

Mission of the Anglican Communion, for example, remind us “the mission of the Church is the mission of Christ ...

- To proclaim the Good News of the Kingdom;
- To teach, baptize and nurture new believers;
- To respond to human need by loving service;
- To seek to transform unjust structures of society, to challenge violence of every kind and to pursue peace and reconciliation; and,
- To strive to safeguard the integrity of creation and sustain and renew the life of the earth.”¹⁹

There is some evidence of a renewal of our missional identity at all levels of our church today. Yet, there remains confusion in the midst of this time of great change.

Informal Ecclesiology

The *informal* or *assumed* aspects of the parish’s ecclesiology are of significance. I discuss these below.

Reframing the Church

The influence of some of the less helpful formal ecclesiological understandings of the past continues to fade, but operate informally in some circles. The parish priest is still sometimes viewed as *the* leader and there is often a yearning to return to the days of Christendom when the church enjoyed a special place of privilege in the culture.

¹⁹ Anglican Consultative Council-6, “Bonds of Affection,” 1984, 49; Anglican Consultative Council-8, “Mission in a Broken World,” 1990, 101; all quoted in The Anglican Communion, “Mission: The Five Marks of Mission,” 2013, <http://www.anglicancommunion.org/ministry/mission/fivemarks.cfm> (accessed May 1, 2013).

For others, the pendulum is swinging dramatically in the other direction. The church as an institution is viewed with great suspicion and there is a desire to radically reframe the church in quite reactionary ways. Sometimes the necessary reframing is envisioned as being shaped along the lines of the primitive church, or sometimes along the lines of other local churches (often of the type sometimes described as “big-box” churches) which seem to be enjoying marks of success.²⁰ Sometimes the reframing seeks to address modern sensibilities and avoid the embarrassing questions raised by our tradition.²¹ Often these reactions are not particularly informed by reasoned theological reflection.

Lay Leadership

The parish enjoys a recent history that includes strong lay leadership. The parish recognizes charisms for many different types of ministry. Within the past decade, the parish had a lay pastoral assistant who acted as “Director of Ministry.” This person facilitated not only a busy church program, but also the calling forth of the many different gifts for ministry resident in the people of the parish. Lay leaders are visible in all aspects of parish life including its liturgical life. Lay preachers are a very regular feature in Sunday worship.

²⁰ These “big box” churches most often locate in the suburbs and edges of the city where big buildings can be erected. One local “big box” church meets in large multi-screen theatres located among the “big box” stores such as Home Depot and Costco and the teaching is provided by live feed from a site in a neighboring city. These tend often not to relate to local neighborhoods as much as draw people from across the city.

²¹ A colleague reported to me that they no longer say the ancient Creeds in his church because the Creeds “raise too many embarrassing questions.” He explained to me that he feels he cannot ask modern people to “believe in fairy tales.” Such a perspective reveals a commitment to the sort of modern sensibilities that I am referring to. I would argue that postmodern people are much less likely to share this concern and are much more likely to know a good story when they hear it.

We have begun, more recently, to lift up and value the vocations of Christians in the everyday, ordinary lives. We want to emphasize that the primary calling that most of us have is lived out within our families, workplaces, neighborhoods, and, in particular, practices of our faith, without failing to recognize that Christians have gifts to share for the common good of the community of faith.²²

Evangelical and Catholic

One lay leader in the congregation described St. Saviour's as a historically Anglo-Catholic parish in the process of "Evangelicalization."²³ I believe that statement was correct at the time, but no longer describes the shift taking place in the parish at the moment, which I would describe as one towards a more missional stance. It is clear, however, that both Evangelicalism and Anglo-Catholicism have left their mark on St. Saviour's. If the classic marks of Evangelicalism are an emphasis on personal faith, the authority of the Bible, and a heart for mission, these marks are certainly evident in our parish life. Our Anglo-Catholic heritage is also still very much alive in the love of beauty in liturgy, a high view of the real presence of Christ in the Eucharist, and a strong sense of the corporate life (catholicity) of the church.

From the beginning of Anglicanism there has been a tension between Protestantism and Catholicism, often resolved in what is referred to as the *via media* (or middle way). There have always been elements within this church that have leaned one

²² At St. Saviour's we recently had a series of sermons on Sunday mornings that outlined the basic practices described in Bass, *Practicing Our Faith*. These practices included hospitality, household economics, honoring the body, and saying "yes" and saying "no".

²³ Lay Leader 1, as reported by Lay Leader 2 in reply to the author's blog post at <http://djanderson.com/?p=67> (accessed, September 15, 2013).

direction more than the other. In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, the polarities were described as “High Church” (Anglo-Catholic) and “Low Church” (Evangelical). The polarity between liberal and conservative became more pronounced during the twentieth century, not necessarily always cutting predictably according to High or Low Church lines. My observation in talking to our newcomers—who may or may not have any history in the Anglican Church—is that these old distinctives mean very little. If younger Christians tend to be less concerned with denominational loyalty, they are even less concerned with the party politics that previous generations have thought so important. In this context, the *via media* often provides a way to learn from, take the best from our traditions, and move forward in a more reasonable and less ideological way. I would argue that St. Saviour’s wide experience with churchmanship has allowed it flexibility in taking the best into its missional journey.

A Tradition in Mission

The Reverend Canon “Padre” Holmes became the rector of the parish during the Second World War. Following the war, and with the beginning of the baby boom, it was recognized that Wellington did not have enough programs for children and youth, especially during the summer months. Holmes had a vision to establish a summer camp as a ministry of the parish in the nearby Dundas valley. The camp, which would include both residential and day programs, became known as Camp Artaban.

The name was taken from the name of the wise man named in Henry Van Dyke’s tale, *The Story of the Other Wise Man*.²⁴ Van Dyke’s story is an adaptation of Matthew

²⁴ Henry van Dyke, *The Story of the Other Wise Man* (New York, NY: Harper & Brothers Publishers, 1895).

2:1-12 and 25:31. In the story, Artaban sets off with the other wise men to visit the Christ Child, but is delayed by various encounters with people in need, for whom he stops and offers care. At the end of the story, Artaban almost encounters Jesus on his way to the cross, but is again distracted by a person in need. It is revealed to Artaban that he has encountered Christ in serving the needs of “the least of these.”

Camp Artaban not only served the needs of young people from the post-war period and into the 1960s, but it instilled within them the spirituality that was reflected in the Artaban story. The spirituality of service remains a hallmark of St. Saviour’s to this day.

Another chapter in this missional tradition is also linked to the Artaban name and experience. A fire destroyed the Parish Hall in 1990. Rather than simply rebuild what had been lost, the parish decided upon a process that would respond not only its own needs—but also more importantly—the needs of the neighborhood and wider community. The site was expanded and non-profit, geared-to-income housing was built on the site, with the parish choosing modest facilities in the basement of the new building as its new Activity Centre in favor of the best result for future residents. The housing complex was named “Artaban Place,” a fitting reflection of the spirituality that informed this generous act of service towards those without affordable housing. The parish realized at this time that more was needed than a renewal of facilities, but a renewal of the parish’s outreach, evangelism, and hospitality. The reconsideration of the parish’s mission meant that it learned from the church-growth movement and program church models.

Fresh Expressions and the Mixed Economy

St. Saviour's has recently been influenced by the Fresh Expressions Movement in Canada and in the United Kingdom (where this movement had its origins). The groundbreaking report to the General Synod of the Church of England of the Archbishop's Commission on Mission in 2004 marked the beginning of a period when the Fresh Expressions movement began to get very real traction in the church.²⁵ The Fresh Expressions movement opened the door to reimagine church for many new contexts. One of the brilliant strokes of the report was its recommendation for what was coined as a "mixed economy of churches." This was the idea that inherited forms of church would need to continue and would be valued, even while the church experimented and found new life in fresh expressions of church. The idea was that both inherited church and fresh expressions of church should live quite happily, not only within the Church of England, but sometimes within the same parish structure.

The embrace of a mixed economy in our local situation has meant that St. Saviour's has been able to continue to offer the various Sunday services, as we have in the past, and in addition, remain open to planting new congregations that more robustly respond to the local context within our parish structure. It seems to us that the advantage of this relationship is that the diverse expressions of church understand that they have a relationship with one another and that a kind of dialogue is possible, allowing us all a place in the mission of God.

²⁵ The General Synod of the Church of England, *Mission-Shaped Church: Church Planting and Fresh Expressions of Church in a Changing Context*, PDF ed. (London: Church House Publishing, 2004).

It was from the Fresh Expressions movement that St. Saviour's learned that it could enter into a process of missional listening, learning from our neighborhood about its needs and discerning where God was already at work. In this process, we learned that many young families lived in the neighborhood. We learned, by talking with these neighbors, that many were not interested in our Sunday services or programs because of their involvement with other Sunday activities. Parents also told us that they did not want to be separated from their children when attending church. We also heard that the pressure of getting to church on time on a Sunday morning was a stress that they would rather avoid.

St. Saviour's began offering "Messy Church" as a response to this need. Messy Church is a model of church that was also pioneered in the United Kingdom as one type of Fresh Expression in a number of contexts. Messy Church is designed for the whole family to be able to experience together.

St. Saviour's has had other experiments with fresh expressions of church from which we have learned. Not all of these have continued or been *successful* in the terms we normally think of. We have also learned to redefine success. There will be further experiments. We are able to do the work of experimentation without telling people who appreciate the ways in which we worship in other settings that they are somehow "wrong." Traditional experiences of worship exist alongside the newer fresh expressions being planted. Although it is sometimes a challenge, our parish family is increasingly becoming aware that we don't need to all be in the room at the same time in order to experience our unity; our unity is rooted in our identity in Christ and in our shared mission and vision for ministry.

This sense of shared mission and vision of ministry will be enhanced as we seek to articulate our understanding of these over time. This sense of unity can only be enhanced as we come to terms with our missional identity and as we pay attention to both our formal and informal ecclesiologies and their development.

A Short History of Spiritual Formation

Dwight Zscheile brings a helpful history to this discussion in his chapter, “A Missional Theology of Spiritual Formation,” in *Cultivating Sent Communities*.²⁶ Zscheile demonstrates that in the primitive church spiritual formation occurred with the emerging Christian community *and* in relationship with neighbors outside that community.²⁷ Zscheile notes that in the time between the New Testament and the conversion of Constantine, mission and spiritual formation unfolded together in the context of “costly public witness within a hostile Roman society.”²⁸ Christians were known for their compassion, egalitarianism, and moral conduct.²⁹

Zscheile marks a shift that begins with the conversion of Constantine as the church focused more on consolidation of its institutional presence than upon its witness to and care of non-Christian neighbors. In this period, leading spiritual figures found their identity in fleeing from society to the desert as hermits and monastics. Monasticism was a turn in Christian spiritual formation that left ordinary life in the world behind to focus on

²⁶ Zscheile, “A Missional Theology of Spiritual Formation.”

²⁷ *Ibid.*, 8.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, 9.

²⁹ *Ibid.*

prayer, spiritual disciplines, work, and communal life.³⁰ The rigorous process of making Christian disciples that was typical in the baptismal and catechismal practices of the early church disappeared in this period. The influence of Greek philosophy, with its dualisms between the material world and spiritual realities tended to denigrate participation in the nitty-gritty of daily life in the world in favor of a spiritual path that was an escape from worldly concerns.³¹ David Bosch notes, “The church established itself in the world as an institution of almost exclusively other-worldly salvation.”³²

Martin Luther’s recovery of the *priesthood of all believers* was a key turning point. Luther rejected the idea that monasteries represented a kind of spiritual elite because of their escape from the world and instead “asserted the interplay and vitality of spiritual formation in ordinary life for all manner of people.”³³ Luther recast the idea of Christian freedom as freedom from the material world to freedom to love one’s neighbor.³⁴

Luther’s vision for Christian faith and discipleship envisioned a more muscular Christianity. The pietistic movements that arose during the late seventeenth century in Europe, and the evangelism that grew out of these movements, tended, however, to continue the Western tradition’s now longstanding approach of focusing upon

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ Ibid., 11.

³² Bosch, *Transforming Mission*, 213.

³³ Zscheile, “A Missional Theology of Spiritual Formation,” 11.

³⁴ Ibid., 11-12.

individualized spiritual growth and a salvation envisioned primarily as an escape from this world to heaven.³⁵

Deism and liberal Protestantism in the modern era took Christian spiritual formation in a different direction. With the rise of Moral Therapeutic Deism humanity was understood to be on its own. “The biblical narrative’s emphasis on an active, participatory God engaged with human affairs—in other words, a missional God”—is eclipsed.³⁶ Human beings are on their own in the present with no sense of hope for God’s future.

In denominations such as St. Saviour’s Anglican Church of Canada, and other so-called mainline churches, Moralistic Therapeutic Deism has been an influential strain.

Christian Smith defines its central tenets as follows:

1. A God exists who created and orders the world and watches over human life on earth.
2. God wants people to be good, nice, and fair to each other, as taught in the Bible and in most world religions.
3. The central goal of life is to be happy and to feel good about oneself.
4. God does not need to be particularly involved in one’s life except when God is needed to solve a problem.
5. Good people go to heaven when they die.³⁷

³⁵ Ibid., 12.

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ Christian Smith quoted in *ibid.*, 3.

Moral Therapeutic Deism can be understood against the larger backdrop of what Charles Taylor calls “a secular age.”³⁸ Taylor charts the shift in the modern understanding from the earlier understanding of one’s self as “relatively open and porous to others and to the presence of God, to a sharply ‘buffered’ self disengaged from everything outside the mind.”³⁹ Zscheile concludes,

In a process of “excarnation” religion became disembodied from communal ritual, emotion, and practice and focused in the mind, until humans were left alone, concentrating on their own flourishing, which could be accomplished more or less without God.⁴⁰

While Zscheile’s history of Christian formation may be an oversimplification of a complex history, it does provide a way of understanding the situation that the church in North American finds itself. After a long period of turning away from neighbors in the world during the Christendom period, Christian spiritual formation must be reconsidered in the church’s new missional context.

One Leader’s Journey

How is it that congregations like St. Saviour’s becomes disconnected with the neighborhoods and the *missio Dei in vicinia*? St. Saviour’s story of disconnect is not unique. Somewhere, congregations lost their way. I was first able to name the displacement I experienced in the church in 1989, after reading Stanley Hauerwas and William H. Willimon’s, *Resident Aliens*.⁴¹ I was a young clergy person beginning a

³⁸ Ibid., 4.

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹ Stanley Hauerwas and William H. Willimon, *Resident Aliens: Life in the Christian Colony*, 25th Anniversary, Kindle ed. (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 2014).

vocation in the church that I knew and loved. *Resident Aliens* accurately described for me the truth about the radical adaptive challenges facing the church as never before in our lifetime. This influential book provided me with a description of what I believed was the work God had given us to do in this new era we are calling post-Christendom.

In *Resident Aliens*, Willimon and Hauerwas were asking questions about the church's vocation *after* Christendom. They date the end of Christendom sometime close to a Sunday evening in 1963 and to an event in Willimon's hometown of Greenville, South Carolina.

Then ... in defiance of the state's time-honored blue laws, the Fox Theater opened on Sunday. Seven of us—regular attenders of the Methodist Youth Fellowship at Buncombe Street Church—made a pact to enter the front door of the church, be seen, then quietly slip out the back door and join John Wayne at the Fox. That evening has come to represent a watershed in the history of Christendom, South Carolina style. On that night, Greenville, South Carolina—the last pocket of resistance to secularity in the Western world—served notice that it would no longer be a prop for the church. There would be no more free passes for the church, no more free rides. The Fox Theater went head to head with the church over who would provide the world view for the young. That night in 1963, the Fox Theater won the opening skirmish.⁴²

From the time of Constantine (AD 313) until relatively recent times, the church could assume that it's surrounding Christian culture would prop it up, and that symbiotically, the church itself would prop up the other institutions of that culture, which were understood to be, by definition, Christian.⁴³

The mission of the church was often indistinguishable from the status quo of Western culture during the church's long sojourn in Christendom. Regrettably, many

⁴² Ibid., loc. 257-263.

⁴³ The extent to which the dominant culture in Christendom was actually *Christian* can be debated. One of the things that happened with the end of the Constantinian worldview was an understanding that one did not simply become a Christian by being born in a particular nation. To be identified as a Christian now involves, in some sense, a choice.

local congregations still seem to look back, enamored by that past. They long for the good old days when everyone in the neighborhood came to church on a Sunday morning, the Sunday school and the pews were filled, and the church did not ask for too much from you beyond a few dollars on the offering plate, perhaps a committee meeting, or something for the bake sale. There is, sadly, not much missional imagination beyond keeping the doors open and pretending that nothing has changed where this is a preoccupation. The reality is, however, that the world has changed dramatically, but still many congregations fail to adapt to the new situation. This failure to adapt is a reason for the disconnect many congregations have with their neighborhoods.

This disconnect was exacerbated, however, by the fact that the death of Christendom was simultaneous with a rise in secularism. Secularism is an old political idea popularized in the Enlightenment by thinkers such as Voltaire, Spinoza, James Madison, and Thomas Jefferson. One of its expressions is the idea that public activities and decisions, especially political ones, should remain uninfluenced by religious beliefs and practices. Secularism is a powerful force, especially within St. Saviour's Canadian context.⁴⁴

Some forms of secularism are now intellectually suspect, however, under the influence of postmodernity. John Milbank makes the point that there is a new opportunity for religiously informed voices to enter the political arena in the postmodern situation.⁴⁵ That said, I find that baby boomers, who were especially formed by modernity, remain

⁴⁴ This is partly an effect of Quebec's quiet revolution of the 1960s. I will rehearse some of this history in the thesis because of the significant and enduring influence of secularism in the Canadian context.

⁴⁵ See John Milbank, *Theology and Social Theory: Beyond Secular Reason*, Signposts in Theology (Oxford: Blackwell, 1993).

very suspect of religiously informed voices in the public sphere. Many of these yearn for the days when religion was an entirely private matter.⁴⁶ This is part of the negotiation for congregations seeking to participate in the *missio Dei in vicinia*.

Willimon, Hauerwas, and Milbank agree that the church has a renewed opportunity. The end of Christendom is not a death to lament, but an opportunity to celebrate. “Christians are at last free to be faithful in a way that makes being a Christian today an exciting adventure.”⁴⁷

Over the past thirty years or more, the church has attempted a number of experiments aimed mostly at regaining its prominent place in the culture, lost with the death of Christendom and the rise of secularism. The rise of the religious right in American political life was an example of this. The *church growth movement* was another.

Alan Roxburgh observes that during the past twenty-five years, during which the church has found itself in this rapidly changing situation, it has been primarily concerned with church questions. He argues that church must move beyond conversations aimed at seeking to “restore the church to some imagined place in the culture.”⁴⁸ I agree that primary questions that really need to be addressed are not ecclesiastical questions, but

⁴⁶ See, for example, Michael Enright’s comments in CBC Radio, “The Public God: A Forum on the Role of Religion in Public Policy,” in *The Sunday Edition*, ed. host Michael Enright (Toronto, ON: The Canadian Broadcast Company, 2014).

⁴⁷ Hauerwas and Willimon, *Resident Aliens*, loc. 289-292.

⁴⁸ Alan J. Roxburgh, *Missional: Joining God in the Neighborhood*, Allelon Missional Series (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2011), 21-22.

missiological ones. “What is God up to in our neighborhoods and communities? How do we join with what God is doing in these places?”⁴⁹

Lesslie Newbigin was naming the same challenges that Hauerwas, Willimon and Milbank addressed. He saw dramatic cultural changes with clear focus upon his return to the church of the west after having served in India for many years. Newbigin argued that there was really one thing needful if there was to be a Christian impact upon public life, and for him that was “the Christian congregation.”⁵⁰ Newbigin concluded that the only possibility that the good news of God’s redemptive reign should be credible in the culture at large would be a congregation of people who live by that good news, who are a “*hermeneutic of the gospel*.”⁵¹ Newbigin reminds us that this was Jesus’ strategy for sharing this good news. He formed a *community* to remember and rehearse his words and to enact the sacraments given by him. Jesus gives this community his character and life, and insofar as this community is true to its calling, it becomes the place where people are able to understand what God is doing in the world.⁵²

I have understood my life’s work and vocation as a priest in Christ’s church as the work of helping the congregations that I serve to find again their place within the *missio Dei*. *The Missional Church Conversation* seems to be one of the ways that the church is being renewed and finding its place in God’s exciting adventure. The ways in which congregations are called to live out the drama of God’s story—to be a hermeneutic of the

⁴⁹ Ibid., 22.

⁵⁰ Newbigin, *The Gospel in a Pluralist Society*, 227.

⁵¹ Ibid. Emphasis added.

⁵² Ibid.

gospel—is contextual. Their “rehearsal” of Christ’s “words and deeds, and the sacraments given by him” corresponds both to the universality of Christ’s claims and the particularity of how Christ comes among people and communities.⁵³ While the *missio Dei* has cosmic significance, it is always expressed in particular and local realities.⁵⁴

As local churches are renewed in their participation in the *missio Dei*, there seems to be a new interest in seeing what God is already doing in the neighborhood—in the *missio Dei in vicinia*—and in partnering with what God is doing with and among others in the neighborhood. Local churches are again learning how to practice the faith, both in the midst of ordinary, everyday life, and in the congregation’s life together. This research project seeks to help carry this story forward as the people of St. Saviour’s Anglican Church learn a new way of being in their neighborhoods and in the world.

⁵³ Ibid.

⁵⁴ The Letter to the Colossians speaks to this cosmic significance: “For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, and through him God was pleased to reconcile to himself *all things, whether on earth or in heaven*, by making peace through the blood of his cross” (Col 1:19-20, emphasis added). The same letter speaks *also* of the practical living out of this good news in intimate and local expression: “As God’s chosen ones, holy and beloved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience. Bear with one another and, if anyone has a complaint against another, forgive each other; just as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. Above all, clothe yourselves with love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony. And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in the one body. And be thankful.” (Col 3:12-15)

CHAPTER THREE

LITERATURE AND THEORETICAL LENSES

Introduction to Literature and Theoretical Lenses

In this literature review, I identify the central issues surrounding this project and provide an “orienting framework.”¹ In order to accomplish this, I explore a variety of theoretical lenses to shed light on the various aspects of the study. I begin by exploring some aspects of *spiritual formation*, *faith development*, and *theories of learning*, because this research investigates a method for encouraging personal and communal growth in the missional engagement of a local congregation. This research assumes that such growth is, at least in part, a *learning* process. This research project also employs the strategy of creating a *learning community* with the intention of stimulating such growth, therefore, theories of learning—as they relate to Christian discipleship or formation—require discussion.

Secondly, I turn to *critical social theory*, which provides an epistemological background for the learning I discuss and which points my discussion in the direction of communicative reason and action. My argument is that both the learning and the missional, neighborly engagement that is sought in and through this project, are communicative and emancipatory.

¹ John W. Creswell, *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches*, 4th ed. (Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, 2014), 29.

Finally, I discuss a number of theories related to life in *neighborhoods and communities*. These include *the power of communities*; *social capital*; and finally, the relationship between *the neighborhood and the world*.

Spiritual Formation and Learning Theory

The first piece of this orienting framework that I want to put in place has to do with learning, learning communities, and apprenticeship. I discuss each of these in turn below.

Discipleship and Christian Formation as Learning

I want to begin by exploring the relationship between *learning* and what we might call the processes of Christian *discipleship*, or Christian *formation*. What kind of learning are we doing when we are engaged in Christian formation? To put this question another way: how do people grow in the life of faith?

Faith and Faith Development Theory

James W. Fowler has had a great influence of theories on faith development. His work, *The Stages of Faith*, was the seminal text for many years.² Fowler was himself greatly influenced by Eric Erikson, who provided the primary theory of *human psychosocial development*.³ Fowler developed his theory of faith development along the

² James W. Fowler, *Stages of Faith: The Psychology of Human Development and the Quest for Meaning* (San Francisco, CA: Harper & Row, 1981).

³ See, for example, Erik H. Erikson, *Childhood and Society* (Toronto, ON: Norton, 1963).

lines of Jean Piaget's *theory of cognitive development* and Lawrence Kohlberg's *stages of moral development*.⁴

What is Faith?

Fowler describes faith as a way of seeing the world and as a mode of being and knowing. Faith shapes our lives in relation to our comprehensive convictions or assumptions about reality. This understanding seems to have come from Fowler's theological reading of H. Richard Niebuhr and Paul Tillich, who describe faith as a human universal.⁵ Fowler's definition of faith is similar to what we might describe as a *worldview*, in at least two respects: first, in the sense that everyone has one; and, second, that such an all-encompassing frame-of-reference develops over time.⁶

According to Fowler's theory, faith develops over time through a hierarchal ordered progression of development in the structural dimensions of being and knowing.⁷ Fowler's theory does allow that changes can occur in faith that are not strictly developmental in nature, as much as changes in content. For Fowler, however, the structural-developmental nature of faith is always primary, while content is incidental.

⁴ Fowler, *Stages of Faith*; Jean Piaget, *The Construction of Reality in the Child* (New York, NY: Basic Books, 1954); Lawrence Kohlberg, *Essays on Moral Development* (San Francisco, CA: Harper & Row, 1981); James W. Fowler, "Faith and the Structure of Meaning," in *Faith Development and Fowler*, ed. Craig R. Dykstra and Sharon Daloz Parks (Birmingham, AL: Religious Education Press, 1986).

⁵ Fowler, *Stages of Faith*, 5.

⁶ See, for example, Brian J. Walsh and J. Richard Middleton, *The Transforming Vision: Shaping a Christian World View* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1984).

⁷ On this point, Fowler is very much influenced by the structural-developmental theorists, Piaget and Kohlberg. Fowler, "Faith and the Structure of Meaning," 28-31.

Faith is a generic term for Fowler, a category not limited to any specific religion or to necessarily religious people. Faith essentially means the same thing in every religion.⁸

Craig Dykstra offers a critique of Fowler's definition of faith. Dykstra draws on George Lindbeck's work in *The Nature of Doctrine*. Lindbeck describes the position under which Fowler's understanding of faith belongs as the "experiential-expressivist" theory of religion.⁹ Lindbeck observes that for nearly two-hundred years this theory of religion has sustained a phenomenological-existentialist stream of thought that has "dominated the humanistic side of western culture ever since Kant's revolutionary 'turn to the subject'.... The habits of thought it has fostered are ingrained in the soul of the modern West, perhaps particularly in the souls of theologians."¹⁰ In the face of this inertia and influence, Dykstra demonstrates that helpful alternatives are available for thinking about faith.

Rather than attempting to suggest a definition of faith in any generic sense—what might be true for all religions—Dykstra suggests that Christians instead have a discussion of the meaning of faith from a particularly *Christian* perspective. Dykstra's proposal has the obvious advantage of not presuming that what faith means for a Christian is the same as it might mean to anyone else. There is also the integrity of speaking to an understanding of faith from one's own perspective and inviting others to do the same.¹¹

⁸ Craig R. Dykstra, "What Is Faith?," *ibid.*, 52.

⁹ *Ibid.*; George A. Lindbeck, *The Nature of Doctrine: Religion and Theology in a Postliberal Age* (Philadelphia, PA: Westminster Press, 1984).

¹⁰ Lindbeck, *The Nature of Doctrine: Religion and Theology in a Postliberal Age*, 21., quoted in; Dykstra, "What Is Faith?," 51.

¹¹ Dykstra, "What Is Faith?," 54-55.

Dykstra draws on the work of John Cobb in *Christ in the Pluralistic Age* in order to begin to form an alternative *Christian* definition of faith.¹² Cobb agrees that, “faith is too important a theme of Christianity to be left simply in this relativistic sea.”¹³ He argues that “we can establish that a central and normative theological meaning of faith is ‘the appropriate, primal response to what the divine is and does.’”¹⁴ Dykstra’s own definition differs only slightly: “*faith is appropriate and intentional participation in the redemptive activity of God.*”¹⁵

Dykstra points out that there are a number of features of this definition of faith that provide advantages, in addition to the ones that have already been suggested. The first is that faith necessarily depends on *God*. Faith is a way of relating to the ultimate source of all being and the ground of existence. Such faith is not, of course, necessarily a human universal. This definition of faith gives room, for example, for the notion of idolatry as an opposite to faith.¹⁶

A second advantage to such a definition of faith has to do with the fact that faith is described as an activity that responds *appropriately* to who God is and what God is doing. Faith is an activity in which we may engage or not engage. This definition also, then, allows us to make sense of the categories of *faithfulness* and *unfaithfulness*.¹⁷

¹² John B. Cobb, *Christ in a Pluralistic Age* (Philadelphia, PA: Westminster Press, 1975).

¹³ *Ibid.*, 88; quoted in, Dykstra, “What Is Faith?,” 55.

¹⁴ Cobb, *Christ in a Pluralistic Age*, 88; quoted in, Dykstra, “What Is Faith?,” 55.

¹⁵ Dykstra, “What Is Faith?,” 55. Emphasis added.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 55-56.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 56.

A third feature to this definition is that it affirms that faith requires particular kinds of knowledge. In order to exercise faith, one needs to have some understanding of who God is and what God is doing. This means that faith is dependent upon God's own action of revelation. God must be present to us in some way to make God's self known to us, and to make what God is doing known, in order to empower and enable us to participate with God in God's redemptive activity.¹⁸

I find the definition of faith provided by Dykstra to be very helpful for the purposes of this study. "*Faith is appropriate and intentional participation in the redemptive activity of God.*"¹⁹ This definition accords with the theological emphases of the Missional Church Conversation, which begins with an understanding of the *missio Dei*.²⁰ The *missio Dei* speaks to the *redemptive activity of God*. The Missional Church Conversation has called the church back to the idea that its mission is, primarily, God's mission; the church's mission can only be rightly understood as a participation in the *missio Dei*.²¹ The response of faith is then, indeed, a participation in the redemptive activity of God.

Dykstra's emphasis on *participation* in the redemptive activity of God as the response of faith becomes very important in this project. This emphasis moves the church from a passive, other-worldly, and excarnated understanding of faith, towards a set of practices which participate in and embody God's work in the world. *Participation* is a

¹⁸ Ibid., 56-57.

¹⁹ Ibid., 55., emphasis his.

²⁰ I discuss this theological emphasis in detail below in chapter 4.

²¹ See Zscheile, "A Missional Theology of Spiritual Formation," 6.

key word in Dykstra's definition. Such faith participates in and imitates the divine life. I return to consider this notion of *participation* in the divine life and mission of God in chapter 4, below, as I discuss the theological frame of *perichoresis* and the related idea of *imitatio Trinitatis*. Here, I merely wish here to accept Dykstra's definition of faith, the practice of which is located where God is at the work in neighbourhoods and in the real needs of neighbours. The muscles of such faith are exercised where Christians seek the common good and the reign of God. Such a definition of faith will assist in operationalizing the dependant variables in this study related to participation in the mission of God and growth in Christian discipleship.

Faith Development and Spiritual Formation

If, as Dykstra suggests, *faith is appropriate and intentional participation in the redemptive activity of God*, this has implications for faith development or spiritual formation.²² More than a structural-developmental phenomenon, faith development has to do with being formed in Christ and to live in Christ.²³ As Stanley Hauerwas puts it,

to be formed in Christ ... is to be committed to bringing every element of our character into relation with that dominant orientation. This is our integrity, when everything that we believe, do or do not do, has been brought under the dominion of our primary loyalty to God.²⁴

Dwight Zscheile offers a helpful definition of *spiritual formation* which accords with this definition of faith. This definition draws on the work of James Wilhoit:

²² Dykstra, "What Is Faith?," 55.

²³ Ibid., 61.

²⁴ Stanley Hauerwas, *Character and the Christian Life: A Study in Theological Ethics*, Trinity University Monograph Series in Religion, Vol. 3 (San Antonio, TX: Trinity University Press, 1975), 223; quoted in, Dykstra, "What Is Faith?," 61.

“Christian spiritual formation refers to the ‘intentional communal process of growing in our relationship with God and becoming conformed to Christ through the power of the Holy Spirit,’ *for the sake of the world*.”²⁵ This definition again leads us in a different direction than Fowler, both in acknowledging the work of the *Holy Spirit*, and in recognizing that spiritual formation is a *communal* process that unfolds over time, but uniquely for each person, and often in a non-linear way.²⁶ Spiritual formation is formation in the likeness of Christ, and as Zscheile points out, we must understand Christ in light of Trinitarian relationships. It flows from this that spiritual formation is not just about individual growth, but about the love of God and of neighbor.²⁷

In order to assess our own or another person’s faith development, or measure spiritual formation, we might, therefore, look at the patterns of intentionality that constitute that person’s fundamental orientation of life, their convictions, character, and practice. These would provide the evidence that one might look at in order to observe change or growth in a person’s faith. It may be that one could use the same questions that Fowler used in his interviews in order to explore this, but one would do so with this different definition of faith in order to discern the narrative of a person’s life, how various themes, events and experiences of that life hold together. Rather than merely deducing

²⁵ Zscheile, “A Missional Theology of Spiritual Formation,” 7; Jim Wilhoit, *Spiritual Formation as If the Church Mattered: Growing in Christ through Community* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2008), 23. The definition is basically Wilhoit’s; Zscheile has added the important phrase, “for the sake of the world.” Emphasis added.

²⁶ Zscheile, “A Missional Theology of Spiritual Formation,” 7.

²⁷ Ibid.

the stage a person occupied, we might have a story of a person's life in context with in all of its wholeness and complexity.²⁸

I accept Dykstra's definition that "faith is appropriate and intentional participation in the redemptive activity of God."²⁹ I want to explore how we might encourage such faith to develop over time. Participation implies that faith is not passive, but active, and that faith necessarily implies a certain practice. Assuming this is the case, and that faith is not merely an intellectual assent to a set of codified knowledge, I turn now to a growing body of research in learning theory, to discuss a framework in which Christians may grow in their life of faith.

Learning Community

There has been a growing body of research in practical learning, or learning through *practice*. Persistent attempts to reform the educational system, especially in the 1980s and 90s in the United States, were widely viewed by educators and others as failures. These failures led to widespread disillusionment with public education and to many educators abandoning the profession. All of this led, however, to a renewed and robust round of research in education.

Richard DuFour is one of these researchers who began writing about *learning communities*. Dufour writes, "There is growing evidence that the best hope for significant school improvement is transforming schools into professional learning communities."³⁰

²⁸ Dykstra, "What Is Faith?," 61.

²⁹ Ibid., 58.

³⁰ Richard DuFour and Robert E. Eaker, *Professional Learning Communities at Work: Best Practices for Enhancing Student Achievement* (Bloomington, IN: National Education Service, 1998). Emphasis mine.

Learning communities stress not only the work of learning together, but particularly, experiential learning, which is, learning by doing.

The school where my own children received their primary education is located near St. Saviour's Church. It is the oldest schoolhouse in Ontario. It was founded in the era of Egerton Ryerson, the influential Methodist minister, educator, politician, and public education advocate of early Ontario. While Ryerson is celebrated for his work advocating free education for all children, not every aspect of the education he advocated is entirely praiseworthy. Ryerson played a significant role in Canada's disastrous policies in the Indian Residential Schools system. It was his study of native education commissioned by the Assistant Superintendent of General Indian Affairs that would become the model upon which the Residential Schools were built. Many of Ryerson's schools, including the one in our neighborhood, look very similar to prisons built in the same era.

Ryerson's schools, and most public school systems organized around the world in that era, were organized according to the concepts and principles of the *factory* model, which was the prevalent organizational model of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.³¹ Uniformity, standardization, and bureaucracy were predominant features of this model. Higher levels of the ladder of bureaucracy dictated decisions about curriculum, and teachers—like factory workers—were expected to manufacture future citizens. It may be argued that this structure served schools well for a time. However, this model has been inadequate to the goals of public education for decades. Assisting

³¹ Ibid., 19.

students to master complex content, learn how to learn, prepare for meaningful employment, and compete in a complex global economy all requires a new model.³²

A number of the educational models adopted by the church, such as those of the Sunday School movement, and some aspects of the Small Group movement, have borrowed from inadequate approaches gleaned from public education. We have seen the factory model at work in Christian education where it has been assumed that every student has the same needs at the same age. As much as schools are not factories, neither are churches. We need a different model.

DuFour lists a number of researchers both inside and outside of education who offer very similar advice for finding a new model for learning and development. They all point to the creation of a *learning community*. Steven Covey, the well-known American educator, author, and businessperson, writes, “Only the organizations that have a passion for learning will have an enduring influence.”³³ Peter Drucker, the Austrian-born American management consultant, educator, and author, agrees that, “every enterprise has to become a learning (and) a teaching institution. Organizations that build in continuous learning in jobs will dominate the twenty-first century.”³⁴ Rather than the factory approach, the notion of the learning community is that educators and students alike see themselves as learners who share a purpose, collaborate, and take collective

³² Ibid., 23.

³³ Covey, “Three Roles of the Leader in the New Paradigm,” 149; quoted in, DuFour and Eaker, *Professional Learning Communities at Work*, 23.

³⁴ Drucker, *Managing for the Future*, 108; quoted in, DuFour and Eaker, *Professional Learning Communities at Work*, 23.

responsibility. This approach offers a vision for learning and growth in faith in the church.

Learning Communities and Action Research

Like Richard DuFour, Stephen P. Gordon's interest is in professional learning communities among educators. He is of particular interest to this discussion because he specifically discusses using Participatory Action Research (PAR) as part of a professional learning community.³⁵ Gordon observes that PAR has been shown to be a powerful and authentic mechanism for making teaching more rewarding. He finds that teachers who regularly engage in Action Research, and then use the results of their studies to inform their future teaching, report greater job satisfaction.³⁶

This project employs PAR, creating learning community around practices of neighborliness. While the congregation is not a professional body, it has attributes similar to a profession, in the sense of having a tradition and a set of practices associated with it. From the outset of this project, the PAR Leadership Team hoped that participants in the learning community and scope of the PAR would find their own practice better informed and personally more rewarding.

Learning Community and Spiritual Formation

This project is, of course, more interested in Christian spiritual formation than in public education. We must acknowledge, however, that the church's thinking about Christian spiritual formation has often been shaped (for good and ill) by public education

³⁵ Gordon, *Collaborative Action Research*.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, 112.

models. Learning from professional learning communities in the field of education has a number of things to offer the church as we consider spiritual formation.

Recall that Zscheile's definition of Christian spiritual formation described it, as an "intentional *communal* process."³⁷ *Christian* spiritual formation can never be a solitary exercise if it is a process of becoming more like Christ, because Christ must always be understood in light of Trinitarian relationships. Spiritual formation is not just for our own individual growth and development; it's aim is to shape people and communities for participation in God's redemptive activity in the world, for the *missio Dei*, for the love of God and neighbor.³⁸

Zscheile expands on the concept of *learning community* for the church. He observes that the community of disciples that Jesus brought together was fluid, composed not only of the twelve, but key women who were also part of his inner circle, and larger circles of people and crowds that followed for a time.³⁹

To be a disciple in the ancient context was to be a learner, apprentice, or student, not so much in an informational sense but in a formational sense. That is, following Jesus meant close observation of his actions in relationship, going where he went, staying where he stayed, sharing conversations, listening, and trying things out. It was about being formed into a new way of life—what came in the book of Acts to be called "the Way."⁴⁰

I explore Jesus' practice with his students in learning community in chapter 4, below.

Zscheile speaks to the importance of the church's vocation in building and restoring community in a participatory age. He observes that "the paradox of the twenty-

³⁷ Zscheile, "A Missional Theology of Spiritual Formation," 7. Emphasis mine.

³⁸ Ibid., 8.

³⁹ Zscheile, *The Agile Church*, loc. 842.

⁴⁰ Ibid., loc 844-847.

first century is the simultaneous disintegration of traditional expressions of community and the rise of a participatory culture.”⁴¹ In our participatory culture, people seek experiences more than ideas or products. “People want to engage meaningfully, not just consume something.”⁴² Zscheile observes that in the face of these wider cultural realities there is “tremendous opportunity to rehear the gospel, to deepen the church’s identity and practice, and to learn how to form community with new neighbors.”⁴³ Zscheile’s concept of learning community involves communicative interaction not only within the church, but in the neighborhood where God is at work, joining with neighbors where they are, listening deeply to their lives, and discerning with those neighbors the new life that God is bringing forth.⁴⁴

Apprenticeship: Learning Through Practice

John P. Bowen describes the church as the “school of Jesus.”⁴⁵ We might ask, exactly what sort of school is this? Bowen suggests that the school of Jesus is rather like a trade school. Learning in trade school might include elements of codified knowledge as one might encounter in a traditional classroom. An apprentice electrician would need to learn the electrical-building code for the local jurisdiction where they would work. More than codified knowledge, however, learning a trade most importantly involves

⁴¹ Ibid., loc. 902-903.

⁴² Ibid., loc. 1119.

⁴³ Ibid., loc. 978-979.

⁴⁴ Ibid., loc. 992.

⁴⁵ Bowen, *Green Shoots out of Dry Ground*, loc. 289.

apprenticeship. The knowledge exercised in practice is often distinct from the codified knowledge privileged within educational institutions.⁴⁶

Apprenticeship has often been overlooked as a process or method of learning beyond the trades. Within trades and vocational (job) learning, apprenticeship-type learning has been seen as the exemplary model because of the extensive practice-based learning that it provides. Higher education has increasingly come under criticism because of its failure to produce graduates who are *job ready*. In many fields of higher education, producing job-ready graduates has never been a goal and it remains debatable whether such a goal is desirable. The church is interested, however, in learning that differs greatly. The church has an interest in vocational (life) learning. Apprenticeship is an important model appropriate to such goals.

Robert Banks is a strong advocate for a missional model of education that includes apprenticeship. In his book, *Renewing Theological Education: Exploring a Missional Alternative to Current Models*, he advocates apprenticeship as “a way to keep *being, knowing, and doing* together.”⁴⁷ Banks’ missional model for learning involves not only learning the tradition (biblical, historical, and theological), but doing so in a “formational and life-oriented way.”⁴⁸ Banks explains that,

... such learning should have reference to all the basic dimensions of a person’s life—family and friendships, work and neighborhood, church and Christian organizations, voluntary and civic involvement—and at crucial points it should be

⁴⁶ Ask the pastor who says, “They didn’t teach me that in seminary.”

⁴⁷ Robert Banks, *Reenvisioning Theological Education: Exploring a Missional Alternative to Current Models* (Grand Rapids, MI: W.B. Eerdmans Pub., 1999), loc. 1314.

⁴⁸ Ibid.loc. 1550.

guided by specific people who have a special understanding and calling to such work.⁴⁹

Apprenticeship involves learning through practice, normally with the assistance and guidance of a master of the trade. Such assistance and guidance will take the form of mentoring and coaching.

Mentoring and Coaching

The terms *mentoring* and *coaching* are often used interchangeably, but there is a distinction between the two. Mentoring refers to a more long-term, often informal relationship between a more experienced practitioner and one less experienced. These relationships are often sustained over a lifetime of practice. Coaching relationships, in contrast, are often of much shorter duration and tend to have formal terms. Where mentoring is broad in scope, coaching tends to focus on specific goals and discreet practices within the occupation.⁵⁰ Studies show that, as with mentoring, the development of close personal bonds between coaches and coached is an important element in the coaching process.⁵¹ Empathy and mutual self-disclosure seems to be key to the learning process in coaching relationships. As in a counseling relationship, self-disclosure by the coach tends to evoke disclosure by the coached, opening up opportunities for exploration.⁵² The match between coach and coached is of crucial importance for these relational dynamics. Moreover, an alignment of values between coach and coached, and

⁴⁹ Ibid., loc. 1550-1552.

⁵⁰ van Woerkom, "Learning through Practice," 257.

⁵¹ Ibid., 264.

⁵² Ibid., 265.

mentor and mentored, is crucial. It cannot be merely assumed that there is a sharing of common ground. Mentors and mentored will typically develop such common ground within their long-term relationship. Coaches and coached need to cultivate such an understanding early in their relationship and are aided when attention has been given to matching. The match between mentors and mentored, coaches and coached, should pay attention not only to the personalities involved, but also to the values that they share. Where this has been taken into account, studies have shown, that coaching and mentoring are powerful tools for learning and development.⁵³

Decision-Making and Discernment

Michael Eraut developed a generic model for professional practices of decision making comprising of four distinct but interacting elements. These four, described simply are: (1) assessing; (2) deciding; (3) agreeing; and (4) monitoring.⁵⁴ Eraut observes that skilled professionals integrate these elements to a high degree. It's not that they assess and then move on to decide and then to act; rather they will tend to assess a little, make a decision and act, only to move back to the beginning of the process. "Situational understanding" generates new personal knowledge that develops as the practitioner interacts in the field.⁵⁵ This new knowledge must itself be assessed alongside of previous knowledge. Eraut finds that experts tend to make better decisions, not because they have

⁵³ Ibid., 265-266.

⁵⁴ Michael Eraut, "Conceptual Analysis and Research Questions: Do the Concepts of 'Learning Community' and 'Community of Practice' Provide Added Value?," (American Educational Research Association, New Orleans, LA); quoted in, Eraut, "Knowledge, Working Practices, and Learning."

⁵⁵ Eraut, "Knowledge, Working Practices, and Learning," 44.

superior reasoning skills, but because they have grown in their “situational assessment skills.”⁵⁶

Eraut’s framework bears a strong resemblance to a framework outlined by Craig Van Gelder in his article entitled “The Hermeneutics of Leading in Mission.”⁵⁷ Van Gelder speaks to a process of learning and change (or what we might call *discernment*) through a cyclical five-step process of *attending*, *asserting*, *agreeing*, *acting* and *assessing*. Van Gelder’s process is grounded in the concept of communicative reason advanced by Jürgen Habermas and critical social theory, which I discuss further below. The practice of communicative reason facilitates diverse communities coming to shared conclusions.⁵⁸

Van Gelder’s framework also emphasizes the need for discernment to be biblically and theologically framed, as well as theoretically informed. Leaders in mission bring the biblical imagination into conversation with specifically situated contexts, and uniquely shaped communities, in order to agree upon strategic action.

This process of decision-making and discernment is something that the congregation of St. Saviour’s strives towards in its own community life. This was also the framework for decision-making by the PAR Leadership Team as it designed elements of the PAR.

⁵⁶ Ibid.

⁵⁷ Craig Van Gelder, “The Hermeneutics of Leading in Mission,” *Journal of Religious Leadership* 3, no. 1 & 2 (2004).

⁵⁸ Ibid., 142.

Socially-Situated Traditions of Knowledge

Situated learning is a theory related to apprenticeship, and how individuals acquire professional skills, and how this leads to membership in a *community of practice*. Situated learning “takes as its focus the relationship between learning and the social situation in which it occurs.”⁵⁹ The concept of a community of practice is a way of thinking about learning in its social dimensions. It locates learning in the relationship between the person and the world. “In this relation of *participation*, the social and the individual constitute each other.”⁶⁰

Stephen Billet recognizes that communities of practice have their own traditions of knowledge, learning, and practice.⁶¹ In the context of a community of practice, socialization into the traditions of the community is an essential aspect of learning. Billet illustrates such traditions by describing the learned occupations of coin-making in ancient China, and of artisans and craftsmen in ancient Greece.⁶² Artisans and artists would find that their occupational preparation was through apprenticeship, usually within their family. A family would have a specific occupation and those born into that family would be expected to engage in and support that occupation.⁶³ The words, tools, concepts,

⁵⁹ William F. Hanks, “Forward,” in *Communities of Practice: Creating Learning Environments for Educators*, ed. Jean Lave and Etienne Wenger, 2 vols. (Charlotte, NC: Information Age Pub., 2008), 14.

⁶⁰ Wenger, “Communities of Practice and Social Learning,” 1; see also, Jean Lave and Etienne Wenger, *Communities of Practice: Creating Learning Environments for Educators* (Charlotte, NC: Information Age Pub., 1998), 7. Emphasis added. Lave and Wenger coined the term “communities of practice.”

⁶¹ Stephen Billett, “Learning through Occupations,” in *Learning through Practice: Models, Traditions, Orientations and Approaches*, ed. Stephen Billett, Professional and Practice-Based Learning, PDF ed. (New York, NY: Springer, 2010), 61.

⁶² *Ibid.*, 61-64.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, 64.

methods, stories, documents, and resources, of a particular community of practice are all part of the tradition of that community and need to be learned in order to master that community's occupation.⁶⁴

Learning in a community of practice requires not only participation in that community but a meaningful interaction with places and/or artifacts connected with that community of practice.⁶⁵ Places and artifacts, indeed, are part of the tradition of communities of practice. Wenger asserts that both *participation* and *reification* (literally, reification means "making into an object") need to be in interplay for meaningful learning in social contexts.⁶⁶ "Artifacts without participation," says Wenger, "do not carry their own meaning; and participation without artifacts is fleeting, unanchored, and uncoordinated."⁶⁷ It is with each engagement, where participation and reification come together to negotiate and renegotiate meaning, that dynamic learning occurs.⁶⁸

A feminist critique of Wenger's theory of socially situated traditions of knowledge and communities of practice suggests that the theory does not adequately take into account dynamics of power. Issues of power are inherent in a social perspective on learning. Wenger admits, "... the definition of the regime of accountability and of who gets to qualify as competent are questions of power."⁶⁹ Wenger also notes that the

⁶⁴ Wenger, "Communities of Practice and Social Learning," 1.

⁶⁵ Ibid.

⁶⁶ Ibid., 1-2.

⁶⁷ Ibid., 1.

⁶⁸ Ibid., 2.

⁶⁹ Ibid., 8.

“pairing of identity and community is an important component of the effectiveness of power. Identification with a community makes one accountable to its regime of competence and thus to its power plays.”⁷⁰ Wenger observes, for example, how anxious and defensive people become in an academic circle when offered a critique of an author or theory with whom they identify.⁷¹ Issues of power are very much a concern because of the strong identifications made within congregations and neighborhoods. It is important to remember, therefore, that learning *is* political.

One of the means of checking for abuses of power in a learning community of practice is through good governance of the learning system. Wenger suggests that learning should drive governance, not the other way around.⁷² Good governance stewards the learning community of practice towards a concerted effort around an identified cause or issue, seeking agreement and alignment across the system.⁷³ Good governance also allows for local decisions and leadership by participants that emerge at the local level. Good governance will also give attention to both the vertical and horizontal axes of accountability. Traditional hierarchies, decisional authority, policies and regulations, will be understood in terms of the power with which they operate; so too will more horizontal dynamics of peer recognition, identity, reputation, commitment to mutual learning, and shared standards of practice.⁷⁴ One axes of power is not necessarily superior to the other.

⁷⁰ Ibid., 9.

⁷¹ Ibid.

⁷² Ibid., 12.

⁷³ Ibid., 12-13.

⁷⁴ Ibid., 13.

They function best in different contexts within systems of learning and need to be brought into interplay and tension with one another in order to manage the dynamics of power and to allow a context for dynamic learning.

Learning Citizenship

Before leaving the discussion of theories of learning, I wish to outline briefly another concept introduced by Wenger. “The concept *learning citizenship* refers to the ethics of how we invest our identities as we travel through the landscape.”⁷⁵ Wenger provides the following examples as considerations of learning citizenship.

1. *Managing one's membership in existing communities.* Asking the question, how do I contribute to the communities that I belong to or could belong to?
2. *Bridging boundaries.* Asking the question about how to become brokers by using multi-memberships as a bridge between learning communities of practice.
3. *Creating new learning communities of practice.* Asking the question about the need for a new community, and finding the legitimacy to call it into being and convene it.
4. *Connecting people.* Looking to connect people to communities that will enhance their own learning.

⁷⁵ Ibid., 14. Emphasis added.

5. *Providing transversal connections.* Looking to strengthen learning communities of practice where the vertical and horizontal accountability structures are disjointed.⁷⁶

Learning citizenship is a way of speaking about the ethical dimension arising out of the reality that each of us has a unique path through the landscape and neighborhood. Our unique perspective, often shaped by multiple communities of practice, is our gift to the world. Responsible citizenship demands that we be good stewards of this valuable gift.

Conclusions: Spiritual Formation and Learning Theory

The first piece of orienting framework that I have put in place for this project relates to spiritual formation and learning theory. I began by looking at the classic faith development theory laid out by Fowler, but accepted the definition of faith proposed by Dykstra: “*faith is appropriate and intentional participation in the redemptive activity of God.*”⁷⁷ Following this, I also accepted the complimentary definition of spiritual formation proposed by Zscheile: “Christian spiritual formation refers to the intentional communal process of growing in our relationship with God and becoming conformed to Christ through the power of the Holy Spirit, for the sake of the world.”⁷⁸ These definitions, with their practical and participatory implications, led me to focus next on theory related to practical learning.

⁷⁶ Ibid.

⁷⁷ Dykstra, “What Is Faith?,” 55. Emphasis added.

⁷⁸ Zscheile, “A Missional Theology of Spiritual Formation,” 7; Wilhoit, *Spiritual Formation as If the Church Mattered*, 23.

I explored literature related to the concept of learning community. The formation of a learning community at St. Saviour's is the core intervention formed in this project. I showed that the formation of a learning community, which is a prevalent model in the field of education, holds promise for the church and for faith development. I looked at additional material that looked specifically at Action Research and its role in learning communities and found that this project itself should be expected to assist the congregation in its faith formation and missional goals.

Finally, I looked at other literature dealing with models of learning related to apprenticeship and found that these also accord well with the faith formation and missional goals of the church. Together, this literature not only provides the first piece of an orienting framework for this project, but provided guidance to the PAR Leadership Team in developing specific interventions that fit under the rubric of learning community. Specific variables regarding the degree to which the project was successful in developing opportunities for apprenticeship, and the degree to which these resulted in growth in Christian discipleship, were operationalized for the end-line questionnaire and focus groups. These were important considerations for the PAR Leadership Team throughout the design and will be discussed further in chapters five and six.

Critical Social Theory

I now wish to give some attention to critical social theory. I draw on the work of Gary Simpson and his discussion of critical social theory and the work of Jürgen Habermas.⁷⁹ I also show that critical social theory provides a social-theoretical

⁷⁹ Simpson, *Critical Social Theory*.

framework that is appropriate to the goal of participation with God in God's mission in the neighborhood. I bring Davydd J. Greenwood and Morten Levin's discussion of *Participatory Action Research*, and John Mezirow's theory of *transformation learning* into this conversation in order to elaborate further on the process of learning and growth envisioned in this project.⁸⁰ Critical social theory and transformational learning also provide language for analyzing and discussing the growth in missional engagement that may occur in the life of the congregation and in the lives of individuals.

Critical social theory has been extremely influential in the late-twentieth and early twenty-first centuries. Its advocates sought the transformation of everyday life, to improve the real-life situations of persons. Critical social theory has been brought to bear on issues such as the family, sexuality, genocide, entertainment, literary analysis, education, and a number of others. Critical social theory is concerned with the imbalances of power that exist within the mega-systems of the market economy, the state, and the public sphere of civil society institutions, and the emerging global civil society.

Critical Social Theory: A Brief Description

A brief history is helpful as an introduction to critical social theory. Philosophy has always had a critical element. Socrates called the conventional wisdom of his own day into question prompting his condemnation by the citizens of Athens for corrupting the morals of youth. Critical social theory builds on this legacy of healthy critique.

⁸⁰ Davydd J. Greenwood and Morten Levin, *Introduction to Action Research: Social Research for Social Change*, 2nd, Kindle ed. (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 2007).

Max Horkheimer and the Genesis of Critical Social Theory

Critical social theory emerged between World War I and World War II as a response to the acute sufferings of vast numbers of persons and communities during this time. Critical social theory had its genesis at the Institute of Social Research at the University of Frankfurt with the appointment of Max Horkheimer as director in 1930. Horkheimer was concerned with the real-life situations of people. “This insistence on the real-life contexts *and* consequences of every philosophy marks Horkheimer’s thinking at every turn and remains a hallmark of critical social theory.”⁸¹ Indeed, Horkheimer held that any abstraction of philosophy from its social context was a practiced delusion.⁸² Horkheimer had noticed that the reigning Nazi social order of the Germany of his day relied heavily on a positivist natural-scientific doctrine of “facts.”⁸³ Modernity and its positivist philosophies had held out the promise of human progress once humanity was free from the old superstitions of religion and more rooted in objective, empirical facts. These dreams were shattered, of course, by the images of Nazi concentration camps, the ruins of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, the Soviet Gulag, and worries about the fear-based McCarthyism on the rise in the United States.⁸⁴

Horkheimer had, early on, been influenced by Karl Marx and accepted Marx’s accent on the significance of practice, agents, and agency. Horkheimer came to emphasize the need for *emancipatory* practice and agents, and for *emancipation*

⁸¹ Simpson, *Critical Social Theory*, loc. 108.

⁸² *Ibid.*, loc. 96.

⁸³ *Ibid.*, loc. 159.

⁸⁴ Stephen Eric Bronner, *Critical Theory: A Very Short Introduction* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2011), loc. 226.

politics.⁸⁵ Critical social theory employed the dialectic method of Hegel and Marx, but departed from Marx most notably in the direction it looked for an emancipatory agent. Marxism had looked to the *proletariat* for such an agent. Horkheimer and critical social theory finds their emancipatory agent, at least in part, among *emancipatory intellectuals* and theorists like himself. Later, through the work of Jürgen Habermas, critical social theory identified a sphere for emancipatory agency in *civil society*. Horkheimer, however, had hoped that the so-called “bourgeois ideals of freedom, justice, and brotherhood”—because of their own inherent rationality—might emerge as the realities of his time.

Nihilism and the Disappointment with Reason

Horkheimer and a number of his colleagues in the Frankfurt School were disappointed that the bourgeois ideals of freedom, justice, and brotherhood did not hold sway and, therefore, adapted a nihilist stance toward reason and embraced more aesthetic forms of critique. Some became, for example, champions of modern art. Nevertheless, the focus on the real-life circumstances of people, and a focus upon the amelioration of suffering and promotion of emancipation, remained hallmarks of critical social theory, as they are to this day.

The nihilism of Horkheimer and thinkers such as Friedrich Nietzsche expressed a disappointment with reason as a foundation for emancipatory society. Habermas observed that Nietzsche had shown the way for a total critique of reason, “reason is nothing else but power, the will to power.”⁸⁶ Habermas remained skeptical, however, of

⁸⁵ Simpson, *Critical Social Theory*, loc. 382-383.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, loc. 909.

Horkheimer's abandonment of reason and argued that Horkheimer and others had overlooked some basic liberative achievements of reason. He argued that they had forgotten the rationality that is contained within the ideals of freedom, justice, and brotherhood themselves.⁸⁷

Jürgen Habermas and the New Paradigm of Communicative Action and Reason

Habermas offered a new paradigm, a theory of communicative action and reason. Habermas noted that in normal everyday conversation, there is an understanding of an idealized agreement that is aimed for in communication free from domination.⁸⁸ In this paradigm, Habermas "seeks to reconstruct the essential features of a life together in communication free from domination."⁸⁹

The *communicative social action* that Habermas championed is different from *strategic action*. Strategic action chooses means appropriate to a situation oriented towards subjectively formulated purposes with respect to objects that are human or societal. The foreseeable consequences are calculated in term of cost and benefits in terms of the success of the action. Communicative action is quite different. It is oriented toward creating normative agreement; it arises from understanding and agreement, as well as the social coordination and integration of action that flows from communicatively achieved agreements.⁹⁰ "Communicative action is always social action mediated through

⁸⁷ Ibid., loc. 933-934.

⁸⁸ Ibid., loc. 968.

⁸⁹ Habermas and Dews, *Autonomy and Solidarity*, 193-194.

⁹⁰ Simpson, *Critical Social Theory*, loc. 1296-1302.

the integrative powers of argumentative speech.⁹¹ For Habermas, this process of argumentative speech is the life-blood of the deliberative democracy.

Habermas noticed and identified that the great threat to the real life situations of people in the late twentieth century lay with the mega-systems of the market economy and the political state. These two systems had become uncoupled from the lifeworlds of people, and indeed, had come to colonize people's lifeworlds through the media of money (in the case of the market economy) and administrative power (in the case of the political state) in very significant ways. Money and power invade the lifeworlds of people in such a way that the lifeworld's communicative moral reasoning and action are inhibited. Everything is decided by money and power.

In the face of this, Habermas suggests a move towards the intentional growth of deliberative democracy.⁹² Habermas' deliberative democracy gives the center stage to the formulation of public opinion, but also prioritizes the institutionalization of citizen rights and a broad enfranchisement of people.⁹³ Such a sphere of *civil society* arises out of the lifeworlds of real persons; it is a vast network of institutions that emerge from people's lifeworlds.

⁹¹ Ibid., loc. 1303.

⁹² Ibid., loc. 1449-1451.

⁹³ Ibid., loc. 1495.

Critical Social Theory and Gary Simpson's Proposal for Christian Congregations as Public Companions in Civil Society

Gary Simpson observes that people today more or less take civil society for granted.⁹⁴ Still, the real lives of people have very much been colonized by the mega-systems of the market economy and the political state. The capitalist heritage of most Western democracies has tended to undercut the power of the political state in favor of the market economy. Most people spend most of their lives simply trying to earn enough money to make a living. Citizens have been reduced to consumers. Yet, many people come to the market without the resources to purchase or produce the goods needed to enjoy the “good life” the market promises.⁹⁵ Instead, too many find a heartless and uncaring world. It is a reality of the current market economy that there are more people living in slavery today than were in the days of William Wilberforce.⁹⁶ In this situation, Simpson calls for an enriched, communicative civil society that will impart resources for a more emancipatory and just deliberative democracy, and for a more responsible stakeholder economy, weakening the mega-system's colonizing effects.⁹⁷

Simpson celebrates the fact that we have arrived at a time when congregations are back on the map.⁹⁸ After a period of confusion and lament with the end of Christendom,

⁹⁴ Ibid., loc. 1677.

⁹⁵ Ibid., loc. 1686.

⁹⁶ Estimates from the United Nations International Labor Organization are there are currently 21 to 36 million enslaved worldwide, generating \$150 billion each year in illicit profits for traffickers. This is more than double the number of people taken from West Africa during the slave trade. Free the Slaves, “About Slavery,” 2016, www.freetheslaves.net/about-slavery/slavery-today/ (accessed June 5, 2016).

⁹⁷ Simpson, *Critical Social Theory*, loc. 1674.

⁹⁸ Ibid., loc. 1756.

congregations are again locations of productive theological imagination and missional engagement. A new missional ecclesiology is taking root in North America. Simpson suggests that the communicative turn of critical social theory is a formidable companion for instilling prophetic imagination in missional congregations. Simpson argues that missional congregations can become public companions in civil society. He cautions that this would not look like a return to Christendom, with assumptions of a privileged place for the church's voice, but a radical immersion in the pluralist and ambiguous life of many cultures, religions, and irreligions.⁹⁹ This is a risky vocation for congregations as we have no monopoly on moral wisdom. We have things to learn in the conversation, the communicative give and take, because we also have been colonized by the effects of money and power.¹⁰⁰

Simpson lists five marks that characterize the communicatively prophetic, public companion congregation. They are worth listing here.

1. *Conviction* that they are participating in God's ongoing creative work.
2. *Compassionate commitment* to other institutions.
3. *Connected* both to God and the social and natural world as public companions.
4. *Critical and self-critical and communicative* practice of prophetic engagement.

⁹⁹ Ibid., loc. 1770.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid., loc. 1805-1809.

5. *Creative, strengthening, and sustaining* of the moral fabric that fashions a life-giving, life-accountable world, with other institutions.¹⁰¹

Critical Social Theory and Education

I have discussed some theory related to the field of education above. I return briefly to the field of education here, in relation to critical social theory, because of the work of John Mezirow and his interest in emancipatory practice in education. Mezirow has an interest in *transformative learning*. As I have noted above, theory regarding adult learning focuses a great deal on learning that is situated in social, cultural, and material contexts. Mezirow's theory is influenced by critical social theory. For Mezirow, transformational learning is a process in which individual experiences are transformed into emancipatory actions.¹⁰² Mezirow builds on Habermas' critique of the scientific tradition and his work on communicative actions.¹⁰³ A key element in Mezirow's theories of adult education is the focus on critical reflection and thinking. Such learning is an emancipatory and communicative process. Instead of using power to have students see and reflect on specific issues, the goal is to free students to be free critical thinkers in a communicative process.¹⁰⁴

Mezirow argues that a cardinal goal of adult education is for individuals to learn to make their own interpretations rather than act on the purposes, beliefs, judgements, and

¹⁰¹ Ibid., loc. 1809-1814.

¹⁰² Greenwood and Levin, *Introduction to Action Research*, 174.

¹⁰³ Ibid.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid., 175.

feelings of others.¹⁰⁵ He argues that *habits of the mind* are sets of code that arise from cultural, social, educational, economic, political, or psychological experience.¹⁰⁶ These habits of mind may be articulated in a specific *point of view*, “a constellation of belief, value judgement, attitude, and feeling that shapes a particular interpretation.”¹⁰⁷

Communicative learning involves a least two persons striving to reach a consensus on these points of view. We engage in *discourse* to assess the evidence, arguments, and alternative points of view.¹⁰⁸ Points of view are transformed through critical reflection on the assumptions on which they are based. Significant personal transformation can occur through such reflection.

Mezirow argues that “thinking as an autonomous and responsible agent is essential for full citizenship in democracy and for moral decision making in situations of rapid change.”¹⁰⁹ He cites both the U.S. Department of Labor and the Australian government as having identified autonomous thinking as a “key competency” for today’s workers.¹¹⁰ Citing the study of the National Institute for Literacy, Mezirow finds that autonomous thinking is an important educational objective identified by adult learners themselves.

¹⁰⁵ Jack Mezirow, “Transformative Learning: Theory to Practice,” in *Transformative Learning in Practice: Insights from Community, Workplace, and Higher Education*, ed. Jack Mezirow and Edward W. Taylor (San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 2009), 5.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid., 6.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid.

¹¹⁰ Ibid., 8.

At first hearing, this insistence upon the importance of *autonomous* thinking may sound as though it is derived merely from modern society's fixation with individualism. Mezirow means something else by *autonomy*. He refers to "the understanding, skills, and disposition necessary to become critically reflective of one own assumptions *and to engage effectively in discourse to validate one's beliefs through the experiences of others who share universal values.*"¹¹¹

The *transformative learning* that Mezirow describes is quite different than the form of education that one would typically employ with children. It focuses on critically reflective thought, imaginative problem solving, and discourse that is learner-centered, participatory, and interactive. It involves group deliberation.¹¹² In such groups, the educator functions as *facilitator* and *provocateur*, rather than the authority on the subject.¹¹³ Mezirow concludes, "transformative learning is not an add-on. It is the essence of adult education."¹¹⁴

Critical Social Theory and Participatory Action Research

Critical social theory has always been interested in social research. Its interest, however, has not just been about learning, observing, and describing "the facts," but about the real lives of people, the alleviation of suffering, the values of freedom, justice, and brotherhood. The critical social theory of Jürgen Habermas is concerned with emancipatory, communicative action. It is no surprise that this great body of work has

¹¹¹ Ibid., 9. Emphasis added.

¹¹² Ibid., 10.

¹¹³ Ibid., 11.

¹¹⁴ Ibid.

had a great influence in social-science research, no less than in the area of Action Research, and specifically the mode of research employed in this project: PAR. PAR can be described as a child of critical social theory.

Greenwood and Levin discuss the various of streams of Action Research in their book *Introduction to Action Research: Social Research for Social Change*.¹¹⁵ They blend their discussion of what they term “Southern participatory action research (PAR),” with their discussion of action research in adult education and contemporary feminism, not because they are all the same, but because the approaches share a number of common elements and features.¹¹⁶

Southern PAR had its genesis as a critique of inequality and a practice of liberation within the context of class struggle. It has an interest in democratization and the liberation of oppressed people. PAR employs interventions in local settings that often employ the researcher or other outsider as a catalyst or awareness-raiser for local discussion.¹¹⁷ The process is communicative. Plans of action are agreed upon and set in motion by participants. Local knowledge is particularly valued in Southern PAR. From the local knowledge and engagement with the outside researcher, the communicative process and dialogue will often transform the life of both. The outsider grows in their understanding of the local situation, and the local participants—whose experience is often all too concrete—receives perspectives that open new scope for action.¹¹⁸

¹¹⁵ Greenwood and Levin, *Introduction to Action Research*.

¹¹⁶ Ibid., 152.

¹¹⁷ Ibid., 154.

¹¹⁸ Ibid., 156.

Critical Social Theory: Summary and Conclusions

Critical social theory and its emphasis on communicative action provides an important theoretical underpinning for this research. The learning that this project seeks to foster is largely learning within a communicative process of engagement with one another in the congregation and in the neighborhood. Critical social theory, and Simpson's proposal for congregations to be civil society companions, also provides insight into the subversive role that congregations can play in the face of the colonizing effects of the mega-systems of the market economy and political state. Simpson's proposal speaks to a way of engaging with God in God's mission in the world.

Neighborhoods and Neighborliness

In this project, I am inquiring how a PAR intervention, utilizing a learning community to engage in Christian practices of neighborliness, might help the members of St. Saviour's Anglican Church engage more fully in God's mission in their corporate gatherings and daily lives. By focusing the experience of the learning community around Christian practices of *neighborliness*, I betray the assumption that the neighborhood is a particular locus of mission. I explore biblical and theological themes connected with neighborliness in chapter 4. Here, I want to touch on other theoretical material. I begin by exploring the so-called *New Urbanism*. Second, I explore the *power of communities and neighborhoods*. Finally, I give attention to the theory of *social capital*, and the potential role of neighborhood churches as generators, reservoirs, stewards, and investors of the same.

The New Urbanism

The *New Urbanism* is a neotraditional urban design movement that focuses on the promotion of environmentally-responsible habits by creating walkable neighborhoods with a wide range of housing and employment opportunities. The primary principles of New Urbanism are: (1) walkability; (2) connectivity; (3) mixed-use and diversity; (4) mixed housing; (5) quality architecture and urban design; (6) traditional neighborhood structure; (7) increased density; (8) smart transportation; (9) sustainability; and, (10) quality of life.¹¹⁹ Its advocates claim that it is about “creating a better future for us all.”¹²⁰ “New Urbanism is a revival of our lost art of place-making, and is essentially a re-ordering of the built environment into the form of complete cities, towns, villages, and neighborhoods.”¹²¹

Included in the New Urbanism are a number of axioms, known as the principles of intelligent urbanism, or PIU, developed by Christopher Charles Benninger. The axioms overlap with the principles listed above. These include: (1) a balance with nature; (2) a balance with tradition; (3) appropriate technology; (4) conviviality (meaning, a place for individuals, friendship, householders, neighborhood, communities, and city domain); (5) efficiency; (6) human scale; (7) opportunity matrix; (8) regional integration; (9) balanced movement; and (10) institutional integrity.¹²²

¹¹⁹ “New Urbanism.”

¹²⁰ Ibid.

¹²¹ Ibid.

¹²² Charles Christopher Benninger, “The Principles of Intelligent Urbanism,” Tain, 2001, <http://tainconstructions.blogspot.com/2010/12/principles-of-intelligent-urbanism-by.html> (accessed June 7, 2016).

The New Urbanism and its traditional urban design is having a profound influence upon the development of many cities, including Wellington. The dedicated cycling lanes linking the city's neighborhoods, mentioned above, along with the light rail transit, and associated infrastructure, are priorities in the city because of the influence these urban design movements in Wellington. A prominent local architect, who also happens to be a member of St. Saviour's, is one of a number of architects, planners, and other professionals who have been so influenced.

Some practitioners of New Urbanism may not be aware, but New Urbanism accords very well with Christian theological concepts such as the *reign of God* and the *common good*, which will be discussed in greater depth in chapter 4 of this thesis. Eric O. Jacobsen's book, *Sidewalks in the Kingdom*, is explicit in making the case that biblical depictions of community support new urbanist design principles.¹²³ Vincent Rougeau, writing from the perspective of Catholic social thought adds approval from that tradition.¹²⁴

New Urbanism has drawn from the sensibilities of the American-Canadian journalist, author, and activist, Jane Jacobs, known for her impact on urban studies and lack of formal education in the field. Jacob's influential book, *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*, published in 1961, advocated that urban design consider the people who actually live in the city.¹²⁵ Jacob's point may seem obvious to us now, but at

¹²³ Jacobsen, *Sidewalks in the Kingdom*; cited in Jenkins, "Neighborhood Ethics," 542.

¹²⁴ Rougeau, "Property Law."; cited in Jenkins, "Neighborhood Ethics," 542; Rougeau, "Property Law."; cited in Jenkins, "Neighborhood Ethics," 542.

¹²⁵ Jane Jacobs, *The Death and Life of Great American Cities* (New York, NY: Random House, 1961).

a time when expressways were being built through neighborhoods, the wisdom of Jacob's proposal was not accepted by all. Jacob's arrest and prosecution for participating in protests connected with the building of expressways prompted her move from her home in Greenwich Villiage, New York, to the Annex neighborhood of Toronto. Jacobs is also credited with introducing the sociological concept of *social capital*, to which I turn later in this chapter.¹²⁶

Willis Jenkins, in his article, "Neighborhood Ethics: Christianity, Urbanism, and Homelessness," observes that, generally speaking, Christian ethics has had an ambivalent relationship to the city and urban reform efforts. He notes that Christian ethics seems to privilege a kind of homelessness that is complicit with "homeless, nomadic capitalist culture," as it approaches its social commitments to those on the margins with its own "nomadic moral tropes."¹²⁷ Jenkins argues for a theological ethic of neighborhood. In his study, he looks at issues of homelessness in New Haven, Connecticut, and finds that Christian communities practice "distinctive icons of urban space in the practices of making space for those without it and of confronting the cultural and political dynamics that make people placeless."¹²⁸ Jenkins observations, together with the principles of New Urbanism, and the theological reflections on neighborliness in chapter 4, provide a vision for St. Saviour's as it seeks to join God in mission in the neighborhood.

¹²⁶ Ibid., 138. Jacobs writes, "If self-government in a place is going to work, underlying any float of population must be a continuity of people who have forged neighborhood networks. These networks are a city's irreplaceable *social capital*. Whenever that capital is lost, from whatever cause, the income from it disappears, never to return, until and unless new capital is slowly and chancily accumulated" (emphasis added).

¹²⁷ Jenkins, "Neighborhood Ethics," 539.

¹²⁸ Ibid.

The Power of Community

John McKnight and Peter Block speak of the power of neighborhood in their book, *The Abundant Community: Awakening the Power of Families and Neighborhoods*.¹²⁹ McKnight and Block recognize seven elements of satisfaction that grow out of abundant community.

1. Health

“Our neighborhoods are the primary source of our health.”¹³⁰ The chief medical officer of health for the city of Wellington has stated that there are no less than 875 deaths in the greater metropolitan Toronto-Wellington area each year that are directly attributable to air-borne poisons from automobiles. A concern for walkable cities is a concern for health.

Health researchers Juha Mikkonen and Dennis Raphael, in their important work, *Social Determinants of Health: the Canadian Facts*, support the idea of *local* health initiatives. There are a variety of models for the social determinants of health. Mikkonen and Raphael adopt the one developed at a York University conference held in Toronto in 2002. These social determinants of health have proven helpful in describing why some Canadians are healthier than others. The fourteen social determinants are: (1) Aboriginal status; (2) disability; (3) early life; (4) education; (5) employment and working conditions; (6) food insecurity; (7) health services; (8) gender; (9) housing; (10) income and income distribution; (11) race; (12) social exclusion; (13) social safety net; and (14)

¹²⁹ Block and McKnight, *The Abundant Community*.

¹³⁰ Ibid., 148.

unemployment and job security.¹³¹ These social determinants of health are embedded at different levels of life. Some are individual or individual lifestyle factors. Others lie at the social and community level. The remainder are more general socioeconomic, cultural, and environmental conditions.¹³²

In her forward to Mikkonen and Raphael's work, Monique Bégin, a member of the World Health Organization Commission on Social Determinants of Health and a former Canadian federal Minister of Health and Welfare, suggests that this work informs the debate about health and "is about *public policies* and *political choices* and our commitment to make these things happen."¹³³ Addressing issues related to the social determinants of health requires action at the level of civil society, however, we make a mistake if we leave these matters to the mega-systems of the market economy and political state. Local, neighborly action is required.

Mikkonen and Raphael explain that most of the social determinants of health operate in people's lives on the level of stress. Stressful situations arise from coping with insecure employment, food insecurity, various forms of discrimination, and others. "The lack of supportive relationships, social isolation, and mistrust of others further increases stress."¹³⁴ The converse is also true. Those who live in the supportive care of a neighborhood community experience greater resilience in health.

¹³¹ Juha Mikkonen, Dennis Raphael, and York University School of Health Policy and Management., *Social Determinants of Health: The Canadian Facts* (Toronto, ON: York University School of Health Policy and Management, 2010), 9.

¹³² Ibid.

¹³³ Ibid., 5. Emphasis added.

¹³⁴ Ibid., 10.

Christopher E. Beaudoin's research, published in *Social Science and Medicine*, looked at neighborliness through the lens of bonding and bridging social capital (which I will discuss further, below).¹³⁵ Beaudoin found that "bonding neighborliness was associated with self-rated health and inversely related with stress."¹³⁶ McKnight and Block observe that "informed medical leaders advocate for community health initiatives because they realize that medical systems have reached the limits of their health-giving power."¹³⁷

2. Safety and Security

McKnight and Block argue that many studies show two major determinants of local security. The first is how many neighbors we know by name and the other is how often we are present and associated in public.¹³⁸

Susan Clampet-Lundquist studied social ties, safety, and what happens to persons in the context of forced public housing relocation. Her study, entitled, "Everyone Had Your Back," showed how neighborhood-based social capital is drawn upon for safety by examining how people kept safe in public housing, and what happened when these social ties were broken through forced relocation.¹³⁹ City planners had hoped to create safer neighborhoods, but Clampet-Lundquist found that relocated residents' relatively new

¹³⁵ Christopher E. Beaudoin, "Bonding and Bridging Neighborliness: An Individual-Level Study in the Context of Health," *Social Science & Medicine* 68, no. 12 (2009).

¹³⁶ *Ibid.*, 2129.

¹³⁷ Block and McKnight, *The Abundant Community*, 2.

¹³⁸ *Ibid.*

¹³⁹ Susan Clampet-Lundquist, "'Everyone Had Your Back': Social Ties, Perceived Safety, and Public Housing Relocation," *City & Community* 9, no. 1 (2010).

status in these neighborhoods translated into less socializing and weaker social ties. Since these residents had previously depended upon these social ties for protection and safety, their lack of integration left a substantial portion of them feeling more vulnerable.¹⁴⁰

Neighborhoods are primary factors in the safety and security of persons.

3. The Environment

“The energy problem,” according to McKnight and Block, “is our local domain because of how we transport ourselves, how we heat and light our homes, and how much we waste what we create.”¹⁴¹ St. Saviour’s neighborhood is rapidly changing with a ground-swell of local support for cycling and greener modes of public transit. Dedicated cycling lanes are being added on a number of streets linking corridors across the city. Although city politicians continue to quarrel over details, senior levels of government have set aside money to build a green light rail system across the city. Train service connecting Wellington with Toronto and other local centers will continue to remove polluting vehicles from the roads. Choices regarding transportation and consumption are local choices. Healthy neighborhoods that are self-sufficient support healthy choices and care for the future of the earth.

4. Resilient Economy

Local economies can be less dependent upon the colonizing mega-system of the global market economy. “As families and neighbors, we have the local power to nurture

¹⁴⁰ Ibid., 87.

¹⁴¹ Block and McKnight, *The Abundant Community*, 3.

and support ... (local, small) business so that they have a viable market.”¹⁴² Eric Jacobsen argues for a local economy that is healthy and diverse enough to offer employment opportunities for a wide range of people in a variety of life stages.¹⁴³ A local economy has a benefit not only in the *financial* concerns of the neighborhood, but in its *cultural* concerns as well. Local culture and economy are related; remember that the word “economy” is first a *household* word.¹⁴⁴ In west downtown Wellington, where St. Saviour’s is located, a number of small, local businesses flourish. It makes the neighborhood interesting, but more importantly, local business owners are invested, not only in making money, but in participating in the community.

On a recent trip to Thunder Bay, Ontario, I was surprised to witness how much that northern Ontario town had grown since my previous visit. Thunder Bay, at the northwest corner of Lake Superior, is the major center for the all of Northwestern Ontario (a massive geographical area), in terms of healthcare, higher education, and other services. Thunder Bay is also the major economic and shopping center for the area.

I was not a little disappointed when my host announced that the closing dinner to mark the end of our meetings, would be held at the local Kelsey’s restaurant in a major shopping mall surrounded by the ubiquitous big-box stores.¹⁴⁵ My disappointment with the choice of Kelsey’s had nothing to do with the quality of food, or excellence of service, or the quality of people who work in that or any of their locations, but everything

¹⁴² Ibid.

¹⁴³ Jacobsen, *Sidewalks in the Kingdom*, 117.

¹⁴⁴ From the Greek *oikos*, meaning “house,” and *nomos*, meaning “law.”

¹⁴⁵ For my American readers, Kelsey’s is a Canadian roadhouse style restaurant chain which can be found all across Canada and which is reminiscent of an Applebee’s, with which you will be familiar.

to do with the cultural experience I had hoped to have. I had hoped that we might have enjoyed some of the local flavor. Kelsey's is fine, but I might have enjoyed exactly the same meal just five minutes from my home in Wellington. To make matters worse, the mall in which the Kelsey's was located was identical to those in every North American city with their Walmarts and Home Depots. I would hardly need to squint my eyes to imagine that I might have been in my own city of Wellington; Orlando, Florida; or St. Paul, Minnesota. Our cities increasingly look the same. The colonization of local culture is that complete. Supporting local business is one way of supporting the fabric of local culture and of subverting the colonizing effects of the market.

5. Food and Food Security

McKnight and Block suggest, "we are coming to see that we have profound local responsibility for the food we eat."¹⁴⁶ In the neighborhood where St. Saviour's is located, a new grocery store cooperative has recently opened. The Mustard Seed Food Cooperative was the brain-child of a young couple that includes the prominent architect influenced by New Urbanism that I mentioned above. The same couple was instrumental in establishing the Hill Street Community Garden in the same neighborhood. As McKnight and Block point out, by supporting local producers we do our part to solve the energy problem created by transporting food great distances, assist economically by participating in the local economy, and improve our health through healthier food choices.

¹⁴⁶ Block and McKnight, *The Abundant Community*, 3.

6. Raising Children

McKnight and Block remind us of the proverb that claims that it takes a village to raise a child.¹⁴⁷ While we may give lip service to this idea, McKnight and Block point out that we tend to pay systems to raise our children in this society. We send our children out to school, to camp, for sports, for youth programs, for health care. Much of the care and nurture of our children is contracted out to strangers. “Our villages have become useless—our neighbors are responsible neither for their children, nor ours.”¹⁴⁸

The City of Wellington markets itself as “the best place to raise a child.” The phrase came from the Wellington Poverty Roundtable, which, more than ten years ago, set a goal of becoming *the best place to raise a child*. The City of Wellington later adopted this goal as part of its strategic plan.¹⁴⁹ Despite this commitment, child poverty levels remain high; the number of families with a new baby considered to be at risk for developmental challenges is rising; the need for school nutrition programs has grown, but funding has not grown with it; and Wellington’s public school system lags behind the provincial average in standardized testing.¹⁵⁰

McKnight and Block would suggest that neighborhoods have capacities to raise the game when it come to the care and nurture of children. St. Saviour’s history of care and nurture of children through Camp Artaban and other programs suggests that this is eminently possible in the neighborhood.

¹⁴⁷ Ibid.

¹⁴⁸ Ibid.

¹⁴⁹ Adam Carter’s article appears on the CBC News website. For reasons of confidentiality, I do not provide a full citation.

¹⁵⁰ Ibid.

7. Care

McKnight and Block argue that institutions can offer only service, but not care, “for care is the freely given commitment from the heart of one to another.”¹⁵¹ Neighbors are able to care, not only for children, but for elders, and the most vulnerable among us. “It is this care that is the most basic power of a community of citizens.”¹⁵²

No institution or government can accomplish what neighborhoods can. While I would want to maintain that good civil society institutions are needed, and play an important role in healthy neighborhoods, I agree that neighborhoods—what McKnight and Block call “abundant community”—have significant roles to play in health, safety, environment, economy, food, the raising of children and care, that can be fulfilled nowhere else.¹⁵³

I expect this project’s interventions to take advantage of the power of community within neighborhoods and cities to effect positive change. This project tests this hypothesis and contributes new information concerning the ways in which congregations can enhance the flourishing of those communities of which they are a part. These theories informed the PAR Leadership Team’s planning of interventions and provided a framework for understanding the processes and relationships at work when the data was analyzed.

¹⁵¹ Block and McKnight, *The Abundant Community*, 4.

¹⁵² Ibid.

¹⁵³ Ibid.

Social Capital

The concept of *social capital* is important for thinking about the resources needed for making positive change in a system such as a neighborhood. Robert Putnam describes social capital as connections between people, social networks, and the norms of reciprocity and trustworthiness that arise from these relationships.¹⁵⁴ Social capital involves the social relations between people that serve to enable members of society to work together to accomplish collective goals. In the words of James Coleman,

Like other forms of capital, social capital is productive, making possible the achievement of certain ends that would not be attainable in its absence. ... For example, a group whose members manifest trustworthiness and place extensive trust in one another will be able to accomplish much more than a comparable group lacking that trustworthiness and trust.¹⁵⁵

What provides social capital with its transforming capacity? The two crucial aspects appear to be trust and reciprocity. *Trust* facilitates cooperation. Yet not all trust is necessarily the same. *Thick* trust exists in communities where there is a high level of intensive, regular, and frequent contact between and among people. These sorts of communities often tend to be homogeneous in their make-up and are often geographically isolated. Most modern societies tend to generate thinner levels of trust. *Thin* trust is the result of weaker social ties; yet even such levels of trust serve to create social adhesiveness in larger, more complex social systems.¹⁵⁶ As Corwin Smidt points out,

Even ordinary life entails so many small risks that life would be impossible to handle without placing some trust in one's fellow citizens. ... Thus the Hobbesian

¹⁵⁴ Robert D. Putnam, *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community*, Kindle ed. (New York, NY: Simon & Schuster, 2000), loc. 150.

¹⁵⁵ James S. Coleman, *Foundations of Social Theory* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1990), 302-304; quoted in, Corwin E. Smidt, *Religion as Social Capital: Producing the Common Good* (Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2003), 4.

¹⁵⁶ Smidt, *Religion as Social Capital*, 5.

state of nature in which life is characterized as nasty, brutish, and short is transformed through social trust; it serves to create a social context in which life is more pleasant and less dangerous.¹⁵⁷

Reciprocity can be described as the basic sense that good deeds do not go unrewarded. While this is not a strict sense of “if you scratch my back, I’ll scratch yours,” it is the assumption that good deeds, though not necessarily rewarded in the short term, will be repaid at some future time, perhaps even by some person unrelated. If social capital is the currency of trust and reciprocity that allows communities to work together to achieve common goals, an understanding of this concept assists Christians seeking to engage with God in God’s mission in the neighborhood.

Bonding and Bridging Social Capital

Putnam distinguishes between different kinds of social capital. *Bonding* social capital brings people together with common traits and undergirds reciprocity and solidarity.¹⁵⁸ *Bridging* social capital provides linkages with other groups, external assets and facilitates the spread of information.¹⁵⁹ Both bonding and bridging social capital have their uses. Bonding social capital holds people together and creates tight circles of care. Putnam points out that a society that has *only* bonding social capital, however, “will look like Belfast or Bosnia—segregated into mutually hostile camps.”¹⁶⁰ Healthy neighborhoods, like any healthy community, require plenty of bridging social capital, not

¹⁵⁷ Ibid., 6.

¹⁵⁸ Putnam, *Bowling Alone*, loc. 240.

¹⁵⁹ Ibid., loc. 242.

¹⁶⁰ Robert D. Putnam, Lewis M. Feldstein, and Don Cohen, *Better Together: Restoring the American Community* (New York, NY: Simon & Schuster, 2003), 3.

merely the bonding type. The problem, as Putnam points out, is that bridging social capital is much harder to come by than bonding social capital. The very type of social capital that is essential for healthy societies and neighborhoods is the hardest to build.¹⁶¹

Democratizing Social Capital

It is widely recognized among researchers who look at social capital that churches regularly foster volunteerism.¹⁶² Religiously motivated volunteers are more likely than non-religious volunteers to appeal to some sense of the common good than to use more individualistic language to explain their behavior.¹⁶³ People are more likely to give money and time, even for so-called secular efforts, if they are church members.¹⁶⁴

Those who participate in the structures of religious communities also grow in civic skills. Sydney Verba, Kay Schlozman, and Henry Brady have shown that churches are superior to the two other main contributors to civic skills: the workplace and non-political civic organizations (such as, the Rotary Club).¹⁶⁵ John A. Coleman concludes

¹⁶¹ Ibid.

¹⁶² See for example, John A. Coleman, S.J., "Religious Social Capital: Its Nature, Social Location, and Limits," in *Religion as Social Capital: Producing the Common Good*, ed. Corwin E. Smidt (Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2003), 34; Robert Wuthnow, *God and Mammon in America* (Toronto, ON: Maxwell Macmillan Canada, 1994), 242.

¹⁶³ Robert Wuthnow, *Acts of Compassion: Caring for Others and Helping Ourselves* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1991), 325; quoted in, Coleman, "Religious Social Capital," 34.

¹⁶⁴ Robert Wuthnow, *Christianity and Civil Society: The Contemporary Debate*, The Rockwell Lecture Series (Valley Forge, PA: Trinity Press International, 1996), 87; quoted in, Coleman, "Religious Social Capital," 34.

¹⁶⁵ Sidney Verba, Kay Lehman Schlozman, and Henry E. Brady, *Voice and Equality: Civic Voluntarism in American Politics* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1995), 18-19; quoted in, Coleman, "Religious Social Capital," 35.

that churches, “especially local congregations are major sites for the generation of social capital.”

Social Capital and Churches: Are Churches the Same?

The question remains, however, are all churches the same in terms of their capacity to generate social capital? Coleman finds that they are not. The first way in which churches differ in their capacity to generate social capital has to do with their structures of religious authority. Coleman cites Putnam who, in his study of civic tradition in modern Italy, found consistently negative correlations between Catholic religiosity and civic engagement.¹⁶⁶ Coleman finds this difference in the generation of social capital is explained by differentiation between horizontal and vertical relations of religious authority. Putnam’s findings regarding Catholicism in Italy are related to that church’s intensely hierarchal structure, which tends to foster passive and subordinate relations vertically. Other forms of churches, especially many found in North America, tend to have much more horizontal authority structures. Coleman concludes that horizontal authority structures, generally, seem to produce social capital.¹⁶⁷

Coleman also finds that congregational size tends to be an indicator of social capital. Large congregations tend to become much more like passive audiences than are smaller communities. Large congregations that promote social capital seem to do so because they engage people in smaller groups. Forms of religiosity that tend to be

¹⁶⁶ Robert D. Putnam, Robert Leonardi, and Raffaella Nanetti, *Making Democracy Work: Civic Traditions in Modern Italy* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1993), 107; quoted in, Coleman, “Religious Social Capital,” 36.

¹⁶⁷ Coleman, “Religious Social Capital,” 36-37.

individualistic, and do not include small group components, also do not seem to generate much social capital.¹⁶⁸

St. Saviour's has a formal church structure that, on paper, looks very hierarchal. Very few parishioners, however, still come to parish life with an attitude of "father knows best."¹⁶⁹ Canadian Anglican parish structure is much flatter in practice. While clergy may be valued as experts within their fields of competency, we tend to strive towards a polity where all voices are welcomed and valued. St. Saviour's is small enough that it is a place where people are free to actively engage in meaningful ways. The evangelical influence at St. Saviour's may have tended to promote a spirituality that is more individualistic, however, that influence has always been tempered by the parish's catholic heritage. St. Saviour's polity and structure has left it well-suited to generate and invest social capital.

Do Churches Spend Their Social Capital?

Social capital speaks to a capacity more than a reality. In economics, capital represents accumulated wealth, and is often set aside rather than enjoyed immediately. There is this same potential with the social capital accumulated by congregations. Do they spend their social capital for the common good? Many religious organizations pay little attention to the social capital that they may have accumulated or do not know how to harness this capital in order to promote the common good. "As a result," writes Coleman, "much of the social capital of some congregations remains frozen within the

¹⁶⁸ Ibid., 37; see also, Robert Wuthnow, *Producing the Sacred: An Essay on Public Religion*, Public Expressions of Religion in America (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1994), 328-328.

¹⁶⁹ *Father Knows Best* was a radio and television comedy series during the period 1949 to 1960 that portrayed a middle class family life in a city named Springfield in the Midwest United States. I use the phrase to describe an attitude more prevalent during the same period when people in the culture tended to defer to authority. Anglican priests are sometimes referred to with the title, "Father."

local unit, or it becomes isolated in separate pockets of friendship cliques within the congregation.”¹⁷⁰ Religious traditions that see themselves essentially as a kind of sanctuary from the world do not often have a sense of a civic, public mission related to the common good. Some congregations may also fear that debates about the public issues of the day may divide congregations and run counter to the sense of fellowship that they are seeking to engender. Such fear may tend to put a chill on the congregation’s desire to invest social capital.

The degree to which a congregation might see itself as a sanctuary, or have a reticence towards civic engagement because of a fear of division, represents a variable that would need to be taken into account was taking place across multiple congregations.

Spending Social Capital

The answer Wuthnow gives to his question, “can religion revitalize civil society,” is “no.”¹⁷¹ He argues that this must be the answer as long as “religion is regarded only as beliefs and convictions that somehow operate independently of other institutions.”¹⁷² Wuthnow says that Christians must engage with the social architecture of their neighborhoods and cities in order to invest their social capital. He argues that the social capital of religious persons is often best exercised in their ordinary, everyday lives, as

¹⁷⁰ Coleman, “Religious Social Capital,” 38.

¹⁷¹ Robert Wuthnow, “Can Religion Revitalize Civil Society?: An Institutional Perspective,” *ibid.*, 209.

¹⁷² *Ibid.*

they work, use their skills, and remain attentive to the political process.¹⁷³ In this way, social capital is unleashed to make positive change and promote the common good.

I expect to find that congregations are, in a sense, reservoirs of social capital and that when this social capital is brought to bear for the good of the neighborhood, there will be positive change. This project tests that theory in the life of St. Saviour's Anglican Church. The theoretical lens of social capital provides language for how congregations may contribute to positive change, what they bring to the neighborhood, and what they might be able to accomplish.

Neighborhoods and the World

While the focus of this project is upon the *local* neighborhood, I want to be clear that a focus on the local does not lead one away from dealing with the larger issues faced by people on the wider scale, either regionally, nationally, or globally. The phrase, "think globally, act locally," is attributed to the early urban planner Patrick Geddes.¹⁷⁴ The phrase communicates the idea that global issues are sometimes best addressed by local action.

Many people who live in city of Wellington are unaware that Wellington is the largest inland port in Canada. I have been involved for some years with the Mission to Seafarers Southern Ontario, which is an organization that offers welcome, hospitality, advocacy, and practical assistance to the hundreds of international seafarers that arrive in this busy port throughout the year. During my association with the mission, I have often

¹⁷³ Ibid.

¹⁷⁴ This phrase is attributed to urban planner, Patrick Geddes, in David P. Barash and Charles Webel, *Peace and Conflict Studies* (London: Sage Publications, 2002). See Patrick Geddes, *Cities in Evolution* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1950).

been asked why these workers deserve our special attention. I have found that most people do not realize that ninety percent of almost every commodity that we have in our homes at some point traveled by ship.¹⁷⁵ Seafarers work very long hours, often in unsafe and less than desirable conditions, endure the threat and actual violence of piracy in many places around the world, receive very little pay, and sometimes abuse from their employers, all in service of the standard of life that we demand in our own communities. We like to purchase our goods, and we demand that they be offered at the lowest possible price. We rarely consider the unseen workers, such as seafarers, who are part of the economic system in which we participate.

The New Urbanism's emphasis on the local economy and local food is one way of addressing such injustices. The Mission to Seafarers provides another by reminding the people of Wellington about the forgotten and unseen workers that are part of our economy. The mission continues to insist that the least we can do is offer these workers a welcome when they arrive in our city, a friendly place to come off ship, and any practical assistance or emotional support that they may need. The mission puts a human face on our economic choices. The small, local, neighborly practices, with which they engage, are not insignificant ways of responding to the colonizing effects of the market economy in our daily lives.

I come to this research with the assumption that local action is, among others, a valid approach to important global issues. While this project does not directly test that

¹⁷⁵ See Rose George, *Ninety Percent of Everything: Inside Shipping, the Invisible Industry That Puts Clothes on Your Back, Gas in Your Car, and Food on Your Plate* (New York, NY: Metropolitan Books/ Henry Holt and Co., 2013).

assumption, I do hope to find that participants find meaning in their actions within the project from the connection that they may make between the local and the global.

Chapter Summary

In this chapter, I began by accepting a definition of faith as “appropriate and intentional participation in the redemptive activity of God.”¹⁷⁶ I also accepted a definition of spiritual formation as the “intentional communal process of growing in our relationship with God and being conformed to Christ through the power of the Holy Spirit, for the sake of the world.”¹⁷⁷

I proceeded by examining a number of theoretical aspects related to adult education, with a special focus on practical learning, and learning community. Critical social theory was introduced and added a perspective for thinking about learning as a communicative process. Transformational learning was considered as a model.

Critical social theory, and Simpson’s proposal for congregations to be civil society companions, provided insight into the subversive role that congregations can play in the face of the colonizing effects of the mega-systems of the market economy and political state. Simpson’s proposal speaks to a way of engaging with God in God’s mission in the world.

Finally, I explored a number of themes related to neighborhoods, including, the New Urbanism, the power of communities and neighborhoods, and social capital, as a way of rooting the theoretical discussion in the realities of how neighborhoods work.

¹⁷⁶ Dykstra, “What Is Faith?,” 53.

¹⁷⁷ Zscheile, “A Missional Theology of Spiritual Formation,” 7.

The theoretical foundations for this project are not yet completely in place. In chapter 4, I pick up a number of theological frames and biblical perspectives that will add to the conversation. At the end of chapter 4, I attempt to tie together the theoretical lenses of this chapter with the theological frames and biblical perspectives of that chapter.

Before bringing this chapter to a close, however, there are a number of important threads to highlight that already begin to weave together to inform this research and its processes of PAR, learning community, and engagement with practices of neighborliness as a way of joining with God in God's mission. These threads are (1) practice, (2) learning, (3) neighborliness, and (4) congregations.

Practice

Practice is a theme that has run through this chapter and which I will expand upon in the next. Practice is vital to this project since I have defined faith, spiritual formation, and engagement with God in God's mission, in terms of *participation* with God. Critical social theory helps us to understand such practice as communicative action. Practice is a primary mode of learning. The context for such practice is the neighborhood and the congregation. In this research project, we are asking people to participate and learn (growing in their life of faith) by engaging in practices of neighborliness. The specific practices focused upon in this project were selected by the PAR Leadership Team and are explained in greater detail in chapter 5, below.

Learning

The learning that we are working towards in this project is life-long learning that conforms us to the image of Christ for the sake of the world. Such learning is transformative and communicative. Communicative learning is necessarily learning in

community, learning that makes community, and learning for the sake of community. In this project the entire congregation, as it engages with God and neighbor in the neighborhood, becomes a learning community. Spiritual formation, growth in Christian discipleship, and learning the practices of the Christian faith are common ways of describing what I have defined here as essentially the same process.

Neighborliness

I have discussed the concept of *neighborliness* from the perspective of the New Urbanism and the power of community as described by McKnight and Block, Ammerman, and others. Neighborhoods are places with enormous potential to contribute towards the common good and fertile ground in civil society. I also pick up the theme of neighborliness in the next chapter.

Congregations

Finally, another thread running through this chapter has been the theme of congregations. In the discussion of *social capital*, I showed that congregations are generators, reservoirs, stewards, and investors of social capital in their neighborhoods. Congregations have tremendous potential as they participate with God in the neighborhood. I develop these themes further in the next chapter as I continue to lay out an orienting framework for my research by exploring *theological frames* and *biblical perspectives*.

CHAPTER FOUR

THEOLOGICAL FRAMES AND BIBLICAL PERSPECTIVES

Introduction to Theological Frames and Biblical Perspectives

This chapter continues to build an orienting framework for this thesis project. In the previous chapter, I reviewed a number of theoretical lenses. Here, I add several theological frames and biblical perspectives. I begin this discussion by outlining central ideas in the *Missional Church Conversation*. Related to this conversation, I examine five areas of discussion: (1) *the missio Dei*; (2) perichoresis; (3) the kingdom of God; (4) the neighborhood (parish); and (5) Christian practice.

The biblical perspectives I discuss come from a diverse set of texts drawn from the New Testament. Many of the same perspectives can be found throughout the Bible. I begin by looking at neighborliness in the Gospel of Luke, following Jesus and his disciples as they move through landscape and neighborhoods. I also look at texts that are illustrative of discipleship and the teaching methods of Jesus in Mark's Gospel. Finally, I look at texts from the Gospel of John that speak about discipleship as participation in the divine life.

Theological Frames

Theology can be defined as a discourse about God. To speak in *theological* terms is to include God in the conversation. Perhaps it will seem odd to readers who come from a conventional modernist social-science background, that in this thesis, I would set out to

deliberately include God. The hermeneutical turn of postmodernity, however, provides the opportunity to bring all manner of perspectives into conversation.¹ From a Christian perspective, an understanding of God informs not only questions of meaning and purpose, but also the shape of life in the world. Questions regarding the relationship between institutions, such as the congregation, and individuals with their neighborhoods, are *theological* questions as much as they are social ones. The theological frame, therefore, brings additional insight for this thesis project.

Darrel L. Guder spoke of an emerging “missiological consensus” in *The Missional Church*.² This consensus has served as the foundation for the concept of the *missional church* and has guided the *Missional Church Conversation*. This conversation developed largely out of the work of the Gospel and Our Culture Network in North America in the late 1980s, which was itself a continuation of the Gospel and Culture discussion in the United Kingdom, initiated by the publication of Lesslie Newbigin’s, *The Other Side of 1984: Questions for the Churches*.³ When Newbigin returned to the United Kingdom after decades of work as a missionary bishop in India, he saw with fresh eyes the challenge of the church in its changed context in Western society. The days of Christendom were over and had been replaced by a society that was clearly post-

¹ For a more in-depth discussion of this opportunity in light of the hermeneutical turn, see Craig Van Gelder, “Method in Light of Scripture and in Relation to Hermeneutics,” *Journal of Religious Leadership* 3, no. 1 and 2, Spring 2004 and Fall 2004 (2004); Van Gelder, “The Hermeneutics of Leading in Mission.” See also Milbank, *Theology and Social Theory*.

² Guder, *Missional Church*.

³ Lesslie Newbigin, *The Other Side of 1984: Questions for the Churches*, The Risk Book Series 18 (Geneva: World Council of Churches, 1983).

Christian and, in some ways, anti-Christian.⁴ Van Gelder summarizes the cluster of ideas that came forward to shape the Missional Church Conversation, with the following six points, which continue to give meaning to the word “missional”:

1. *Church and mission/missions.* Missiology and ecclesiology must be connected to overcome the historical dichotomy between the church’s mission and missions.
2. *Trinitarian missiology.* Missiology must begin with an understanding of the Holy Trinity, because this triune God is a *missionary* and *sending* God.
3. *Missio Dei.* God is the primary agent of mission. Rather than a church-centric view of mission, we require a theocentric view.
4. *Kingdom of God.* God’s good news for the world is Jesus’ message of the reign of God, the presence of which must be understood as both *already* and *not yet*.
5. *The church’s missionary nature.* God is a missionary God who sends the church into the world to represent the reign of God, hence, the church is missionary in its very nature.
6. *Missional hermeneutic.* Scripture must be read with a missionary hermeneutic in order to understand the intent of God’s mission in the world.⁵

This research project aspires to be part of the Missional Church Conversation and as such, each of these theological emphases speak to the matter of how people might grow, individually and corporately, in their engagement in God’s mission.

⁴ Guder, *Missional Church*, 3.

⁵ Van Gelder and Zscheile, *The Missional Church in Perspective*, 6-7.

The first three theological frames discussed below arise immediately from the central items of consensus in the Missional Church Conversation. I define and discuss the *missio Dei*, perichoresis, and *kingdom of God*. Following the discussion of these three frames, I examine two others discussed in the missional literature. The first has to do with a locus of God's mission: the *neighborhood*. The second relates to how people share in God's mission through specific *Christian practice*.

The *Missio Dei*

David Bosch traces the history of mission in his seminal work, *Transforming Mission: Paradigm Shifts in Theology of Mission*.⁶ Bosch points to Karl Barth as one of the first theologians of the twentieth century to articulate that mission is first an activity of God and that mission has to do with the very nature of God.⁷ Bosch writes,

The classic doctrine on the *missio Dei* as God the Father sending the Son, and God the Father and God the Son sending the Spirit was expanded to include yet another 'movement': Father, Son, and Holy Spirit sending the church into the world.⁸

The *missio Dei* recalls that God has a mission in the world, and that God—not the church—is the primary agent of this mission.⁹ An understanding of the *missio Dei* demands that the church remember that God is already at work in the world and its

⁶ Bosch, *Transforming Mission*.

⁷ Ibid., 399.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Tim Dearborn expressed this idea very well in a statement quoted in the influential *Mission-Shaped Church* report of the General Synod of the Church of England. "It is not the Church of God that has a mission in the world, but the God of mission who has a Church in the world." Quoted in The General Synod of the Church of England, *Mission-Shaped Church*; Tim Dearborn, *Beyond Duty: A Passion for Christ, a Heart for Mission* (Monrovia, CA: MARC, 1997).

neighborhoods and that this mission unfolds in a way that is in keeping with God's own nature.

God's Mission is *God's* Mission

The grand biblical narrative of the scriptures of the Old and New Testaments tells a story that begins with creation and ends with new creation. The story reveals that God has a redemptive purpose for the world, a desire to see the creation restored and healed. This is the story of God's mission. Christians assert that this story has a universal claim as the story into which all of human history belongs and that all local stories belong within this grand narrative that reminds us that God is at work in the world to make all things new.¹⁰ The Bible describes God as refusing to give up on God's creation, determined to restore, redeem, and make new according to God's design. The Bible itself is an artifact of this mission, telling the story of God's revelation to—and relationship with—human beings over time. There are stories of God taking the initiative to restore broken relationships, time after time. The biblical accounts were often recorded by people who were themselves faced with the challenging task of living in response to God's redemptive action in the world.¹¹

Lesslie Newbigin had a tremendous influence in reminding the church that the mission of God is primarily that: *God's* mission. Newbigin observes, "Even Jesus himself speaks of his words and works as not his own but those of the Father. His teaching is the

¹⁰ Christopher J. H. Wright, *The Mission of God: Unlocking the Bible's Grand Narrative* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2006), 47.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 48.

teaching of the Father, and his mighty works are the work of the Father.”¹² The works of Jesus’ disciples are, in the same way, also understood to be the work of God. The Holy Spirit gives them power and the Holy Spirit bears witness through them (see for example, Acts 1:8; Romans 8:16; 1 Corinthians 2:4-13). The participation of the disciples of Jesus in God’s mission is not only a matter of practices such as teaching and preaching, but also of learning. Newbigin continues, “Jesus tells the disciples that there is much for them yet to learn and he promises them that the Spirit who will convict the world will also lead them into the truth in its fullness (John 16:12-15).”¹³

The concept of the *missio Dei* has import not only for the content of mission, but also for the means. With respect to the question of content—the *what* of mission—the *missio Dei* answers that God’s mission is about God’s purposes of redemption, wholeness, and justice. The question of means cannot be separated from the question of content; the *how* relates to the *what*. I return to this matter of content and means—the *what* and the *how* of the *missio Dei* in my discussion of the kingdom of God, below.

God’s Mission in God’s World

The concept of the *missio Dei* insists that God is at work in the world. God works in the midst of life and uses all manner of persons and institutions in order to accomplish God’s mission. God is able to use all manner of things to accomplish the good God intends for the world. As Bosch argues, “The grace of God and the power of the Spirit move the world towards the common good and we encounter a more humane world. This

¹² Newbigin, *The Gospel in a Pluralist Society*, 117.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 118.

is not a purely human product; the real author of this humanized history is the Holy Spirit.”¹⁴

God is the primary agent of the *missio Dei*; nevertheless, the church has a role to play in this divine economy. God sends the church to all human communities in all of their diversity and particularity. The church is itself a mighty work of God and an eschatological sign of the in-breaking of the kingdom. The church is not so much an agent of the *missio Dei* as a locus of mission. Newbigin describes the church as a “visible embodiment” of a community that lives out of God’s story of the “self-emptying of God in the ministry, life, death, and resurrection of Jesus.”¹⁵ The church’s liturgy and life point to “the day when Jesus shall come again, when his hidden rule will become manifest and all things will be seen as they truly are.”

That is why we repeat at each celebration of the Supper the words which encapsulate the whole mystery of faith: “Christ has died. Christ is risen: Christ shall come again.”¹⁶

Bosch agrees that the church’s liturgy and life in the world is a participation in the *missio Dei*, representing God in the world, and holding up Jesus “in a ceaseless celebration of the Feast of the Epiphany.”¹⁷

Newbigin has famously argued that the only possibility that the story of God at work in the world could be received as credible is a congregation of people who are a

¹⁴ Bosch, *Transforming Mission*, 401. See also Pope Paul VI, “Gaudium et Spes,” sec. 26; *ibid.*

¹⁵ Newbigin, *The Gospel in a Pluralist Society*, 120.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 120-121.

¹⁷ Bosch, *Transforming Mission*, 400.

“hermeneutic of the gospel,” men and women who believe and live this good news.¹⁸ We see the influence of Newbigin’s call for the congregation as a hermeneutic of the gospel in Hauerwas and Willimon’s *Resident Aliens*, where they insist that the church is called to be a

visible church, a place, clearly visible to the world, in which people are faithful to their promises, love their enemies, tell the truth, honor the poor, suffer for righteousness, and thereby testify to the amazing community-creating power of God. ... This church knows that its most credible form of witness (and the most “effective” thing it can do for the world) is the actual creation of a living, breathing, visible community of faith.¹⁹

God’s Mission, God’s Way: *Imitatio Trinitatis*

The concept of the *missio Dei* also calls those who will join in God’s mission to do so in a way that imitates God and participates in God’s nature. Miroslav Volf’s essay, “Being as God Is,” in *God’s Life as Trinity*, edited by Volf and Michael Welker, advances this idea.²⁰

Volf begins by observing that God’s relationship to Christian discipleship can be imagined in terms of a racecourse, in which God sets up the course, gives human beings rules in which to run the race, and commands them to run. God waits at the finish line to evaluate how each runner performed. In such a scenario, Volf observes, the nature of God would be more or less irrelevant to the character of Christian discipleship. “Not who God is but what God demands is what would matter; or rather, who God is would matter only

¹⁸ Newbigin, *The Gospel in a Pluralist Society*, 227.

¹⁹ Hauerwas and Willimon, *Resident Aliens*, loc 679-689.

²⁰ See Miroslav Volf, “Being as God Is,” in *God’s Life in Trinity*, ed. Miroslav Volf and Michael Welker (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2006).

to the extent that it informed what God demands. Whether God is triune or not would be of no direct consequence.”²¹

Volf argues that orthodox Christian theology has never accepted such a deistic view of God, what it means to participate in God’s mission, or live life as God intends. The nature of God’s being—not just the nature of God’s commands—is integral to understanding the Christian life. As Volf points out, we baptize Christians *into* the triune name, attesting to the fact that we do not merely respond to God’s call, but enter into communion with the triune God.²²

Perichoresis and Participation in God

Perichoresis describes the relationship among the three persons of the Holy Trinity. The term comes from the Greek, περιχώρησις, meaning, *rotation*. The Church Fathers were the first to use the noun, *perichoresis*, drawing on Gregory of Nazianzus’ use of the verb “perichoreo.”²³ Gregory was describing the relationship between the divine and human natures of Christ.²⁴ John of Damascus, extended the meaning of *perichoresis* to include the interpenetration of the three persons of the Trinity. The term has gained a new currency with the work of Jürgen Moltmann, who developed this concept in *The Trinity and the Kingdom: The Doctrine of God*.²⁵ Orthodox theologian

²¹ Ibid., 3.

²² Ibid.

²³ Paul S. Fiddes, *Participating in God: A Pastoral Doctrine of the Trinity* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2001), 73.

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ Jürgen Moltmann, *The Trinity and the Kingdom: The Doctrine of God* (San Francisco, CA: Harper & Row, 1981); G. L. Prestige, *God in Patristic Thought* (London: S.P.C.K., 1956), 291-294.

Jean Zizioulas and his understanding of the being of God in communion has also been very influential.²⁶ Perichoresis speaks to the relationality of God and the mutuality and integrity of relationships within the Holy Trinity. Perichoresis describes the reciprocal dynamism between the divine persons, the ways in which they share each other's nature and one another's life.

The love of God embraces the creation, and as such, invites persons into loving relationship with God. Theologians such as Hans Urs von Balthasar, have argued that since human beings are made in the image of God, the divine attribute of perichoresis is reflected in a reciprocal dynamism between God and God's creatures, especially in the sacraments.²⁷

Henri Nouwen, the Jesuit spiritual writer, has written an insightful meditation on Andrei Rublev's icon of the Holy Trinity.²⁸ It portrays the three angels who visit Abram and Sarah by the oaks of Mamre in Genesis 18. The three angels in the icon are traditionally understood as a representation of the Holy Trinity, just as the angels in the Genesis account have traditionally been understood as a theophany. Nouwen describes the experience of praying before this icon as "a gentle invitation to participate in the

²⁶ Jean Zizioulas, *Being as Communion: Studies in Personhood and the Church* (Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1985); Fredrickson, "The Missional Congregation in Context," loc. 524-526.

²⁷ Stephan Ackermann, "The Church as Person," *Communion: International Catholic Review* Summer (2002).

²⁸ Henri J. M. Nouwen, *Behold the Beauty of the Lord: Praying with Icons*, Revised, Kindle ed. (Notre Dame, IN: Ave Maria Press, 2007), loc. 98; Andrei Rublev, *Trinity*, 15th c. Tretyakov Gallery. In the tradition of iconography, icons are understood to be *written*, rather than *painted*.

intimate conversation that is taking place among the three divine angels and to join them around the table.”²⁹ Nouwen continues,

The movement from the Father toward the Son and the movement of both Son and Spirit toward the Father become a movement in which the one who prays is lifted up and held secure.³⁰

Nouwen explains that this icon not only shows the relationship between Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, but also reveals the vocation of the church and all Christians. He points to the small rectangular opening at the front of the table/altar, beneath the chalice, to which the Spirit points. This opening at the front of the altar is located where we, looking at the icon, are invited to join in the divine circle. The small rectangular space represents the reliquary in many medieval altars. The icon calls us to place our lives where the martyrs and saints have gone before, on the narrow road of following Christ. While the four corners of the reliquary remind us that all people are invited from north, south, east, and west, its position in the open space in front of the altar signifies that joining God in fellowship involves participation in the divine sacrifice by offering our lives as a witness to the love of God.³¹ All of humanity is invited to join in the perichoretic dance of the holy Trinity within the *missio Dei*.

Scott Fredrickson argues that missional congregations understand the importance of relationship in the being of God, “and the congregation can use its own relationship with context as a way to participate in God’s mission for the sake of the world.”³²

²⁹ Nouwen, *Behold the Beauty of the Lord*, loc. 112-114.

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ Ibid., loc. 148-151.

³² Fredrickson, “The Missional Congregation in Context,” loc. 526-527.

Fredrickson explains that Zizioulas uses the word *person* in a way that is different from our usual conception. For Zizioulas, a person is someone who exists in relationship, and is, therefore, fundamentally someone different from what we might call an individual or personality.³³ Such a person can only be known in these relationships, but these relationships do not blend them into something other than who they are. The persons maintain their uniqueness in relationship.

The mystery of being a person lies in the fact that here otherness and communion are not in contradiction but coincide. Truth as communion does not lead to the dissolving of the diversity of beings into one vast ocean of being, but to the affirmation of otherness in and through love.³⁴

Fredrickson's insight, expanding perichoresis to missional context, is that the missional congregation and its context exist as *persons*, albeit in a special sense. They have their own identity and ways of living and being as communities. However, Fredrickson observes, "the missional congregation *is* the context in the same way that the context *includes* the missional congregation."³⁵ The mutual interpenetration of the persons of the Holy Trinity helps us to understand what God is doing in the world in the incarnation: God redeems context through the life, death, resurrection, and ascension of the Son. God comes to earth and earth is lifted to heaven. This relates to the missional congregation's position in context as the congregation participates with God in incarnation. The congregation participates in context "while not being subsumed wholly

³³ Ibid., loc 529-530.

³⁴ Zizioulas, *Being as Communion*; quoted in Fredrickson, "The Missional Congregation in Context," loc. 532-534.

³⁵ Fredrickson, "The Missional Congregation in Context," loc. 548.

beneath it, in order to show the context deeper reality,” namely, its redemption in the life, death, resurrection, and ascension of Jesus.³⁶

Volf describes humanity’s participation in the perichoretic divine life as *imitatio Trinitatis* and describes its content under four rubrics: (1) creativity, (2) generosity, (3) reconciliation, and (4) identity.³⁷ Volf finds it sufficient to develop only the rubric of *generosity* in his essay. He notes that if we are to imitate God in generosity, we must give freely, as God freely gives. To the extent that we are able to give freely, we live as creatures redeemed by God, indwelled by God, and living our identity in God.³⁸

Volf argues that the generosity of God seeks *the good of another*.³⁹ God lacks nothing and so God does not need to give in order to receive anything. God gives without self-seeking and only for the benefit of others. When we participate in giving for the good of the other, there can be a kind of mutuality of giving and receiving. When all give and receive at the same time, all can rejoice with one another. Gifts become a kind of sacrament of love, a feast of delight: “delight in things given, delight in acts of giving and receiving, delight in persons giving and receiving, and delight in the community enacted by the whole process.”⁴⁰

³⁶ Ibid., loc. 564-565. I expand on these ideas while dealing with biblical texts below, in particular see my comments on John 14:23-29, John 17:20-26, and John 14:8-17.

³⁷ Volf, “Being as God Is,” 7.

³⁸ Ibid., 7-8.

³⁹ Ibid., 9.

⁴⁰ Ibid.

Volf also argues that the generosity of God promotes *equality*.⁴¹ The gifts of love and glory flow freely among the persons of the Godhead. Volf explains,

Each loves and glorifies the other two, and each receives love and glory from them. One does not give first, with the result that the others would be indebted, but all give in the eternally moving circle of exchanges. Because they give in this way, they have all things in common except that which distinguishes them from each other. Their eternal bliss is the delight of this loving gift exchange.⁴²

There is no equality between God and God's creatures. When God gives, however, it is so that the relation between God and humans is brought to a greater depth. God shares God's own divine life. Christ enters our poverty, indwells us, and makes his life to be our own. Our gifts to one another can aim at establishing equality even in the face of drastic inequality. Volf argues that the goal is not uniformity as much as an equality of satisfied needs. The apostle Paul speaks to giving to those in need as a participation in providing food from heaven so that "The one who had much did not have too much, and the one who had little did not have too little" (2 Corinthians 8:15).⁴³

Finally, Volf insists that God's generosity promotes *communion*. God is a perfect communion of love. The divine persons of the Trinity exchange gifts, and in turning to humanity, God gives because God delights in us and because we are needy. That delighting in—or love of humanity—is part of God's relationship with human beings. The name of that relationship is communion. We were created for communion with God

⁴¹ Ibid., 10-11.

⁴² Ibid., 11.

⁴³ Ibid., 10-11.

and with one another. Part of the *missio Dei* is the creation of a new community in one body: his body, the church.⁴⁴

In summary, *perichoresis* is a way of saying that the divine persons of the Holy Trinity share their life with one another. A key aspect of the *missio Dei* is that the triune God seeks to share that life with the world. I employed Fredrickson's insight regarding perichoresis and the relationship between missional congregations and their contexts. Volf's concept of *imitatio Trinitatis*, likewise, describes the way that human beings are called to imitate and be bearers of this divine life in the world.

The Kingdom of God and the Common Good

What is the direction or goal towards which God is working if, in the *missio Dei*, God is at work in the world? The theological concepts of the *reign of God* and the *common good* are other important concepts for this discussion.

Kingdom of God

The *kingdom (or reign) of God* is closely linked with the *missio Dei*. God created the world, and is redeeming the world in the life, death, resurrection, and ascension of Jesus Christ. Jesus himself announced the good news of this redemption saying, "The *kingdom of God* has come near" (Mark 1:15, emphasis added).⁴⁵ The *missio Dei* continues to bring restoration to the world, to bring forth the reign of God, and to bring all things back into right relationship with their creator. This redemption is accomplished

⁴⁴ Ibid., 11-12.

⁴⁵ This *good news* is also referred to by Christians as *the gospel*.

in Christ through the ongoing work of the Holy Spirit, with an eschatological future that includes the restoration of all things.

I have said above that the concept of the *missio Dei* speaks to the content and means of God's mission in the world: the *what* and the *how*. The concept of the kingdom of God speaks to the content of the *missio Dei*, or to be more precise, its end or goal. The *missio Dei* is primarily concerned with ushering in the kingdom of God on earth.

The Gospel of Matthew asserts that the Servant Song of Isaiah 42:1-4 is an anticipation of the ministry of Jesus (Matthew 12:18-21).⁴⁶

Here is my servant, whom I uphold, my chosen, in whom my soul delights; I have put my spirit upon him; he will bring forth *justice* to the nations. He will not cry or lift up his voice, or make it heard in the street; a bruised reed he will not break, and a dimly burning wick he will not quench; he will faithfully bring forth *justice*. He will not grow faint or be crushed until he has established *justice* in the earth; and the coastlands wait for his teaching. (Isaiah 42:1-4, emphasis added)

This passage suggests that *justice* is a key element of the kingdom of God. The word “justice” appears in the passage no fewer than three times. If we inquire into the content of the *missio Dei* and of the *kingdom of God*, one answer must certainly refer to justice.⁴⁷ The kingdoms and empires with which the world is all too familiar—the colonizing mega-systems of the political state and the market economy—tend towards injustice. We know such empires for their coercive powers and oppressive regimes which tend to benefit the privileged few at the expense of the subjugated many. The kingdom of God, however, “scatters the proud in the thoughts of their hearts ... (brings) down the powerful

⁴⁶ I am indebted to Syd Heilema for his exposition of Isaiah 42:1-4. Syd Heilema presented this unpublished material at a conference in Wellington. For reasons of confidentiality I do not provide a full citation.

⁴⁷ See also, Isaiah 5:16: “But the Lord of hosts is exalted by justice, and the Holy God shows himself holy by righteousness.”

from their thrones, and (lifts) up the lowly” (Luke 1:51b-52). The kingdom of God is “good news to the poor, ... (brings) recovery of sight to the blind, ... lets the oppressed go free, ... (and) proclaims the year of the Lord’s favor” (Luke 4:18b-19).

The kingdom of God speaks not only to the content of the *missio Dei*, but also to the means. The reign of God comes in a manner that is unique to the nature of the kingdom of God. The Servant Song of Isaiah 42:1-4 is again instructive. The Servant will “not cry or lift up his voice, or make it heard in the street” (v.2). The kingdom of God generally works quietly without drawing attention to itself. The kingdom of God is often present in small and unobtrusive ways and may even remain, for a while, unnoticed.

Isaiah says of the Servant, “a bruised reed he will not break, and a dimly burning wick he will not quench” (Isaiah 42:3). The kingdom of God takes special care for the most vulnerable. It is concerned for the poor, the sick, and the oppressed. Unlike the powers of this world—the mega-systems we have identified—whose machinations abuse the vulnerable, the kingdom of God is established without collateral damage.

Finally, the prophecy of Isaiah promises that the Servant “will faithfully bring forth justice. He will not grow faint or be crushed until he has established justice in the earth” (Isaiah 42:1-4a). Although this kingdom may begin small and may remain unnoticed for a while, the kingdom *will* be established. The Servant will not tire or be defeated until the reign of God is established in the earth.

I have discussed the content and means of the kingdom of God: the *what* and *how*. It is also important to discuss something of the timing (*when*). Theologians speak about an inaugurated eschatology, where, on the one hand, the kingdom of God is already

present and inaugurated in the life, death, resurrection, and ascension of Jesus.⁴⁸ God's redemptive presence is at work in the world. On the other hand, the fullness of the reign of God has not yet arrived. All things have not yet been redeemed, healed, and made new. The kingdom of God is both *already* and *not yet*. We refer to fact as the mystery of the kingdom of God.⁴⁹

If the goal of faith formation is to create disciples of Jesus who individually and corporately participate with God in God's redemptive activity in the world, we must pay close attention to the kingdom of God. Missional congregations will be sensitive to the issues of injustice and participate in emancipatory communicative action. Congregations will seek to participate in the *missio Dei* by embodying the good news in a way that avoids the *collateral damage* too often inflicted by a culture's shallow solutions characterized by the *quick fix*, or *silver bullet*.

The reign of God has also provided a reference point for the work of the PAR Leadership Team as they planned interventions that sought to cooperate with the *missio Dei*, participate in God's redemptive activity, and point towards the reign of God. The reign of God provides a similar reference point in the discussion of findings below in chapter 6.

⁴⁸ See, for example, Benjamin L. Gladd, *Making All Things New: Inaugurated Eschatology for the Life of the Church*, Kindle ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2016), loc. 96-100.

⁴⁹ Craig Van Gelder, *The Essence of the Church: A Community Created by the Spirit*, Kindle ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2000), loc. 1267. Van Gelder suggests that we see especially, Matthew 13, Mark 4, and Luke 8:13).

The Common Good

If it is the role of the local congregation to be a *hermeneutic of the gospel* and if this gospel (or good news) has to do with the *reign* or *kingdom of God*, then the life of the congregation in the world—corporately and as families and individuals—ought to point towards a vision of that reality. This vision for the flourishing of human beings and their communities, as well as the health and wholeness of the world, is what we call “the common good.” The common good is one of the ways in which the reign of God is made manifest in the world.

Walter Brueggemann begins his book, *Journey to the Common Good*, by arguing that, “The great crisis among us is the crisis of ‘the common good,’ the sense of community solidarity that binds all in a common destiny—haves and have-nots, the rich and the poor.” He continues,

We face a crisis about the common good because there are powerful forces at work among us to resist the common good, to violate community solidarity, and to deny a common destiny. Mature people, at their best, are people who are committed to the common good that reaches beyond private interest, transcends sectarian commitments, and offers human solidarity.⁵⁰

Brueggemann argues that the *neighborhood* is key to the common good, but observes that a competing vision tends to hold sway in our communities. He suggests that the fear of scarcity drives our “entitled consumerism” and denial of neighborly responsibility.⁵¹ Brueggemann’s alternative to our sad condition is the practice of neighborhood, which he describes as a “covenantal commitment to the common good.”⁵² He claims, “The journey

⁵⁰ Brueggemann, *Journey to the Common Good*, 1.

⁵¹ Ibid., 29.

⁵² Ibid., 30, 31. Emphasis his.

from *scarcity* through *abundance* to *neighborhood* is the essential journey that ... all humans must make in order to be maximally human.”⁵³ Brueggemann also argues that this journey has “peculiarly” (not exclusively) been entrusted to the church and her allies.⁵⁴ Brueggemann’s sense of neighborhood is close to Peter Block and Scott McKnight’s definition of “abundant community.”⁵⁵

Miroslav Volf is simple and direct about the vocation of the church and its members in *A Public Faith: How Followers of Christ Should Serve the Common Good*. “The challenge facing Christians is ultimately very simple: love God and neighbor rightly.”⁵⁶ While Volf states this simply, he acknowledges that the challenge is also complex and difficult. Christians must be able to speak and act meaningfully about how God is related to human flourishing with regard to many concrete issues we are facing today:

... from poverty to environmental degradation, from bioethical issues to international relations, from sex to governing. Without showing how a Christian understanding of God and a vision of human flourishing apply to concrete issues, these notions will remain vague and inert, with little impact on the way we actually live. ⁵⁷

Volf argues that perhaps the most difficult challenge for Christians is to *actually believe* that God is fundamental to human flourishing. Volf is suggesting that such belief

⁵³ Ibid. Emphasis his.

⁵⁴ Ibid., 31-36.

⁵⁵ Block and McKnight, *The Abundant Community*, 2-3.

⁵⁶ Volf, *A Public Faith*, 73.

⁵⁷ Ibid.

must be more than theoretical, but a driving force that moves Christians to concrete actions in the world. Volf asks if we can really believe and act as though

the presence and activity of the God of love, who can make us love our neighbors as ourselves, is our hope and the hope of the world—that this God is the secret of our flourishing as persons, cultures, and interdependent inhabitants of a single globe.⁵⁸

This love of God and neighbor is what drives engagement for the sake of the common good.

What should such engagement look like, however? Volf suggests, “Christian identity in a culture is always a complex and flexible network of small and large refusals, divergences, subversions, and more or less radical and encompassing alternative proposals and enactments, surrounded by the acceptance of many cultural givens.”⁵⁹ The Christian presence does not seek to transform the culture wholly, nor does it accommodate to the culture, instead it engages the culture. It is the engagement of the whole person in all aspects of the culture in fostering human flourishing and serving the common good; it involves not only the private sphere, but also the public. “It concerns social relations—people’s rights and obligations—in business, politics, entertainment, communication, and more.

Christian engagement touches all dimensions of a culture and yet doesn’t aim to transform any of them totally. Instead, in all of them it also seeks and finds goods to be preserved and strengthened. It is total in scope but limited in extent—limited not just by resistance of individuals, social systems, and whole societies to change, but also limited by the finitude and fragility of humanity as well as by its inalienable goodness.⁶⁰

⁵⁸ Ibid., 76.

⁵⁹ Ibid., 93.

⁶⁰ Ibid., 98.

One important aspect of the common good is that it is held *in common*. The philosopher Charles Taylor writes, “The bond (of belonging in a society) resembles that of friendship, as Aristotle saw. The citizen is attached to the laws as the repository of his own and other’s dignity.”⁶¹ Picking up on Taylor’s insight, Rowan Williams argues that this is to say the work of politics is not done “without the recognition that my good or dignity has no substance, no life, without someone else’s good, or dignity involved.”⁶² This is more, however, than a simple self-serving contract whereby one secures one’s own position by securing the position of another. “It is an acknowledgement that someone else’s welfare is actually *constitutive* of my own,” that our relations with each other are part of each other’s flourishing.⁶³ Ultimately, the ground that we hold in common is not found in mutual interest or such features as race, class, national, or ethnic identity, or even opinion. Our common ground is in our identity as beloved children of God. We discover this identity in each other through practices such as neighborliness, through conversations and encounters.

Like the reign of God, the common good provided a standard for the work of the PAR Leadership Team as it planned interventions. Interventions were deliberately designed to contribute to the common good. Likewise, the *common good* provides a way to discuss the efficacy of these interventions.

⁶¹ Charles Taylor, *Philosophical Arguments* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1995), 191.

⁶² Rowan Williams, *Lost Icons: Reflections on Cultural Bereavement* (Harrisburg, PA: Morehouse Pub., 2000), *Lost icons*, 77.

⁶³ Ibid. This relates to Thomas Aquinas’ definition of love, to which I return below. For Aquinas, *agape* love is to “will the good of another.” See Thomas Aquinas, “Summa Theologica,” 1493, <http://www.newadvent.org/summa/> (accessed June 5, 2016), I-II, 26, 4.

Summary: The Kingdom of God and the Common Good

Jesus came proclaiming the good news of the kingdom of God in his own mission and ministry (Mark 1:14-15). The kingdom of God was not only the *content* of his message; it was the *means* and *end* (*telos*) of his ongoing mission. As people respond in faith to God's redemptive activity in the world, they come to participate with God in this mission. Loving God and loving our neighbor is expressed in seeking the common good and human flourishing. The neighborhood is a primary location for seeking the common good and the reign of God.

The Neighborhood (The Parish)

I now want to explore some theological frames for thinking about the neighborhood itself. These include (1) the *missio Dei in vicinia*; (2) a theology of place; (3) contextual theology; and, (4) the Anglican parish tradition.

Missio Dei in Vicinia

The missio Dei in vicinia is concept that I have been developing in my own papers in this program of study and is a way of speaking about the *missio Dei* as it is expressed in a particular context.⁶⁴ This concept remembers that God is particularly interested in the flourishing of persons and communities and that this is uniquely expressed in their local contexts.⁶⁵ The story of the *missio Dei* has unfolded in particular places such as Bethlehem, Nazareth, Jerusalem, Rome, St. Paul, and Wellington. While the mission of

⁶⁴ I have developed this primarily in, "Missio Dei in Vicinia: The Mission of God in the Neighborhood: An Ecclesiology for the Local Parish," (Unpublished essay, Luther Seminary, St Paul, MN), <http://www.djanderson.com/?p=46> (accessed May 7, 2015).

⁶⁵ This scandalous particularity is discussed, for example, in Newbigin, *The Gospel in a Pluralist Society*, 72.

God has universal significance, it is played out in the lives of real people, families, and the neighborhoods where people live.

I emphasize the role of the local parish church or congregation as a particular locus of mission. In the same way that every neighborhood has its own culture and context, each local congregation has its own unique role in the *missio Dei in vicinia*. As suggested above, the uniqueness of the local congregation as a *person* corresponds *perichoretically* to its local neighborhood. The local neighborhood is a particular expression within the life of the city, region, and world, and likewise, the local congregation is a particular expression of the church catholic. It is these local expressions that tend to intersect most directly with people's everyday lives. If congregations are, as Newbigin suggests, a *hermeneutic of the gospel*, they will make sense of what the good news of God means in the local neighborhood.

One of the areas of parish life engaged in this PAR serves as an illustration. In the summer of 2015, Canada was immersed in a federal election. The death of Alan Kurdy, a young Syrian child whose body washed ashore on a beach in Turkey, caused the plight of Syrian refugees to become a major election issue. On one side were people demanding that Canada do more to address the global humanitarian crisis by dramatically increasing the number of refugees Canada would accept. On the other side were those resistant to immigration and the welcome of refugees. The politics of fear became a narrative in the election.

In St. Saviour's neighborhood, there was a palpable sense of frustration that immediate action could not be taken to address the refugee issue. It seemed it would take too long to sort out the matter in the federal election and then wait for government to act.

Many people in the neighborhood felt frustrated, helpless, and were looking for an opportunity to make a difference. St. Saviour's was in a position to coordinate local action immediately. The diocese to which St. Saviour's belongs had already announced a plan to sponsor fifty refugees and an agreement with the federal government to make this happen. When St. Saviour's presented its plan in the neighborhood, people in congregation and in the neighborhood responded immediately and generously with gifts of money and pledges of volunteer support. Within the matter of a few weeks the parish was able to welcome a family of four Syrian refugees. The congregation and neighborhood worked together for the common good and, as a result, gave expression to the gospel.

Missio Dei in vicinia is a way of speaking about the *missio Dei* as it is expressed in a particular context. For the people of St. Saviour's, this means that their participation in the *missio Dei* takes place in a particular neighborhood within a particular city. The people of St. Saviour's have their homes, often work, and live their lives within this particular neighborhood. Some live in families; others are single. Each person in the congregation has networks of relationships both within the church and without, people with whom they work, go to school with, neighbors, and other friends. They are related to others with whom they do business or upon whom they rely for any number of services that are part of living together in a neighborhood.

In my preaching ministry, I am often reminding the people of St. Saviour's that the primary location in which they live out their Christian vocation is their everyday, ordinary lives. By locating vocation here, we have come to understand that Christian

discipleship and missional engagement takes place within our encounters with our family, coworkers, classmates, and neighbors that we encounter every day.

A strong case had been made for the idea of “exile” as a metaphor for the position of the church in North America since the death of Christendom.⁶⁶ While the particular context for mission is *our neighborhood*, or what we might call *our home*, there remains a sense in which we are people whom God *sends* into this context. Any adequate understanding of the church must recognize that mission is definitive of what the church is, because the church is both a product of, and participant in, God’s mission.⁶⁷ Lesslie Newbigin says that to be baptized is to be baptized into God’s mission.⁶⁸ Even though we are *resident* in a particular place and time, so that a particular neighborhood is our home, we are sent into this context in the sense that we continue to have a mission and alternative vision for life, even when we participate fully in the life of our community. We truly are “resident aliens” as we participate in the *missio Dei in vicinia*.⁶⁹

The *missio Dei in vicinia* provided an essential framework for the PAR Leadership Team in understanding what the interventions within this project were designed to accomplish. This concept was vitally important in both the design of interventions and their analysis.

⁶⁶ See for example, Hauerwas and Willimon, *Resident Aliens*.

⁶⁷ Zscheile, “A Missional Theology of Spiritual Formation,” 6.

⁶⁸ Newbigin, *The Gospel in a Pluralist Society*, 17.

⁶⁹ See Stanley Hauerwas and William H. Willimon, *Resident Aliens: Life in the Christian Colony* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1989).

Theology of Place

Much of literature that I have discussed thus far has suggested that the Christian faith is embodied in practices. It is equally important to note that such faith is embodied in places. In this section, I draw primarily on the work of John Inge's, *A Christian Theology of Place*, and Craig Bartholomew's, *Where Mortals Dwell: A Christian View of Place Today*. I begin with Inge's observation that place has been displaced in Western thought and practice. I then turn briefly to resources available for the renewal of the place of place in the biblical, sacramental, and other theological traditions of the church. Finally, I argue for a new appreciation of place and discuss the role of the church in such a program.

The Displacement of Place

Inge shows that the Western tradition has tended to play down the importance of place based on roots in Greek philosophy which bred a conviction "that our local embodied relations are to be transcended and left behind—that place is ultimately of no import."⁷⁰ Place was vitally important for Augustine, but we find a dualism in his, *The City of God*, which draws a sharp distinction between the city of God and the city of man.⁷¹ As the Western tradition developed so did the dualism that viewed place as something to rise above. The displacement of place did not reach its fullness until the modern period, however. Throughout the premodern era, most people remained attached to place. With the arrival of the modern period, subtle changes were taking place. Michel

⁷⁰ Inge, *A Christian Theology of Place*, 5.

⁷¹ Augustine and Henry Bettenson, *Concerning the City of God against the Pagans*, Kindle ed. (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1972).

de Certeau, for example, traces the movement from *itinerary* to *map*.⁷² The itineraries of the premodern period told a form of spiritual story. Such stories might, for example, illustrate of the route of a pilgrimage and give instructions on where to pray, where to spend the night, and so on.⁷³ A map, by contrast, puts all places on a grid where they are rationalized as homogeneous and identical units.⁷⁴ Inge shows that Enlightenment thought eventually brought the West to a situation where place was eclipsed by space and time.⁷⁵

Brian Walsh and Steven Bouma-Prediger reflect on the lives of two persons at the beginning of their book, *Beyond Homelessness: Christian Faith in a Culture of Displacement*.⁷⁶ Kenny is a homeless person who lives under a bridge in a large North American city. Kenneth lives in a luxury condominium in the same city. The authors argue that both Kenny and Kenneth are homeless; they have both been displaced.

Kenneth's social, economic, and legal place in the world not only requires that he be geographically "displaced" (with no real home) and that he have a willingness to leave any place in order to facilitate his upwardly mobile climb; it also requires him to have the willingness to sacrifice any place—his own or someone else's—for the sake of power and wealth.⁷⁷

⁷² Michel de Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1984), 120; quoted in Inge, *A Christian Theology of Place*, 7.

⁷³ William T. Cavanaugh, "The World in a Wafer: A Geography of the Eucharist as Resistance to Globalization," *Modern Theology* 15, no. 2 (1999): 183; Inge, *A Christian Theology of Place*, 7.

⁷⁴ Cavanaugh, "The World in a Wafer," 183; Inge, *A Christian Theology of Place*, 7.

⁷⁵ Inge, *A Christian Theology of Place*, 7-9.

⁷⁶ Bouma-Prediger and Walsh, *Beyond Homelessness*.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, loc. 178-180.

Wendell Berry describes the places where many of us live as “a rootless and placeless monoculture of commercial expectations and product.”⁷⁸ Kenneth’s life is described occupying exactly such a location.

He sinks no roots down in the cities where he lives, knows nothing of the social history of any of the neighborhoods, is unaware of the unique ecosystem that exists within a few blocks of his condo, and drinks coffee at the same chain of specialty coffee shops in every city to which his travels take him. Kenneth is placeless, and his business depends on his willingness to exploit any place and render any people placeless if it serves the interests of power and wealth.⁷⁹

It is no surprise that many postmoderns acknowledge the sense of *dislocation* in Western society. Elie Weisel has characterized the twentieth century as the “age of the expatriate, the refugee, the stateless—and the wanderer.”⁸⁰ Placelessness has had a dehumanizing effect in Western society. The loss of place is the cost of the global market economy which prizes mobility, centralization, and rationalization. The expressways that destroyed neighborhoods during periods of unchecked urban sprawl in the twentieth century, and were so criticized by the likes of Jane Jacobs, are examples of the consequences of this shift from place to space and time.

A number of theologians suggest that the time is right for a reconsideration of the importance of place. Inge rightly identifies a postmodern longing to reconnect with place, exemplified in the New Urbanism. Place was largely neglected in the field of Christian theology during the modern period. There is now the beginning, however, of a renewed interest in place. A number of rich resources are available for this work. We can learn

⁷⁸ Wendell Berry, *Sex, Economy, Freedom & Community: Eight Essays* (New York, NY: Pantheon Books, 1993), 151.

⁷⁹ Bouma-Prediger and Walsh, *Beyond Homelessness*, loc. 183-184.

⁸⁰ Elie Wiesel, “The Longing for Home,” in *The Longing for Home*, ed. Leroy S. Rouner 17 (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1996), 19.

from aboriginal people whose sense of place remains an important part of their tradition. The Christian biblical and sacramental traditions also provide a rich resource.

Place in the Scriptures

Walter Brueggemann's influential book, *The Land: Place as Gift, Promise and Challenge in Biblical Faith*, is a helpful resource in understanding the place of place in the Old Testament.⁸¹ He encourages us to see that place is a "primary category of faith" and that land is central, if not *the central theme* of biblical faith.⁸² Brueggemann suggests that the narrative of the Old Testament is centered on land. Land takes on importance because it is a particular place that has been promised. He argues that the Bible addresses the fundamental human problem of homelessness.⁸³ Brueggemann is clear that human flourishing, as promised and described in the Old Testament, is found in belonging to place in which the historicity of a community has been experienced and to which one refers for identity, orientation, and empowerment.⁸⁴ Land is more than real estate. It has memories and hopes; it is a storied place.

The experience of exile is one of the crises presented in the Old Testament. Exile and homelessness remain a desperate reality for many people in the world today. There are more refugees in the world in 2016 than ever before in history.⁸⁵ War, famine, and

⁸¹ Brueggemann, *The Land*.

⁸² Ibid., loc 312.

⁸³ Ibid., loc 290.

⁸⁴ Ibid., loc. 336.

⁸⁵ Adrian Edwards, "Global Forced Displacement Hits Record High," Geneva: United Nations High Commission for Refugees, 2016, <http://www.unhcr.org/uk/news/latest/2016/6/5763b65a4/global-forced-displacement-hits-record-high.html> (accessed July 1, 2016).

persecution displace people around the world. Most of the world's refugees come from the world's poorest countries and are also hosted by the world's poorest countries. In the biblical narrative, God's faithfulness was experienced even in the midst of exile. The experience of exile was horrendous, yet even in the experience of displacement, people found a way to make a place. Inge notes, for example, that during exile, synagogues were developed as gathering places.⁸⁶ Biblical faith holds out the promise of restoration and enjoyment of a sense of place.

Place also has a special place in the New Testament narratives. W.D. Davies has written an important study of this in *The Gospel and the Land*.⁸⁷ The land and its places are more than a backdrop for the New Testament narrative. Place has a major role in the drama. In Matthew, for example, Jerusalem is the inevitable messianic center (Matthew 21:10; 16:21). Davies describes it as the "city of the great king, the setting of the great eschatological drama."⁸⁸ The sin and brokenness of that city is also very real in Matthew; it is the place of the rejection of Jesus. Jerusalem also plays an important role in Luke-Acts. John's Gospel, however, seems less concerned with Jerusalem, and argues instead that the temple, as the central place where God is to be worshiped is to be replaced, or superseded by Christ. Yet, even if the temple is to be replaced, there is no suggestion of a denigration of place in John. On the contrary, God moves into the neighborhood in the incarnation. Christ is a real-life, flesh-and-blood person: a located, incarnated being. Place takes on a new meaning in the New Testament as the place where Christ dwells.

⁸⁶ Inge, *A Christian Theology of Place*, 43-44.

⁸⁷ Davies, *The Gospel and the Land*.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, 242.

“The word became flesh and we beheld his glory” (John 1:14). God becomes knowable to human beings as God enters into the particular and local.

The biblical tradition values place. Place is a primary category of faith in the Old Testament. In the New Testament, it is the incarnation that promotes the vital significance of place in God’s dealings with humanity. Christ redeems all places in his incarnation and continuing mission in the world, and invites us to value place as well. One way we value place is by understanding it sacramentally.⁸⁹

Place in the Sacramental Tradition

According to one popular definition, sacraments are thought of as *outward and visible signs of inward and spiritual grace*.⁹⁰ The Protestant tradition speaks of two dominical sacraments (i.e., instituted by Christ): Baptism and Holy Communion. The Council of Trent, in the sixteenth century, responding to the reformers, affirmed seven sacraments that were entrusted to the church by Christ, some directly and some indirectly. Whatever the number of official sacraments, there has been a move, especially in the twentieth and early twenty-first centuries, to acknowledge that more than these two, or seven, partake in a sacramental nature.⁹¹ The document, *Gaudium et Spes*, asserts that “the church is the ‘universal sacrament of salvation,’ simultaneously manifesting and

⁸⁹ Inge, *A Christian Theology of Place*, 58.

⁹⁰ The General Synod of the Anglican Church of Canada, “The Catechism,” in *The Book of Common Prayer and Administration of the Sacraments and Other Rites and Ceremonies of the Church; Together with the Psalter as Is Appointed to Be Said or Sung in Churches and the Form and Manner of Ordaining and Consecrating of Bishops, Priests and Deacons* (Toronto, ON: Anglican Book Centre, 1962), 550.

⁹¹ There is evidence of a more liberal view of sacramentality going back to the Patristic period. See, for example, “Didache: The Teaching of the Twelve Apostles,” in *Early Christian Fathers*, ed. Cyril C. Richardson (Philadelphia, PA: The Westminster Press). See also Inge, *A Christian Theology of Place*, 58-59.

exercising the mystery of God's love for man."⁹² A former Archbishop of Canterbury, William Temple, also speaks of this sacramentality beyond the sacraments:

The real presence in the Eucharist is a fact, but it is not unique. The Word of God is everywhere present and active. ... The bread and wine have symbolic meaning before they are consecrated—they are the gift of God rendered serviceable by the labour of man; and that is what we “offer” at the “offertory.” It is this that the Lord takes to make his special vehicle of His *universal presence*. No words can exaggerate the reverence due to this divinely appointed means of grace; *but it is easy to confine our reverence when we ought to extend it.*⁹³

The Anglican tradition has long seen the connection between the sacramental in the church's sacraments and the sacramental in everyday life. Having been fed with the body and blood of Christ, we return to everyday life to find Christ in the people and places of our ordinary life. Rowan Williams makes the point that the world is not naturally sacramental. The world is *made* to be sacramental.⁹⁴ Places are infused with sacramental nature.

A friend recently related the experience of finding himself on Aldersgate Street, not far from St. Paul's Cathedral. This site was famously described in the diaries of John Wesley. On the date of May 24, 1738, Wesley wrote:

In the evening, I went very unwillingly to a society in Aldersgate Street, where one was reading Luther's preface to the Epistle to the Romans. About quarter before nine, while he was describing the change which God works in the hearts through faith in Christ, I felt my heart strangely warmed.⁹⁵

⁹² Pope Paul VI, “Gaudium et Spes,” I.45.

⁹³ Temple, *Nature, Man and God*; quoted in Inge, *A Christian Theology of Place*, 62. Emphasis is Inge's.

⁹⁴ Williams, *On Christian Theology*, 201.

⁹⁵ John Wesley, Richard P. Heitzenrater, and W. Reginald Ward, *Journal and Diaries*, The Works of John Wesley (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 2003), 51; quoted in Inge, *A Christian Theology of Place*.

This event happened for Wesley at a very particular place and nowhere else. My friend, coming across this site by chance, remembered this story and with it the inspiring story of the life of John Wesley and the legacy of Methodism. There was a sacramentality to this place, not only for Wesley, who recalled in his journal what God had done there, but for my friend who had this experience remembering this story in that place. The sacramentality of that place touched me, far away, as my friend shared his experience. The circle widens as my readers have also now been drawn into this story. These widening circles illustrate that the sacramentality of place is related to the stories connected with them.

Inge concludes, “God, people, and place cannot be separated.”⁹⁶ The place of the sacramental happening is important and intrinsic to it. The sacramental story of a place is written by God in relationship and communicative action. Sacramental encounters occur in particular places. These encounters are built into the stories of such places for Christian communities, individuals, and neighborhoods, and by these means places become designated as special or holy. These special, holy places become associated with holy people in whom something of the story of God has been revealed. The existence of these holy, sacramental places reminds us that all time and places belong to God. There is no place that is mere real estate.

⁹⁶ Inge, *A Christian Theology of Place*, 60.

Place, the New Urbanism, and Community of Virtue

Bartholomew recognizes that the New Urbanism is in many ways, not that very *new*.⁹⁷ Indeed, this movement is also known as *traditional neighborhood design*. The tradition that New Urbanism itself refers to is to be found in the early twentieth century in America, where cities were typically made up of compact, mixed-use neighborhoods. This changed with the advent of the automobile and the urban sprawl that resulted from new-found mobility. Bartholomew draws on the work of Philip Bess, the Catholic professor of architecture who works from a Thomistic perspective.⁹⁸ Bess engages positively with New Urbanism and writes, “There is a sacred order to which we are all accountable and relative to which we discover our own good, but also a rightful ‘autonomy of earthly affairs.’”⁹⁹ In the tradition of Thomas Aquinas’ and Aristotle’s virtue ethics, Bess affirms the city, with all its neighborhoods, as the ultimate human community.

Bess is a practitioner of architecture. City and neighborhood planners are practitioners of their various professions. Citizens are, likewise, *practitioners* of citizenship. I speak more about Christian practice below; however, I note here with Bartholomew, that the practice of a certain moral craft is essential to neighborliness. While Bess supports New Urbanism’s move to engage broadly across society—by working with public official, planners, traffic engineers, bankers, developers, who are responsible for much new building—he offers an important critique and caution. Bess

⁹⁷ Bartholomew, *Where Mortals Dwell*, 260.

⁹⁸ I discuss the Thomistic view of neighbor-love and the common good below.

⁹⁹ Philip Bess, *Till We Have Built Jerusalem: Architecture, Urbanism, and the Sacred*, Religion and Contemporary Culture Series (Wilmington, DE: ISI Books, 2006), xv.

points out that more than action on the built environment is needed.¹⁰⁰ “The healthy neighborhood requires a *virtuous community*.”¹⁰¹ Bess stresses that such communities are not *built* overnight. They require the slow, careful nurture of important moral virtues that promote the common good.

Bess notes that North America has few resources for this work.¹⁰² Clearly, cities require the development of a moral vision, an alternative to the vision supplied by the market economy (capitalism and consumerism) or the political state (the politics of fear). The church, *the missio Dei in vicinia*, and her partners in the city, are present for the very purpose of working together communicatively to nurture the communal virtues required for healthy community.¹⁰³

Summary: Theology of Place

In this section, I have shown how the importance of place has been displaced in Western thought and practice. This has had very negative effects in human society in general, and in the life of cities in particular. I have reviewed significant resources in the Christian biblical and theological traditions for an appreciation of the importance of place. I argued that cities need more than a built environment to become neighborhoods that will promote human flourishing. A moral vision and framework of neighbor-love,

¹⁰⁰ Ibid., 54.

¹⁰¹ Bartholomew, *Where Mortals Dwell*, 262. Emphasis added. I hear echoes of Newbigin’s *hermeneutic of the gospel*, MacIntyre’s *community of practice*, and Hauerwas’ *community of character*.

¹⁰² Bess, *Till We Have Built Jerusalem*, 60.

¹⁰³ Bartholomew, *Where Mortals Dwell*, 265.

abundant community, and the common good are needed. Christian congregations as communities of practice have an important potential role to play in their neighborhoods.

This line of argument supports the rationale for this thesis project creating a learning community around practices of neighborliness in seeking to empower the congregation of St. Saviour's corporately and individually to engage in God's mission in the neighborhood. It offers insight for how God works in places and how a theology of place can inform engagement and practice.

Contextual Theology

We cannot talk about a theology of place—or any theology for that matter—without taking into account the fact that all theology is contextual, which is to say, that theologies are shaped by places, people, and the environment in which they are articulated. Steven Bevans', *Models of Contextual Theology*, is a key work in this area.¹⁰⁴

Bevans recognizes that contextual theology takes four things into account:

- (1) the spirit and message of the gospel; (2) the tradition of the Christian people; (3) the culture of a particular nation or region; and (4) social change in that culture, due to technological advances on the one hand and struggles for justice and liberation on the other.¹⁰⁵

The *models* of contextual theology that Bevans outlines apply different emphases and approaches to the four considerations above: (1) the *anthropological* model, which stresses listening to the culture; (2) the *translation* model, which stresses the message of the gospel and preservation of the church's tradition; (3) the *praxis* model, which focuses

¹⁰⁴ Stephen B. Bevans, *Models of Contextual Theology*, Faith and Cultures Series, Revised ed. (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2002).

¹⁰⁵ Stephen B. Bevans, "Models of Contextual Theology," *Missiology* 13, no. 2 (1985): 186.

on the phenomena of social change and the struggle for justice; (4) the *synthetic* model, which seeks to synthesize the first three models; (5) the *semiotic* model, which attempts to listen to the culture by means of semiotic cultural analysis; and (6) the *transcendental* model, “a meta-model which focuses not on theological content, but on subjective authenticity within theological activity”¹⁰⁶

It is important to note with Bevans that models are just that: they are *models* of reality. They are means of describing and understanding realities that are more complex.¹⁰⁷ Contextualization is, indeed, a complex undertaking. Life at the crossroads of scripture, tradition, culture, and social change can be extremely complex. The models presented by Bevans are constructions intended to assist us in thinking through and living among these complexities. It is not that the models are to be thought of as distinct options for moving forward, although they may be that in part; they are most useful as ways of thinking about what we do when we engage in the contextualization of theology.

An example of this at work is illustrative. One part of the interventions designed by the PAR Leadership Team for this project involved a partnership between the congregation of St. Saviour’s and local musicians and their audiences. One of the activities undertaken in the congregation was the gathering of people to think theologically about this work. From the beginning the synthetic mode of contextual theology seemed to have much to offer. It allowed the community to listen to its own tradition, to hear what the tradition might say to our neighborhood, while also listening

¹⁰⁶ Ibid.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid., 187.

deeply to the culture of the neighborhood and for what God was doing in terms of social change and justice.

The musical arts themselves provided one of the languages for the conversation. The Christian biblical and theological tradition provided another. The experiences of parishioners and interactions with musicians and audience members came into play. Amid all of this, we also attended to the needs of persons in the neighborhood who are at risk for social isolation and began to design elements within the concert project in such a way as to address these needs. We did this in a way that honored and brought together the arts, the Christian tradition, and emancipatory social action, all the while promoting the common good and abundant community. The contextual theology done by participants may be best described by the *synthetic* (also called the *dialectical*) model, but a number of perspectives were explored as we asked the question about what God might be doing (and want to do) in the neighborhood.

Van Gelder argues that the narrative of the Book of Acts tells the story of how “the gospel continued to cross boundaries and become *contextualized* within new cultural settings ... under the Spirit’s leading, and often in spite of the church’s reluctance.”¹⁰⁸ As the church seeks to participate with God in the *missio Dei in vicinia*, it is “always *forming*, even as it also seeks to be *reforming*.”¹⁰⁹ Van Gelder notes a three-fold hermeneutic at work, providing shape to the content of the Book of Acts: (1) the

¹⁰⁸ Craig Van Gelder, *The Missional Church in Context: Helping Congregations Develop Contextual Ministry*, Kindle ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Pub. Co.), loc. 343-344. Emphasis added.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid., loc. 345. Emphasis his.

spreading of the gospel message; (2) the growth of the church; and (3) the influence of the gospel on the growing church within various cultural contexts.¹¹⁰

The Book of Acts, then, tells a story that is repeated as the Spirit continues to cause the gospel to cross cultural boundaries. Contextual theology reminds us that talk about God always occurs within and is influenced by a context. In the communicative process, the complex negotiation between the gospel itself, the Christian tradition, the local culture, and social change is worth our attention.

The learning community that was formed in this project was engaged in this complex work, asking the question about what God was doing in the neighborhood. The work of contextual theology is the *raison d'être* of the missional congregation.

The Anglican Parish Tradition

I came to this project expecting that I would find a great deal of literature concerning the Anglican parish tradition. I found, however, that not a great deal has been written on the subject, and what has been written remains relatively obscure. The popular history of the Anglican Church has largely been written as the history of the English Reformation and the process of colonization—church growth by empire. The English Reformation, with its various settlements, took particular shape in *The Book of Common Prayer* (BCP). As an episcopal church, the history of Anglicanism has also often been told as the history of bishops and dioceses.

While the official histories of the Anglican Church have told the stories of princes, bishops, missionaries, colonies, and dioceses, the real history of Anglicanism,

¹¹⁰ Ibid., loc. 346-347.

the practices of faith of ordinary people, and of parish life, has largely been ignored. While local parish histories exist, many of these tend to tell the stories of clergy.¹¹¹ One of the ways in which the *parish* life of everyday, ordinary persons is becoming known is through the scholarly work of persons unearthing and studying the personal diaries of people of the time.¹¹² This is exciting and important work.

Early influences upon the Anglican parish tradition are traced to the English Reformation and the actions of Henry VIII in the closing of monasteries and causing the monastic tradition to move to the parish. The BCP simplified the Divine Office for parish life, so that Matins and Evensong set the rhythm of daily worship. To this day, the BCP requires each cleric to say the Divine Office “unless prevented by sickness or other urgent cause.”¹¹³ It is understood that not every parishioner may have the freedom to participate in the Office by attending service in the church proper. For that reason, the parish clergy are enjoined by the BCP to cause the church bell to be rung at the time of the Office, “in order that the people *may* come to take part in the Service, *or at least* may lift up their hearts to God in the midst of their occupations.”¹¹⁴ This may seem to be quaint anachronism today. I would argue, however, that this remains an important influence in the Anglican parish tradition. While the monastic tradition was partly an

¹¹¹ An exception and good example of a *parish* history is Fred Habermehl, *St. Mark's, Persons of Hopeful Piety: Anglican Church, Niagara on the Lake, 1790-2000*, edited by Donald L. Combe and St. Mark's Anglican Church Archives Committee (Niagara-on-the-Lake, ON: Archives Committee of St. Mark's, 2000).

¹¹² I consider my friend, Dr. Emily Hill, to be a hero for undertaking this important work. Her doctoral thesis was Emily S. Hill, “Women, Work, and God: The Incarnational Politics and Autobiographical Praxis of Victorian Labouring Women” (Unpublished thesis, McMaster University, 2015).

¹¹³ The General Synod of the Anglican Church of Canada, *The Book of Common Prayer*, lvi.

¹¹⁴ Ibid. Emphasis added.

escape from the place of ordinary life, the Anglican parish tradition attempted to bring daily rhythms of prayer and worship together with the rhythms of everyday, ordinary life. The work of prayer and worship were no longer just for the cloistered, but for the whole people of God.

The BCP understands the parish as the local neighborhood, not merely as an ecclesiastical structure. While the BCP tradition assumes a Christendom context, it understands the parish neighborhood as a locus of God's mission in the world. The following prayer is typical.

Most merciful Father, we beseech thee to send down thy heavenly blessing upon thy Church in this Parish, that all its members may dwell together in unity and brotherly love. Keep far from us all self-will and discord. Endue thy Ministers with righteousness, and enable them faithfully to dispense thy holy Word and Sacraments, to bring again the outcasts, and to seek the lost. Grant that we may so receive their ministrations, and use thy means of grace, that in all our words and deeds we may seek thy glory and the advancement of thy kingdom; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.¹¹⁵

The typical Anglican in North America identifies their local parish church as their primary unit of belonging in the church. This reality is sometimes met with some ambivalence on the part of bishops and other diocesan leaders who would prefer to imagine the diocese as the primary unit. Part of this ambivalence comes from a desire to maintain that, in Anglican polity and practice, the bishop is the chief and senior pastor, not only of the diocese, but of each parish church. Another, related reason for this ambivalence is a concern about congregationalism.

I sometimes feel that assertions of congregationalism by parishes, on one hand, and concerns regarding congregationalism by diocesan leaders, on the other, are in fact

¹¹⁵ Ibid., 736.

two sides of the same coin. This coin is essentially a problem minted in modernity. On one hand, the reality of creeping congregationalism is fueled by a sense of member's democratic rights, and based upon modern ideas of personal autonomy and freedom. The fear of congregationalism at the diocesan level sometimes seems reactionary.

John Wesley, an Anglican priest, once famously said, "The *world* is my parish."¹¹⁶ Sometimes, however, the church has been guilty of forgetting that the *parish* is our parish. Paul Sparks, Tim Soerens, and Dwight J. Friesen explore the idea of the parish in their book, *The New Parish: How Neighborhood Churches are Transforming Mission, Discipleship and Community*.¹¹⁷ These authors suggest a renewal of the concept of *parish*. They acknowledge that the word "parish" may come with some baggage.

While the word has positive images, there are also memories of manipulation, hierarchies, patriarchal structures, and abuse.¹¹⁸ Their concept of the *new parish* allows for the neighborhood to have a voice that contributes to the church and a sense that the Spirit is working through the many relationships in the neighborhood to teach "what love and faithfulness look like in that particular context."¹¹⁹ The authors' concept of the new parish is diverse and includes the many expressions of the church living in the same neighborhood. By using the word "new," the authors do not mean to suggest they are presenting something they have invented. They are merely giving witness to a movement

¹¹⁶ John Wesley, *The Journal of John Wesley*, Online ed. (Chicago, IL: Moody Press, 1951), <http://www.ccel.org/ccel/wesley/journal.i.html>, Online book. Emphasis added. Wesley's view also has much to commend it.

¹¹⁷ Sparks, Soerens, and Friesen, *The New Parish*.

¹¹⁸ Ibid., 31.

¹¹⁹ Ibid.

they have witnessed where the Spirit is at work in neighborhoods to give new shape to the church, moving it beyond insularity to neighborliness.

Some of the strengths of the Anglican tradition are its beliefs, rites, rituals, sacraments, and other theological distinctives. Within the Anglican tradition's *big tent*, many have found a home. In the age of rapid change in which we live, the tradition's gifts of longevity and its formative tradition are increasingly important. The capacity to know our own story as distinct from all of the competing stories that run counter to the common good, human flourishing, and the reign of God, is crucial and potentially prophetic. Most Anglican congregations knew how to do this very well in their neighborhoods in the era before the automobile, when people were still rooted in a particular place. With the advent of the automobile and urban sprawl, people began to live above place. Many Anglican congregations, along with other "heritage churches," have only a vague recollection of what it meant to have their identity rooted in a neighborhood.¹²⁰

St. Saviour's inheritance of the Anglican parish tradition provided the PAR Leadership Team with a way of thinking about the relationship of the parish church and the neighborhood. The concept of the *new parish* gave the team inspiration for shaping and analyzing interventions for this project.

Summary: The Neighborhood (The Parish)

Each of these concepts—the *missio Dei in vicinia*, a theology of place, contextuality, and the Anglican parish tradition—provide ways of thinking about the

¹²⁰ Ibid., 79.

local congregation in the context of its neighborhood. As such, they informed the PAR Leadership Team's planning of interventions, particularly as they were shaped towards the uniqueness of St. Saviour's context, and the context of individuals in the neighborhoods where they live. These concepts and principles subsequently provide a way of analyzing the fit and appropriateness of the interventions in the discussion of findings.

Christian Practice

There has been a vigorous discussion regarding Christian practice in recent years. The roots of this conversation can be traced to Thomas Aquinas, who himself drew heavily from Aristotle.¹²¹ Alasdair MacIntyre has been influential in this conversation in recent times and his work has been foundational for others, such as Stanley Hauerwas and John Milbank.¹²²

When MacIntyre gave the Gifford Lectures he developed an extensive account of the craft-like nature of morality. Modernity had argued that the moral good is available to any intelligent person no matter what their point of view. MacIntyre argues, however, that in order to be a good moral person one has to be *made* into a particular kind of person who can acquire knowledge about what is good or true. Transformation is

¹²¹ Aristotle and Roger Crisp, *Nicomachean Ethics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000).

¹²² Stanley Hauerwas, *A Community of Character: Toward a Constructive Christian Social Ethic* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1981); Hauerwas and Willimon, *Resident Aliens*; MacIntyre, *After Virtue*; Milbank, *Theology and Social Theory*.

required if one is going to be moral.¹²³ MacIntyre asserts, “To share in the rationality of a craft requires sharing in the contingencies of its history, understanding its story as one’s own, finding a place for oneself as a character in the enacted drama narrative which is that story thus far.”¹²⁴

MacIntyre likens the transformation required to that of becoming an apprentice to the master of a craft. In this apprenticeship, we seek to acquire the intelligence and virtues necessary to become skilled practitioners. MacIntyre explains that one must learn a number of situational skills, such as, recognizing the distinction between what in a particular situation is really good to do, and what only *seems* good to do, but is not in fact so. Apprentices learn first from their teachers, and then in their continuing development, how to identify their mistakes by applying “the acknowledged standard, the standard recognized to be the best available so far in the history of that particular craft.”¹²⁵

Apprentices must learn the difference between what is *good* and what is *best* for them within their craft. That is, the apprentice must understand the excellence that is available to them at their particular level of training and ability, and also the *telos* towards which they strive.¹²⁶ MacIntyre argues that habits of judgement that are rooted in inadequate and corrupt desires, taste, and practices must be transformed through initiation

¹²³ Alasdair C. MacIntyre, *Three Rival Versions of Moral Enquiry: Encyclopaedia, Genealogy, and Tradition* (Gifford Lectures Delivered in the University of Edinburgh in 1988 (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1990), 63.

¹²⁴ Ibid., 65; quoted in Bartholomew, *Where Mortals Dwell*, 261.

¹²⁵ MacIntyre, *Three Rival Versions of Moral Enquiry*, 61-62.

¹²⁶ Ibid.

into the craft. Those who engage in the craft must come to terms with, and make themselves adequate to the standards of the craft.¹²⁷

Hauerwas picks up this argument in *After Christendom: How the Church Is to Behave If Freedom, Justice, and a Christian Nation Are Bad Ideas*.¹²⁸

The Enlightenment tried to show that the mind was immediately appropriate to a factual world without training. In contrast, our minds are adequate to that which we come to know *only by being formed by the skills and practices of a tradition*. Such training, of course, not only transforms us but transforms what it is that we think we need to know. That is why there can be no knowledge without appropriate authority.¹²⁹

The master is a master because he or she has learned how to advance the craft and how to direct others to do the same, and knows how the tradition can move towards the telos of the craft.¹³⁰ Hauerwas concludes that this “reminds us that Christianity is not beliefs about God plus behavior.”¹³¹ What makes us Christians is not what we believe, but that we have been called to be disciples of Jesus. “To become a disciple is not a matter of a new or changed self-understanding, but rather to become a part of a different community with a different set of practices.”¹³²

I believe that it is important for me to offer the reminder here that such attention to practices within a community of disciples also implies that those practices be rooted in a particular place. The word, *inhabit*, means to dwell in a place. It shares a Latin root

¹²⁷ Ibid.

¹²⁸ Stanley Hauerwas, *After Christendom?: How the Church Is to Behave If Freedom, Justice, and a Christian Nation Are Bad Ideas* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1999), 105. Emphasis added.

¹²⁹ Ibid., 106.

¹³⁰ Ibid., 107.

¹³¹ Ibid.

(*habi*), with the word, *habit*, which can refer to an acquired behavior, or customary practice. When we inhabit a particular neighborhood, it is not simply a matter of geography, but a bringing to bear in a particular place on an entire vision of life and human flourishing.

Practicing the Faith

The Christian practices discussion has been furthered by a number of other authors whose work is important for this project. These include Dorothy Bass, Craig R. Dykstra, Miroslav Volf, David Fitch, Paul Miller, and Benjamin T. Connor.¹³²

Dorothy Bass edited the important book, entitled, *Practicing Our Faith: A Way of Life for a Searching People*.¹³³ Bass has collaborated with Craig Dykstra, whose definition of faith I have already discussed and accepted. When Dykstra served as senior vice-president for religion of the Lily Endowment, he was in a position to support the practices conversation, which was centered around Bass at Valparaiso University, and known as the Valparaiso Project on the Education and Formation of People in Faith. A glance at the project's website reveals numerous valuable resources for parish use.¹³⁴

¹³² Bass, *Practicing Our Faith*; Conner, *Practicing Witness*; Craig R. Dykstra, *Growing in the Life of Faith: Education and Christian Practices* (Louisville, KY: Geneva Press, 1999); David Fitch, *Faithful Presence*, (St. Catharines, ON: Unpublished, 2014), audio recording of lecture given at the ReChurch Conference based on the forthcoming book; Volf and Bass, *Practicing Theology*; Miller, "A Theory of Christian Practices."

¹³³ Bass, *Practicing Our Faith*.

¹³⁴ These resources include *Way to Live: Christian Practices for Teens*, which we have used with youth at St. Saviour's. See <http://www.practiceourfaith.org/>.

Dykstra and Bass coauthored the first chapter in *Practicing Our Faith*, where the foundations that have shaped the Christian practices conversation are laid out.¹³⁵ Dykstra and Bass define Christian practices as “things Christian people do together over time in response to and in the light of God’s active presence for the life of the world in Christ Jesus.”¹³⁶ These authors explain that “practices address fundamental needs and conditions through concrete human acts.”¹³⁷ Practices have value, not only in accomplishing their ends, but in participation, even when it seems that the intended ends were not achieved. “They are doing it not just because it works (though they hope it does) but because it is good. The observable outcome is, in a sense, beyond them; a different satisfaction comes just from taking part.”¹³⁸ When we enter a Christian practice we enter into a community with standards of excellence.¹³⁹ Christian practices also help us to see that our daily lives participate in the *missio Dei*.¹⁴⁰

Bass and Dykstra ground the many practices of the faith in the central practice of worship. Worship is a way of speaking about all the practices in the sense that they each can be described in terms of a response to God. Worship is a way of rehearsing the reign of God through ritual. The authors point out that worship is also a practice in the same

¹³⁵ Dorothy C. Bass and Craig R. Dykstra, “Times of Yearning: Practices of Faith,” in *Practicing Our Faith: A Way of Life for a Searching People*, ed. Dorothy C. Bass, 2nd, Kindle ed. (San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 2010), loc. 477-663.

¹³⁶ Ibid., loc. 552-553.

¹³⁷ Ibid., loc. 572-573.

¹³⁸ Ibid., loc. 580-582.

¹³⁹ Ibid., loc. 589.

¹⁴⁰ Ibid., loc. 605.

sense that a piano student may *practice* the scales.¹⁴¹ Practice shapes us in the skills we need for excellence in the craft.

In this discussion, I touch only on those specific practices that seemed important within the scope of this project. This is not to say that other practices, which I do not describe here, did not come into the project. Christian practices are not lived out as discreet activities, but weave together in a real life.¹⁴² The practices described here are those the PAR Leadership Team intended to engage with as the project unfolded. These are *hospitality* and *citizenship*.

Hospitality

Hospitality is a practice that was exercised in each of the activities of this PAR. The learning community engaged in four main activities: (1) refugee sponsorship, welcome, and settlement; (2) partnership with musicians; (3) Messy Church; and (4) building community with persons at risk for social isolation. My discussion of the Christian practice of hospitality reviews several areas. I begin by discussing the *universal need for hospitality* and move on to consider *the fear of the stranger; the experience of estrangement; learning and hospitality*; and, finally, *radical welcome*.

The universal need for hospitality. We have noted that Christian practices correspond to real human needs. Ana María Pineda wrote the chapter on *hospitality* in *Practicing Our Faith*.¹⁴³ She notes that the human need for shelter “is a fundamental

¹⁴¹ Ibid., loc. 629.

¹⁴² Ibid., loc. 636.

¹⁴³ Ana María Pineda, “Hospitality,” *ibid.*

human need.”¹⁴⁴ Because the need for shelter is universal, none of us know when we may find ourselves uprooted and reliant on the hospitality of others. Pineda observes that throughout human history, there have been times when people have found themselves dislocated, and when this has occurred, people have taken them in and sometimes not.¹⁴⁵ The placelessness and rootlessness of Western culture that I discussed above underlines the existential need that people have for hospitality. People long to be welcomed.

The fear of the stranger. While the human need for hospitality remains constant, so does the fear of the stranger it seems. “Unfortunately, the fear of ‘the strange one’ has a long history in human societies.”¹⁴⁶ The stranger is unknown and, therefore, potentially challenges what we do know. The stranger causes us to worry about dangers and raises our fears, so that we human beings try to keep strangers at a distance.¹⁴⁷

St. Saviour’s recently hosted a screening of the award-winning documentary film, *Salam Neighbor*.¹⁴⁸ The filmmakers of the documentary were given the opportunity to be embedded with 85,000 refugees in the Za’atari refugee camp in Jordan. These two young American men were allowed by the United Nations High Commission for Refugees

¹⁴⁴ Ibid., loc 955.

¹⁴⁵ The Syrian refugee crisis is the most recent and large-scale example. Other examples from the twentieth century include the displaced people of Kosovo, and the so-called *boat people* of Vietnam. Many nations including Canada, the United States, and the United Kingdom, have shameful histories that include the refusal to accept Jewish refugees at the beginning of the Second World War. The MS St. Louis, for example, was turned away by Cuba, Canada, and the United States. It is estimated that approximately one quarter of the 908 Jewish refugees on board eventually died in Nazi death camps after they were returned to Europe. United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, “Voyage of the St. Louis,” Washington, DC: United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, <https://www.ushmm.org/wlc/en/article.php?ModuleId=10005267> (accessed June 15, 2016).

¹⁴⁶ Pineda, “Hospitality,” loc. 958.

¹⁴⁷ Ibid., loc. 961.

¹⁴⁸ Ingrasci and Temple, “Salam Neighbor.”

(UNHCR) to register and set up a tent in the camp as though they were refugees themselves. The film shows that the presence of these two is not immediately welcome among their new Syrian neighbors, but initial concern gives way quickly to acts of welcome and generosity towards their visitors. By the end of the film, the filmmakers have made many new friends. They have learned through the process of listening and from difficult mistakes. In the conclusion, the community gathers in the filmmaker's tent to share some farewells. One of the young Syrian men references how his community is often portrayed in the American media. "They show us as blood-thirsty terrorists," he observes. Then he asks, "Now you have met us, are we like that?" He answers his own question, "No, we are just like you. All people are the same. We are neighbors."¹⁴⁹ The film offers a powerful insight into our initial fear of the stranger and how, indeed, all human beings share similar basic needs and aspirations for hope and a future.

The experience of estrangement. The deep need for a renewal of hospitality in our culture corresponds not only to the presence of strangers, or even our own sense of dislocation, but also to the reality of estrangement that is prevalent in society. "We are short not only of tables that welcome strangers but even tables that welcome friends."¹⁵⁰

In St. Saviour's immediate neighborhood, we have many examples of how the elderly are isolated from the affection and care of their own families and how busy families with young children find little time even to welcome each other over supper at home. As mentioned above, St. Saviour's conducted informal research that identified a

¹⁴⁹ Ibid.

¹⁵⁰ Pineda, "Hospitality," loc. 970.

number of groups at risk for social isolation in the neighborhood, including young families, seniors, and persons with disabilities.

Hospitality as learning. The fact that hospitality brings us into contact with the stranger opens us up to the opportunity for communicative learning. Amos Yong refers to this reality in his book, *Hospitality and the Other: Pentecost, Christian Practices, and the Neighbor*.¹⁵¹ Yong observes that “the human family may be more divided than we would like to admit.”¹⁵² Yong notes, however, that despite the fears of global terrorism, the fear of stranger ultimately takes a back seat to the hospitality advocated by the world’s religions. Yong refers to the “massive mobilization of disaster relief, the charitable efforts and commitments of people, and the many acts of unrelenting kindness, all of which brought together people across traditionally divided religious lines.”¹⁵³ Yong argues for a kind of hospitality for Christian mission that is appropriated to the “postmodern, pluralistic, and post-9/11 world.”¹⁵⁴ Yong develops the concept of the *missio Dei* along the lines of hospitality. He observes that participation in the *missio Dei* is nothing more or less than participation in the hospitality of God.¹⁵⁵ Yong suggests that hospitality opens for us a “‘free space,’ where people of other faiths can enter, where strangers, even enemies, might be transformed into friends, where hosts do not dictate how much a guest

¹⁵¹ Yong, *Hospitality and the Other*.

¹⁵² Ibid., loc. 259.

¹⁵³ Ibid., loc. 269; see also, Riad Z. Abdelkarim, “The Muslim American Community a Year after the Attacks,” in *Muslims in America*, ed. Allen Verbrugge (Detroit, MI: Greenhaven Press, 2004).

¹⁵⁴ Yong, *Hospitality and the Other*, loc. 3374.

¹⁵⁵ Ibid., loc. 3806. See my comments on Rublev’s icon of the Holy Trinity, s.v., *Perichoresis*, above.

must change but rather provides a safe forum for change to occur.”¹⁵⁶ Such Christian hospitality involves not only risking *hosting* people of other faiths, but being *guests* of such strangers. It also includes the risk of being vulnerable *to them* and *with them*.¹⁵⁷

Paul Murray introduces the concept of receptive Catholic learning in his book with Luca Badini Confalonieri, *Receptive Ecumenism and the Call to Catholic Learning: Exploring a Way for Contemporary Ecumenism*.¹⁵⁸ Murray’s focus is ecumenical dialogue. In the same way that hospitality is needed to overcome the estrangement sometimes expressed within families, receptive Catholic learning draws the Christian family together. Murray’s first chapter begins with a quote from St. Augustine. Augustine was exploring the meaning of the Eucharist with the newly baptized:

So if it’s you that are the body of Christ and its members, it’s the mystery meaning you that has been placed on the Lord’s table; what you receive is the mystery that means you. It is to what you are that you reply *Amen*, and by so replying you express your assent. What you hear, you see, is *The body of Christ*, and you answer, *Amen*. So be a member of the body of Christ, in order to make that *Amen* true ... Be what you can see, and receive what you are.¹⁵⁹

Receptive ecumenism and Catholic learning is a matter of becoming more fully what we are, a process of growth and change. Openness to the encounter with the *other*, who is also our brother or sister, is the key to this growth and learning.¹⁶⁰ Such learning is a communicative process.

¹⁵⁶ Ibid., loc. 3816.

¹⁵⁷ Ibid., loc. 3819, 3826.

¹⁵⁸ Murray and Badini Confalonieri, *Receptive Ecumenism and the Call to Catholic Learning*.

¹⁵⁹ Augustine, *Sermons*, ed. John E. Rotelle, trans. Edmund Hill, The Works of Saint Augustine: A Translation for the 21st Century Part III, Volume vii (Hyde Park, NY: New City Press, 2004); quoted in Murray and Badini Confalonieri, *Receptive Ecumenism and the Call to Catholic Learning*, 6.

¹⁶⁰ Murray and Badini Confalonieri, *Receptive Ecumenism and the Call to Catholic Learning*, loc. 727.

Receptive ecumenism also speaks to the curiosity that I believe is key to learning and growth, and especially the learning and growth possible in a communicative process such as hospitality. Murray notes that receptive ecumenism:

... is concerned to place at the forefront of the Christian ecumenical agenda the self-critical question, "What, in any given situation, can one's own tradition appropriately learn with integrity from other traditions?" and to ask this question without insisting, although certainly hoping, that these other traditions are also asking the same question.¹⁶¹

In this way, receptive ecumenism and Catholic learning express the same core values of responsible hospitality.¹⁶²

Radical welcome. The form of hospitality which may have most to offer the practice of neighborliness may be what Stephanie Spellers calls "radical welcome," in her book, *Radical Welcome: Embracing God, the Other, and the Spirit of Transformation*.¹⁶³ As Spellers uses the term, *radical welcome* refers to "the spiritual practice of embracing and being changed by the gifts, presence, voices, and power of The Other: the people systemically cast out of or marginalized within a church, a denomination and/ or society."¹⁶⁴ As in the models of hospitality discussed above,

Radical welcome is concerned with the transformation and opening of individual hearts, congregations and systems so that The Other might find in your community a warm place and a mutual embrace and so that you are finally free to embrace and be transformed by authentic relationship with the margins.¹⁶⁵

¹⁶¹ Ibid., 862.

¹⁶² Ibid., loc. 860; see also George Tavard, "Hospitality as an Ecumenical Paradigm," *Bulletin of the Centro Pro Unione* 69 (2006).

¹⁶³ Spellers, *Radical Welcome*.

¹⁶⁴ Ibid., loc. 164-165.

¹⁶⁵ Ibid., loc. 167-169.

The author of John's Gospel asserts God found no welcome at the incarnation. "He was in the world, and the world came into being through him; yet the world did not know him. He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him" (John 1:10-11). Despite the reality that there was no hospitality for God, God shows an abundance hospitality towards humanity. "But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God ..." (John 1:12). Hospitality is a key Christian practice particularly because of the way that it calls us to welcome others in the radical way that we have been welcomed by God.

McKnight and Block comment: "hospitality is the signature of not only an abundant community, but a confident one. ... A wounded community does not have this capacity. Hospitality generates from trust and produces trust. It is what is missing in the world of fear and scarcity."¹⁶⁶

Citizenship

Citizenship as a Christian practice remembers that Christians have a role to play in participating in the variety of institutions that are important for the common good of the neighborhood. The *missio Dei in vicinia* reminds us that God is already at work in the neighborhood, and that includes the ways in which God may be working in and through the various institutions that are part of community life. Rowan Williams agrees that Christians should exercise their citizenship by developing a critical identification with:

... whatever political groupings speak for a serious and humane resistance to consumer pluralism and the administered society. These days, such groupings are less likely than ever to be found within historic mainstream political parties,

¹⁶⁶ Block and McKnight, *The Abundant Community*, 79.

though there are some countries happily, where moral imagination has not been so completely privatised.¹⁶⁷

Robert Bellah and his co-authors in *The Good Society* argue for greater participation of citizens rather than less. They clarify that they are interested not only in smaller, face-to-face groups—families, congregations, neighborhoods—but also the larger structures that so dominate life today. “Indeed,” they write, “it is our sense that only greater citizen participation in the large structures of the economy and the state will enable us to surmount the deepening problems of contemporary social life.”¹⁶⁸

The Christian American poet, novelist, and essayist, Wendell Berry, speaks to his passion for citizenship in relation to his appreciation for place. He is less open to the possibility of citizen partnerships with colonizing mega-systems. He writes, “I am a member, by choice, of a local community.”¹⁶⁹ He notes that he has much less choice whether to participate in the economic market or political state. He observes that while the market economy might pretend to be a friend of the local economy,

... the great centralized economic entities of our time do not come into rural places in order to improve them by “creating jobs.” They come to take as much of the value as they can take, as cheaply and quickly as they can take it. They are interested in “job creation” only so long as the jobs can be done more cheaply by humans than by machines. They are not interested in the good health—economic or natural or human, of any place on this earth.¹⁷⁰

While I understand Berry’s skepticism, I agree with Bellah and Williams on the value of citizen participation in societal institutions.

¹⁶⁷ Williams, *On Christian Theology*, 37.

¹⁶⁸ Bellah et al., *The Good Society*, 6.

¹⁶⁹ Wendell Berry, *Another Turn of the Crank: Essays* (Washington, DC: Counterpoint, 1995), x.

¹⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 11.

Cardus is an influential Christian think tank, headquartered in Wellington, and which is “dedicated to the renewal of North American social architecture.”¹⁷¹ While I don’t always in agreement with the particular analysis Cardus brings to various issues, I affirm that their approach and call for robust engagement is extremely valuable. Social architecture is of concern to Christians who are engaged citizens living into the practices of neighborliness.

Biblical texts such as Psalm 137 and Jeremiah 29 call for the people of God to participate in the life of their new home in exile, participating in God’s work of restoring the all things to the wholeness God intends. The exiled may embrace many of the features of the local culture in which they find themselves, but they participate within that culture with a view towards an alternative future. Not all features of the local culture are consistent with the vision of life which Christians share through their participation in God’s mission in the world. Indeed, the church may often weep as the Hebrews did in Babylon (Psalm 137). When the dominant message of the surrounding culture is one of violence, ecological destruction, and out-of-control materialism, the church sings the Lord’s song—an alternative vision and message of hope for the future—and weeps for the violence and destruction which surrounds it.

One of the ways that Christians sing their song in a foreign land within North America today, is when they express an alternative view to the western consumerist society. John McKnight and Peter Block observe that North American society has converted its citizens into consumers and that “the essential promise of a consumer

¹⁷¹ The quotation is from the Cardus web site. For confidentiality reasons, I do not provide a full citation.

society is that satisfaction can be purchased.”¹⁷² These authors go on to say that the consumerist culture has inculcated the belief that “what is fulfilling or needed in life can be bought—from happiness to healing, from love to laughter, from rearing a child to caring for someone at the end of our life.”¹⁷³ The church has a role to play in being and becoming the sort of community that holds out an alternative in the neighborhood. McKnight and Block refer to this alternative becoming possible in the shift from the consumerist way of consumption and scarcity, to the *citizen* way of cooperation and abundance.¹⁷⁴ The best hope for the culture we live in is a vision for life firmly grounded in a view of God, embodied in Jesus Christ, in an alternative community called the church, and a life marked by neighborliness.

As a people in exile, the people of God live as dual citizens.¹⁷⁵ In the Letter to the Ephesians, the author instructs, “So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are *citizens* with the saints and also members of the household of God, built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the cornerstone” (Ephesians 2:19-20). We are citizens who share a vision of life called the kingdom of God. The apostle Paul, nevertheless, claimed his Roman citizenship by demanding the rights that it afforded him.¹⁷⁶ Like Paul, we live as citizens of two societies.

¹⁷² Block and McKnight, *The Abundant Community*, 9.

¹⁷³ Ibid.

¹⁷⁴ Ibid., 11-18.

¹⁷⁵ As Hauerwas and Willimon argue, Christians are called to be “resident aliens.” See Hauerwas and Willimon, *Resident Aliens*.

¹⁷⁶ See, for example, Acts 21:39; 22:25 and 25:10.

The radical hospitality I spoke of above, challenges us to embrace the stranger. It is a fact that some are *stranger* than others. We should note that Jesus was particularly strange, in the sense of odd, queer, and peculiar. Likewise, the church is formed as a *peculiar people*.¹⁷⁷ The church is *peculiar* in the sense of being a *particular* people. However, the church has a vocation to be *peculiar* in the other sense. The church is odd, queer, and peculiar, even when it is at home in the culture, because of its *prophetic* identity. The decentering word of God that continues to create the church, calls it deeper into the life of Christ, and deeper, therefore, into the foolish ways of the cross. It is precisely this *difference*—this odd character of the church—that exposes the world's ways of violence, exclusion and injustice.

Christians may engage society in a way that helps to shape opinion through its witness and participation in society. Duane Friesen, a theologian writing from an Anabaptist perspective, argues that the church does this:

- By unmasking the myths of society that perpetuate violence and selfishness by challenging the truthfulness of the society's narratives;
- By engaging the society simply by being itself and living out of its alternative vision;
- By participating in the democratic process, working in partnerships with one another and sympathetic partners to promote positive change;
- By engaging in the politics of resistance and protest;

¹⁷⁷ As the King James Version translation of 1 Peter 2:9 tells us.

- By making a difference through service in our community, meeting real human needs; and,
- By engaging in our vocation and every day, ordinary lives in such a way that we contribute to the common good and partner with God's mission in the world.¹⁷⁸

One way to think of the church's presence in society, embodied in the lives of Christians who live their ordinary, everyday lives engaged in society, is through the narrative of the incarnation.

If ... Jesus Christ is the supreme act of divine intrusion into the world's settled arrangements, then the church is especially the church when its members scatter in their various places of employment and practice the professions with the institutions of our society, within political and economic life. The church is the church as members work with other in voluntary associations that seek to bring about change in society. It is the church when Christians propose policies to meet basic needs of human beings, as well as when they seek to write laws and administer laws to meet these needs.¹⁷⁹

A Christian view of citizenship must take into account the biblical call to do justice. As Friesen observes, "Marx's slogan, 'from each according to his ability, to each according to his need,' echoes a theme in the Book of Acts."¹⁸⁰ In Christian theology, we refer to this as "God's preferential option for the poor."¹⁸¹

¹⁷⁸ These six ways of engagement are outlined by Duane Friesen in: Duane K. Friesen, *Artists, Citizens, Philosophers: Seeking the Peace of the City: An Anabaptist Theology of Culture* (Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, 2000), 214-218.

¹⁷⁹ Ibid., 40.

¹⁸⁰ Ibid.

¹⁸¹ This phrase has its origins in Catholic social teaching and liberation theology. See for example, Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, "Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church," The Vatican: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 2004, http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/pontifical_councils/justpeace/documents/rc_pc_justpeace_doc_20060526_compendio-dott-soc_en.html (accessed June 1, 2016); Leonardo Boff, *Cry of the Earth, Cry of the Poor*, Ecology and Justice (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1997).

Christians must work for justice, but past injustices cannot simply be forgotten. A passion for justice must be motivated by love and made complete by forgiveness.

Anglicans were among the first to offer the First Nations peoples of Canada a formal apology for the legacy of Indian Residential Schools. Many Anglican institutions were complicit in the nation's injustices towards First Nations' people. Children were forcibly removed from their homes and sent to the schools, many children were physically and sexually abused, and there was an official government program to erase indigenous languages. Anglicans have marked their repentance in many ways including a costly financial contribution towards a healing fund. Healing can only come when we take responsibility for our sin and guilt.

When we have identified with those who have suffered injustice, Jesus provides us with a model for forgiveness. As Miroslav Volf puts it, "In the presence of God our rage over injustice may give way to forgiveness, which in turn will make the search for justice for all possible. If forgiveness does take place it will be but an echo of the forgiveness granted by the just and loving God."¹⁸²

The PAR Leadership Team considered citizenship as one of the practices of neighborliness as it designed the learning community intervention and the projects and activities within it. The practice of citizenship was also one variable measured in the questionnaires and explored in interviews and focus group protocols.

¹⁸² Miroslav Volf, *Exclusion and Embrace: A Theological Exploration of Identity, Otherness, and Reconciliation* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1996), 124-125.

Summary: Christian Practice

Christians are called to simultaneously inhabit the kingdom of God with its vision for the common good, and their neighborhoods. In their life in the neighborhood, and the practices that give shape to that life, they bring to bear in a particular place an entire vision of life and human flourishing. In this section, I discussed the Christian practices of hospitality and citizenship as habits which are key to the life of neighborliness.

The PAR Leadership Team considered these important practices as they designed the intervention for this project. Christian practice provided a vital frame for considering faith development and participation in the mission of God in the neighborhood. The learning community formed in this project focused deliberately upon apprenticing participants in Christian practices of hospitality and citizenship.

Biblical Perspectives

The theological frames discussed above are themselves informed by biblical perspectives. From a Christian perspective, the biblical narrative is the story of God's activity in the world. That story, therefore, shapes the Christian understanding of God and of God's world. In the discussion below, I now want to draw upon a few key biblical texts that speak to the vocation of Christian congregations and individuals within their neighborhoods among their neighbors.

Neighborliness and Discipleship in Luke 9 and 10

The tenth chapter of Luke's biography of Jesus provides a biblical perspective on *neighborliness*. This chapter has three main movements which include, Luke 10:1-24 (The Mission to Neighborhoods); Luke 10:25-37 (The Parable of the Good Neighbor);

and Luke 10:38-42 (Jesus in the neighborhood of Mary and Martha).¹⁸³ These three passages from the tenth chapter of Luke, comprise Jesus' key teachings on neighborliness, including the biblical imperative, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength, and with all your mind; *and your neighbor as yourself*" (Luke 10:27, emphasis added). Before looking at Luke 10, however, I want to begin with the passage that immediately precedes it, which puts these passages in the context of Jesus' journey to Jerusalem, and importantly, what it means for disciples to follow him. The context for this is a particular locale.

Following Jesus: Discipleship in Luke 9:51-62

A new section of Luke's Gospel begins at Luke 9:51, with Jesus firmly setting his sights on going to Jerusalem. Luke asserts the timeliness of Jesus' decision to go to Jerusalem, saying that this occurred "When the days drew near for him to be taken up" (Luke 9:5). This reference links the present action with the end, or *telos*, of Jesus' own journey, being the cross, resurrection, and ascension, all of which are closely related to God's redemptive purposes in the world. Jesus' journey is explicit throughout Luke 9 and 10 (9:56; 10:1, 38), yet the journey remains in the background as the focus remains on Jesus' teaching about the reign of God, the meaning of discipleship, and the *missio Dei in vicinia*.

¹⁸³ "The ways local churches would take form and understand their place in these cultures was not in their being Platonic, ideal churches with well-crafted vision and values and mission statements, but through the existential wrestling with the story of Jesus in these shifting local contexts." Roxburgh, *Missional*, 70.

Few people travelled in the ancient world. Time away from one's main occupation in life was expensive and travel was dangerous.¹⁸⁴ First century Jews were an exception to this general rule of limited travel, since it was normative for them to make an occasional pilgrimage to Jerusalem. The Jews who lived in Galilee could make the pilgrimage to Jerusalem by walking for two or three days.

Such a pilgrimage was filled with meaning as they would remember the great journey of the Exodus, when their ancestors traveled from their captivity in Egypt to their new life in the Promised Land.¹⁸⁵ Jesus' journey to Jerusalem is to fulfill his own Exodus.¹⁸⁶ Everything that Jesus teaches about the reign of God, the meaning of discipleship, and the *missio Dei in vicinia*, has this Exodus journey as backdrop.

James and John appear in this pericope as a reminder that even those who sign on for this journey do not immediately grasp all that it entails. In Luke 9:54, James and John want to command fire to come down upon the Samaritans who have not welcomed Jesus. Perhaps this is Luke's way of speaking to the ambition of these two, as in the account in 10:35-40. James and John seem to think that they are in the same position as Elijah of the Old Testament calling fire down upon their enemies. Jesus reveals that such violence is not in the nature of his redemptive journey.¹⁸⁷ As I have argued, the journey of discipleship is one of *imitatio Trinitatis*. This exodus is not a triumphant march that will

¹⁸⁴ The dangers of travel are underlined especially in the passage we will consider at Luke 10:25-37.

¹⁸⁵ N. T. Wright, *Luke for Everyone*, Second ed. (London: SPCK, 2004), 117.

¹⁸⁶ Ibid. See also Luke 9:31.

¹⁸⁷ See my comments on Isaiah 42:1-4 above.

sweep all resistance aside. This is a journey of progress in the kingdom of love and grace.¹⁸⁸

It becomes clear in Luke 9:52-62 that not all people will receive the reign of God with open arms or follow Jesus on this journey. A Samaritan village rejects Jesus and his message in Luke 9:52-53. They would not “receive him, *because* his face was set toward Jerusalem” (Luke 9:53; emphasis added). E. Earle Ellis offers the explanation that the Samaritans reject Jesus and his companions, not so much because of their *identity*, as their *destination*. The center for worship in Samaria was a “countertype and rival to the temple in Jerusalem.”¹⁸⁹ This was a source and point of animosity between these peoples. Galilean pilgrims passing through Samaria on their way to Jerusalem were not only unwelcome, but also subjected to harassment, and overt violence.¹⁹⁰ While Samaria rejected Jesus and his disciples, the fact remains that when they arrive at the end of Jesus’ journey, in Jerusalem, all will reject him. Would-be disciples must choose, not only whether they will receive God’s reign, but whether they will follow in the way of Jesus with all its demands and risks. This comes clearly into focus in Luke 9:57-62 and the encounters along the way.

Luke presents three potential candidates for discipleship in Luke 9:57-62. The first and the third are volunteers; the second is called by Jesus. Jesus challenges them all by reminding them the journey ahead is difficult and demands are great. The passage

¹⁸⁸ Wright, *Luke for Everyone*, 118.

¹⁸⁹ E. Earle Ellis, *The Gospel of Luke*, New Century Bible Commentaries (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1981), 151. See John 4:20, where Jesus is in conversation with a woman of Samaria regarding this difference between Jews and Samaritans.

¹⁹⁰ Josephus, *The Antiquities of the Jews*, cited in *ibid*.

concludes with Jesus saying, “No one who puts a hand to the plow and looks back is fit *for the kingdom of God*” (Luke 9:62, emphasis added). The statement reminds us that being a disciple, or follower of Jesus, is hard work, but that the journey with Christ propels us forward in the redemptive progress of the kingdom of God.

The journey is one of the primary biblical motifs for describing discipleship. The trope of journey suggests a change of location; however, such a change of location may only rarely be geographical. In the Gospels, the essence of a change of location appears mostly to do with alignment with Jesus’ journey and *telos* of the reign of God. We see in the texts I examine below that this journey leads to a new life of neighborliness. We see in this pericope, and in those that follow, that a change of location may also involve dispossession, rejection, and sacrifice. Such a journey is undertaken by choice. It is the response of faith. Such a choice is shown to be the appropriate response to the redemptive activity of God in the world.

The Mission to Neighborhoods: Luke 10:1-9

Luke 10:1-24 is a familiar passage at St. Saviour’s. Alan Roxburgh reintroduced this passage to me when I attended a diocesan clergy conference where he was our guest speaker. I had already read Roxburgh’s book with Fred Romanuk, *The Missional Leader*, where he talks about the influence this text has had upon congregations engaged with it in *lectio divina*.¹⁹¹ Roxburgh had conference participants reflect together on this text and shared again the story of how this passage had transformative effects in his Vancouver area congregation.

¹⁹¹ Alan J. Roxburgh and Fred Romanuk, *The Missional Leader: Equipping Your Church to Reach a Changing World*, Leadership Network Series (San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 2006).

Soon after this, I invited Pernell Goodyear, whose congregation had also been dwelling in this passage, to be the guest speaker at a St. Saviour's Parish Council retreat. He took this passage as his theme and expanded upon it by speaking about seven practices or habits of a missional church that his own congregation had gleaned by reading and living into this text. He described the church possessed of these habits as, "Cultured, Partnered, Storied, Neighbored, Shared, Normalized, and Kingdomized."¹⁹²

Cultured

The church needs to understand and engage with the culture that it finds itself in.

Jesus said,

Carry no purse, no bag, no sandals ... Remain in the same house, eating and drinking whatever they provide, for the laborer deserves to be paid. Do not move about from house to house. Whenever you enter a town and its people welcome you, eat what is set before you (Luke 10:4a, 7-8).

In Luke 10, Jesus sends his followers out instructing them to take nothing with them.

They relied completely on the hospitality of strangers and when they entered a house or a community, they accepted what they received.

Communication is always culturally specific and conditioned. Goodyear told the story of his encounter with a man in an inner-city park. Goodyear was sitting on a park bench and observed a man moving towards him who was shaking involuntarily, and who looked to be either mentally ill, in drug withdrawal, or both. The man appeared to be paranoid and was constantly looking over his shoulder. Eventually, the man sat down

¹⁹² Pernell Goodyear, "Seven Suggestions from One Congregation's Reflections on Luke 10:1-9," (Unpublished notes taken from two talks given on a Parish Council retreat, David J. Anderson, ed., St. Saviour's Anglican Church, Ingersoll, ON).

beside Goodyear, looked around one last time, and then leaned forward as if to share an important secret. “The boat is in the bay,” he said.

“Excuse me?” Pernell said.

“The boat is in the bay!” With the repetition of the message, the man got up and walked away as quickly as his legs could take him.¹⁹³

What did this cryptic message mean? Was this good or bad news? For someone waiting for a boat to arrive in the bay, this might be very good news. However, if we knew the boat to be carrying some sort of disaster—a bomb or dread disease—this might be very bad news indeed. Communication is contextual.¹⁹⁴

The church speaks its message in a context, but sometimes uses a language that others do not understand. The church’s insider language may have no meaning, or in other cases, a meaning in the wider culture that is quite contrary to the meaning intended. While the church may shout its slogans, the average person in the neighborhood is just as likely to misunderstand.

When one enters the house of another culture, one has the opportunity to learn the cultural references and speak the local dialect. Goodyear’s point was that this passage calls the church to immerse itself in the culture to which it has been sent. Being “cultured” does not mean that the church needs to blindly accept all of the features of the wider culture it finds itself in, but to understand and engage with the culture in order to communicate with and subvert it.¹⁹⁵ Engaging with another culture also opens us to the

¹⁹³ Ibid.

¹⁹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁹⁵ Ibid.

other and to the possibility of being ourselves subverted by God who is already at work among our neighbor.

Partnered

The concept of the *missio Dei* reminds the church that the mission of God is primarily just that, God's mission.¹⁹⁶ The church in mission is God's partner. As the church moves forward in mission it must keep in mind that there is no place where the church can go where God has not gone before. One of the key questions that we can ask is the question about what God is already doing in our neighborhoods. The church can ask how it can collaborate in what God is already doing.

The Luke 10:1-9 passage begins, "The Lord appointed seventy others and sent them on ahead of him in pairs to every town and place where he himself intended to go" (Luke 10:1). Jesus sent others ahead of himself. They were partners in his ministry. He also sent them in pairs, to collaborate with one another in their mission. Partnerships are ways of living into our neighborly vocations.

There are obvious strengths in partnerships. Churches can consider whether there are partnerships they have ignored in the past. Individual parishes can consider their natural partnerships with other regional and denominational partners, sister parishes, and affiliated ministries. Local ecumenical partners may provide more natural relationships in certain neighborhoods.

The partnership most often overlooked, however, is the partnership with those to whom the church is sent. Too often, the church has been guilty of doing ministry *to*

¹⁹⁶ Ibid.

people, rather than *with* people. What would it mean if the church running a soup kitchen invited the homeless to make the soup? Partnership and neighborliness go together.

Neighbored

Goodyear defined the quality of being neighbored as a commitment to the local.¹⁹⁷ This commitment calls churches to engage with the people right in their own neighborhoods. “Whatever house you enter, first say, ‘Peace to this house!’ And if anyone is there who shares in peace, your peace will rest on that person” (Luke 10:5-6a).

It has sometimes been the practice of congregations to do demographic studies before reaching out in their neighborhoods. These can be of limited use, since neighborhoods are not comprised of people who can be summed up by numbers, but of real people and families whom we encounter in conversation and friendship. The best way to get to know our neighbors is not by studying them with a kind scientific objectivity and detachment, by seeking *the facts*. Learning comes through communicative action, by actually talking with neighbors and getting to know them, person by person, family by family. Jesus’ counsel for his followers, to get to know the people to whom they have been sent around the dining room table is an excellent model to follow. It is also a living into the *missio Dei in vicinia*.

Storied

Goodyear points to the common activity that occurs when people gather around tables of hospitality as described in Luke 10:7-8. People tell stories. Goodyear suggests that the church in mission needs to listen more and talk less. The church must be prepared

¹⁹⁷ Ibid.

to listen to the stories of the people to whom we are sent, to hear God's story in their stories, and to be immersed in God's story. In listening to the stories of others, we hear who they are and what is important to them. When we have first listened, and understood, and only then will we be able to share our own story. Our own story is part of a bigger story that we may also tell and point to. God's people in mission need to be familiar with the story of God's work in the world. This is not primarily Bible knowledge, but the lived story of God's activity in the world and in our lives. The world is changed by such conversations. Story-telling, listening, and conversation are communicative and potentially emancipatory processes.¹⁹⁸

Shared

The *missio Dei in vicinia* and the move to authentic neighborliness is linked to learning.¹⁹⁹ We need to learn from the extraordinary generosity of God. Jesus said, "Go on your way. See, I am sending you out like lambs into the midst of wolves" (Lu 10:3). Following Jesus leads in the way of dispossession and sacrifice. Lambs are food for wolves. God's story is not Western culture's narrative of the ladder of success and the upwardly mobile. Philippians 2 describes Jesus as the one whom, in the incarnation, humbled himself, even to death on a cross. Following in the way of Jesus means that we will make ourselves vulnerable, and share our lives with others. Can the church share in such a way that the people on the margins become the people at the center? Can the

¹⁹⁸ I am indebted to Don Posterski for this insight. Posterski was for many years the President of World Vision Canada. Prior to that he was National Director of InterVarsity Canada. In 2000 Posterski was an Associate Professor of in Christianity and Culture at McMaster Divinity College in Hamilton, ON, where I studied under him in a course on evangelism.

¹⁹⁹ Goodyear, "Seven Suggestions from One Congregation's Reflections on Luke 10:1-9."

church give its life to the poor? The *missio Dei in vicinia* calls neighbors to a life shared where abundant community is possible.²⁰⁰

Normalized

Goodyear recognized that Luke 10:1-9 seems to indicate that the life of mission should be the regular, ordinary mission of the church.²⁰¹ This does not mean that our missional work should be domesticated and risk-free, but it does mean that mission is vital to the church's identity. We do not need gurus to show us how to do mission because this vocation belongs to all. We are called to be Jesus' people all of the time, not just on Sunday morning. We are called to be Jesus' people, whether we are clergy or lay. We need to be recognizable as the people of Jesus. The *missio Dei in vicinia* is the normal vocation of the church and has to do with the ordinary, everyday lives of her members.

Kingdomized

Finally, Goodyear created the word "kingdomized" to fit with his other six suggestions.²⁰² Jesus sends out his followers with the instruction, "cure the sick who are there, and say to them, 'The kingdom of God has come near to you'" (Luke 10:9). It needs to be recognized that the *missio Dei in vicinia* is subversive to the dominant culture. Jesus calls us to join him in his healing mission. In Luke 10:17, the seventy will return to Jesus with joy and say, "Lord, in your name even the demons submit to us!"

²⁰⁰ See Brueggemann, *Journey to the Common Good*.

²⁰¹ Goodyear, "Seven Suggestions from One Congregation's Reflections on Luke 10:1-9."

²⁰² Ibid.

(Luke 10:17). The powers and dominions of our own age—the narcissism, materialism, consumerism, militarism, and so on—will be overthrown by the coming reign of God, an age of justice and peace.

Participation with God: Luke 10:10-24

I signalled above that I find Dykstra's definition of faith helpful. He defines faith as the "*appropriate and intentional participation in the redemptive activity of God.*"²⁰³ I argued that Dykstra's definition makes sense of categories of faithfulness and unfaithfulness. In Luke 10:10-24 these various responses to God's redemptive activity in the world are contrasted.

In Luke 10:10 it becomes apparent that not everyone will welcome the kingdom of God or its messengers sent by Jesus. Jesus tells those whom he sends that they and their message may be rejected by the towns to which they are sent, much in the same way that Jesus and his companions had been rejected by the village of Samaria in Luke 9:52-53. Jesus laments, in Luke 10:15-16, over the Galilean towns of Capernaum, Bethsaida, and Chorazin, which apparently had also rejected Jesus' message. Their lack of a faith response, their failure to participate in the redemptive activity of God, is its own judgement.

Jesus rejoices in the participation of his followers in God's redemptive activity in the world in Luke 10:21-24.

At that same hour Jesus rejoiced in the Holy Spirit and said, "I thank you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and the intelligent and have revealed them to infants; yes, Father, for such was your gracious will. All things have been handed over to me by my Father; and no one knows who the Son is except the Father, or who the Father is except the Son

²⁰³ Dykstra, "What Is Faith?," 55. Emphasis added.

and anyone to whom the Son chooses to reveal him.” Then turning to the disciples, Jesus said to them privately, “Blessed are the eyes that see what you see! For I tell you that many prophets and kings desired to see what you see, but did not see it, and to hear what you hear, but did not hear it.” (Lu 10:21-24)

N.T. Wright describes this as a moment of “vision and delight” in which Jesus celebrates the depths to which God has allowed Jesus’ followers to participate in God’s redemptive purposes in the world.²⁰⁴ Wright also observes that here—and at every chance—the witness of the New Testament seems to be that one does not need any special privilege, learning, or intelligence in order to enter into the kingdom of God or participate in God’s redemptive reign.²⁰⁵ Jesus observes that there have been rulers of Israel, leaders, prophets, and self-appointed teachers, who longed to see and participate in what the followers of Jesus have seen and participated in, but who did not. As Jesus makes his way to Jerusalem, he rejoices that the Father’s purpose is already being accomplished among the diverse group who has followed him.

The Parable of the Good Neighbor: Luke 10:25-37

Jesus and his followers are on the road to Jerusalem and so, it is not surprising that he chooses to tell the story of travelers in his first parable in this context. This story has become so well known in Western culture that have given new meaning to the word, “Samaritan,” has changed. The word is commonly used with the adjective “good” before it, to describe a person who stops to lend assistance. This is certainly not what was meant by the word in Jesus’ day. As discussed above, a great animosity existed between Jews and Samaritans in the time of Jesus. Despite Jesus’ own intention to travel through

²⁰⁴ Wright, *Luke for Everyone*, 125.

²⁰⁵ Ibid.

Samaritan territory in his journey to Jerusalem and the cross, he is rejected by the people of the Samaritan towns.

This parable is often interpreted in very moralistic terms, as if to say that if you see someone in the ditch, you should stop to help them. “Go and do likewise,” says Jesus (Luke 10:37). This is certainly good moral advice. This moral lesson is enhanced if one remembers that Samaritans and Jews hated one another; then message of the parable is expanded to be a lesson against racial and religious prejudice. This is also good moral advice.

Jesus’ message in this passage is, however, far more radical than either of these options and has to do more with competing visions of what it means for Israel to be Israel, and by extension, what it means for the church to be the church. The definition of what it means for Israel to be Israel, is closely related to the identity of Israel’s God and the answer to the question, “Who is my neighbor?” (Luke 10:29).

For the lawyer in the story, however, God is the God of *Israel* (only), and the neighbors that one is called to love are, therefore, *Jewish* neighbors. Jesus offers a different view. God is a God of grace and love for the *entire* world, and it follows from this that a neighbor is *any* person in need. Since God’s love and grace are for all, God’s redemptive activity encompasses all. Those who respond to God in faith—who respond to God by participating in God’s redemptive activity in the world—will necessarily love their neighbor, and assist the person in need.

N.T. Wright argues that when the lawyer asks Jesus the question, “Who is my neighbor?” he is hoping to expose Jesus’ supposedly heretical views concerning God’s

wider plans for the whole world.²⁰⁶ Jesus obliges with an answer that does go to God's wide-reaching grace. However, Jesus shows that these views are not heretical, but the fulfillment of God's command which the lawyer claims as vital.²⁰⁷ Wright concludes, "No church, no Christian, can remain content with easy definitions which allow us to watch most of the world lying half-dead in the road."²⁰⁸

There is a connection between the Parable of the Good Neighbor in Luke 10:29-37 and the pericope from Luke 9:51-52 discussed above, where Jesus begins his journey to Jerusalem and the cross, entering a Samaritan town. The shortest route from Galilee to Jerusalem involves taking a road through the heart of Samaria and its villages. Luke's immediate connection between Jesus' decision to begin this journey and the entrance into a village of Samaria in Luke 9:51-52 seems to suggest this route. This was not, however, the most common route of travel for Jews making their way from Galilee to Jerusalem. The more common route involved avoiding the heart of Samaria by making a detour to a more easterly road following closer to the Jordan River. The final part of this detour involved the road back to the west from *Jericho to Jerusalem*.²⁰⁹

All the travelers described in Luke 10:30-36 were travelling this road. The question arises for Luke's readers then, whether these travelers making their way from Jericho to Jerusalem are doing so because they are completing a journey designed to avoid Samaritans. If this was the case, the priest, the Levite, and the man who was

²⁰⁶ Ibid., 129.

²⁰⁷ Ibid.

²⁰⁸ Ibid., 129.

²⁰⁹ See www.bible-history.com/maps/palestine_rit_times.html.

robbed, beaten, and left for dead, shared more in common than we may have realized. The fact that it was a Samaritan traveling this road who shared love for his neighbor would then be doubly surprising. Luke's readers are surprised that Jesus' sets up a despised Samaritan as the hero of his story, over and against the priest and the Levite. They are also surprised to learn that the Samaritan has already been breaking boundaries and traveling the same road. The road which the Jewish characters of the story traveled in bigotry, the Samaritan travels in solidarity.

Jesus makes it clear that neighbor-love crosses boundaries and makes neighbors of people whom otherwise might have found themselves separated by culture and practice. God is not just the God of Israel. God is God of the entire world and all of its neighborhoods, where all people are made neighbors.

Jesus in the Neighborhood: Luke 10:38-42

The radical message of the love and grace of God continues in Luke 10:38-42 where Jesus enters into the neighborhood (and indeed the home of) Martha and Mary. We know that the location of this story in time does not entirely fit the context, as Bethany is geographically close to Jerusalem, and Jesus has not yet arrived there. The location of Bethany, near the road between Jericho and Jerusalem, may instead be Luke's point. Since this story is more than a chronological telling, there is a hint that the stories relate in some other ways. The previous story had to do with the redrawing of the borders between God's people. Jesus here addresses what is another problematic boundary, that between genders.

One traditional reading of this story contrasts *active* and *contemplative* forms of spirituality. The faithful life requires both. If we accept the definition of faith as an

appropriate response and participation in the redemptive activity of God in the world, we know that the faithful life is not all sitting at Jesus' feet. It necessarily involves sitting at Jesus' feet and learning from him, but is also includes following him in the places where he goes, and loving the neighbors whom he gives.

Martha's complaint against Mary was likely not merely about the workload left to her in the kitchen, but the fact that Mary was acting like a man.²¹⁰ Mary was sitting with Jesus in the public room of the house where only men would sit. By sitting at Jesus' feet, Mary was taking her place as Jesus' student. More than this, however, by sitting at the seat of the rabbi, one also signaled that they wanted (by studying with the rabbi), to become a rabbi. Mary had quietly taken her place as a would-be leader and teacher in the kingdom of God.²¹¹ Jesus affirms her right to do so.

Jesus' views on race or gender are not based on abstract views of equality, egalitarianism, and human rights, as they are in our Western society. Jesus' views are based on the abounding love and grace of God. Mary represents all women who, when they hear the proclamation of the kingdom of God "know that God is calling them to listen carefully so that they can speak of it too."²¹²

These passages from Luke's Gospel have been instructive. They inform our understanding of the learning community that we call the church and the role that all people can play as apprentices and masters, sharing their experience and practical

²¹⁰ Wright, *Luke for Everyone*, 130.

²¹¹ Ibid., 131.

²¹² Ibid.

knowledge of what it means to respond appropriately to God's redemptive activity in the world.

Conclusion: Neighborliness in Luke's Gospel

There is the option to choose from among many biblical passages that might shed light on what it means to love God and neighbor. Those I have discussed above have provided a rich language and imaginative vision for the work of the PAR Leadership Team, the learning community, and for the discussion of findings in this project.

Since the love of God and love of neighbor are so closely linked in the biblical tradition, the two cannot be separated. We cannot have orthodoxy without orthopraxy, or vice versa. The biblical lens of neighborliness and the relationship between the love of God and the love of neighbor gives us a way to think about the relationship we find at St. Saviour's between our experience of loving God and loving our neighbors. Is it possible to love God, but ignore our neighbors? Does loving our neighbors in some way help us to love God? What can loving our neighbors teach us about loving God? These are some questions that this biblical lens can help us explore.

Jesus' Teaching Ministry in Mark

I have already touched on the biblical theme of discipleship in consideration of the texts above. In this section, I would like to consider some key texts in Mark's Gospel.

Apprenticeship in Jesus' Teaching Ministry: Mark 1:14-45

Now after John was arrested, Jesus came to Galilee, proclaiming the good news of God, and saying, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God has come near; repent, and believe in the good news." As Jesus passed along the Sea of Galilee, he saw Simon and his brother Andrew casting a net into the sea—for they were fishermen. And Jesus said to them, "Follow me and I will make you fish for people." And immediately they left their nets and followed him. (Mr 1:14-18)

Simon and his brother Andrew were skilled in a trade. Mark tells us that they were fishermen. We might presume that, like James and John who left their father Zebedee and his hired men in the boat to follow Jesus (Mk 1:19-20), Simon and Andrew had likely been apprenticed in the family business. Jesus tells Simon and Andrew that he will “make you fish for people” (v.17). He invites them to take on a new trade, where instead of working with their father to gather fish, they will work with Jesus to gather people.²¹³ I find Bowen’s description of the Trade School of Jesus (mentioned above) very helpful. Joining Jesus’ mission of proclaiming the good news of the kingdom of God includes taking up a new trade, learning the ways of Jesus and the kingdom he proclaims. This theme develops throughout Mark’s Gospel, as disciples follow Jesus through various neighborhoods, where Jesus does those things he “came out to do” (v.38). This includes casting out demons and demonstrating the power to free (1:39; 4:35–5:20; 6:45-51); healing the sick (1:29-34, 40–2:12; 3:1-12; 5:21-43; 6:12, 53-56; 7:24-36); gathering community (2:13-17; 3:13-19; 6:1-11); feeding the hungry (6:30-44); and teaching about the reign of God (2:19-28; 3:20-33; 7:1-23). At the end of Mark 7 the author has the crowd affirm that Jesus “has done everything well ...” (v.37b).

The Learning Community in Mark 8-10

We observe Jesus’ own teaching methods at work in Mark 8-10. When we arrive in Mark 8:1 the disciples have already been learning from Jesus as they have followed him and accompanied him in his work.²¹⁴

²¹³ Bowen, *Green Shoots out of Dry Ground*, loc. 292-293.

²¹⁴ I am indebted to Robert Banks for bringing this passage to my attention. See Banks, *Reenvisioning Theological Education*, loc. 1016-1026.

This section begins with the feeding of four thousand people in an isolated place (8:1-8). The account begins with Jesus *drawing* his disciples into a discussion about how he and they might respond to the needs of the large crowd that has gathered (8:2-5).²¹⁵ He begins by *affirming* his compassion for the crowd (v.2) and the harsh reality that if they are sent away hungry “they will faint on the way—and some of them have come a great distance” (v.3). The disciples predictably respond by *reflecting* upon the scarcity of resources in the desert. As Jesus *questions* their perspective, it becomes clear that the disciples see only scarcity (vv.4-5). The dramatic moment comes when Jesus takes bread, breaks it, and distributes it in a way that *miraculously feeds* the crowd with an abundance remaining (vv.6-8). Jesus’ *action* moves the gathered community from scarcity to abundance.

Further teaching arises in the next pericope (8:14-21). Jesus has spoken a *warning* about the “yeast of the Pharisees and the yeast of Herod” (v.15b), which the disciples had *failed to understand*. The fact that the disciples had *forgotten* to bring any bread (v.14), becomes an *occasion* for further teaching, where through *questions* and *responses*, Jesus *explains*—and seems to become not a little exasperated with the disciples’ lack of understanding (vv.17-21).

Jesus and his disciples next continue to a nearby town and Jesus *performs* a yet another healing of a blind man, which the disciples *watch* (8:22-26). The visit to other nearby villages continues and in one of these places, Caesarea Philippi, Jesus asks the disciples further *questions* (8:27-30). He asks first about who people believe him to be.

²¹⁵ The reader will note that I italicize a number of verbs and adjectives in this section. I do this to highlight the great variety of teaching methods employed by Jesus.

He *asks* them next what they themselves have *concluded* about him. This results in Peter's confession, "You are the Messiah" (v.29d). In turn, this leads to Jesus offering an *instruction* about the suffering of the Son of Man (vv.31-32a). Peter's *rejection* of Jesus' teaching about the suffering and death of the Messiah (v.32b) occasions further teaching from Jesus about the cost of discipleship (8:31-9:1).

The action, then, continues as Jesus chooses three disciples to join him on the mountain and to witness his transfiguration. They *discuss* the meaning of this occurrence in connection with the resurrection on their way down the mountain (9:2-14). The public exorcism of a young person becomes the context for an *argument* among the disciples as to which of them is the greatest (9:15-29). Further *questions* from Jesus lead to a *discussion* about the meaning of greatness and service in the kingdom of God (9:33-49).

Jesus and his disciples again *move* on to another locale, where Jesus *teaches* a large crowd, and becomes engaged with the Pharisees in a *debate* about divorce (10:1-10). The *discussion* continues privately with the disciples (10:11-12). The two *encounters* that follow—the first with children who were brought to Jesus, the second with a wealthy young man—become rich teaching moments (10:13-31).

Finally, Jesus takes the disciples on the road towards Jerusalem and *expands* on his predictions of his death and the cost of discipleship (10:32-45). Another *healing* of a blind person closes this section (10:46-52).

Robert Banks points out that Jesus makes use of these diverse occasions to teach the Twelve: events, disputes, challenges, observations, questions, and comments. Jesus makes use of "personal and group failure, inappropriate ambition and conflict among his

followers, the presence or appearance of small children, a prostitute or a sick person; everyday objects and activities in the home, fields, or countryside.”²¹⁶

Banks raises an important question regarding Jesus’ teaching method described in the Gospels. He asks, to what extent does Jesus ask for imitation of what he does and says. For some scholars, Jesus’ invitation to *follow* is considered synonymous with an invitation to *imitate*. Banks concludes that in the Gospels the imitation of Jesus plays only a minor role in Jesus’ teaching method. Rather, Jesus seems to direct his disciples’ attention more towards the kingdom of God, the will of God, and an imitation of “God’s character and actions.”²¹⁷

Discipleship as Participation in God in John

I was recently sharing with a friend over coffee how my preaching ministry, particularly in the Sundays of Easter this year, seemed filled with the themes and concepts that I am dealing with in the orienting framework for this project. Themes concerning neighborliness seem to be everywhere, and particularly in the Revised Common Lectionary (RCL) texts appointed for these Sundays (Easter, Year C) from John’s Gospel.²¹⁸ My friend commented how when such things happen we know that we are looking at only one of two possibilities. He said, “You are either really on to something, or you are completely deluded.” I hope to show that I am on to something.

²¹⁶ Banks, *Reenvisioning Theological Education*, loc. 1036-1037.

²¹⁷ *Ibid.*, loc. 1046.

²¹⁸ Consultation on Common Texts, *The Revised Common Lectionary (RCL)* (1992), www.commontexts.org.

The Second Sunday of Easter: John 20:19-31

Three important elements of this narrative stood out to me as speaking to the *missio Dei in vicinia*. The first has to do with Jesus' appearance behind locked doors (v.19). The second, Jesus' commissioning of his followers, "As the Father has sent me, so I send you" (v.21). The third is Jesus breathing on them and inviting them to receive the Holy Spirit (v.22).

It is significant that Jesus' followers are to be found, "on *that* day" (v.19a, emphasis added)—the day of Jesus' resurrection—behind locked doors, because of their fear of the religious authorities. The locked doors are the physical consequence of the existential reality that fear has cut this community off from their neighbors. They have closed the door, literally and metaphorically, to any communicative process. They have no way to know for certain if they, in fact, are at risk of further persecutions from their neighbors, or agents of the religious-political system of their day. The door to communicative and emancipatory action is closed, and remains so until Jesus appears behind the locked door and presents an alternative perspective.

The alternative perspective that Jesus brings is best described as *resurrection*. In his resurrection, Jesus has not only overcome death, but the power of the religious-political system that killed him. While they succeeded (for a time) in killing him, Jesus resurrection meant that they were not ultimately successful. Death was not the last word. The fact of Jesus' resurrection addresses the fear that kept disciples locked behind doors. If there is no reason to fear death, the religious-political system has lost significant power. Resurrection is emancipatory and frees Jesus' followers to move beyond locked doors into communicative action with their neighbors.

Jesus appears to his disciples behind these locked doors and explicitly commissions them to move out into the neighborhood. Jesus says, “As the Father has sent me, so I send you” (v.21b). The *missio Dei in vicinia* is all in this half verse. In this text I hear everything I have already rehearsed concerning the theological concepts of *perichoresis*, *imitatio Trinitatis*, and participation in God. When, here at the end of John’s Gospel, I hear Jesus’ commission, “As the Father has sent me, so I send you” (v.21b, emphasis added), I recall a phrase from the beginning of John that describes *how* the Father has sent Jesus into the world. “The Word became flesh and blood, and moved into the neighborhood. We saw the glory with our own eyes, the one-of-a-kind glory, like Father, like Son, Generous inside and out, true from start to finish” (John 1:14, *The Message*).²¹⁹ The resurrected Christ sends his followers out into the neighborhood in the same way that God moved into the neighborhood in the incarnation. The followers of Jesus, as they participate in God, now continue the incarnation and participate in God’s redeeming purposes in the neighborhood.

The resurrected Jesus breaths on his followers and invites them to receive the Holy Spirit. This fulfills the promises that Jesus made before his death, most significantly in the Farewell Discourse of John 14-17. These texts are highlighted in the RCL Sunday Gospel readings in Year C, and I discuss some of these further below. The fulfillment of this promise is also significant, at this moment as Jesus commissions his disciples to move beyond locked doors, and sends them as the Father has sent him. The Father has

²¹⁹ Biblical quotations cited from *The Message* are from Eugene H. Peterson, *The Message: The Bible in Contemporary Language* (Colorado Springs, CO: NavPress, 2003).

sent the Son, not simply as an emissary or ambassador, but as God's own presence in the neighborhood. The Son sends his followers similarly, *as* divine presence in the world.

The Third Sunday of Easter: John 21:1-19

This passage describes a miraculous catch of fish by the disciples, who have significantly, returned to their fishing nets. While these followers of Jesus are no longer locked behind doors, it does not seem that they have embraced their new mission in the neighborhood. Instead, they have returned to their old lives. Having done so, it becomes apparent that their efforts are not fruitful. The miraculous catch that Jesus provides seems to be an invitation to a more fruitful engagement and partnership with Jesus.

The second half of this passage forms a restoration narrative for Peter. Three times Jesus asks Peter, "do you love me?" (vv. 15, 16, 17). It seems likely that the author intends the reader to connect these three with Peter's three denials of Jesus, which feature prominently in the earlier passion narrative of this Gospel (18:17, 25, 27).

There is, however, much more going on in the restoration narrative of John 21:15-19 than meets the eye in most English translations of this text. Throughout this passage different Greek words are translated as "love" in the English translations. *Agape* and *phileo* both denote important and noble forms of love, but there are distinctions between their meanings. St. Thomas Aquinas defined *agape* love as "to will the good of another."²²⁰ In the Christian tradition *agape* describes the unconditional, sacrificial love that God has for his people and the greatest of the spiritual gifts.²²¹ *Phileo* is also a word

²²⁰ Thomas Aquinas, "Summa Theologica," I-II, 26, 4.

²²¹ See 1 Corinthians 13.

that describes robust love; it denotes “affectionate regard, friendship,” usually “between equals.”²²² With these meaning in mind, the conversation between Jesus and Peter can be rendered quite differently. It begins with Jesus asking, “Simon ... do you love me with sacrificial, self-giving love ...?” (v.15a). Peter replies, “Jesus, you know that I hold you in extremely high regard” (v.15b). This question and response are repeated essentially word for word in verse 16. The third time of questioning differs. “Simon ... do you really hold me in high regard?” (v.17a). This translation makes better sense of the author’s aside, “Peter was grieved because he (Jesus) said to him the third time, ‘Do you love (*phileo*) me?’”—as well as Peter’s response—“Lord, you know everything, you know that I love (*phileo*) you” (v.17b, c).

This reading also makes better sense of verses 18 and 19 which speak to the “kind of death” by which Peter “was to glorify God” (v.19). Jesus tells Peter that when he is old he will indeed lay down his life. In the midst of this encounter with Jesus, so soon after having denied Jesus three times, Peter may not have had confidence to claim to bear sacrificial, self-giving, *agape* love for Jesus, but Jesus knows Peter’s heart and future. Peter will indeed lay down his life in love. Thomas Aquinas’ definition of *agape* love as love that “wills the good of another” (at the expense of oneself) is a good definition of the neighbor-love of which the New Testament speaks.

²²² Henry George Liddell et al., *A Greek-English Lexicon*, Revised ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), s.v., φιλία; *ibid.*; Henry George Liddell et al., *A Greek-English Lexicon*, 9th, Kindle ed. (Lighthouse Digital Publishing, 2012).

The Fifth Sunday of Easter: John 13:31-35

The primary importance of John 13:31-35 passage in the Easter sequence, as related to my interests in this project, has to do with Jesus' saying in verses 34 and 35, "I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another." This clear link between love for neighbor and discipleship does not require much comment.

Verse 33 introduces a tension in John's narrative that becomes more important in passage to be considered below. Jesus' saying, "Where I am going, you cannot come," produces an anxiety for his disciples and readers. How are we to follow Jesus if we cannot be *with* him? Obedience to Jesus' command to hold our neighbors in love is part of the answer to that question. The other part of the answer is revealed in passages considered below.

The Sixth Sunday of Easter: John 14:23-29

Jesus continues to address the anxiety that I identified above in this passage, however, his words take on a mysterious tone. "I am going away, and I am coming to you" (v.28b). Jesus is clearly preparing his disciples for his departure. "I have told you this before it occurs, so that when it occurs, you may believe" (v.29). Jesus speaks a word of peace to his disciples who find themselves troubled by the prospect of Jesus' departure. "Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled, and do not let them be afraid" (v.27).

Jesus makes it clear that the peace he gives is peace with a difference. His "going away"—the reason for their anxiety—is clearly a reference to Jesus' upcoming death.

The peace he offers seems to be linked with the fact that Jesus is also “coming to you” (v.28b). Jesus’ return in his resurrection may be the meaning of this promise, however, taking the context of the passage as a whole, the peace “coming to” (vv.23, 27 and 28) the disciples seems to be a coming of God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit (v.26). Jesus makes it clear that those who love him and keep his word (perhaps primarily his commandment of neighbor-love), will enjoy the Father’s love. Jesus assures, “and we will come to them and make our home with them” (v.23).

This is strong neighboring language. Eugene Peterson renders the second half of verse 23, “If anyone loves me, he will carefully keep my word and my Father will love him—we’ll move right into the neighborhood!” (v.23, *The Message*). God moved into our neighborhood in the incarnation. In sending the Holy Spirit upon the church, God moves into the neighborhood to make a permanent home. The word “Advocate” in verse 26 is an English translation of the Greek word “paraclete,” literally meaning, “the one who comes alongside.” In my Easter proclamation, I made the claim that it is a fair translation to speak of the Paraclete as the “neighboring Spirit.”

Seventh Sunday of Easter: John 17:20-26

The *missio Dei in vicinia*, framed by the concepts of perichoresis, participation in God, and neighborliness are themes we find again in the Gospel reading for the Seventh Sunday of Easter in the RCL, Year C. John 17:20-26 is part of Jesus’ High Priestly Prayer in John 17.

I have always been interested in the prayers of Jesus recorded in the Gospels. On a number of occasions, the Gospel writers tell us about Jesus’ followers coming upon him and finding him in prayer. The experience makes an impression, as in Luke 11:1, for

example, where it prompts one of Jesus' disciples to ask, "Lord, teach us to pray, as John taught his disciples." Jesus responds with what we know as The Lord's Prayer and other extended teaching on prayer. From the perspective of Trinitarian theology, there is something intriguing about Jesus in prayer, a view into the relationships within the Godhead: God praying to God.²²³

The prayer of John 17 is doubly fascinating because, not only is Jesus praying to the Father, but the content of the prayer itself addresses the relationality within the Godhead as well as the participation (deification) of Jesus' followers. "As you, Father, are in me and I am in you, may they also be in us ..." (v.21b). The perichoretic relationship between members of the Godhead is extended. Jesus makes the reason for his request clear and suggests further that the unity he prays for is purposeful, or, in other words, missional. Jesus prays that "all may be one" (v.21a)—that is, Jesus' followers with one another, and with the Father, and the Son—"so that the world may believe that you sent me (v.21c, emphasis added).²²⁴ Unity serves mission by confirming that God has made a home in the neighborhood. More than God's mere presence in the neighborhood, unity serves the missional purpose of being a sign of God's loving purposes in the neighborhood: "so that the world may believe that you sent me *and have loved them even as you have loved me*" (v.23c, d; emphasis added).

²²³ The Son prays to the Father. Does the Father pray to the Son?

²²⁴ See also verse 23.

The Day of Pentecost: John 14:8-17

The Gospel Reading appointed by the RCL for the Day of Pentecost in Year C repeats the Easter promise of the neighboring Spirit. Jesus is addressing his follower's anxieties of abandonment. We can hear this anxiety in Philip's plea, "Lord, show us the Father, and we will be satisfied" (v.8). Jesus' answer to Philip offers the assurance that the Father has been revealed in Jesus' communicative action. "The words that I say to you I do not speak on my own, but the Father who dwells in me does his works" (v.10b). Jesus invites Philip to "believe" (v.11a) on the basis of Jesus' communicative action, because of his *practice*: "believe me because of the works themselves" (v.11b).

Jesus offers further assurance that, even if now the followers of Jesus do not fully understand, the neighboring Spirit will continue Jesus' communicative, learning process.²²⁵ This "Spirit of truth" accompanies the community of Jesus' followers and forms them as a learning community of practice.²²⁶

Jesus' promises in this pericope regarding growth in this learning community of practice are quite astounding. Jesus has told Philip that we will know the Father—which is to say in part, that we will know the missional, neighborly ways of God—by seeing the works (communicative actions) of Jesus' himself. But Jesus claims that his followers "will do *greater works* than these, because I am going to the Father" (v.12b). Jesus'

²²⁵ See also John 16:13.

²²⁶ We see Jesus' promise that the neighboring Spirit will form a learning community of practice fulfilled in the Pentecost narrative of Acts 2. When the Spirit miraculously provides the gift of language, the purpose is communicative. When those who hear the disciples speaking the good news in their own tongues are "amazed and perplexed" and ask the question, "what does this mean?" (Acts 2:12), Peter suddenly emerges as an outstanding communicator in his address to the crowd (Acts 2:14-36). The author tells us that approximately three thousand were baptized into the new Christian community that day. The learning nature of this community is further emphasized. "They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers" (Acts 2:42).

learning community of practice will continue to grow and develop because the Paraclete, the neighboring Spirit, comes along side.

Throughout these Easter readings I found themes and concepts that I have been dealing with in the orienting framework for this project. I will leave it up to my readers, and the worshippers at St. Saviour's who heard my sermons on these texts, to decide the extent to which I was engaged in exegesis or eisegesis. As my friend suggested, I am either "on to something, or completely deluded." What I have seen in these texts is that God is creating a people who participate with God in the *missio Dei in vicinia* who, accompanied by the neighboring Spirit, continue the ministry of Jesus in bringing to light the reign of God, and who embody God's life of love in their own love of God and neighbor.

The biblical perspective on discipleship will be crucial for this study, since the basic intervention is the formation of a learning community, or a community of disciples. Following Jesus into the neighborhood is really at the heart of this project. This biblical lens helps us understand process of discipleship. The church has too often given people the impression that the invitation to live as a Christian is an invitation to something static or unchanging. Our liturgy in the Anglican Prayer Book tradition, for example, has changed very little since the days of Cranmer.²²⁷ In some churches, we actually attach the furniture to the floor.

All of this enhances the impression that things in the church are not meant to change. Christians sometimes wrongly assume that once they are baptized, nothing more

²²⁷ The Anglican Church of Canada has not authorized a new prayer book in more than 30 years. A process for the development of new liturgical materials is, however, now underway.

is required beyond participation in the maintenance of the institution. A biblical understanding of discipleship, however, comprehends that the invitation to follow Jesus is an invitation to a process, a journey of growth and discovery in the company of others, which is meant to reorient life dramatically towards the reign of God. As such, this biblical lens provides not only a rationale for inviting people to join in the discipleship process of the learning community, but a way of analyzing the efficacy of individual interventions. Did they help people in their journey of discipleship? To what extents were they disruptive to the status quo and to what extent did they help reorient life? The biblical lens of discipleship helps us address these questions.

Chapter Summary

Here at the end of chapter 4, I have completed laying out the orienting framework for this project. In chapter 3, I discussed theoretical concepts related to spiritual formation and learning theory, critical social theory, and neighborhoods and neighborliness. In this chapter, I explored a number theological frames related to each of the concepts of the *missio Dei*, perichoresis, the kingdom of God and the common good, the neighborhood, and Christian practice. I also explored a number of biblical perspectives including, neighborliness and discipleship in Luke, Jesus' teaching ministry in Mark, and discipleship in John as participation in God. The themes of *practice*, *learning*, *neighborliness* and the role of *congregations* that emerged in chapter 3 were expanded upon in this chapter.

Practice

Practice emerged as an important concept for this study in chapter 3 because I defined faith, spiritual formation, and engagement with God in God's mission, in terms of

participation *with* God. In this chapter, we have noted that Christian discipleship can also be understood as participation *in* God. I discussed how learning and apprenticing in the practices are the way the life of faith is formed in Christian disciples. I also discussed how Christian practice forms a community of virtue that is so needed in our cities' neighborhoods. I noted that Christian practices are those "things Christian people do together over time in response to, and in the light of, God's active presence for the life of the world in Christ Jesus."²²⁸ I discussed a number of specific Christian practices that are important to this project. Christian disciples inhabit particular neighborhoods with a vision of life oriented towards the reign of God.

Learning

In the previous chapter, I talked about how this project seeks to participate in the life-long learning that conforms us to the image of Christ for the sake of the world. In this chapter, we saw how the practice neighborliness (especially, for example, hospitality) creates its own learning opportunity. I reviewed Jesus' teaching methods described in the Gospel of Mark, and noted that Jesus seemed to use every opportunity—from more formal teaching moments, to occasions of failure, questions, arguments, and frustrations—to teach his followers his way. I noted that Jesus' teaching method did not insist primarily on imitation of him, as much as it pointed to the reign of God, and imitation of the Father. I also noted that in John's Gospel, the neighboring Spirit is given to the church to continue to teach and form the people of God in the ways of Christ, so that the church might do "even greater works" (John 14:12).

²²⁸ Bass and Dykstra, "Practicing Our Faith," loc. 552-553.

Neighborliness

Chapter 3 looked at neighborliness from the perspective the New Urbanism, the power of community, and social capital. I noted the tremendous potential that neighborhoods have for the common good. In this chapter we noted that neighborliness is a primary category of Christian discipleship. In Luke's Gospel, Jesus affirms the summary of the law, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength, and with all your mind; and your neighbor as yourself" (Luke 10:27). As we participate in God as Christian disciples, we reflect and share God's own love for the world and for our neighbor. We noted how, in the biblical tradition, the love of neighbor transcends and breaks down barriers. I also argued that place is not incidental to the living out of neighborliness. We make meaning as we live out our vocation of neighborliness in a particular place. The making of neighborhoods is part of the work of neighborliness.

Congregations

In chapter 3, we began to note the potential role that congregations can have in their neighborhoods and as learning communities.²²⁹ In this chapter, we noted that congregations have a vital role as a *hermeneutic of the gospel*, and *community of virtue*.²³⁰ I noted how congregations are indeed learning communities of practice. I also discussed the Anglican parish tradition, and what it has to offer, as we think about the relationship of congregation and neighborhood.

²²⁹ This has also been well demonstrated in Ammerman and Farnsley, *Congregation & Community*.

²³⁰ Newbigin, *The Gospel in a Pluralist Society*; MacIntyre, *After Virtue*.

These many themes have come together to provide the orienting framework for this project. These concepts led the PAR Leadership Team to choose a number activities that we part of the overall intervention designed to assist the people of St. Saviour's in forming a learning community engaged in practices of neighborliness. This orienting framework is apparent in the research design that I discuss in chapter 6, and in the discussion and analysis of results in chapters six and seven.

CHAPTER FIVE

METHODOLOGY

Introduction to Methodology

I investigated how the practices of a learning community might enhance the missional engagement of St. Saviour's Anglican Church in their local neighborhood. My specific research question was:

How might a participatory action research intervention, which utilizes a learning community to engage in the Christian practices of neighborliness, help the members of St. Saviour's Anglican Church engage more fully in God's mission in their corporate gatherings and daily lives?

The primary research method employed in this project was transformative mixed methods. This method makes use of both quantitative and qualitative methods to form a PAR intervention.

Rationale for Using the Methodology

Davydd James Greenwood and Morten Levin have written an *Introduction to Action Research*. They define action research as,

... social research carried out by a team that encompasses a professional action researcher and the members of an organization, community, or network ("stakeholders") who are seeking to improve the participants' situation. AR promotes broad participation in the research process and supports action leading to a more just, sustainable, or satisfying situation for the stakeholders.¹

¹ Greenwood and Levin, *Introduction to Action Research*, loc. 274.

The “stakeholders,” as Greenwood and Levin describe them, are in the case of this project, the members of St. Saviour’s Anglican Church who are invited to join God in God’s mission in the neighborhood. These members committed to join in God’s mission in their baptism and, therefore, have an interest in practicing their faith in every aspect of life, together as a congregation gathered, and in their individual lives in the neighborhood.² The “improved situation” that Greenwood and Levin describe, is an increased participation in this mission, particularly through practices of neighborliness. The “broad participation” called for took place in various aspects of the learning community formed through various parish activities, and in the research instruments themselves.

The use of the transformative mixed method’s approach was crucial for exploring my research question, which sought to empower the parish community in forming a learning community around the practices of neighborliness. The baseline questionnaire and interviews helped to paint a picture of where the parish began this process, and served to raise interest for the project in the congregation as a whole. The PAR Leadership Team chose to develop a learning community by employing four parish projects and activities, where the practices of neighborliness would be central, and where the congregation could engage and learn through these practices. Focus groups gathered data about these learnings. The end-line questionnaire and interviews painted a picture of where the congregation had arrived at the end of the process.

² The baptismal covenant within the liturgy of the Anglican Church of Canada contains wonderfully missional language. The General Synod of the Anglican Church of Canada, *The Book of Alternative Services*, 150.

Transformative mixed methods in general, and Action Research in particular, are designed to empower and effect democratically-informed change in a system. This type of research is an intervention in itself. Before the formal interventions began, announcing to the congregation that this research was to happen, and conducting the baseline questionnaire, were early interventions of their own. The announcement and baseline questionnaire highlighted the practices of neighborliness and the importance of learning as a community. When the more formal intervention began, the congregation was prepared to engage. Overall, the methods described here became a catalyst for positive change in the congregation.

Theological Rationale for Using This Methodology

Some may find a project that involves social science research to be an odd undertaking for a priest or a Christian congregation. It may be helpful to articulate a theological rationale for undertaking this project within the framework of social science research in general, and with the methodology of transformative mixed methods and PAR in particular.

Social Science Research

Van Gelder argues that the church does its best missional discernment when its strategic action is not only communally discerned, and biblically and theologically framed, but also theoretically informed.³ Christians can find support for taking on learning from the social sciences within their own biblical and theological tradition.

³ Craig Van Gelder, *The Ministry of the Missional Church: A Community Led by the Spirit*, Kindle ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2007), loc. 1647-1826.

Christians tend to believe that although their knowledge of the world and of the kingdom of God is limited and perspectival, the world can be truly known, which makes information to be gained from the social sciences useful. The social sciences often have the benefit of bringing different information to the table. For those who may find themselves skeptical of the church's voice, and authoritative texts and traditions, the additional perspective of social science research may lend a layer of credibility to the church's missional discernment from what might be for them a more-trusted source.⁴

Participatory Action Research (PAR)

Social science research, as part of a discernment process, has the potential to level the power dynamic. Participatory Action Research (PAR) is particularly designed to accomplish this.⁵ Within PAR, members of the community are empowered to form an Action Research Team (ART). This team conducts the research and plans the interventions that are part of the research. The ART—as part of the system—determines what interventions are to be employed and analyzes these interventions from its own perspective in terms of what is good for the system.⁶ PAR enhances the *communally-discerned* element of the missional discernment process.

⁴ I do not myself accept the premise that science provides a “more-trusted” source, but I understand that some take such a view.

⁵ Greenwood and Levin, *Introduction to Action Research*, loc. 238-239. Davydd Greenwood and Morten Levin describe action research “as a set of collaborative ways of conducting social research that simultaneously satisfies rigorous scientific requirements and promotes democratic social change.”

⁶ David Coghlan and Teresa Brannick, *Doing Action Research in Your Own Organization*, 3rd, Kindle ed. (London: SAGE, 2009), loc. 343-346. David Coghlan and Teresa Brannick argue that, “Action researchers work on the epistemological assumption that the purpose of academic research and discourse is not just to describe, understand, and explain the world but also to change it (Reason and Torbert, 2001). The issue is not so much the form of the knowledge produced or the methodology employed to gather data/evidence, but who decides the research agenda in the first place and who benefits directly from it.”

The use of PAR finds justification within a theological paradigm that values communal discernment and includes the voices of as many as possible. The Christian tradition of the *priesthood of all believers* suggests that all members of the community have something important to contribute to the entire church. Within the New Testament, and especially the writings of Paul, there is strong language that suggests that although there is diversity within the body of the church of Christ, each part of the body plays a crucial role.⁷ Spiritual discernment is possible because the Holy Spirit indwells each member of the body, and since each member receives the same Spirit, each member potentially plays an important role in the process of discernment.

Transformative mixed-methods and PAR have the goal of improving the situation of participants. We refer to this, in theological language, as promoting *the common good*. The interventions of this project seek to help the church become more fully itself in becoming people who follow the commandment of Jesus to love their neighbor. It also seeks to enhance the life of the neighborhood through greater participation in neighborliness.

I made an argument earlier in this paper for biblical and theological reflection in relation to the work of social science, and have closed the circle here by arguing for the legitimacy of social science research in general, and PAR in particular, from a biblical and theological perspective. Having introduced the research methodology, I now explain in some detail the research design.

⁷ See especially 1 Corinthians 12. See also Ephesians 4:4-16, Colossians 2:19, and 3:15.

Research Design

Modified PAR Design

The basic research design for a typical PAR was modified for this thesis project. In a typical PAR, the entire population would have the opportunity to participate in the ART and in creating the PAR design. In this project, I employed a PAR Leadership Team comprised of volunteers from the population. The PAR Leadership team was recruited from members of St. Saviour's who expressed interest in joining the team. The membership of the team is described in chapter 6. The PAR Leadership Team was encouraged to advocate for the maximum benefit of the population in seeking more robust missional participation in the neighborhood.

The PAR Leadership Team

The PAR Leadership Team met three times as the project began. The first meeting was held in October, 2015. At that meeting I introduced some of the literature which provided theoretical lenses, theological frames, and biblical perspectives. Participants suggested additional literature to be considered. The PAR Leadership Team also began to consider what types of interventions might be helpful in creating a learning community at St. Saviour's. I collected data in each meeting of the PAR Leadership Team by keeping a journal of these meetings.

A second meeting of the PAR Leadership Team occurred in January, 2016. The research design began to take shape at this meeting. At that time, we noted that St. Saviour's had already undertaken—or was about to undertake—a number of projects and activities that would involve engagement with practices of neighborliness. It was, therefore, suggested that rather than adding further activities, this research take advantage

of the existing ones with a view to maximizing the learnings in each. It was agreed that St. Saviour's learning community would be formed around the practices of neighborliness in the activities and projects already committed to. This was to be accomplished by consolidating and sharing learnings by various means, including the research instruments themselves. The four parish activities identified included: (1) the formal sponsorship and welcome of a refugee family; (2) a concert project with local musicians; (3) engagement with persons at risk for social isolation, including persons with disabilities; and, (4) the parish's Messy Church.

A third meeting of the PAR Leadership Team took place February, 2016. At this meeting, I presented some results of the baseline questionnaire. The PAR Leadership Team also suggested an intervention that would accompany the refugee sponsorship project. "Guess Who's Coming to Dinner" (GSCTD) would be an event involving house dinners, where hosts and guests are paired without knowing who has been invited. The goal of this intervention was experiential learning through the extension and reception of hospitality and immersion in a neighborly encounter. Each house dinner included a person who told the gathered group about the experience and progress of the family the parish had sponsored as refugees. The invitation to GWCTD can be found in appendix J.

Basic Elements of the Data Collection and Analysis

The active phase of this research project began by establishing a baseline. I employed a baseline questionnaire to gather quantitative data, measuring the missional engagement of individual parishioners in their various neighborhoods. Some qualitative data were also gathered by means of open-ended questions in the same questionnaire.

Further qualitative data were gathered from three interviews. These baseline instruments are described further, below.

The formation of the Learning Community, which is at the heart of this project, was accomplished in four activities and projects which ran between January and July 2016.⁸ These are also described below.

Qualitative data were gathered from meetings of the PAR Leadership Team by means of my own observations recorded in memos and journals. Further qualitative data were gathered by employing a focus group protocol for each project in the intervention. The focus group protocol is also described below.

The research concluded by collecting end-line data. Quantitative data were again gathered by the means of an end-line questionnaire corresponding with the baseline instrument. Additional questions were added in order to gain insight into participants' levels of engagement in the various projects. Demographic questions deemed to be redundant, because the data had been gathered at baseline, were omitted from the end-line instrument. Interviews were also conducted for the end-line, and were based upon a similar protocol as the baseline, with the addition of questions inquiring into learnings from participation in the intervention and its projects. These instruments and protocols are also discussed below and included in the appendices that follow. The basic research design is summarized in Figure 5.1, also below.

⁸ It should be noted that various elements of these projects preceded this period, and many elements continued at St. Saviour's past the conclusion of this research project.

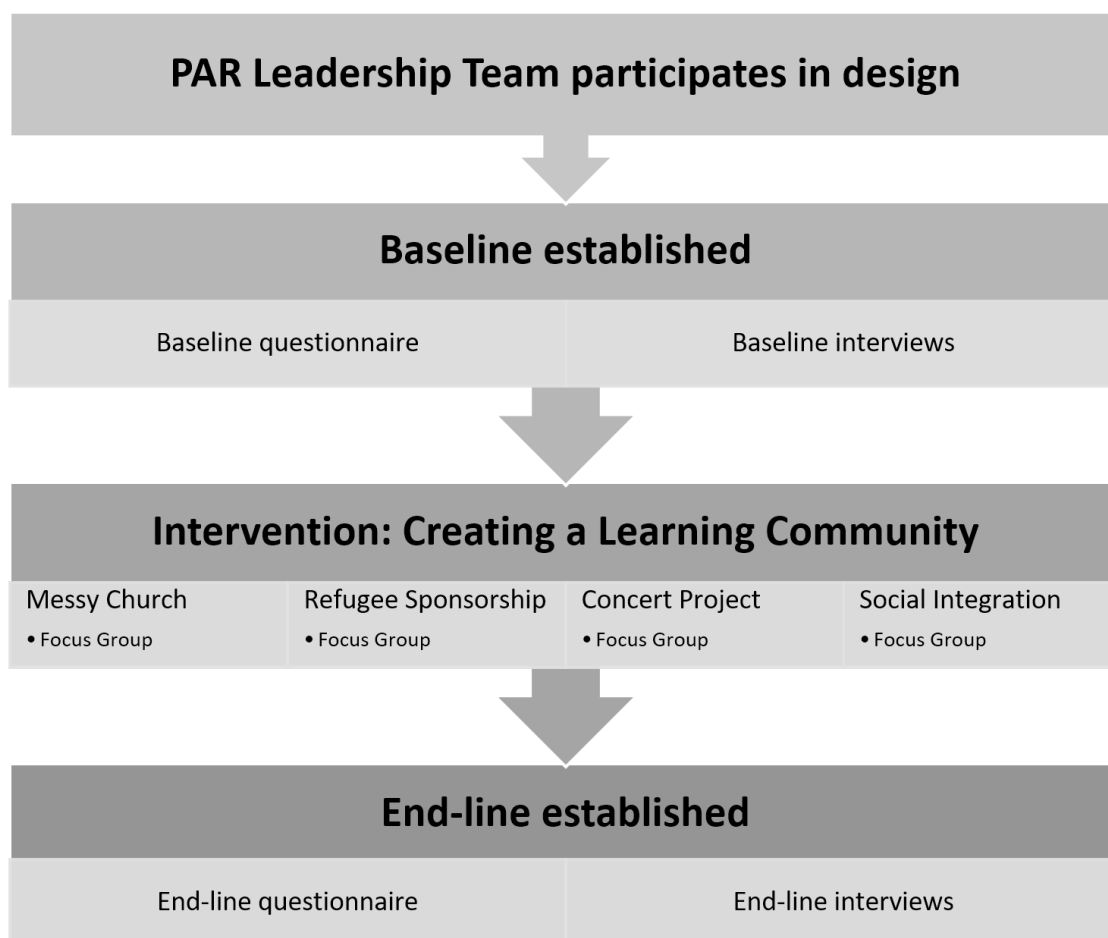


Figure 5.1. Research Design

Development and Use of Instruments

Baseline Questionnaire

The population for the baseline and end-line surveys was all members of the St. Saviour's over the age of eighteen.⁹ Initial field-testing of the questionnaires was

⁹ For the purposes of this study, I am defining church membership as those persons who regularly attend worship at St. Saviour's Church. Traditionally, Anglicans know nothing of church *membership*. Voting members at the annual meetings of "Vestry" are defined as all persons who are regular communicants, support the parish through financial giving, and participation in worship, which have reached the age of sixteen years, and have not voted in the Vestry of another parish during the past six

completed with my cohort colleagues. Final field-testing was completed with volunteer members of a neighboring parish. The baseline questionnaire and implied consent letter are included in appendix A.

The questionnaires were administered as a census of the entire population. I used both Survey Monkey, and printed questionnaires with reference numbers, so that late participants could be encouraged, and so that paired t-tests comparing baseline with the end-line, would be possible.¹⁰ Invitations to complete the online version of the questionnaire were sent by e-mail to all members for whom the parish had an e-mail address. Paper copies were mailed with an addressed, postage-paid return envelope to all others. Each invitation included the implied consent letter. The baseline questionnaire was administered between November 6, 2015 and January 30, 2016. I received a total of eighty responses to 119 invitations, for a return rate of 67.2 percent. The PAR Leadership Team was pleased by the rate of return.

Responses submitted in printed questionnaires were entered into Survey Monkey by myself. The data from Survey Monkey were exported to Microsoft Excel to begin the process of data cleaning. Final data cleaning was completed in SPSS.¹¹ SPSS was also used to complete various statistical analyses.

months. *Parishioners* are normally understood to be those who regularly attend worship. See *Canons of the Diocese of Niagara*, 2014 (1974).

¹⁰ Survey Monkey is an online tool for creating and administering questionnaires. Survey Monkey. Palo Alto, CA: Survey Monkey Inc., www.surveymonkey.com.

¹¹ SPSS is a statistics software program. IBM Corp. Released 2013. IBM SPSS Statistics for Windows, Version 22.0. Armonk, NY: IBM Corp.

Baseline Interview Protocol

Baseline interviews were conducted with respondents to the baseline questionnaire using a quota sample. Three interviews were conducted. Interviewees were selected in proportion roughly to the average attendance at the main Sunday services.¹² I decided that one male and one female interviewee would be chosen from among those who regularly attend the Discovery Service. One person (without reference to gender) would be chosen from the Choral Service. Respondents to the baseline questionnaire were asked if they would be willing to be interviewed and whether they planned to participate in the various projects of the intervention. Those who responded affirmatively created a pool from which I drew my sample. The only other criteria for selection involved the availability of potential interviewees to meet with me.

I personally conducted these interviews in February, 2016. Interviewees signed the informed consent form included in appendix C. These interviews were all conducted at St. Saviour's Anglican Church. Participant responses were audio recorded in two forms. The recordings were transcribed, and coded by myself using the process described below for qualitative data. The baseline interview protocol is included in appendix D.

Focus Group Protocol

Focus group meetings were convened related to each of the projects connected with and forming the intervention of creating a learning community. Focus groups followed the protocols included in appendix F. Focus group participants were asked to

¹² There are normally three Sunday services at St. Saviour's. These include: The Early Service (8:15 a.m., said Holy Eucharist, traditional); The Discovery Service (9:30 a.m., less formal Holy Eucharist with a worship band); The Choral Service (11 a.m., Choral Holy Eucharist in the classic Anglican tradition). By the referring to the *main* Sunday services, I mean only the Discovery and Choral service, where most members attend.

sign the informed consent form as included in appendix G. The focus groups were all conducted at St. Saviour's Anglican Church. Each group took approximately seventy minutes to complete. These focus groups met between June 29 and August 11, 2016. Focus group participants' responses were recorded in audio and video, transcribed, and coded by myself using the process described below for qualitative data. The participants in these focus groups are also described in chapter 6.

End-line Questionnaire

The end-line questionnaire followed the basic design of the baseline questionnaire. Certain aspects of the questionnaire, such as demographic information, were redundant and, therefore, not included. Additional questions asked about respondent's participation in the various activities within the intervention. The coding of the end-line questionnaire followed the same process as the baseline questionnaire. The questionnaire was administered between September 8 and October 4, 2016. A total of 119 invitations were sent to the identical sample as the baseline questionnaire. Each invitation included an implied consent letter. Seventy-two responses were received for a return rate of 60.5 percent, which corresponded favorably with the baseline response rate. The end-line questionnaire and implied consent letter are included in appendix B.

End-line Interview Protocol

The intention and plan had been to repeat interviews at the end-line with the same participants that had been interviewed at baseline. The personal circumstances of two of these participants required a change of plan, since one was unable to meet for an interview, and another had not participated in the intervention's activities. I chose four other persons to participate in the end-line interview whom I knew to have participated in

at least two of the intervention's activities or projects, and who were available to meet with me. The participants in these interviews are described in detail in chapter 6.

As with the baseline interviews, I conducted these interviews personally. These took place between August 15 and September 17, 2016. Three of these were conducted at St. Saviour's Anglican Church, one was conducted at a participant's home, and the other in a coffee shop in the neighborhood. In all cases, the interviews took place where the participant indicated they felt most comfortable. Participants were asked to sign the informed consent form found in appendix G. Participant responses were audio recorded in two forms, transcribed, and coded by myself using the process described below for qualitative data. The end-line interview protocol is included in appendix E.

Intervention and Projects

Learning Community

The PAR Leadership Team planned the intervention that was employed in this project. The main intervention across this PAR study was the establishment of a learning community to engage in and learn through practices of neighborliness. As I explained above, the PAR Leadership Team decided that it would be advantageous to work with the few activities and projects that the congregation had already decided upon, where practices of neighborliness would play a major role. Participation in these were used as occasions for learning. Members of the congregation explored the practices of neighborliness in depth through: (1) the sponsorship of a refugee family; (2) a concert project with local musicians; (3) engagement with persons at risk for social isolation; and, (4) a project designed to assist the social integration of persons at risk for social isolation. This last project included a number of small efforts, such as: (a) friendly visits to a group

home for persons with mental illness; (b) community dinners; (c) The Artaban Supper Club; (d) The Knitting Circle; and, (e) friendly visiting and sacramental ministry for seniors.

Refugee Sponsorship Project

Alan Kurdi died on September 2, 2015. Alan was just three-years old, a Syrian boy of Kurdish descent. His family were refugees from the Syrian conflict, looking to eventually find a new home in Canada through Europe. They died making the treacherous crossing of the Mediterranean Sea. The image of Alan's lifeless body as it lay on a Turkish beach had an enormous impact upon the notice taken of the Syrian refugee crisis by the world. This was especially true in Canada, where this crisis became an issue in the federal election in the summer and fall of that year.

St. Saviour's Anglican Church, and the diocese of which it is a member, committed to refugee sponsorship as a legacy project for significant anniversary celebrations in 2015. The attention that came to the refugee crisis assisted in gaining support for the project within the parish and in the neighborhood. While the refugee sponsorship project of the parish was not an intervention in itself, the project created an opportunity for learning community.

The sponsored refugee family arrived as newcomers to Canada in January of 2016 very soon after the PAR Leadership Team had decided to include this project. There were many ways in which members of St. Saviour's and partners from the neighborhood participated. Members of St. Saviour's, with community members from the neighborhood, made up a steering committee that met regularly to organize the project. Smaller working groups were established for tasks. One was responsible to find

appropriate housing. The family's new home needed to be furnished and equipped. A preliminary budget had to be prepared. A plan had to be made to introduce the family to the everyday activities of life in their new neighborhood. People were needed to welcome the family at the airport, and to bring them to Wellington. Relationships needed to be forged and trust built. Volunteers were needed to introduce the family to public transit, the grocery store, the local mosque, day care, English classes, and banking. The family required assistance in connecting with telephone and other utilities. Coordination was required to help the family gain access to health and dental care.

Many friendships were forged along the way, not only between the refugee family and their new neighbors, but among the many neighbors who came to work together. Many people participated at different levels. The Steering Committee estimated that up to thirty people from the congregation had some direct involvement with the family within the first eight months of their arrival, while up to sixty were involved in project in some way. This number did not include the large wider circle of people who supported the project with financial donations. Appendix O contains data from the end-line questionnaire that further describes the participation of respondents in this project (see especially, Table O.5 and Table O.6).

In addition to the involvement of those who participated directly in the refugee sponsorship project, the congregation was regularly informed about the project. There were celebrations at worship gatherings when the funds were raised to support this endeavor. The celebration continued when the family arrived at the end of January, 2016. Several members of the congregation met the family at a parish dinner in February, 2016. A video was prepared and shown to the congregation in May, 2016, in which the family

shared some of the details of their escape from Syria, as well as the ordeal of life in Jordan as refugees. There were very few members of St. Saviour's who were untouched by the parish involvement in this project.

Guess Who's Coming to Dinner (GWCTD) was an intervention devised by the PAR Leadership Team to assist with telling the story of our refugee family's arrival. This event also allowed participants the opportunity to reflect on the universal human need for hospitality. In this intervention, members of St. Saviour's were for several weeks invited to attend the dinners that would be held on the same evening in June 2016. A copy of an invitation can be found in appendix J. GWCTD was described as "an experience in hospitality, welcome, giving, and receiving."¹³ The invitation explained, "The idea is to find yourself sitting around a dining table with people you may have seen, but have not really met, or do not yet know very well."¹⁴ Six dinners were hosted with a total of thirty-six participants. Each dinner employed the use of a discussion guide that asked participants to reflect together on their experience of giving and receiving hospitality. At least one person who had direct experience working on the refugee sponsorship project was part of each dinner and was asked to share something of their experience.

The Refugee Sponsorship Project Focus Group (Ref-FG) was not only an opportunity to collect data about people's experiences while engaging in practices of neighborliness through the project. The focus group provided an opportunity to reflect upon the experience of the practice of neighborliness in the refugee project, to share

¹³ See the invitation to GWCTD in appendix K.

¹⁴ Ibid.

learnings, and to consolidate new knowledge. Ten persons participated in this focus group and they are described in detail in chapter 6.

The Concert Project

St. Saviour's has an ongoing relationship with local musicians, their audiences, and the neighborhood, through its concert project, known as *Arts on Main*. Arts on Main began when local musicians approached the parish about using the church proper as a performance space. St. Saviour's recognized this opportunity as an occasion for living out its vocation in the neighborhood as a builder of community. The artists that we work with have also seen value in collaborating with us in responding to the needs of persons at risk for social isolation. We are developing partnerships with local businesses to sponsor blocks of tickets that can be sold at reduced rates, or given free, to people whom otherwise would not be able to afford an evening out at a concert. Some seniors and persons with disabilities that we have connected with find themselves in this category.

There were several opportunities for involvement with this project. A steering committee was formed to guide the management of the project overall. This group consisted of six members, all of whom were volunteers from the congregation. Around this group were a committed group of volunteers who offered hospitality to musicians, presenters, and audiences at the various concerts. During the period of this PAR study, from January through August 2016, a total of twenty concerts were held, with audiences ranging in size from thirty-five to 168. The hospitality offered included welcoming people at the door, taking tickets, handing out programs, assisting people to their seats, directing them to facilities, serving refreshments, and generally being a friendly, welcoming presence.

One of my favorite moments came at a concert at the beginning of the summer, where one of our favorite musicians and partners was having a special album release concert, which included other special musical guests. Ticket and refreshment prices were kept intentionally low to ensure that everyone would have a nice time and feel free to purchase the albums on offer. At the beginning of the concert, one of the musicians gave a shout-out from the stage to the volunteers selling the refreshments at the back of the room. The musician asked the crowd, “Where can you go out for a night of music and buy five-dollar tall cans?” (referring to the low price of the excellent craft beer on offer). A person in the crowd yelled out the approving answer: “At church!” That response speaks to the hospitality St. Saviour’s seeks to offer.

As St. Saviour’s began the concert project, some members of the congregation expressed a certain ambivalence. Some struggled to understand the connection between the concerts and the aspiration to join God in God’s mission in the neighborhood. Some wondered if the concert project was really an attempt at money-making for the congregation. In response, leaders of the project tried to emphasize the missional opportunities they saw inherent in the project. They emphasized the opportunity the congregation had to exercise hospitality—and to do so without strings attached—as people made their way in and out of the church building to enjoy the concert experience. Leaders also expressed that a partnership with artists in the creation of beauty was a way of contributing to the common good. These same leaders articulated a vision for the concert project as an opportunity for St. Saviour’s to be exactly the sort of community that it is called to be in the neighborhood: a place of welcome, beauty, refuge, and inclusion.

One of the ways that the creation of a learning community was enhanced in this project, was in a special meeting of leaders of this project, other parish leaders, and some of the people who had expressed ambivalence. This meeting was held in May, 2016. Through a communicative process, a greater understanding was gained concerning the role that St. Saviour's was playing in promoting the common good in the neighborhood in this project. This meeting spawned further conversation at St. Saviour's Parish Council and around dining room tables.

Participant volunteers for the concert project were busy with twenty-six performances during eight months. Because of the frequency of the concerts, some of which were series running over five straight evenings, there was a need to recruit many volunteers. The recruiter was successful in encouraging several people whom I might not have predicted would volunteer. Appendix Q contains data from the end-line questionnaire that further describes the participation of respondents in this project (see especially, Table O.1 and Table O.2). The concert project steering committee reported to me that more than twenty persons participated as volunteers in the project.

The Concert Project Focus Group (Concert-FG) provided an opportunity to reflect upon the experience of practice, to share learnings, and to consolidate new knowledge. Six persons participated in this focus group and they are also described in detail in chapter 6. Five of the participants in this focus group were from the leadership team. The sixth person had enjoyed the experience of volunteering with the project, but had been one of those persons who had previously had difficulty seeing how the project connected with the mission of the church.

Messy Church

Messy Church is a worship service for designed to engage the entire family and be inclusive of children and their needs. The basic concepts and ideas for Messy Church are borrowed from the Messy Church movement which began in the Church of England in 2004.¹⁵ Messy Church avoids some of the challenges that families find with the regular patterns of Sunday worship in many congregations. At Messy Church, adults and children are not segregated, but participate in the various aspects of the worship experience together. Participants can never be late for Messy Church, because it starts when you get there. Adults don't need to worry if their children will sit still, because there is no such expectation.

The experience involves moving among various stations, which include the opportunity to engage with a biblical story and theme, through crafts, games, and stories. Snacks are provided when families arrive and these are enjoyed as families make their way through the various stations. Later in the evening, participants gather for a brief time of singing, story-telling, and prayer, after which a nutritious, child-friendly meal is served. Messy Church is held early on a week-night once a month and many families report that this time is more meaningful to them than four Sundays in church. I note that as the parish priest, I spend more quality time interacting with families at Messy Church, than I am ever able to do in Sunday worship.

There were multiple opportunities for people to participate in Messy Church. The Messy Church planning team meets to plan the program. The team chooses a theme for

¹⁵ Messy Church, "Messy Church: The Story So Far," Abingdon, <http://www.messychurch.org.uk/story-so-far> (accessed February 18, 2017).

the season and then a number of biblical stories, one for each session of Messy Church throughout the year. The Messy Church planning team meets twice between each session to plan the various elements of the upcoming gathering, including crafts, games, and food, related to the theme. The second monthly meeting usually centers around the preparation of craft materials. Each of these meetings give the leadership of Messy Church the opportunity to reflect on their experience of meeting families from the neighborhood.

On the evening of Messy Church, participants and visitors are welcomed by volunteers. Each of the stations have at least one volunteer who interacts with participants, hearing their stories, sharing the details of the activity, and relating the biblical story in connection with it. Other volunteers prepare and present the singing, story-telling, and prayer. Additional volunteers prepare, serve, and clean up from the meal.

In addition to volunteers who assist the gathered community in the experience of Messy Church, there are, of course, the participant-worshippers themselves. The *Annual Report* of St. Saviour's Church for 2016 states that there was an average attendance of fifty-nine guests at Messy Church throughout the year, which included eighteen adult participants, twenty-four children, and sixteen volunteer hosts.¹⁶ Appendix O contains data from the end-line questionnaire that further describes the participation of respondents in this project (see especially, Table O.3 and Table O.4).

¹⁶ Average attendance at Messy Church was virtually unchanged from 2015 in 2016. A full citation for the *Annual Report* is not given because of this thesis project's commitment to confidentiality.

The participant-worshippers at Messy Church who attend each month can generally be described in three categories. The first includes several families who also attend St. Saviour's Sunday services, or who have another family connection with the parish. The second includes several families who attend Sunday worship at other churches, but who enjoy Messy Church at St. Saviour's. The third includes those persons for whom Messy Church is their only worship gathering in any given month.

Most participants heard about Messy Church by word-of-mouth. It has been reported to us from families who attend, that Messy Church is the talk of the playground. Children tend to hear about Messy Church from one another. Parents tend to hear about Messy Church from other parents. A large banner on St. Saviour's building directs people to more information on the parish website.

The focus group for Messy Church participants (MC-FG) was held in June 2016. An open invitation was relayed to all Messy Church participants at the June Messy Church gathering. The nine participants attending the focus group were all volunteers at Messy Church, although not necessarily members of the planning team. The participants are described in chapter 6, below. The focus group provided an opportunity to reflect upon the experience of the practice of neighborliness, to share learnings, and to consolidate new knowledge.

Project with Persons at Risk for Social Isolation

The informal research that St. Saviour's conducted in its neighborhood in 2013 revealed that there were many people living in their neighborhood who were either suffering from, or at risk for, social isolation. The groups of people so identified included: seniors, persons with disabilities, and families with young children. St.

Saviour's understood that part of its vocation in the neighborhood was to build community, and thus, committed to find ways to address and alleviate social isolation for these groups.

The establishment of Messy Church in 2013 was an attempt to foster community among isolated young families. St. Saviour's hired a student as a Community Outreach Worker in the summer of 2014, which helped us to connect with persons with disabilities in the neighborhood. A partnership was developed with a local non-profit that provides housing for persons with disabilities, especially those with mental illness, and some friendships and programs developed. A weekly Bible study was sponsored by members from St. Saviour's in a local group home.

The projects and activities which the PAR Leadership Team identified and connected with the learning community formed around practices of neighborliness included what was referred to as *the project for building community among persons at risk for social isolation*. This project, in fact, included six smaller activities. (1) Monthly visits were made by members of St. Saviour's Youth Group to a group home for a games night and social time. A number of adults accompany the youth on these monthly visits. Youth shared something of their experience with these visits with the congregation by means of a video, and invited the participation of the wider worshipping community. Four additional persons from the congregation were able to join the youth group for these visits.

(2) Community dinners are occasionally offered as a place for the neighborhood to gather. During this PAR study, the Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper invited the

community for dinner and provided an opportunity for the parish to tell the story of its work in refugee sponsorship.

Another dinner was sponsored and provided by the parish especially with neighbors from Artaban Place especially invited and welcomed. Out of this gathering the concept of the Artaban Supper Club was formed.

Luncheons are also held twice a year with the intention of bringing isolated senior's together. We know that many seniors in the neighborhood suffer from social isolation. By employing many volunteers, we are able to provide transportation and accompaniment to these two special gatherings at St. Saviour's. These meals typically occur before Christmas and Easter and include an opportunity to share in Holy Eucharist in the church proper before the meal. A number of seniors tell us that these gatherings are moments that they look forward to throughout the year.

(3) The Artaban Supper Club is sponsored by St. Saviour's and meets monthly. It is an occasion when residents of the non-profit, affordable housing development next door to the church, come and share in friendship and a meal. All people who live in the building are welcome to attend and several St. Saviour's parishioners, most of whom are also residents in the building, offer support for this project.

(4) The knitting circle was established as a place for people who are available during the day to find meaningful social connections. St. Saviour's knitting circle joins with the knitting circle of another congregation in the neighborhood every other week, and social connections are thus multiplied.

(5) St. Saviour's offers friendly visiting and sacramental ministry to a local senior's residence and many seniors who are shut-in their homes by disability. In addition

to the pastoral staff of the parish, several volunteers participated in this work. Appendix O contains data from the end-line questionnaire that further describes participation in these (see especially, Table O.7 and Table O.8).

I convened only one focus group connected with this project and it was related the Artaban Supper Club. I accepted the invitation to attend the Artaban Supper Club meeting on April 29, 2016, and at that meeting shared in the meal and fellowship. Following the meal, I explained my research project, and asked if participants might be interested in participating by attending a focus group. It was suggested by a Supper Club participant that I return for the next gathering and run a focus group following the meal on that night. I returned and ran the focus group on June 27, 2016. Those who attended the dinner on that evening received another introduction to my thesis project and had the consent form explained. Supper Club participants were given the opportunity to exercise a choice not to take part in the focus group, however, all in attendance at the meal remained and participated. There was a total of nine participants in this focus group, four of which, were members of St. Saviour's congregation. These participants are described in detail in chapter 6.

Analysis of Data

Quantitative Data

Survey questions asking for quantitative responses were pre-coded. From these data, I report descriptive statistics, including the total number in the sample (N), frequency, percentage, and mean, where appropriate. I also use inferential statistics, specifically paired and independent t-tests, for analyzing the baseline and end-line data from questionnaires. These measures provide the analysis of data that determines if, in

fact, a statistically significant result is found with respect to change in participants' practices of neighborliness. Questionnaires at both baseline and end-line used numbered identifiers for participants allowing for the paired t-tests, but protecting the confidentiality of respondents.

Qualitative Data

I analyzed the qualitative data utilizing the layers of coding described by Kathy Charmaz in her book, *Constructing Grounded Theory*.¹⁷ Charmaz calls for two main phases of coding where the initial phase of examining each word, line, or segment is followed by a focused, selective phase that draws together significant or frequent codes “to sort, synthesize, integrate, and organize large amounts of data.”¹⁸

My own line-by-line coding, as Charmaz suggests, gave me starting points for my data, without determining its content. This phase of coding also allowed me to generate *in vivo* codes, drawn directly from the language of the participants.¹⁹ The initial phase of coding was followed by focused coding that involved the clustering *in vivo* codes into larger categories. The initial focused coding of various qualitative data sets produced large numbers of focused codes. To bring these to a more manageable number, I proceeded with a second level of focused coding where necessary. Primary-level and secondary-level focused codes are reported in chapter 6, with further detail included in

¹⁷ Charmaz, *Constructing Grounded Theory*. While I use this method for coding, this project does not rely upon Grounded Theory.

¹⁸ Ibid., 115.

¹⁹ Ibid., 117.

appendices L, M, and N. Axial coding further clustered focused codes. Finally, theoretical coding explained the relationships between the axial codes.

The questionnaires included some open-ended questions designed to capture a limited amount of qualitative data. The wording of these questions asked for categorical responses and, therefore, responses were simply coded according to those categories.

Chapter Summary

This chapter described the use of the transformative mixed-methods modified PAR methodology employed in this study. It detailed some of the changes that were made in the research design as originally envisioned, and what was conducted given the realities of conducting PAR research in a learning community and the unpredictability inherent in the real life of a congregation and its people.

The transformative mixed-methods and use of a PAR in this project opened the parish of St. Saviour's to the possibility of embracing change that improved the parish's missional engagement in the neighborhood. Having described the methodology employed in this PAR study we are now ready to consider, in the next chapter, the results of this project.

CHAPTER SIX

RESULTS OF STUDY AND INTERPRETATION

Introduction to Results

This study investigates how the practices of a learning community might enhance the missional engagement of St. Saviour's Anglican Church in their local neighborhood.

The specific research question is this:

How might a participatory action research intervention, which utilizes a learning community to engage in the Christian practices of neighborliness, help the members of St. Saviour's Anglican Church engage more fully in God's mission in their corporate gatherings and daily lives?

In order to pursue this investigation, I employed a transformative mixed methods approach. This method made use of both quantitative and qualitative methods to form a PAR intervention.

In this chapter, I begin by providing a summary of the research design to put the data presented into context. I then describe the participants in the study by providing some detail from the data collected about the PAR team, as well as contributors to both the qualitative and quantitative data, who participated in interviews, focus groups, and questionnaires. I then describe my interrogation of the quantitative data by means of various statistical tests, and the qualitative data by means of coding. I bring the various data into conversation and, finally, I present and summarize the findings.

Setting the Results in Context: A Brief Review of the Research Design

The Transformative Mixed Methods approach employed a PAR Leadership Team to advise on the design of the central intervention, which involved establishing a learning community around practices of neighborliness. This central intervention used four of St. Saviour's activities and projects, where practices of neighborliness were central, as learning opportunities. These included (1) a refugee sponsorship program, (2) St. Saviour's Messy Church, (3) St. Saviour's concert project, and (4) a project designed to assist the social integration of persons at risk for social isolation. This last project included a number of small efforts, such as: (a) The Artaban Supper Club; (b) friendly visits to Indwell (a group home for persons with mental illness; (c) The Knitting Circle; (d) community dinners; and, (e) Senior's programs.²⁰

The PAR Leadership Team was interested to explore the learning that would occur within the practices constituent of the projects and activities themselves, and in the conversation and reflection that were part of ordinary life in the parish, such as small group discussion, public prayer, and sermons. The PAR Leadership Team also intended that the tools designed to capture data for this study—the questionnaires, interviews, and focus groups—would themselves provide opportunity for deeper reflection and learning from the neighborly practices embedded within the various activities and projects. The flow of the research design is represented in Figure 6.1, below.

²⁰ These projects are described in detail in chapter 5.

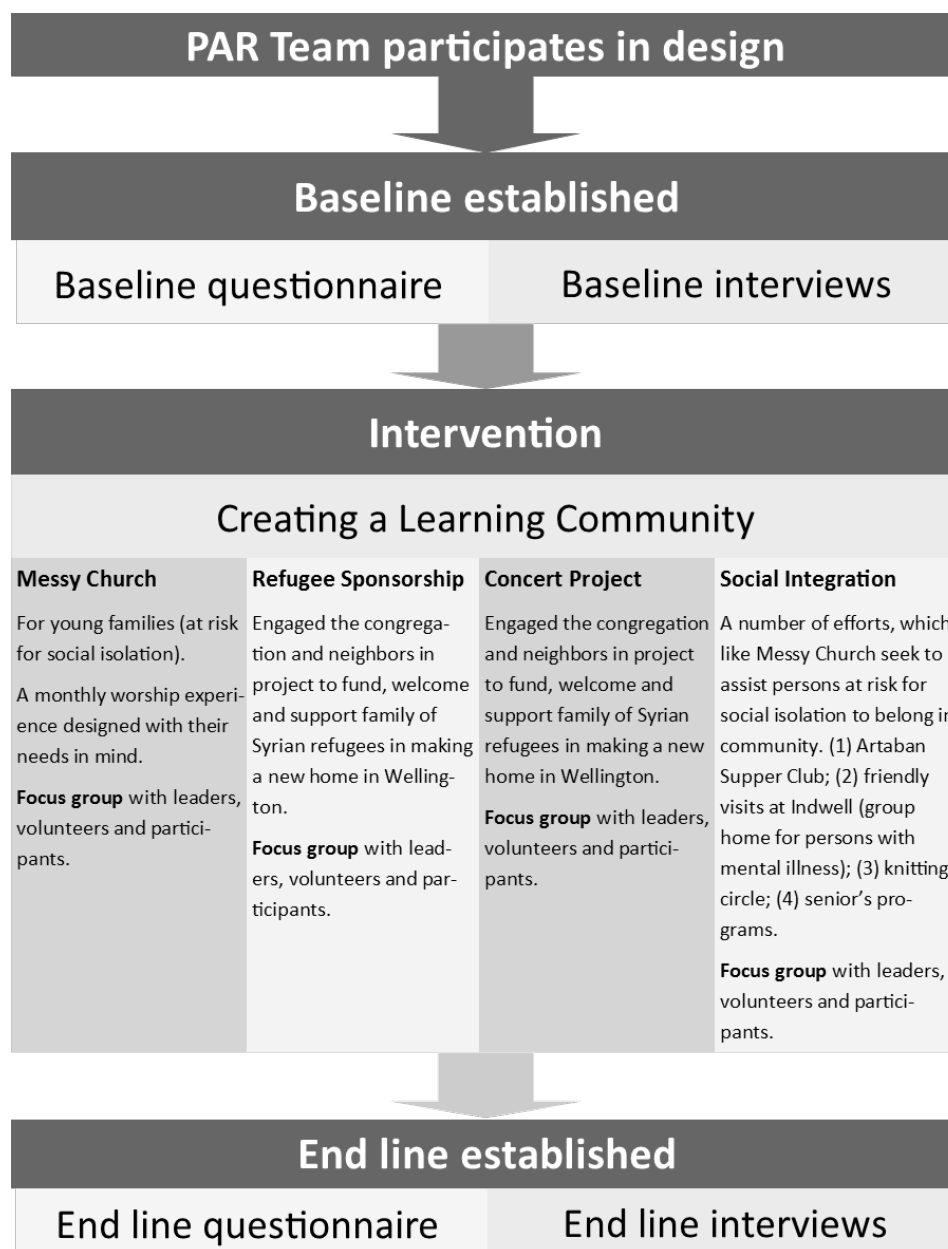


Figure 6.1. Research Design

The research design as envisioned by the PAR Leadership Team was relatively simple. A baseline was established by means of a questionnaire and enhanced by means of three interviews. The baseline questionnaire was administered between November 6, 2015 and January 30, 2016. The baseline interviews were conducted in the period beginning January 1 to March 15, 2016. The interventions and various projects continued from January 1 through June 30, 2016. Focus groups and end-line interviews were conducted in June and August of 2016 and the end-line questionnaire was administered during the period of September 8 to October 4, 2016. I discuss each set of data in detail below.

Description of Participants

There were a number of participants in various aspects of this project. At one level the entire congregation and the neighborhood were involved. It was a *parish* project in the best sense of the word. The widest circle of participation occurred where more focused participants—those involved directly in the learning community intervention and its various projects and activities—encountered their neighbors in mission. A wonderful example of this broad participation occurred within the Refugee Sponsorship project. This project came at a time when people at St. Saviour's were ready to take action to make a difference—if even in a small way—in a disturbing and growing international humanitarian crisis. As we learned, however, the people of St. Saviour's were not the only people ready to take action. The neighborhood came together in significant ways to participate in St. Saviour's project.

PAR Leadership Team

I gathered the PAR Leadership Team from among leaders at St. Saviour's and people who had been in conversation with me about my research project, formally as members of my Journey Partner Team, or in other contexts.²¹ The membership of the PAR Leadership Team is described in Table 6.1, below. The table gives the names of each participant in the team, along with the gender with which they identify, age group, occupation, as well as the activities and projects the participant engaged in as part of the learning community intervention.²²

Table 6.1. PAR Team Members

PAR Team Members				Intervention/Project Participation			
	Gender	Age	Occupation	Messy Church	Refugee	Concert	Social Integration
Leah	Female	30s	Academic	No	Yes	No	Yes
Abbi	Female	30s	Social Science Researcher	No	Yes	Yes	No
Patrice	Female	60s	Legal Clerk	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Marlene	Female	60s	Retired Librarian	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Terry	Male	50s	Academic	No	No	No	No
Dean	Male	50s	Clergy	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

The PAR Leadership Team was also a source of data. I kept a journal of the early meetings of the PAR Leadership Team and wrote memos regarding discussions with members about some of the data collected from questionnaires, interviews, and focus

²¹ The Journey Partner team is a feature of the Doctor of Ministry program in Congregational Mission and Leadership at Luther Seminary, wherein local participants in the student's ministry context are engaged with the student in the learning process.

²² All names are pseudonyms.

groups. The journal from the PAR Leadership Team meetings was coded in the same manner as other qualitative data and was included with other qualitative baseline data. The memos became part of the process of my reflection and analysis on collected data.

Contributors to Quantitative Data

The collection of quantitative data began with a baseline questionnaire that was e-mailed to all regular worship attenders of St. Saviour's for whom the parish had a valid address. The e-mail contained an electronic link which, when followed, took respondents to SurveyMonkey where the questionnaire was administered. One hundred and nine invitations to the baseline questionnaire were sent by e-mail on November 6, 2015; ten were unopened, and four bounced back. SurveyMonkey reported that ninety-five questionnaires were opened by the e-mail recipient, however, only seventy-four were completed. Paper copies of the same questionnaire were mailed to regular worship attenders for whom the parish did not have a valid e-mail address. Ten of these questionnaires were mailed; however, only six were completed and returned. The data from paper copies of the questionnaire were manually entered into SurveyMonkey. The baseline questionnaire closed on January 30, 2016. The overall response rate was 67.2 percent.

The collection of quantitative data continued with an end-line questionnaire that was emailed to same list of regular worship attenders following the PAR intervention and its constituent parts. As with the baseline questionnaire, the e-mail contained an electronic link which, when followed, took respondents to SurveyMonkey where the questionnaire was administered. One hundred and nine invitations to the baseline questionnaire were sent by e-mail on September 8, 2016; fourteen were unopened, and

five bounced back. SurveyMonkey reported that ninety questionnaires were opened by the e-mail recipient, however, only sixty-four were completed.

Paper copies of the same end-line questionnaire were mailed to regular worship attenders for whom the parish did not have a valid e-mail address. Ten of these questionnaires were mailed and eight were returned completed. The data from paper copies of the questionnaire were manually entered into SurveyMonkey. The end-line questionnaire closed on October 5, 2016. Table 6.2 shows the numbers of questionnaires sent and returned for both the baseline and end-line along with their percentages. The overall response rate for the end-line questionnaire was 60.5 percent. Eleven respondents who had not completed the baseline questionnaire completed the end-line questionnaire, which brought the total number of respondents from whom quantitative data was collected to ninety-one.

Table 6.2. Questionnaires Sent and Returned

Questionnaires	Baseline Sent	Baseline Returned	Baseline Returned Percentage	End-line Sent	End-line Returned	End-line Returned Percentage
By E-mail	109	74	67.9	109	64	58.7
By mail	10	6	60.0	10	8	80.0
Total	119	80	67.2	119	72	60.5

The genders of respondents are reported in Table 6.3. The total number of respondents were ninety-one; 36.3 percent of these identified as male, and 63.7 percent as female. The gender make up of end-line questionnaire respondents was similar. The total number of respondents was seventy-two; 36.1 percent identified as male, and 63.8 percent as female.

Table 6.3. Frequencies and Percentages by Gender of Respondents

What is your gender?	(<i>b</i> n) <i>e</i> n	Percent
Male	(33) 26	(36.3) 36.1
Female	(58) 46	(63.7) 63.9
Total	(91) 72	(100.0) 100.0

Age is closely related to issues concerning the stage of life, and possibly relate, therefore, to the amount of time that persons have available, beyond the basic responsibilities of home and work, to participate in a project such as this. The ages of respondents are reported in Table 6.4, below.

Table 6.4. Frequencies and Percentages by Age of Respondents

What was your age on your last birthday?	(<i>b</i> n) <i>e</i> n	(<i>b</i>) <i>e</i> Percent	(<i>b</i>) <i>e</i> Cumulative Percentage
18-29	(6) 5	(6.6) 7.0	(6.6) 7.0
30-39	(16) 13	(18.7) 18.3	(25.3) 25.4
40-49	(10) 6	(11.0) 8.0	(36.3) 33.5
50-59	(17) 15	(18.7) 21.1	(54.9) 54.6
60-69	(27) 24	(29.7) 33.8	(84.6) 88.7
70-79	(7) 5	(7.7) 7.0	(92.3) 95.7
80 or more	(7) 3	(7.7) 4.2	(100.0) 100.0
Total	(90) 71	(100.0) 100.0	

The ages of respondents corresponded with the demographic makeup of the worshipping community at St. Saviour's. While the largest group of persons were in their sixties (*bn* = 27, 29.7%; *en* = 24, 33.8%), a similarly-sized cohort is made up of persons in their forties and fifties taken together (*bn* = 26, 29.7%; *en* = 21, 29.1%). The number of younger adults—those in their twenties and thirties—was only marginally smaller in number (*bn* = 22, 25.3%; *en* = 18; 25.3%).

St. Saviour's hosts three worship opportunities on Sunday mornings as well as one on Wednesday morning. Messy Church is a Thursday evening worship service held once per month. Each of these are distinct worshipping communities within the one parish family. A number of respondents indicated that they "most often attend" more than one of these worship opportunities, which explains why, when ninety-one persons responded to the question at baseline, the frequency for the yes answer for all worship services totaled to 110. See Table 6.5 below.

Table 6.5. Frequencies and Percentages by Worship Service Attendance

Which worship service(s) do you (and your family, if applicable) most often attend?	(<i>bn</i>) <i>en</i> Yes	Percentage	(<i>bn</i>) <i>en</i> No	Total N
Early Service	(12) 9	(13.2) 12.7	(79) 62	(91) 71
Discovery Service	(50) 37	(54.9) 52.1	(41) 34	(91) 71
Choral Service	(33) 28	(36.3) 39.4	(58) 43	(91) 71
Messy Church	(9) 8	(9.9) 11.3	(82) 63	(91) 71
Wednesday	(6) 5	(6.6) 7.0	(65) 60	(91) 71
Total	(110) 87			

The level of education attained by participants is another variable worth noting since this project explores the question of Christian discipleship and learning through practice. St. Saviour's is a highly-educated congregation, with more than 49.4 percent of respondents, and 50.0 percent of end-line respondents, indicating that they have attained a graduate level of education or higher. More than 85.7 percent of the baseline respondents and 81.7 percent at end-line have some form of post-secondary education. See Table 6.6, below.

Table 6.6. Frequencies and Percentages by Level of Education Attained

What is the highest level of education that you have attained?	(<i>b</i> n) <i>e</i> n	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Elementary	(0) 0	(0.0) 0.0	(0.0) 0.0
Secondary	(11) 10	(14.3) 16.7	(14.3) 16.7
Trade	(1) 1	(1.3) 1.7	(15.6) 18.4
Undergraduate	(27) 19	(35.1) 31.7	(50.6) 50.1
Graduate	(18) 12	(23.4) 20.0	(74.0) 70.0
Post-graduate	(20) 18	(22.0) 30.0	(100.0) 100.0
Total	(76) 60	(100.0)	

Another important variable to consider concerning the respondents in the qualitative data is the level of direct participation they had in the various projects and activities that were part of the interventions in the overall PAR project. The PAR Leadership Team felt encouraged by the level of participation in the projects and the opportunity that each would have in contributing to the learning of the congregation

through practice. Table 6.7, below, shows the levels of participation of respondents in Messy Church. Table 6.8 shows the level of participation of respondents in the Concert Project. Table 6.9 shows the same for the Refugee Project and, finally, Table 6.10 shows participation in our projects designed to promote social integration among those at high risk for social isolation.

Table 6.7. Frequencies and Percentages by Level of Participation in Messy Church Project

In the past twelve months, how often did you participate in <i>Messy Church</i> ?	n (N = 71)	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Never	44	62.0	62.0
Rarely	8	11.3	73.2
Sometimes	2	2.8	76.1
Often	4	5.6	81.7
Very often	13	18.3	100.0
Total	71	100.0	

Table 6.7 shows that 38.0 percent of respondents did have some participation in Messy Church. Considering the mixed aged demographic, this level of participation is striking. Likewise, the PAR Leadership Team was encouraged that almost half of respondents (47.9%) had some exposure and participation in the Concert Project (see Table 6.8, below).

Table 6.8. Frequencies and Percentages by Level of Participation in Concert Project

In the past twelve months, how often did you participate in St. Saviour's <i>Concert Project</i> ?	n (N = 71)	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Never	37	52.1	52.1
Rarely	9	12.7	64.8
Sometimes	12	16.9	81.7
Often	7	9.9	91.5
Very often	5	5.5	98.6
Don't know	1	1.4	100.0
Total	71	100.0	

Table 6.9. Frequencies and Percentages by Level of Participation in Refugee Project

In the past twelve months, how often did you participate in St. Saviour's <i>Refugee Sponsorship and Welcome Project</i> ?	n (N = 71)	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Never	15	21.1	21.1
Rarely	21	23.1	50.7
Sometimes	22	31.0	81.7
Often	7	9.9	91.5
Very often	6	6.6	100.0
Total	71	100.0	

There was widespread participation in the Refugee Project by people in the congregation and in the wider neighborhood. Table 6.9 shows that only 21.1 percent of respondents had no participation in the project, meaning that full 78.9 percent of respondents had participated. Almost half the respondents (49.3%) reported that they had participated more than rarely.

Table 6.10. Frequencies and Percentages by Level of Participation in Social Integration Project

In the past twelve months, how often did you participate in St. Saviour's <i>ministries designed to connect with persons at risk for social isolation</i> ?	n (N = 71)	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Never	44	62.0	62.0
Rarely	7	9.9	71.8
Sometimes	7	9.9	81.7
Often	5	7.0	88.7
Very often	8	8.8	100.0
Total	71	100.0	

Table 6.10 describes the participation of respondents in the parish's ministry projects designed to connect with persons at risk for social isolation. Among the twenty-seven respondents (38.0%) who participated in these ministry projects were adults who

supported and accompanied youth members in their work at Indwell, others involved in a smaller project at Artaban Place (our neighbors providing affordable housing for persons with disabilities), and still others who participated in our programs that work with isolated seniors in the neighborhood and wider community.

Contributors to Qualitative Data

I also collected data through several baseline and end-line interviews, as well as focus groups attached to each of the projects that participated in the learning community intervention. I describe the contributors to this data.

Interviews

Qualitative data were collected for the baseline by means of three interviews. Only one of the end-line interviews involved a person interviewed for the baseline. Leah was not only interviewed for both the baseline and end-line, she was a member of the PAR Leadership Team and a significant participant in the social integration project. While I had hoped to interview all three baseline interview participants, their availability unfortunately made this impossible. I was, however, able to interview a few persons for the end-line who had significant experience of the various projects and activities connected with the learning community intervention. These participants are described in Table 6.11 below, in terms of the gender with which they identify, age group, occupation, as well as an outline of the projects and activities with which the participant engaged.

Table 6.11. Interview Participants

Baseline Interviews				Intervention/Project Participation			
	Gender	Age	Occupation	Messy Church	Refugee	Concert	Social Integration
Leah	M	30s	Academic	No	Yes	No	Yes
Anita	F	60s	Educator R	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Scott	M	30s	Counselor	Yes	Yes	No	No
End-line Interviews				Intervention/Project Participation			
	Gender	Age	Occupation	Messy Church	Refugee	Concert	Social Integration
Leah	F	30s	Academic	No	Yes	No	Yes
Patrice	F	60s	Legal Clerk	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Marlene	F	60s	Librarian R	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Evelin	F	30s	Architect	No	Yes	Yes	No
Jessie	F	20s	Researcher	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
R = retired.							

Focus Groups

I convened focus groups for each of the projects and activities associated with the learning community intervention at the heart of this study. Focus groups were designed as opportunities, not only to collect data concerning the learning that had occurred in the neighborly practices connected with each project, but also as opportunities of learning community in and of themselves. Focus group participants are described in the tables below in terms of the gender with which they identify, their age group, as well as an outline of the projects with which each engaged.

Messy Church Focus Group

The Messy Church Focus Group consisted of nine members of the leadership team for Messy Church, as well as table leaders and other volunteers. Four participants identified themselves as male and five as female. All the participants were in the fifties and sixties age groups. All the participants were also engaged to some degree in the other activities or projects within the intervention of the learning community. Three were involved in all four activities; four were involved in at least three; the remaining two focus group participants were involved in both Messy Church and the refugee sponsorship project. See Table 6.12.

Table 6.12. Messy Church Focus Group Participants

Messy Church Focus Group				Intervention/Project Participation			
	Gender	Age	Messy Church Involvement	Messy Church	Refugee	Concert	Social Integration
Patrice	F	60s	TL	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Marlene	F	60s	Co, LT	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Dean	M	50s	TL	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Gideon	M	60s	St, LT	Yes	Yes	No	No
Helen	F	60s	TL	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Murphy	M	60s	Musician	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Kim	F	60s	LT	Yes	Yes	No	No
Howard	M	60s	Co, LT	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Clair	F	50s	LT	Yes	Yes	Yes	No

Co = Coordinator; LT = Leadership Team Member; TL = Table Leader; St = Storyteller.

Concert Project Focus Group

The Concert Project Focus Group consisted of six persons, five of which comprised the leadership team for the Concert Project. I invited the sixth person, Molly, to participate in the focus group because she has a leadership role in the parish, some experience in volunteering with the project, and had articulated a number of interesting

questions and concerns with respect to the project and how it fit within the mission of the church. I was interested to hear Molly's perspective and to follow her learning during this project. Five of the six participants in the focus group identified themselves as female, and one as male. All the participants were in the fifties and sixties age groups. All the participants were also engaged to some degree in the other activities or projects within the intervention of the learning community. Two were involved in all four projects; the remaining four persons participated to some degree in at least three other activities. See Table 6.13.

Table 6.13. Concert Project Focus Group Participants

	Concert Project Focus Group			Intervention/Project Participation			
	Gender	Age	Concert Project Involvement	Messy Church	Refugee	Concert	Social Integration
Dean	M	50s	LT, Vol	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Patrice	F	60s	LT, Vol	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Anita	F	60s	LT, Vol	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Marlene	F	60s	LT, Vol	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Claire	F	50s	LT, Vol	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Molly	F	50s	Vol	No	Yes	Yes	Yes

LT = Leadership Team Member; Vol = volunteer usher, welcome, etc.

Refugee Project Focus Group

The Refugee Focus Group was made up of ten persons of whom three identified as male and seven as female. Participants ranged in age from their thirties to seventies, with five participants in their sixties. Participants had all been involved significantly in the refugee project. Nine of the participants had taken part in the large leadership team for the project. Seven had at least some direct involvement with the refugee family. All the participants were also engaged to some degree in the other projects within the intervention of the learning community. Two were involved in all four activities; the

remaining four persons participated to some degree in at least three other activities. See Table 6.14.

Table 6.14. Refugee Project Focus Group Participants

Refugee Project Focus Group				Intervention/Project Participation			
	Gender	Age	Refugee Project Involvement	Messy Church	Refugee	Concert	Social Integration
Dean	M	50s	LT, Dir	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Gladys	F	50s	Co, LT, Dir	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Evelin	F	30s	LT, Dir	No	Yes	Yes	No
Patrice	F	60s	LT, Prep	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Rosanne	F	70s	LT, dir	No	Yes	No	No
Helen	F	60s	LT, dir	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Randal	M	60s	dir	No	Yes	No	Yes
Marlene	F	60s	LT, Prep	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Howard	M	60s	LT, Prep	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Zoey	F	40s	Co, LT, Dir	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

Co = Coordinator; Dir = significant direct involvement with refugee family; dir = some direct involvement with refugee family; LT = Leadership Team Member; Prep = made preparations for refugee family arrival.

Artaban Supper Club Focus Group

The Artaban Supper Club Focus Group consisted of nine persons. All but one were regular participants in the supper club. Four of the participants are regular worship attendees at St. Saviour's. Eight of the nine participants in the focus group identified themselves as female and the one remaining person as male. All the regular participants in the supper club who attended the focus group are in their sixties and seventies. Other than the Supper Club Focus Group members who are also regular worship attenders at St. Saviour's, none of the focus group members were involved in any of the other projects or interventions. See Table 6.15.

Table 6.15. Artaban Supper Club Focus Group Participants

Artaban Supper Club Focus Group				Intervention/Project Participation			
			Social Integration Project Involvement	Messy Church	Refugee	Concert	Social Integration
	Gender	Age					
Dean	M	50s	ArtG	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Lilah	F	70s	Art	No	No	No	Yes
Celina	F	60s	Art	No	No	No	Yes
Rachel	F	70s	Art	No	No	No	Yes
Andrea	F	70s	Art	No	No	No	Yes
Ann	F	60s	ArtSS, Co	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
Melanie	F	60s	ArtSS	Yes	No	No	Yes
Ada	F	60s	ArtSS	No	No	No	Yes
Stacey	F	60s	ArtSS, Co	No	No	No	Yes

Art = Regular Artaban Supper Club Participant; ArtG = Guest Artaban Supper Club Participant; ArtSS = Regular Artaban Supper Club Participant and St Saviour's parishioner; Co = Coordinator.

Quantitative Data

Comparison of Means Baseline to End-line

One of the ways to measure the possible effect of the PAR is to compare the baseline and end-line data from the questionnaires. I completed several paired t-tests, which compared the means of the same sample of respondents from the baseline to end-line. I could complete these tests because I maintained numbered identifiers for each respondent that corresponded in both the baseline and end-line.

Paired t-tests

T-tests are used to analyze whether there are significant differences between two means, or the means of two groups. Paired t-tests use values for each individual in the data set and are very useful in comparing baseline to end-line in a PAR.

Citizenship

Table 6.16, below, summarizes the t-tests conducted on five questions in the baseline and end-line questionnaires related to citizenship. The first question asked respondents to indicate their level of agreement on a Likert scale. The next four questions used a Likert scale to ask about frequency of practice. In the case of each of these questions but one, the means increased in the same direction. The paired t-test is designed to tell us, whether these changes are statistically significant. Since for each question, $p > 0.05$, the null hypothesis was not rejected, meaning, there was no statistically significant difference in the means baseline to end-line.

Table 6.16. Paired t-tests: Citizenship

Questions Pertaining to Citizenship	$\bar{x}_b$ (N_b)	$\bar{x}_e$ (N_e)	df	t-value	p^{23}
“I think that global issues can be substantively approached through local action. ‘Think globally, act locally.’”	3.90 (49)	4.08 (49)	48	-1.137	0.261
1 = Never; 2 = 1-2 times; 3 = 3-4 times; 4 = 5-10 times; 5 = More than ten times.					
I vote in civic elections when they are held.	4.76 (54)	4.76 (54)	53	0.000	0.261
In the past year, how often have you signed a petition to any level of government.	2.04 (53)	2.11 (53)	52	-0.405	0.687
In the past year, how often have you attended a meeting of your neighborhood association.	1.30 (54)	1.44 (54)	53	-0.904	0.370
In the past year, how often have you attended another type of community meeting (other than church).	1.98 (53)	2.15 (53)	52	-0.655	0.516
1 = Never; 2 = 1-2 times; 3 = 3-4 times; 4 = 5-10 times; 5 = More than ten times.					

²³ Interpretive key for t-test results: N is the total number of responses; $\bar{x}$ is the mean; df is the degrees of freedom; b and e subscripts indicate baseline and end lines data, respectively; p is the probability ($T \leq t$) one-tail; bold font signifies statistically significant change ($p < 0.05$).

Neighorly Compassion and Care

Another set of questions asked respondents about their practices related to compassion and care for neighbors, by asking how frequently they had prayed for a neighbor; assisted them with a task or need; visited them, or anyone in a hospital, nursing home, or senior's residence; or stopped to assist a stranger. In the case of each question, there was an increase in the means from baseline to end-line suggesting a trend, however, none of these alone were statistically significant ($p > 0.05$). See Table 6.17 below.

Table 6.17. Paired t-tests: Neighborly Compassion and Care

Questions Pertaining to Neighborly Compassion and Care	$\bar{x}_b$ (N_b)	$\bar{x}_e$ (N_e)	df	t-value	p
In the past year, how often have you prayed for your neighbors?	3.49 (51)	3.73 (51)	50	-0.747	0.459
In the past year, how often have you assisted your neighbor in some way with a task or need?	3.31 (54)	3.35 (54)	53	-0.156	0.877
In the past year, how often have you visited a neighbor in hospital?	1.39 (54)	1.65 (54)	53	-1.677	0.099
In the past year, how often have you visited anyone in a hospital, nursing home, or senior's residence?	2.63 (54)	2.98 (54)	53	-1.487	0.143
In the past year, how often have you stopped to assist a stranger?	2.80 (51)	2.94 (51)	50	-0.643	0.523
1 = Never; 2 = 1-2 times; 3 = 3-4 times; 4 = 5-10 times; 5 = More than ten times.					

Familiarity with PAR Projects and "The Missional Conversation"

Respondents were asked to rate their familiarity with the PAR projects and activities and the "Missional Church Conversation" on a Likert scale (1 = "no familiarity," 5 = "very familiar"). As with the questions discussed above, all of these questions showed an increased mean from baseline to end line. There was no statistical significant result in the change in mean from baseline to end-line on questions asking

about familiarity with what St. Saviour's has done regarding affordable housing, is doing with its concert projects, or with young families. Neither was their statistical significance in the difference from baseline to end-line on the question asking about familiarity with "the Missional Church Conversation." While there were no statistically significant differences between these means, I note that in each case the means increased. See Table 6.18, below.

Table 6.18. Paired t-tests: Familiarity with Projects and Missional Conversation

Questions Pertaining to Respondent Familiarity with St. Saviour's Projects and Missional Conversation					
How would you describe your familiarity with the following?	$\bar{x}_b$ (N_b)	$\bar{x}_e$ (N_e)	df	t-value	p
What St. Saviour's has done regarding affordable housing?	3.18 (51)	3.37 (51)	50	-0.798	0.429
What St. Saviour's is doing with its concert projects?	3.15 (52)	3.33 (52)	51	-0.766	0.447
What St. Saviour's is doing to build community among persons at risk for social isolation?	2.46 (50)	3.14 (50)	49	-3.420	0.001
What St. Saviour's is doing with young families?	3.22 (51)	3.55 (51)	50	-1.554	0.127
The "Missional Church Conversation?"	3.12 (49)	3.57 (49)	48	-1.880	0.066
1 = No familiarity; 2 = Uncertain; 3 = Somewhat familiar; 4 = Familiar; 5 = Very familiar					

There was statistical significance in the increase of means, baseline to end-line, on one question. The question asked about familiarity with "what St. Saviour's is doing to build community among persons at risk for social isolation?" For this question, $\bar{x}_b = 2.46$ and $\bar{x}_e = 3.14$, $t_{(50)} = -3.420$, $p = 0.001$. Because the p-value is less than 0.05, the null hypothesis is rejected. I conclude, therefore, that there is a relationship between the variables. The variables in the case of this question are the respondent's familiarity with what St. Saviour's is doing to build community among persons at risk for social isolation

(dependent variable) and the elapse of time from baseline to end-line (independent variable). While I can say that there is statistical difference in responses baseline to end-line regarding St. Saviour's work to build community among socially isolated persons, we cannot necessarily conclude that the interventions were responsible for this; I can only say that there was a possible effect. Other variables may be at work. Nevertheless, it seems likely that the PAR had the effect of increasing awareness of St. Saviour's work building community among persons at risk for social isolation.

Neighborly Generosity

Just two questions were asked in the baseline and end-line questionnaires regarding the practice of generosity towards neighbors. The questions enquired into the frequency of practice by means of a Likert scale (1 = "never," 5 = "more than ten times"). The first question asked, "In the past year how often have you given money to someone who asked (other than a family member)?" The second asked, "In the past year how often have you donated money to a parish partner or other agency that cares for the poor in our city?" The mean for the first question's answers responses increased slightly from baseline to end-line ($\bar{x}_b = 2.73$ and $\bar{x}_e = 2.88$). There was a decrease in the means baseline to end-line for the second question ($\bar{x}_b = 3.09$ and $\bar{x}_e = 2.80$). Neither of these differences were statistically significant ($p = 0.522$ and $p = 0.262$, respectively, >0.05). See Table 6.19, below.

Table 6.19. Paired t-tests: Neighborly Generosity

Questions Pertaining to Generosity Towards Neighbors	$\bar{x}_b$ (N _b)	$\bar{x}_e$ (N _e)	df	t-value	p
In the past year how often have you given money to someone who asked (other than a family member)?	2.73 (52)	2.88 (52)	51	-0.645	0.522
In the past year how often have you donated money to a parish partner or other agency that cares for the poor in our city?	3.09 (54)	2.80 (54)	53	1.134	0.262
1 = Never; 2 = 1-2 times; 3 = 3-4 times; 4 = 5-10 times; 5 = More than ten times.					

Hospitality

The baseline and end-line questionnaires asked seven questions related to the practice of hospitality. See Table 6.20, below. All of these questions but one revealed no statistically significant differences, although the means of each increased baseline to end-line. The one question showing significance asked, “In the past year how often have you listened to a stranger?” The baseline and end-line means had a statistically significant change ($\bar{x}_b = 2.80$ and $\bar{x}_e = 3.28$; $t_{(53)} = -2.040$, $p = 0.046$). Participants reported an increase in the practice of listening to strangers from the time they responded to the baseline questionnaire to the time when they provided responses at end-line that was statistically significant. It seems likely that the PAR intervention had an effect.

Table 6.20. Paired t-tests: Hospitality

Questions Pertaining to Hospitality	$\bar{x}_b$ (N _b)	$\bar{x}_e$ (N _e)	df	t-value	p
“I welcome strangers into my home.”	2.33 (54)	2.43 (54)	53	-0.566	0.574
1 = Strongly disagree; 2 = Disagree; 3 = Both agree and disagree; 4 = Agree; 5 = Strongly agree					
In the past year how often have you invited a neighbor into your home?	2.52 (54)	2.78 (54)	53	-1.244	0.219
In the past year how often have you made a new friend?	2.67 (52)	2.81 (52)	51	-0.599	0.552
In the past year how often have you listened to a stranger?	2.80 (54)	3.28 (54)	53	-2.040	0.046
In the past year how often have you started a conversation with a complete stranger?	3.06 (53)	3.43 (53)	53	-1.517	0.135
In the past year how often have you learned something from one of your neighbors that enriched your life?	2.73 (49)	3.04 (49)	48	-1.400	0.168
1 = Never; 2 = 1-2 times; 3 = 3-4 times; 4 = 5-10 times; 5 = More than ten times.					

Missional Engagement and Understanding of Neighbor's Needs

I conducted paired t-tests on data from six questions related to missional engagement and the respondent's understanding of neighbor's needs. See Table 6.21. All of these questions asked for the respondent's level of agreement with statements on a Likert scale, (1 = “strongly disagree,” 5 = “strongly agree”). The question asking the respondent if they believed that St. Saviour's does “a good job engaging with God in God's mission in the neighborhood,” saw a small decrease in the mean from baseline to end-line, ($\bar{x}_b = 3.90$, $\bar{x}_e = 3.88$, $p = 0.919$). The second question asked for level of agreement with the statement, “I feel that I do a good job engaging with God in God's mission in my neighborhood.” The mean increased from baseline to end-line from 3.24 to 3.35 (N = 49); however, this result was not statistically significant ($p = 0.584$).

The next two questions asked whether respondents thought they understood the primary needs of people in the neighborhood and in the city. The mean of these two question also increased from baseline to end-line, but neither were statistically significant.

Table 6.21. Paired t-tests: Missional Engagement and Understanding of Needs

Questions Pertaining Missional Engagement and Confidence in Understanding the Needs of Neighbors	$\bar{x}_b$ (N_b)	$\bar{x}_e$ (N_e)	df	t-value	p
“I feel that St. Saviour’s does a good job engaging with God in God’s mission in the neighborhood.”	3.90 (51)	3.88 (51)	50	0.102	0.919
“I feel that I do a good job engaging with God in God’s mission in my neighborhood.”	3.24 (49)	3.35 (49)	48	-0.552	0.584
“I think that I understand the primary needs and issues faced by people in my neighborhood”	3.32 (47)	3.38 (47)	46	-0.308	0.759
“I think that I understand the primary needs and issues faced by people in my city.”	3.54 (52)	3.54 (52)	51	0.000	1.000
“I believe that I am doing my part helping to address the needs in my neighborhood.”	3.23 (53)	3.28 (53)	52	-0.282	.0779
“I believe that I am doing my part helping to address the needs in my city.”	2.92 (49)	3.20 (49)	48	-1.549	0.128
1 = Strongly disagree; 2 = Disagree; 3 = Both agree and disagree; 4 = Agree; 5 = Strongly agree					

Finally, the questionnaire asked respondents whether they believed they were “doing (their) part helping to address the needs” of the neighborhood and city. The means of these questions increased baseline to end line, however, the change was without statistical significance ($\bar{x}_b = 3.23$, $\bar{x}_e = 3.28$, $p = 0.0779$; $\bar{x}_b = 2.92$, $\bar{x}_e = 3.20$, $p = 0.128$).

Neighborly Relations and Interactions

Another set of four questions asked about neighborly relations and interactions. The first three of these questions asked respondents to indicate level of agreement on a

Likert scale (1 = “strongly disagree,” 5 = “strongly agree”). These statements were: (1) “I feel that I have meaningful relationships with my neighbors;” (2) “I believe that I understand Jesus’ command to love our neighbors;” and (3) “I feel that I am obedient to Jesus’ command to love my neighbor.” The results of the paired t-tests are found in Table 6.22, below.

Table 6.22. Paired t-tests: Neighborly Relations and Interactions

Questions Pertaining Neighborly Relations and Interaction	$\bar{x}_b$ (N _b)	$\bar{x}_e$ (N _e)	df	t-value	p
“I feel that I have meaningful relationships with my neighbors.”	3.53 (53)	3.53 (53)	52	0.000	1.000
“I believe that I understand Jesus’ command to love our neighbors.”	4.13 (54)	4.28 (54)	53	-1.033	0.306
“I feel that I am obedient to Jesus’ command to love my neighbor.”	3.47 (53)	3.60 (53)	52	-0.707	0.482
1 = Strongly disagree; 2 = Disagree; 3 = Both agree and disagree; 4 = Agree; 5 = Strongly agree					
In the past year how often have you connected people in your neighborhood with each other based on need, interest, or ability.	2.14 (51)	2.24 (51)	50	-0.388	0.699
1 = Never; 2 = 1-2 times; 3 = 3-4 times; 4 = 5-10 times; 5 = More than ten times.					

Most of these questions saw only a small increase in the mean from baseline to end-line, however, none of these results were found to be statistically significant. The first question saw the mean remain constant from baseline to end line. The final question, regarding neighborly relations and interaction, asked, “In the past year how often have you connected people in your neighborhood with each other based on need, interest, or ability.” Responses were on a Likert scale for frequency (1 = “never,” 5 = “more than ten times”). A small increase in the mean from baseline to end-line was shown, however, this result was without statistical significance.

Worship and Daily Life

Finally, I conducted a paired t-test on the question that enquired into the respondent's view on the relationship between worship and daily life. I asked for indications of level of agreement with the statement, "I believe that there is a direct connection between what we do in worship at church and how I live my daily life." Responses were on the Likert scale (1 = "strongly disagree," 5 = "strongly agree"). There was an increase in means from baseline to end-line that was statistically significant." The baseline mean was 3.97 and the end-line 4.69. The p-value was less than 0.001. The result was statistically significant. It appears to be likely that the PAR helped participants to grow in their understanding.

Table 6.23. Paired t-test: Worship and Daily Life

Question Pertaining to Worship and Daily Life	$\bar{x}_b$ (N _b)	$\bar{x}_e$ (N _e)	df	t-value	p
"I believe that there is a direct connection between what we do in worship at church and how I live my daily life."	3.89 (54)	4.69 (54)	53	-5.654	0.000
1=Strongly disagree; 2=Disagree; 3=Both agree and disagree; 4=Agree; 5=Strongly agree					

Summary: Paired t-tests

In summary, paired t-tests comparing the means of baseline and end-line responses of individual respondents found statistically significant results in only three questions. These are summarized in Table 6.24, below.

Table 6.24. Questions Where Paired t-Tests Found Statistical Significance

Question	$\bar{x}_b$ (N _b)	$\bar{x}_e$ (N _e)	df	t-value	p
“I believe that there is a direct connection between what we do in worship at church and how I live my daily life.”	3.89 (54)	4.69 (54)	53	-5.654	0.000
1=Strongly disagree; 2=Disagree; 3=Both agree and disagree; 4=Agree; 5=Strongly agree					
In the past year how often have you listened to a stranger?	2.80 (54)	3.28 (54)	53	-2.040	0.046
1=Never; 2=1-2 times; 3=3-4 times; 4=5-10 times; 5=More than ten times.					
Familiarity with what St. Saviour’s is doing to build community among persons at risk for social isolation?	2.46 (50)	3.14 (50)	49	-3.420	0.001
1= No familiarity; 2=Uncertain; 3=Somewhat familiar; 4=Familiar; 5=Very familiar					

Independent t-tests

Independent t-tests are also used to determine if there are significant differences between means. In an independent t-test, the means of different groups are compared. I conducted several independent t-tests for various groups of respondents. The groups to which respondents were assigned were determined by responses to demographic and other questions in the questionnaire. Respondents were grouped by frequency of worship attendance, primary worship service of attendance, and level of participation in the intervention projects. I conducted several independent t-tests in order to investigate whether the data provided any further insight into for the change in mean from baseline to end-line in the questions that showed statistically significant change in the paired t-tests discussed above. The three questions listed in Table 6.24, above, were interrogated in this way.

Worship and Daily Life

I was interested first to learn if any quantitative data collected accounted for the change in mean for the question asking the level of agreement with the statement, “I believe that there is a direct connection between what we do in worship at church and how I live my daily life.” I first conducted an independent t-test to see if there was any difference between those who regularly attended worship, and those who did not, in terms of the change in mean regarding views on the connection between worship and daily life. The results of this test can be seen in Table 6.25. These statistics show that both frequent worship attenders (those who attend more than one Sunday per month), and less frequent worship attenders (one Sunday per month or less), had increases that were statistically significant. Whether respondents had frequent participation in worship did not seem to affect their changing views regarding the connection between worship and daily life.

Table 6.25. Independent t-test: Worship and Daily Life by Other Variables

Question/Variable	$\bar{x}_b$ (N _b)	$\bar{x}_e$ (N _e)	df	t-value	p
“I believe that there is a direct connection between what we do in worship at church and how I live my daily life.”					
High attendance worshippers (more than one Sunday per month) only	4.05 (64)	4.82 (50)	112	-5.780	0.000
Low attendance worshippers (one Sunday per month or less) only	3.56 (16)	4.50 (20)	34.0	-3.481	0.002
Early Service Attendees	4.18 (11)	4.75 (8)	13.7	-1.838	0.088
Discovery Service Attendees	4.00 (45)	4.80 (35)	77.4	-4.846	0.000
Choral Service Attendees	3.96 (26)	4.77 (26)	47.5	-3.921	0.000
Parish Council Members	4.24 (17)	4.67 (15)	27.5	-1.460	0.156
Parish Council Non-members	3.95 (80)	4.73 (70)	147.5	-6.360	0.000
High participation in intervention projects	4.04 (24)	4.92 (24)	46	-4.509	0.000
Low participation in intervention projects	3.91 (56)	4.63 (46)	91.7	-4.574	0.000
1 = Strongly disagree; 2 = Disagree; 3 = Both agree and disagree; 4 = Agree; 5 = Strongly agree					

I also investigated whether there may be differences in the way that persons attending different services experienced change in their perceptions about the connection between worship and daily life by worship service attended. I ran an independent t-test on the same question. See Table 6.25, above. Both Discovery Service attenders and Choral Service attenders had statistically significant differences in the means of the answer to the question ($\bar{x}_b = 3.98$, $\bar{x}_e = 4.76$, $p < 0.001$; $\bar{x}_b = 4.00$, $\bar{x}_e = 4.73$, $p < 0.001$), while Early Service attenders did not ($\bar{x}_b = 4.22$, $\bar{x}_e = 4.67$, $p = 0.295$). I did note that Early Service worship attenders had a higher mean at baseline than either of the other two groups. I also

note that the size of the Early Service worship attender's group is much smaller ($N_b = 9$, $N_e = 6$). The small sample size has an effect on the test's ability to determine significance.

My perception was that Early Service worship attenders did not generally have a high degree of participation in other aspects of the intervention, and so I was curious to investigate levels of participation in the intervention's projects. Based on frequencies of participation in the various activities within the intervention, I divided the sample into two groups. High participators were persons who participated in at least four activities of the project ($N_b = 56$, $N_e = 49$). Low participators were those who had participated in three or less ($N_b = 23$, $N_e = 21$). I conducted an independent t-test with these two groups on the baseline and end-line means for the question concerning the connection between worship and everyday life. The results of that test are also shown in Table 6.25, above. Since both groups share statistical significance in the difference in means, I note that the change in perception regarding the connection between worship and daily life did not seem to be effected by frequency of participation.

Members of St. Saviour's parish council had enjoyed formation around missional issues in the past, and so I was also curious to investigate whether there were differences among people who had served on St. Saviour's parish council and those who had not. I divided the sample into those who had participated in parish council during the past three years ($N_b = 17$, $N_e = 15$), and those who had not ($N_b = 80$, $N_e = 70$). The results of the independent t-tests of means of these two groups for the question concerning the connection between worship and everyday life, baseline and end-line are also shown in Table 6.25, above. There was statistical significant in the change, baseline to end-line,

among parish council non-members ($\bar{x}_b = 3.95$, $\bar{x}_e = 4.73$, $p < 0.001$), but no statistical significance in the change for members ($\bar{x}_b = 4.24$, $\bar{x}_e = 4.67$, $p = 0.156$). The small sample size for parish council members as well as the fact that their mean at baseline was already high may contribute to the fact there was no statistically significant result for this group.

Welcoming Strangers and Learning from Neighbors

The question asking respondents to indicate their frequency of practice— “In the past year how often have you listened to a stranger?”—reflects hospitality and openness. I ran several independent t-tests on the data from this question and compared the same groups used in the previous test, namely: (1) high and low worship attenders; (2) Early Service, Discovery Service, and Choral Service worship attendees; (3) parish council members (within the past three years) and non-members, and (4) persons with high or low participation in the intervention projects. The results of this analysis are shown in Table 6.26, below.

Table 6.26. Independent t-tests: Hospitality by Other Variables

Question/Variable	$\bar{x}_b$ (N _b)	$\bar{x}_e$ (N _e)	df	t-value	p
In the past year how often have you listened to a stranger?					
High participation in intervention projects	2.79 (24)	3.17 (24)	45.1	-1.002	0.322
Low participation in intervention projects	2.95 (55)	3.17 (46)	94.7	-0.968	0.336
Parish Council Members	3.24 (17)	3.13 (15)	30.0	0.232	0.272
Non-Parish Council Members	2.90 (79)	3.17 (70)	145.7	-1.376	0.171
Early Service Attenders	3.09 (11)	3.00 (8)	14.3	0.134	0.895
Discovery Service Attenders	3.02 (45)	3.26 (35)	74.9	-0.869	0.388
Choral Service Attenders	2.88 (26)	2.85 (26)	49.7	0.116	0.908
Low Worship Attenders	3.00 (16)	3.00 (16)	29.3	0.000	1.000
High Worship Attenders	2.87 (63)	3.24 (50)	104.8	-1.687	0.095
1 = Never; 2 = 1-2 times; 3 = 3-4 times; 4 = 5-10 times; 5 = More than ten times.					

The results of these independent t-test showed that was no statistical significant change in the mean, baseline to end-line, when these groups were analyzed separately.

Familiarity with St. Saviour's Projects

The comparison of baseline and end-line responses to the question asking respondents to indicate their familiarity with what St. Saviour's is doing to build community among persons at risk for social isolation, revealed a statistically significant result in the increase of means. This may be an indication that the PAR intervention played a role in the respondent's developing understanding of these initiatives in parish

life. I conducted several independent t-tests on the data from this question and compared the same groups used in with the data discussed above, namely: (1) high and low worship attenders; (2) Early Service, Discovery Service, and Choral Service worship attendees; (3) parish council members (within the past three years) and non-members, and (4) persons with high or low participation in the intervention projects. To these groups, I added an additional pair of groups for analysis, (5) persons who had participated in the project for persons at risk for social isolation and non-participants. The results of this analysis are shown in Table 6.27, below.

The results of these independent t-test showed that was no statistical significant result for the change in the mean, baseline to end-line, most of these groups. The groups that were exceptions included those who had low participation in the intervention projects in general ($\bar{x}_b = 2.28$, $\bar{x}_e = 2.80$, $p = 0.040$), respondents who reported low rates of attendance in worship ($\bar{x}_b = 2.13$, $\bar{x}_e = 3.10$, $p = 0.003$), and persons who had not participated in the projects for the integration of persons at risk for social isolation ($\bar{x}_b = 2.37$, $\bar{x}_e = 2.95$, $p = 0.008$).

Table 6.27. Independent t-tests: Familiarity with St. Saviour's Projects

Question/Variable	$\bar{x}_b$ (N _b)	$\bar{x}_e$ (N _e)	df	t-value	p
What St. Saviour's is doing to build community among persons at risk for social isolation?					
High participation in intervention projects	3.17 (24)	3.17 (24)	44.8	-0.024	0.981
Low participation in intervention projects	2.28 (52)	2.80 (45)	95	-2.079	0.040
Parish Council Members	3.41 (17)	3.00 (14)	27.4	1.116	0.274
Non-Parish Council Members	2.63 (76)	2.93 (68)	136.5	-1.697	0.092
Early Service Attenders	2.80 (10)	2.75 (8)	11.7	0.088	0.932
Discovery Service Attenders	2.73 (44)	2.85 (34)	72.6	-0.501	0.618
Choral Service Attenders	2.88 (26)	2.80 (26)	46.9	0.287	0.775
Low Worship Attenders	2.13 (16)	3.10 (20)	34.0	-3.229	0.003
High Worship Attenders	2.77 (60)	2.85 (48)	96.5	-0.426	0.673
Projects for Integration of Persons at Risk for Social Isolation Participants	2.94 (35)	2.89 (28)	58.9	0.182	0.856
Projects for Integration of Persons at Risk for Social Isolation Non-participants	2.37 (41)	2.95 (40)	79	2.272	0.008
1 = No familiarity; 2 = Uncertain; 3 = Somewhat familiar; 4 = Familiar; 5 = Very familiar					

I was initially surprised by these findings as I had perhaps assumed that the PAR interventions would have a greater impact upon those with *higher* levels of participation in the projects themselves, and/or Sunday worship where these projects were often discussed and highlighted. These results, however, show that there were increases that were statistically significant in familiarity with what St. Saviour's is doing among

persons at risk for persons at risk for social isolation among persons with the *lowest* level of participation, and only among persons in these groups. Close attention to the data points to a possible explanation for these findings. When the baseline means of groups with lower participation are compared with the baseline means of persons with higher levels of participation, in each case, the means of means of the low participation groups are strikingly lower. Respondents reporting low participation in the intervention projects had a baseline mean of 2.28, compared with those with high participation who had a baseline mean of 3.17. Respondents reporting low levels of attendance in worship had a baseline mean of 2.13, compared with persons with higher levels of worship attendance who had a mean of 2.27. Respondents who had not participated in the projects for the integration of persons at risk for social isolation had a baseline mean of 2.37, compared with persons who had participated, who had a mean of 2.94. The lower means at baseline of these groups suggests that there was a greater potential for the PAR to have the effect of informing these groups of the work being done among persons at risk for social isolation. This, indeed, seems to have been the case.

Qualitative Data

The qualitative data for this study were gathered from interviews and focus groups which were audio (and sometimes, video) recorded. I transcribed and coded these myself. The coding involved a word-by-word, line-by-line, and event-by-event reading of the transcripts as they were transcribed and in their final written form. I first identified *in vivo* codes (in the words of the participants themselves), and then gathered these into focused codes around various themes. Noticing relationships between the focus codes, these were gathered into axial codes. I paid close attention to the relationships between

axial codes, and finally described these in a set of theoretical codes. I explain the details of this data, its coding and the theoretical view of their relationships below.

Baseline Qualitative Data

The baseline qualitative data were collected from five sources in total. These five sources included three interviews, journal notes from the PAR Leadership Team meetings, and the responses to open-ended questions in the baseline questionnaire. Each of the sources were coded as described above, moving from *in vivo*, through focused and axial codes, towards a theoretical coding describing relationships in the qualitative data.

The interviews did not begin as a written source. I had audio recorded each of the three baseline interviews. I transcribed these myself as part of the word-by-word, line-by-line, and event-by-event process coding in the words of the respondents themselves (*in vivo*). I also treated written responses to the open-ended questions in the baseline questionnaire as *in vivo* codes. Each relevant entry in my journal notes from PAR Leadership Team meetings was treated as an *in vivo* code.

Axial and Focused Codes for Baseline Data

I began by keeping the *in vivo* codes from all sources in two basic groups. The first included only the written responses from the questionnaire. The second included the three interviews and the PAR Leadership Team meeting journal.

Baseline Qualitative Data from Questionnaire

I compiled a total of eighty-three primary-level focused codes from the initial *in vivo* codes arising from the questionnaire responses. Table L.1 through Table L.6 in

appendix L, lists the various primary-level focused codes with their related frequency for each open-ended question in the questionnaire.

I proceeded with a second round of focused coding to bring the number of secondary-level focused codes to a more manageable number. I identified thirty-seven secondary-level focused codes and these are listed in Table L.7, in appendix L.

Axial codes clustered these focused codes into larger themes. I found five axial codes arising from the questionnaire responses. I list these, together with their respective focused codes, in Table L.8, in appendix L.

Baseline Qualitative Data from Interviews and Journal

I repeated a similar process with data collected in interviews and PAR Leadership Team meetings. I identified a total of thirty-eight focused codes from the initial *in vivo* codes arising from these data; these are listed in alphabetical order in Table M.1, in Appendix M. Axial codes clustered these focused codes into larger themes. The axial codes arising from the questionnaire responses, together with their respective focused codes are listed in Table M.2, in appendix M.

Baseline Qualitative Data Combined

Once I had completed the focused and axial coding of the baseline data separately, as described above, I noticed a striking similarity in the data and decided to combine the focused codes from all baseline sources and repeat the step of axial coding. In this step, I collated the thirty-seven secondary-level focused codes from the baseline questionnaire with the thirty-eight focused codes from the interviews and journals. This resulted in a total seventy distinct focused codes after duplicates were combined. See Table 6.28, below.

Table 6.28. Focused Codes for Baseline Qualitative Data

Focused Codes		
1. Accepting others.	25. Caring for refugees.	48. Living the faith in everyday life.
2. Acting with compassion and care.	26. Caring for seniors.	49. Making a difference in the lives of neighbors.
3. Appreciating a sense of belonging.	27. Concern for environmental factors.	50. Meeting needs in the neighborhood around St. Saviour's.
4. Appreciating a sense of safety and security.	28. Concern for persons who have lost their pensions.	51. Meeting people in the neighborhood.
5. Appreciating access to transportation.	29. Concern regarding affordable housing.	52. Noticing neighbors with specific challenges.
6. Appreciating accessibility for persons with disabilities.	30. Concern regarding gentrification.	53. Noticing newcomer neighbors from other cities.
7. Appreciating accessibility to nature and parks in the city and neighborhood.	31. Concern regarding schooling.	54. Noticing Wellington's shifting economy.
8. Appreciating affordability.	32. Concern regarding traffic.	55. Observing employment issues.
9. Appreciating availability of healthcare	33. Concerns regarding city infrastructure.	56. Observing good neighbors.
10. Appreciating cleanliness, quietness, care of property	34. Concerns regarding economic factors	57. Participating at St. Saviour's.
11. Appreciating cultural opportunities.	35. Concerns regarding education	58. Participating in civic life as citizen.
12. Appreciating St. Saviour's.	36. Concerns regarding housing issues.	59. Participating in Messy Church
13. Appreciating the grittiness and reality of Wellington.	37. Concerns regarding poverty issues.	60. Participating in St. Saviour's ministries.
14. Appreciating the labour history of Wellington.	38. Concerns regarding public transit.	61. Practicing hospitality at St. Saviour's.
15. Appreciating urban gardens.	39. Concerns regarding social infrastructure, robust institutions.	62. Practicing hospitality in Messy Church.

Table 6.28. Focused Codes for Baseline Qualitative Data (Continued)

Focused Codes		
16. Appreciating walkability.	40. Concerns regarding streetscape, design, planning.	63. Practicing hospitality in the Concert Project.
17. Appreciating Wellington.	41. Concerns regarding traffic.	64. Practicing spirituality.
18. Appreciating Wellington's built heritage.	42. Concerns regarding transforming hearts.	65. Sharing in reciprocity.
19. Being a presence in the neighborhood around St. Saviour's.	43. Conversing with neighbors.	66. Taking pride in place.
20. Building community with persons at risk for social isolation.	44. Feeling at home in Wellington.	67. Taking pride in Wellington history.
21. Building relationships with neighbors.	45. Find a church.	68. Telling St. Saviour's story of mission.
22. Caring for children.	46. Finding refuge at St. Saviour's.	69. Valuing diversity.
23. Caring for persons in poverty.	47. Knowing and being known.	70. Valuing the neighborhood.
24. Caring for persons with addictions issues.		

I brought together these seventy focused codes in seven axial codes. The axial codes were: (*bA*) *Christian formation at St. Saviour's*; (*bB*) *participation in God's mission at St. Saviour's*; (*bC*) *care for neighbors, responding to needs*; (*bD*) *valuing relationships*; (*bE*) *building relationships*; (*bF*) *concern regarding social issues*; and, (*bG*) *loving the neighborhood*. Table 6.29, below, shows these axial codes with their focused codes.

Table 6.29. Axial Codes for Baseline Qualitative Data Combined

Axial Codes/ Focused Codes	
<i>b</i>A. Christian Formation at St. Saviour's 1. Appreciating St. Saviour's. 2. Building community with persons at risk for social isolation. 3. Concerns regarding transforming hearts. 4. Find a church. 5. Finding refuge at St. Saviour's. 6. Participating at St. Saviour's. 7. Practicing hospitality in Messy Church. 8. Practicing spirituality.	<i>b</i>B. Participating in God's Mission at St. Saviour's. 1. Appreciating St. Saviour's. 2. Being a presence in the neighborhood around St. Saviour's. 3. Building community with persons at risk for social isolation. 4. Building relationships with neighbors. 5. Caring for children. 6. Caring for persons in poverty. 7. Caring for seniors. 8. Concerns regarding transforming hearts. 9. Finding refuge at St. Saviour's. 10. Living the faith in everyday life. 11. Making a difference in the lives of neighbors. 12. Meeting needs in the neighborhood around St. Saviour's. 13. Participating at St. Saviour's. 14. Participating in civic life as citizen. 15. Participating in Messy Church 16. Participating in St. Saviour's ministries. 17. Practicing hospitality at St. Saviour's. 18. Practicing hospitality in Messy Church. 19. Practicing hospitality in the Concert Project. 20. Practicing spirituality.
<i>b</i>C. Care for neighbors, responding to needs. 1. Acting with compassion and care. 2. Appreciating accessibility for persons with disabilities. 3. Being a presence in the neighborhood around St. Saviour's. 4. Building community with persons at risk for social isolation. 5. Caring for children. 6. Caring for persons in poverty. 7. Caring for persons with addictions issues. 8. Caring for refugees. 9. Caring for seniors. 10. Concerns regarding transforming hearts. 11. Making a difference in the lives of neighbors. 12. Meeting needs in the neighborhood around St. Saviour's. 13. Noticing neighbors with specific challenges. 14. Noticing newcomer neighbors from other cities.	

Table 6.29. Axial Codes for Baseline Qualitative Data Combined (*continued*)

Axial Codes/ Focused Codes	
<i>b</i>D. Valuing relationships. 1. Accepting others. 2. Appreciating a sense of belonging. 3. Appreciating a sense of safety and security. 4. Concerns regarding transforming hearts. 5. Feeling at home in Wellington. 6. Finding refuge at St. Saviour's. 7. Knowing and being known. 8. Observing good neighbors. 9. Sharing in reciprocity. 10. Valuing diversity. 11. Valuing the neighborhood. <i>b</i>E. Building relationships. 1. Accepting others. 2. Appreciating cultural opportunities. 3. Appreciating urban gardens. 4. Building community with persons at risk for social isolation. 5. Building relationships with neighbors. 6. Caring for children. 7. Caring for seniors. 8. Conversing with neighbors. 9. Knowing and being known. 10. Making a difference in the lives of neighbors. 11. Meeting people in the neighborhood. 12. Noticing newcomer neighbors from other cities. 13. Participating in civic life as citizen. 14. Sharing in reciprocity.	<i>b</i>F. Concern regarding social issues. 1. Appreciating a sense of safety and security. 2. Appreciating accessibility for persons with disabilities. 3. Appreciating affordability. 4. Appreciating availability of healthcare 5. Building community with persons at risk for social isolation. 6. Caring for children. 7. Caring for persons in poverty. 8. Caring for seniors. 9. Concern for environmental factors. 10. Concern for persons who have lost their pensions. 11. Concern regarding affordable housing. 12. Concern regarding gentrification. 13. Concern regarding schooling. 14. Concern regarding traffic. 15. Concerns regarding city infrastructure. 16. Concerns regarding economic factors 17. Concerns regarding education 18. Concerns regarding housing issues. 19. Concerns regarding poverty issues. 20. Concerns regarding public transit. 21. Concerns regarding social infrastructure, robust institutions. 22. Concerns regarding streetscape, design, planning. 23. Concerns regarding traffic. 24. Noticing Wellington's shifting economy. 25. Observing employment issues. 26. Participating in civic life as citizen.

Table 6.29. Axial Codes for Baseline Qualitative Data Combined (*continued*)

Axial Codes/ Focused Codes
6G. Loving the neighborhood. 1. Appreciating a sense of belonging. 2. Appreciating access to transportation. 3. Appreciating accessibility for persons with disabilities. 4. Appreciating accessibility to nature and parks in the city and neighborhood. 5. Appreciating affordability. 6. Appreciating availability of healthcare 7. Appreciating cleanliness, quietness, care of property 8. Appreciating cultural opportunities. 9. Appreciating the grittiness and reality of Wellington. 10. Appreciating the labour history of Wellington. 11. Appreciating urban gardens. 12. Appreciating walkability. 13. Appreciating Wellington. 14. Appreciating Wellington's built heritage. 15. Feeling at home in Wellington. 16. Taking pride in place. 17. Taking pride in Wellington history. 18. Telling St. Saviour's story of mission. 19. Valuing diversity. 20. Valuing the neighborhood.

Theoretical Coding of Baseline Data

Theoretical coding consists of determining the relationship between the axial codes and describing the direction of influence between the same. Figure 6.2, below, represents the theoretical coding of the baseline qualitative data for this PAR study.

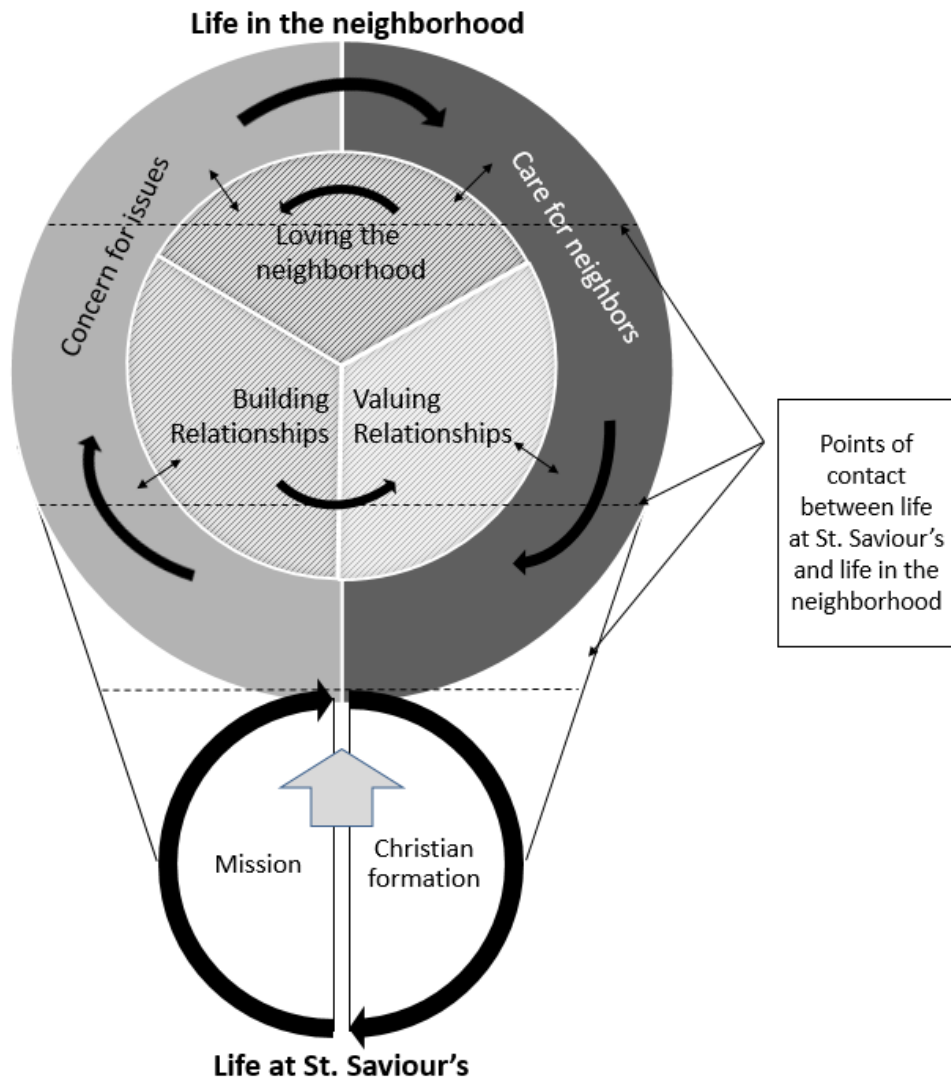


Figure 6.2. Theoretical Coding of Baseline Data

Life at St. Saviour's

Figure 6.2 shows the two axial codes, (*bA*) *Christian formation at St. Saviour's*, and (*bB*) *participating in God's mission at St. Saviour's*, grouped together at the bottom of the figure and labeled, "life at St. Saviour's." This label denotes the primary location of the activities of mission and Christian formation as described in this data. Some of St. Saviour's life in Christian formation and mission seems to be located closer to life in the neighborhood than other aspects. Several focused codes described realities firmly located almost exclusively within the walls of the church. Some of the focused codes, however, relate connections between St. Saviour's and the neighborhood, either by inviting the neighborhood and city into St. Saviour's life, or by sending St. Saviour's out into the neighborhood or city in some way. See Table 6.30 below.

Table 6.30. Focused Codes for Axials *bA* and *bB* by Related Location

Location/ Axial Code/ Focused Code
Internal to St. Saviour's
<i>bA</i> . Christian formation at St. Saviour's
(<i>bA1</i>) Appreciating St. Saviour's as a community
(<i>bA2</i>) Appreciating young families in church
(<i>bA3</i>) Finding a church home
(<i>bA6</i>) Participating in Christian formation
<i>bB</i> . Participating in God's mission at St. Saviour's
(<i>bB1</i>) Being a presence in St. Saviour's neighborhood
(<i>bB3</i>) Concern regarding the transformation of hearts
(<i>bB4</i>) Observing opportunities for St. Saviour's building
(<i>bB5</i>) Observing St. Saviour's housing project
(<i>bB6</i>) Participating at St. Saviour's
(<i>bB7</i>) Participating at Messy Church
(<i>bB8</i>) Participating in the refugee project

Table 6.30 Focused Codes for Axials *b*A and *b*B by Related Location (continued)

Location/ Axial Code/ Focused Code
Inviting the neighborhood and city into St. Saviour's life
<i>b</i> A. Christian formation at St. Saviour's
(<i>b</i> A3) Finding a church home
(<i>b</i> A7) Participating in Christian witness
<i>b</i> B. Participating in God's mission at St. Saviour's
(<i>b</i> B1) Being a presence in St. Saviour's neighborhood
(<i>b</i> B2) Building community with persons at risk for social isolation
(<i>b</i> B3) Concern regarding the transformation of hearts
(<i>b</i> B4) Observing opportunities for St. Saviour's building
(<i>b</i> B7) Participating at Messy Church
(<i>b</i> B9) Practicing hospitality at St. Saviour's
(<i>b</i> B10) Practicing hospitality at Messy Church
(<i>b</i> B11) Practicing hospitality in the concert project
Moving into the life of the neighborhood and city
<i>b</i> A. Christian formation at St. Saviour's
(<i>b</i> A4) Living the faith in everyday life.
(<i>b</i> A5) Observing the relationship between Christianity and neighborliness
<i>b</i> B. Participating in God's mission at St. Saviour's
(<i>b</i> B1) Being a presence in St. Saviour's neighborhood
(<i>b</i> B2) Building community with persons at risk for social isolation
(<i>b</i> B3) Concern regarding the transformation of hearts
(<i>b</i> B5) Observing St. Saviour's housing project
(<i>b</i> B8) Participating in the refugee project
(<i>b</i> B11) Practicing hospitality in the concert project
(<i>b</i> B12) Telling St. Saviour's story of mission

Christian formation at St. Saviour's. The eight focused codes belonging to the axial, (*b*A) *Christian formation at St. Saviour's* arose, almost exclusively, from the interview data. Almost all this data pointed to a close relationship between Christian formation and participation in mission at St. Saviour's. Respondents talked about how they had come to make St. Saviour's their church home (Leah, Scott, *b* Interview) and about their various involvements in the life of this faith community (Leah, Scott, Anita, *b* Interview). Other than one focus code—(*b*A6) *find a church*—all other focused codes related to the axial, (*b*A) *Christian formation at St. Saviour's*, are cross-listed to the axial,

(*bB*) *participating in God's mission at St. Saviour's*. The close relationship between these axial codes is represented in the theoretical coding of Figure 6.2, as two halves of a circle, in conversation with one another, and moving towards the set of axials shown together and labeled, "life in the neighborhood."

The fact that members of St. Saviour's were generally committed to the work of Christian formation in the parish was supported in the quantitative data. Respondents were asked about small group participation in the baseline questionnaire. The responses to this questions are described in Table 6.31, below.

Table 6.31. Participation in Small Groups

	n (N=70)	Percent	Cumulative percent
Did you ever participate in a small group that meets on a regular basis for bible study or other learning, prayer and fellowship?			
Yes	48	68.6	68.6
No	22	31.4	100.0
Total	70	100.0	
Are you now part of any type of small group connected with St. Saviour's?			
Yes	33	47.1	47.1
No	37	52.9	100.0
Total	70	100.0	

A strong majority of respondents (68.6%) indicated that they had participated in such small groups and almost half (47.1%) indicated that they were at the time a member of a small group connected with the parish. Respondents were generally committed to participation in the work of Christian formation in the parish.

Participation in God's mission at St. Saviour's. The qualitative data also revealed a high commitment to God's mission at St. Saviour's. Twenty focused codes related to the axial, (*bB*) *participating in God's mission at St. Saviour's*. Scott talked

about St. Saviour's mission which he saw unfolding in St. Saviour's Messy Church, which has welcomed many neighborhood families and provides a gathering place for young families, hospitality, and Christian nurture. Scott commented on the value of this support for young families that can be isolated and facing challenges. "I am sympathetic to people in my life stage. It can be lonely. It can be very trying. It can be infuriating. Some days you love your kids but you don't like them. It's important to get out" (Scott, *b* Interview).

Anita is a long-time member of St. Saviour's. She talked about the importance of St. Saviour's mission in the neighborhood over time. She recalled the project that the parish undertook in the 1990s, after a fire had destroyed the parish hall. It was decided that St. Saviour's would build affordable housing rather than simply replace its hall. Anita acknowledged that this was an important way in which the parish engaged in God's mission at the time (Anita, *b* Interview).

Figure 6.2, above, describes *life at St. Saviour's* and *life in the neighborhood* as separate spheres. The data showed that sometimes these spheres seem to be entirely separate, while at other times they overlap and interact dramatically. Leah observed, for example, that St. Saviour's life of mission in the neighborhood is often expressed not so much in its corporate life, but through the everyday lives of its members. "Many of our parishioners actually live in this neighborhood and themselves, like me, talk to their neighbors, help their neighbors out" (Leah, *b* Interview). Leah also observed that when St. Saviour's takes on a project, as it did around refugee sponsorship, it has credibility in the neighborhood because of the relationships individual members have cultivated in their daily lives (Leah, *b* Interview). Leah also acknowledged that St. Saviour's building

continues to serve the neighborhood in various ways. “We are part of this neighborhood because we have this building, and because we sit in this specific place.” Leah suggested that there are many opportunities for St. Saviour’s to serve the neighborhood because of its presence and profile. Anita described St. Saviour’s various ministries over its long history in the neighborhood, including a camping program for children that began in the post-World War II era and continued through the 1960s, to its various current programs such as Messy Church, which continue to respond to needs that have been recognized in the neighborhood (Anita, *b* Interview).

Life in the Neighborhood

Figure 6.2, above, also describes five axial codes in two concentric spheres and labeled, “life in the neighborhood.” The inner sphere focuses upon relationships and is comprised of the focused codes: (*b*D) *valuing relationships*; (*b*E) *building relationships*; and, (*b*G) *loving the neighborhood*.

Loving the neighborhood. There was a great deal of data from baseline sources that related to the neighborhood. The baseline interview protocol asked respondents to reflect on their neighborhood and their connection with it. Many Wellingtonians speak with appreciation for the grittiness or real nature of the city. This was reflected in the data collected. Leah said, “I’ve never really quite lived in a city like this, where, I don’t know, I think it’s particularly due to the working class history” (Leah, *b* Interview). She continued, “Wellington was for a long time seen by outsiders as the armpit of Ontario, or whatever. But the people who have lived here have always had a certain appreciation about what it is, that outsiders couldn’t really understand” (Leah, *b* Interview). People sometimes have what may appear to outsiders as romantic notions about the city’s

grittiness. Again, Leah talked about how Wellingtonians are sometimes relieved to return to the city after living elsewhere. “I’ve heard a lot of people say this ... That when they come back to Wellington, they feel that they are breathing a sigh of relief, because there really is a kind of home feeling to Wellington where you don’t have any pretensions at all (Leah, *b* Interview).

The baseline questionnaire asked respondents what three things they appreciated most about the city and neighborhood where they live. Twenty-six primary-level focused codes arose from the various responses received (N = 196). See Table 6.32, below.

Table 6.32. Primary Focused Codes by Frequency: Three Favorite Things about the Neighborhood

What are your favorite things about the neighborhood where you live?	n (N = 196)	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Nature	24	12.2	12.2
Neighbors	23	11.7	23.9
Location	22	11.2	35.1
Services	21	10.7	45.8
Quiet	16	8.2	54.0
Hospitality	13	6.6	60.6
Walkability	13	6.6	67.2
Parks	9	4.6	71.8
Safety	7	3.6	75.4
Clean	6	3.1	78.5
Diversity	6	3.1	81.6
Affordability	5	2.6	84.2
Transit	4	2	86.2
Church	3	1.5	87.7
Pride	3	1.5	89.2
Built heritage	3	1.5	90.7
Education	3	1.5	92.2
Gardens	3	1.5	93.7

Table 6.32. Primary Focused Codes by Frequency: Three Favorite Things about the Neighborhood (*Continued*)

What are your favorite things about the neighborhood where you live?	n (N = 196)	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Care	2	1	94.7
Streets	2	1	95.7
Property-care	2	1	96.7
Third-space	2	1	97.7
Family	1	0.6	98.3
Housing	1	0.6	98.9
Institutions	1	0.6	99.5
Cultural	1	0.5	100.0
Total	196	100	

The most frequent response to this question was “nature” (n = 24, 12.2%), which may surprise people who only know Wellington as a rusty steel town. The second most frequent response was “neighbors” (n = 23, 11.7%). Another frequent response was “hospitality” (n = 13, 6.6%). Other qualities of the neighborhood that were strongly appreciated included, “location near to transit and convenient access to other cities,” (n = 22, 11.2%); “nearby excellent services,” such as shops, healthcare and the like (n = 21, 10.7%); “quietness” (n = 16, 8.2%); and “walkability” (n = 13, 6.6%).

Respondents reported that they appreciated similar things about their city. See Table 6.33, below.

Table 6.33. Primary Focused Codes by Frequency: Three Favorite Things about the City

What are your three favorite things about the city where you live?	n (N = 195)	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Nature	39	20.0	20.0
Cultural	24	12.3	32.3
Pride	18	9.2	41.5
Diversity	11	5.6	47.1
Neighbors	11	5.6	52.7
Services	11	5.6	58.3
Hospitality	10	5.1	63.4
Growth	7	3.6	67.0
Healthcare	6	3.1	70.1
Citizenship	5	2.6	72.7
Family	5	2.6	75.3
Affordability	4	2.1	77.4
Parks	4	2.1	79.5
Safety	4	2.1	81.6
Education	4	2.1	83.7
Size	4	2.1	85.8
Walkability	4	2.1	87.9
Location	3	1.5	89.4
Jobs	3	1.5	90.9
Urban renewal	3	1.5	92.4
Clean	2	1.1	93.5
Housing	2	1.0	94.5
Care	2	1.0	95.5
Church	1	0.5	96.0
Belonging	1	0.5	96.5
Built heritage	1	0.5	97.0
Vibrancy	1	0.5	97.5
Quiet	1	0.5	98.0
Transit	1	0.5	98.5
Poverty Reduction	1	0.5	99.0
Property-care	1	0.5	99.5
Compassion	1	0.5	100.0
Total	195	100.0	

When asked about their favorite things about the city where they live, the most frequent response was again coded “nature” (n = 39, 20.0%); the written comments included appreciation for the natural beauty of local waterfalls, the escarpment, and waterfront. The second most frequent response was “cultural opportunities,” (n = 24, 12.3%), which included things such as concerts, theatre, and sports. I coded the third most frequent response as “pride,” which relates to what I discussed above and is related to Wellington’s pride in being gritty, unpretentious, compassionate and real (n = 18, 9.2%).

While several responses to these questions related to amenities, infrastructure, and natural attributes, many responses pertained to human relationships. These primary focused codes (which included: cultural, diversity, neighbors, hospitality, citizenship, family, church, belonging, and compassion) represented 39.8% of responses. Loving the neighborhood was very much related to building and valuing relationships.

Valuing relationships. Many of the respondents to the baseline questionnaire described their neighbors as one of the three things they appreciated most about their neighborhoods (n = 23, 11.7%, see Table 6.32, above.) Each of the persons interviewed at the baseline emphasized the value of relationships in the neighborhood. Leah, for example, discussed how she has appreciated getting to know her neighbors as she greets them on the street while walking her dog and by participating in a number of street parties organized by neighbors (Leah, *b* Interview). Scott acknowledged that in the suburban neighborhood, where he and his family have their home, their children provide the main connection with their neighbors. Scott observed that there are several neighbors that are known by sight, but with whom there has never been a connection. The children tend to make friends quickly and decide to play together. Scott described how he and his

family have come to know one neighbor family, with whom they have found they have little in common, except that their children enjoy playing together. Scott and his family appreciated this about life in the neighborhood (Scott, *b* Interview).

Building relationships. Valuing relationship and building relationships go hand in hand. Leah talked about there was a certain intentionality about building relationships in her neighborhood. The street parties that she described in the interview were interventions conceived by neighbors who saw the value in building such relationships. Leah also observed that the environment of the neighborhood seemed to have fostered the building of relationships early on. Leah discussed what she called “front porch culture” and “dog walking culture” as some of the positive elements of life in her neighborhood. She explained that many of her neighbors do not have backyards and theorized that the sense of community in her neighborhood was perhaps related to the “fact that people are sitting on their porches and drinking tea at night” (Leah, *b* Interview).

Scott described his own corner of Wellington—his local neighborhood—as “rough around the edges” (Scott, *b* Interview). He talked about the mix of housing in the neighborhood, the inclusion of social housing, and the fact that some of his neighbors seem to have obvious struggles. Scott told the story of travelling in his car on a Christmas morning and encountering his next-door neighbor in obvious mental distress, half-clothed and in bare feet, running down the middle of the street. Scott talked about the awkwardness of that situation, with his own children and parents in the car. He nevertheless told the story with appreciation for the opportunity to live in such a place (Scott, *b* Interview). Thankfully, Scott could intervene and helped his neighbor to calm down and return to her home. While Scott described some of his neighbors as “rough

around the edges,” it was clear that he appreciates them and values these relationships. “Proximity definitely breeds community. Sure, it’s uncomfortable sometimes. But it’s good” (Scott, *b* Interview). Building relationships with neighbors and valuing those relationships, is closely related to the care that neighbors take for one another and the concern they have about the issues that neighbors face.

Care for neighbors, responding to needs. Scott’s relationship with his neighbors has meant that he and his family care deeply about the struggles they have witnessed. Scott and family are aware that they often hear shouting coming from the house next door where the young playmate of their children lives. The police have often attended the home. Scott, an addictions counsellor himself, suspects that the father is an alcoholic. Even though Scott described himself as having little in common with his neighbor, except the parenting of children the same age, Scott was clearly concerned about the situation next door. Scott and his family are supporting this family in the small ways that they can. Their care is primarily expressed to the child who often visits their home. Scott and family are happy that they can provide a place of refuge for the child.

The axial code, (*bC*) *care for neighbors, responding to needs*, arises out of the data that showed that when respondents built and valued relationships in their neighborhood, they also tended to respond to the needs of neighbors with care and compassion. Anita, for example, has noticed that there seems to be large number of seniors in the neighborhood who appear to be socially isolated. Anita knows many seniors in this situation through connections at St. Saviour’s and friendships and connections she has developed over a lifetime lived in the neighborhood. Anita said, “I get concerned about some of the older men” (Anita, *b* Interview). She went on to name

some specific persons she was concerned about. Anita's concern did not stop there. She has been having conversations with other younger, retired men, who might organize some social times, perhaps an outing for coffee, with the older men who are isolated. Anita's *concern* has led her to look for ways that she could *respond* to these needs.

Concern regarding issues. The baseline data revealed that respondents were concerned about the issues faced by their neighbors. The baseline questionnaire asked respondents to identify what they consider the major issue facing the neighborhood. See Table 6.34, below.

Table 6.34. Primary Focused Codes by Frequency: Major Issue Facing the Neighborhood

Please name what you consider the major issue facing your neighborhood.	n (N = 59)	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Housing	8	13.6	13.6
Poverty	7	11.9	25.5
Isolation	5	8.5	34.0
None	4	6.8	40.8
Marginalization	3	5.1	45.9
Diversity	3	5.1	51.0
Hospitality	3	5.1	56.1
Infrastructure	3	5.1	61.2
Safety	3	5.1	66.3
Spiritual	3	5.1	71.4
Streets	3	5.1	76.5
Gentrification	2	3.4	79.9
Care	2	3.4	83.3
Transit	2	3.4	86.7

Table 6.34. Primary Focused Codes by Frequency: Major Issue Facing the Neighborhood (*Continued*)

Growth	1	1.7	88.4
Church	1	1.7	90.1
Privacy	1	1.7	91.8
Economic factors	1	1.7	93.5
Neighbors	1	1.7	95.2
Youth	1	1.6	96.8
Aging	1	1.6	98.4
Jobs	1	1.6	100.0
Total	59	100	

The issue receiving the highest number of responses was *housing* (n = 8, 13.6%), with *poverty* a close second (n = 7, 11.9%). Other responses included, *isolation* (n = 5, 8.5%), *marginalization* (n = 3, 5.1%), and *gentrification* (n = 2, 3.4%). While West downtown Wellington is a great place to live, for many, life is not what it could be. This data was echoed in the baseline interviews.

Anita described her concern for retired steelworkers who recently lost their pensions. The steel company was bought by an American conglomerate who transferred the business to the United States and then declared the Canadian operation bankrupt. The pension fund belonging to retirees had been invested in the company and now the investment was gone. Steelworkers and the Canadian government are suing in American courts; however, the future is uncertain. Anita asked, “what are people going to do? Our seniors who worked so hard and gave up stuff to have those pensions and now it’s gone. How can that be? Where is the social justice in that?” (Anita, *b* Interview). Anita also notices that there are more people than ever before panhandling on Wellington’s streets.

“When I go downtown I have some money ready because I know someone is going to ask me for help. That’s just the reality” (Anita, *b* Interview).

Scott also noticed that poverty is an issue in the city and that there seems to be a great disparity between different parts of the city. “You do get a pretty strong juxtaposition between some neighborhoods. Some neighborhoods you drive through and it’s a lot different” (Scott, *b* Interview). Leah, likewise, spoke about poverty issues alongside others: “there are such obvious huge needs in terms of poverty, and housing, and welcoming new immigrants” (Leah, *b* Interview).

Marginalization and isolation mentioned in the baseline questionnaire also came up in the baseline interviews. I have already mentioned Anita’s concern for some of the elderly men that she knows who struggle with isolation. She wondered what the church might be able to do to address this need in the neighborhood. “It’s a difficult thing. Any group that is socially isolated is difficult because they are socially isolated. So how do you reach them?” (Anita, *b* Interview). Leah also referenced the needs of seniors. She observed, “we do have a lot of older people. I wonder if we are serving those people. ... Sometimes I wonder about the type of care that they are getting and if there is a way of intervening in that” (Leah, *b* Interview). She continued,

I am seeing a lot of elderly people and some of them don’t have family. I mean, they tell you that. They have serious health issues and they tell you that. They tell you that they don’t have family and I think that there must be something going on. (Leah, *b* Interview)

Likewise, Scott said of seniors in the neighborhood, “I think that that’s another huge population that is lonely. ... There are a lot of lonely people and if we can somehow draw them into community” (Scott, *b* Interview).

The rise of gentrification was mentioned only twice by respondents to the baseline questionnaire (3.4%), but was a prominent issue raised in the baseline interviews. Scott talked about how much he and his family love the neighborhood where St. Saviour's building is located. This local neighborhood has experienced a great deal of gentrification in the past few years. The opening of Starbucks in the neighborhood was a signal moment. The neighborhood is a place where people like to come. There are many popular hangouts. The popularity of this neighborhood is, however, a "two-edged sword" (Scott, *b* Interview). As Scott said, "we would like to live in this neighborhood, but the affordability wasn't there" (Scott, *b* Interview).

Anita also described the financial pressure on young families because of the rising housing prices associated with gentrification (Anita, *b* Interview). Anita's son and family just bought a home in the neighborhood, so she understands the challenges.

Leah spoke at some length about her concerns regarding gentrification. She describes the gentrification and immediate neighborhood of the church building as occurring "gradually, over the past ... ten to fifteen years" (Leah, *b* Interview). She notices that the same is happening in other neighborhoods in the city "very rapidly" (Leah, *b* Interview). She worries that the "city seems to be willing to sell its soul to developers. It's like, it's happening very quickly that prices are going up for people" (Leah, *b* Interview). Leah also spoke about this as a "two-edged sword." "Who doesn't want their property values to go up? ... It's great if you own property; or making money on your investment" (Leah, *b* Interview). She worries, however, about those who are left out of this arrangement, left behind, or worse, displaced. Leah talked about her gratitude for her apartment that is in the local neighborhood where St. Saviour's building is

located. She is aware, however, that if she were renting that apartment today she would likely not be able to afford it. “Because of the way that housing prices are going up in the neighborhood, my landlord will be able to charge at least \$1,200, which even at my income level now, I would not be able to afford to live in this neighborhood” (Leah, *b* Interview). Leah continues, “so the thing that I worry about is that there won’t be the kind of mixture (diversity within the neighborhood) that we have now. I just feel like it’s not healthy at all that the house prices are skyrocketing” (Leah, *b* Interview). Leah has heard stories about unscrupulous landlords that have forced low-rent tenants out of building so that they can either charge higher rents or convert rental space to luxury condominiums.

If my landlord ... would try to get rid of me so that he could put up those rents space ... he doesn’t have the right to do that. ... But I don’t think that everybody else understands their rights (under the law) in the same way necessarily, and that may lead to people being displaced. ... We hear stories at this sort of thing is happening ... where people are being tricked and moved out of their places (Leah, *b* Interview).

There seems to be no room in a gentrified neighborhood for the working poor, the immigrant, and the refugee—not to mention others who live on the margins. While some may view this as progress for a neighborhood, I would argue that it is to the credit of the baseline interviewees that they did not. Leah wondered whether there was a way that those who benefit from the two-edged sword of gentrification might be able to share something of that benefit, thereby mitigating some of the worst effects. “But does it impose a question upon us as Christians (when we realize a dramatic capital gain) to share it in some way by making an investment in the community, by helping to create some affordable housing” (Leah, *b* Interview).

Leah’s suggestion that things can be done about some of the problematic effects of gentrification, provides the opportunity to emphasize that respondent’s concern about

issues in the neighborhood did not end merely with *awareness* of the issues, but with an expressed desire to find ways to *participate in positive change* that might alleviate these problems.

Anita talked about her interest in making the neighborhood a better place in connection with her passion for making a difference in the lives of isolated seniors. “There is a lot of older people in our neighborhood,” she said. “A lot of these older people gave a lot of time and energy to the church and the community. They were the lifeblood of the community when I was growing up. I can honour their contributions from that time and ... recognize what they have done in my life and hopefully offer lots of love and laughter as well” (Anita, *b* Interview). Anita’s desire to serve seniors comes out of her Christian spirituality. “Jesus calls me to serve, to make a difference. And so I guess I look for ways to make a difference” (Anita, *b* Interview).

Scott was very direct about his desire to make the world a better place when talking about his work. Scott is an addictions counsellor and he considers this not just a job, but a vocation, or calling. Scott said,

I think I chose counselling because I really do love, I really do love dialoguing with people and understanding what people are going through. Presence makes a difference in mental health, that whole staring depression in the face. You take tiny steps with people to work out of it and at the same time realize that there are people who are really suffering, ... asking God why are these things in the world. It really doesn’t make sense. It’s not fair that people have to deal with that stuff. ... I find that my desire to try to meet with people and support and encourage and all of those things, that desire never dries up. ... I don’t feel like I chose it; in some ways I really think it shows me. (Scott, *b* Interview)

Leah wondered how St. Saviour’s could participate more fully in making the neighborhood a better place. She asked how our Christian discipleship might inform life in the neighborhood. “What are some of the practices of neighbourliness that could cause us to be thinking about economic justice” (Leah, *b* Interview). Leah noted that among

those who attend St. Saviour's there are not many who are themselves poor. She suggested,

When you look at the people that God has given you, and if those people happen not to be poor, but your middle-class neighbors who are participating in the process of gentrification, how do you make them think about the money that they are making off their class and socioeconomic status? Can you ask them to question their position in relation to the rest of the people in Wellington, or think about how they can use their privileged actually ensure that we remain a city that is connected.” (Leah *b* Interview)

Leah also suggested that St. Saviour's may have a role in helping “change the hearts of the people who live in this neighborhood about issues of poverty” (Leah, *b* Interview).

The persons I interviewed as part of the baseline talked about their desire to make a difference and be subversive of the values that continue to support a status quo in the neighborhood and which do not promote human flourishing. I have already noted Anita and Scott's desire to make a difference. Anita seeks to make a difference in the lives of seniors with whom she volunteers in her retirement. Scott seeks to make a difference in the lives of persons who struggle with addictions and mental illness through the practice of his profession. In the interview, Scott described the world as a window which is meant to give a clear view, but where the window has become dirty so that reality is distorted. Scott said, “this may sound cheesy, but you pick up your Windex and you spray a little bit and you grab a rag and you start wiping. And that's your corner of the window that you can work on” (Scott, *b* Interview). Leah also described how she sees people being subversive of the status quo that prevents human flourishing. She cited the examples of two organizations in the neighborhood that are making such difference. The first is an organization named Indwell, that St. Saviour's partners with. At a time when many people feel that nothing can be done about Wellington's housing crisis, Indwell is building apartments and making a place for Wellington's citizens who are the hardest to

house. “They are showing that you can make a difference” (Leah, *b* Interview). Leah also mentioned Café 541, which is a very nice café in one of Wellington’s most challenged neighborhoods. Patrons can purchase their beverage and food at very reasonable prices and add buttons to their purchase. Each button is worth one dollar and buttons purchased go in a jar near the cash register. Patrons who don’t have money for their purchase may use the buttons as cash. The simple economic alternative of this social enterprise which allows a sharing between patrons is subversive of the status quo and, as Leah says, “shows that there is an alternative ... We can have a beautiful coffee shop and welcome all people of the neighborhood, whether they can pay or not” (Leah, *b* Interview).

Summary of Baseline Data and Theoretical Coding

An explanation of the theoretical coding of the baseline qualitative data provides a good opportunity to summarize the baseline data. The data tells the story of two spheres which overlap to various degrees and in various ways. In the theoretical coding, these spheres are described as “life in the neighborhood,” and “life at St. Saviour’s” (Figure 6.2, above). The data described life at St. Saviour’s in terms of Christian formation and mission. Christian formation and mission at St. Saviours have a strong relationship with one another, each participating in the other. As such, Christian formation and mission *at* St. Saviour’s moves people and forms them for life in the neighborhood. Life in neighborhood was framed by the fact that there seemed to be many attributes and amenities in the neighborhood and city that respondents enjoy. Primary among what was appreciated in the neighborhood were the network of relationships. Valuing these relationships went hand in hand with an intentional building of such relationships. Loving the neighborhood, building and valuing relationships, were all, in turn, related to caring

for neighbors and responding to their needs as well as concern regarding the social issues that are faced by those neighbors.

Focus Groups Related to Intervention's Projects and Activities

The primary intervention of this project was the creation of a learning community where participants could be apprenticed in practices of neighbourliness as part of their Christian discipleship. This intervention involved several projects and activities with which participants were invited to engage as part of the learning community. Focus groups had a two-fold purpose. Focus groups were designed to be opportunities for participants in various projects or activities to meet, discuss, and reflect together about their practice and experience, and therefore as opportunities for learning. Focus groups also provided the opportunity to collect data.

I audio and video recorded each focus group and then transcribed the conversations. I proceeded to code the transcriptions using the same method as for baseline interviews, reading the transcriptions word by word, line by line, event by event, and capturing what was being said with *in vivo* codes. These initial codes were gathered together into focused codes according to themes that emerged. At this stage I realised that there was a striking similarity between this data and the data from end-line interviews. Focus group and end-line interviews were conducted during the same period of time having allowed the learning community intervention maximum time to have an effect. Because of the striking similarity in data, I brought all the focus group data together with the other end-line qualitative data for the final analysis and discussion. I describe each of the four focus groups below, however, the data analysis will be included with the end-line qualitative data.

Artaban Supper Club Focus Group

The Artaban Supper Club is one of the activities of St. Saviour's church designed to create community among those at risk for social isolation. The other projects include monthly visits by the youth group of the parish to a local group home, run by an organization known as Indwell, where persons with mental illness live together in community. The youth visits are times of gameplaying, sharing food, and friendship. Messy Church, which has its own focus group, was originally conceived as a community gathering for young families who also were at risk for social isolation. The Artaban Supper Club was started for residents of Artaban Place, a not-for-profit housing complex that is adjacent to the church building, and founded by the church. Many residents of Artaban Place are persons with disabilities. The double bind of poverty, together with physical disability, puts persons at extreme risk for social isolation. The supper club is an opportunity for residents to come together in community.

The coordinators of the Artaban Supper Club invited me to attend the supper club as a guest and to tell them about my research project. Those in attendance expressed an interest in participating in a focus group. I was invited back to another evening of the supper club to run a focus group. After dinner, on that evening, I explained the research project to the group again, distributed and explained the informed consent form, and gave attendees the opportunity to opt out of the focus group. All in attendance stayed, signed a consent form, and participated in the focus group. In all there were nine participants in the focus group. All but one were residents at Artaban Place. Only four of the participants are regular worshipers at St. Saviour's. Other attributes of the focus group attendees are described in Table 6.15, above.

The focus group was an opportunity for participants to tell the researcher about their experience of life together in the building, as neighbors, and as participants together in the supper club. New learning was generated as the participants reflected on their neighborly life together. The participants who were also St. Saviour's members appreciated learning about the impact of this outreach project of the parish. Data was collected in the focus group. This data is discussed below with other end-line qualitative data.

Concert Project

St. Saviour's Concert Project began in 2014, when local musicians knocked on St. Saviour's door and inquired whether St. Saviour's would be open to allowing musicians to use the space for performances. St. Saviour's realized that this was an opportunity to make community with local musicians and their audiences, as well as to support the arts as part of the common good in our city. Rather than merely allowing musicians to rent space, St. Saviour's has entered a partnership with local musicians whereby musicians, St. Saviour's, and the community benefit. Musicians can perform their music, express their art, and gain the financial benefit accrued through ticket sales. The community enjoys wonderful music in a beautiful setting and at an accessible price. St. Saviour's lives out its vocation of hospitality, welcomes many of its friends—who are at risk for social isolation, who otherwise may not afford to enjoy the arts—because St. Saviour's effectively sponsors these concerts.

I invited those who volunteered with this project to participate in the Concert Project Focus Group. Included in this number were people who volunteered to offer hospitality at the concerts, have participated in the steering group for the project, or have

been connected in other important ways. Six people were in attendance for the focus group. All of them are regular worship attenders at St. Saviour's. All of them were involved in at least one other intervention or project. Other attributes of these focus group attendees are described in Table 6.13, above.

The focus group provided an opportunity for participants to explore together what they had learned by welcoming the community in this way. As the group talked together, new learning was generated. Data was also collected and is discussed below with the end-line qualitative data.

Messy Church

Messy Church is one of St. Saviour's regular worship services. Messy Church is different from other worship services in that it meets only once a month on a Thursday evening. Many young families have a difficult time wrangling children in such a way as to arrive at programs on time. Messy Church overcomes part of this difficulty by beginning when people arrive. Participants are welcome to arrive any time after five in the afternoon. Unlike traditional Sunday school models, where parents and children are separated when they come to church, Messy Church keeps families together. Families encounter the biblical story at different stations through crafts and games. The entire community gathers for prayer, singing, and storytelling, followed by a shared meal. Messy Church is designed for families.

St. Saviour's began its Messy Church worship service after learning that young families in the neighborhood were at risk for social isolation. It can be difficult for adults to make community in their neighborhoods when the care and nurture of children

consumes so much of their time. Messy Church provides an ideal opportunity for young families to come together, make community, and find mutual support.

I invited the leadership team for Messy Church to come together as a focus group. The focus group was an opportunity to reflect on neighborly practice, to share learnings, and collect data. Table 6.12, above, describes the members of the focus group. The data from this focus group is also discussed with the other end-line qualitative data, below.

Refugee Project

St. Saviour's refugee project got underway in the fall of 2015 with the intensification of the Syrian refugee crisis and the worldwide attention which came to it. St. Saviour's was paired with the Syrian refugee family in January 2016. The family of four arrived in Canada and Wellington later that month. Many people from St. Saviour's and the neighborhood have been involved in welcoming this family.

The focus group was an opportunity to gather participants for reflection, shared learning, and data collection. I invited all volunteers in the project to participate in the focus group. The invitation was accepted by ten individuals. They are described in detail Table 6.14, above. As with the other projects, the data is reported and discussed with other end-line qualitative data, below.

End-line Qualitative Data

The end-line qualitative data were collected from a total of ten sources: four focus groups; five interviews; and the qualitative data collected from open-ended questions in the end-line questionnaire. Each of these sources were coded in the same manner as the baseline data, moving from *in vivo*, through focused and axial codes, towards a theoretical coding describing the relationships between the data. Like the baseline

interviews and focus groups, the end-line interviews did not begin as a written source. The interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed by myself as part of the word-by-word, line-by-line, and event-by-event process of coding in the words of respondents themselves (*in vivo*). Written responses to the open-ended questions in the end-line questionnaire were treated as *in vivo* codes. There was a total of 849 *in vivo* codes arising from these data.

Axial and Focused Codes for End-line Data

The initial *in vivo* codes were collated into ninety-nine primary-level focused codes. These are listed in Table N.1 in appendix P. A second iteration of focused coding reduced these to twenty-six secondary-level focused codes. Axial codes clustered these secondary-level focused codes into larger themes. I found four axial codes arising from the end-line data. The end-line focused codes were: (*eA*) *concern for human flourishing*; (*eB*) *participating in the neighborhood*; and, (*eC*) *practicing the faith*. The axial codes for the end-line data and listed with their related secondary-level focused codes in **Error! Not a valid bookmark self-reference.**, below.

Table 6.35. Axial Codes for End-line Data with Related Secondary-level Focused Codes

Axial Codes/ Secondary-level Focused Codes	
<i>e</i> A. Concern for Human Flourishing	<i>e</i> B. Participating in the Neighborhood
1. Appreciating beauty and natural environment	1. Asserting values, subverting the status quo
2. Asserting values, subverting the status quo	2. Enhancing health and wholeness
3. Building community	3. Enhancing social infrastructure
4. Celebrating and caring for children	4. Knowing and being known, valuing intimacy, friendship
5. Celebrating diversity, acceptance and belonging	5. Making community
6. Concern for affordability of housing	6. Participating in SS's projects
7. Concern for neighbors with addictions	7. Practicing Christian witness
8. Concern for persons living in poverty	8. Practicing citizenship
9. Concern for refugees	9. Practicing good stewardship
10. Concerns for persons living in social isolation	10. Practicing neighborliness
11. Enhancing health and wholeness	11. Practicing the faith
12. Enhancing social infrastructure	12. Practicing vocation
13. Naming the economic issues	
14. Valuing physical infrastructure, services, access and walkability	
15. Valuing safety and security	
16. Valuing the neighborhood	

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Table 6.35. Axial Codes for End-line Data with Related Secondary-level FocusedCodes (*continued*)

eC. Practicing the Faith.

1. Appreciating beauty and natural environment
 2. Asserting values, subverting the status quo
 3. Building community
 4. Celebrating and caring for children
 5. Celebrating diversity, acceptance and belonging
 6. Enhancing health and wholeness
 7. Enhancing social infrastructure
 8. Knowing and being known, valuing intimacy, friendship
 9. Making community
 10. Participating in SS's projects
 11. Practicing citizenship
 12. Practicing neighborliness
 13. Practicing vocation
 14. Participating in SS's projects
-

Theoretical Coding of End-line Data

The final level of data coding was theoretical. I spent time reflecting upon the relationships between the axial codes and the data they represented. I developed a diagram to show the relationship between the end-line data. See Figure 6.3, below.

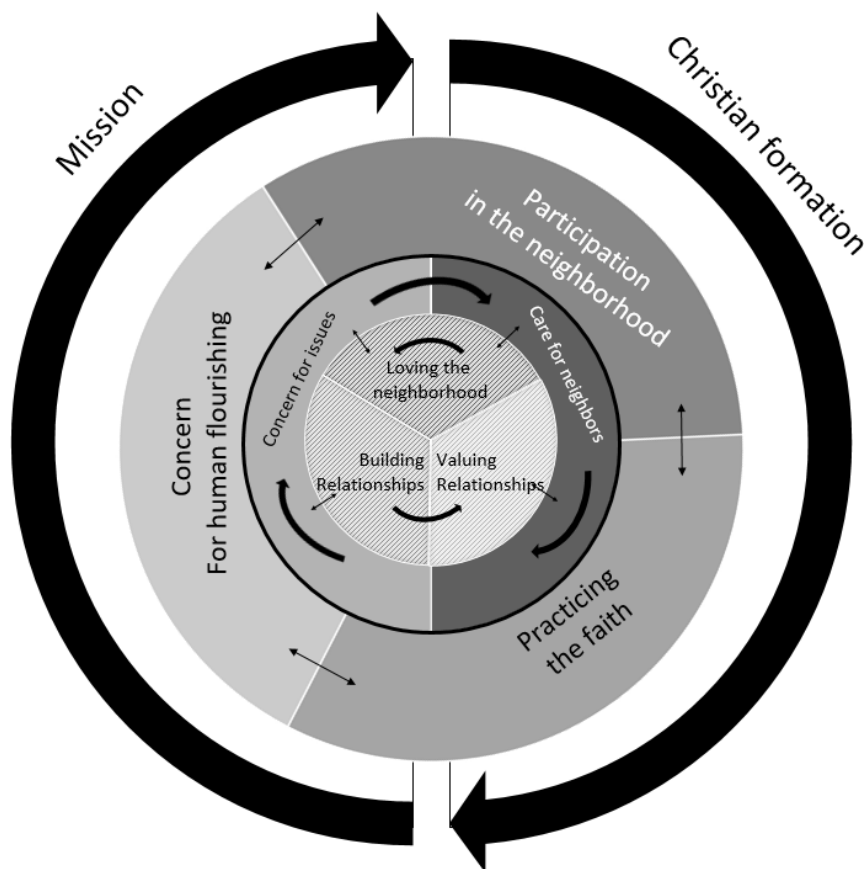


Figure 6.3. Theoretical Coding of End-line Data

The three axial codes, (eA) *concern for human flourishing*; (eB) *participation in the neighborhood*, and, (eC) *practicing the faith*, are represented as three sections in, or outer rim of a wheel. I have shown elements of the baseline theoretical coding at the center of the wheel to illustrate the symmetry of themes. The large arrows on the outside of the figure illustrate the dynamism at work and how concern for human flourishing, participation in the neighborhood, and practicing the faith are animated by Christian formation and mission at St. Saviour's.

Participating in the Neighborhood

The end-line data revealed that respondents participate in their neighborhood and place a high value on that experience. The end-line questionnaire asked respondents several questions related to their neighborhood. Respondents to the end-line questionnaire were asked, “what are your favorite things about the neighborhood where you live?” The responses to this question (N = 202) gave rise to nineteen different primary-level focused codes. I was interested to note that the responses to the same question at the baseline produced twenty-six focused codes, implying that respondent’s attention had become more focused on particular values. See Table 6.36, below.

Table 6.36. Frequencies for Valued Neighborhood Qualities at End-line

Primary-level Focused Code	n (N = 202)	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Walkability	29	14.4	14.4
Services	28	13.9	28.2
Nature	25	12.4	40.6
Neighbors	22	10.9	51.5
Safety	14	6.9	58.4
Hospitality	13	6.4	64.9
Location	13	6.4	71.3
Quiet	13	6.4	77.7
Parks	9	4.5	82.2
Diversity	7	3.5	85.6
Clean	6	3.0	88.6
Built heritage	6	3.0	91.6
Church	4	2.0	93.6
Education	4	2.0	95.5
Growth	3	1.5	97.0
Care	3	1.5	98.5
Business opportunity	1	.5	99.0
Environmental stewardship	1	.5	99.5
Infrastructure	1	.5	100.0
Total	202	100.0	

The most valued attribute of the neighborhood at the end-line was *walkability* (n = 29; 14.4%). The next most frequent responses included: *availability of services* (n = 28, 13.9%), *accessibility to nature* (n = 25, 12.4%), *good neighbors* (n = 22, 10.9%), *safety* (n = 14, 6.9%), and *hospitality* (n = 13, 6.4%). If *hospitality* and *good neighbors* are taken together, this would represent the most frequent response, (n = 35, 20.8%).

The end-line questionnaire also asked respondents, “what are your three favorite things about the city in which you live?” Table 6.37, below, shows the frequencies of focused codes for valued city qualities in response to a question in the end-line questionnaire. Almost seventy percent of the responses were included in the top six focused codes: (1) *accessibility to nature* (n = 39, 20.3%); (2) *belonging* (n = 29, 15.1%); (3) *availability of services* (n = 21, 10.9%); (4) *diversity* (n = 15, 7.8%); (5) *Wellington pride*, which values Wellington’s grittiness and compassion (n = 15; 7.8%); and (6) *neighbors* (n = 12; 6.3%).

Table 6.37. Frequencies for Valued City Qualities at End Line

Value	n (N = 192)	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Nature	39	20.3	20.3
Belonging	29	15.1	35.4
Services	21	10.9	46.4
Diversity	15	7.8	54.2
Wellington pride	15	7.8	62.0
Hospitality	13	6.8	68.8
Neighbors	12	6.3	75.0
Safety	6	3.1	78.1
Walkability	6	3.1	81.3
Infrastructure	4	2.1	83.3
Parks	4	2.1	85.4
Business opportunity	3	1.6	87.0
Church	3	1.6	88.5
Built heritage	3	1.6	90.1
Housing	3	1.6	91.7
Location	3	1.6	93.2
Growth	2	1.0	94.3
Family	2	1.0	95.3
Care	2	1.0	96.4
Citizenship	1	.5	96.9
Clean	1	.5	97.4
Ecumenism	1	.5	97.9
Environmental stewardship	1	.5	98.4
Quiet	1	.5	99.0
Reputation	1	.5	99.5
Size	1	.5	100.0
Total	192	100.0	

The high value that respondents placed on good neighbors stood out in both the focus groups and the end-line interviews. This was very clear, for example, in the Artaban Supper Club Focus Group (ASC-FG). Stacey proudly claimed, “The fact is we are good neighbors” (ASC-FG), speaking of her neighbors in the Artaban building.

Andrea agreed, saying, “There is something about this building ... that is welcoming to pretty well everybody. Everybody says hello. ... Everybody seems happy that’s here, welcoming” (ASC-FG). Many participants agreed and said that they enjoy living in the building so much that the only way they intend to leave is “feet first” (Zoey, Ada, Lilah, ASC-FG).

One of the ways that this neighborliness is experienced by the participants in the Artaban Supper Club Focus Group is in the mutual care and support they find among neighbors. “If anything is ever wrong, I don’t think that anybody would hesitate to go ask somebody for help” (Andrea, ASC-FG). Lilah told the story of a recent time when she had trouble with her colostomy bag. She said, “I’ve had several of my neighbors come in to replace my bag (laughing). ... Not mentioning any names, but Melanie and Andrea have come up to help me when my bag burst” (Lilah, ASC-FG). Ann said, “I told you I would come and help you anytime” (ASC-FG). Andrea replied, “Oh, that was nothing. I told you, any time” (ASC-FG). When asked for the reason such care exists in the building, Lilah responded by talking about respect. “We recognize everybody’s dignity, even when they’re not in the best situation” (Lilah, ASC-FG). Stacey talked about care and compassion. “We really do care for each other” (Stacey, ASC-FG).

The other end-line data sources talked about what they learned about the value of neighborliness through their interaction in the various projects connected with the PAR intervention of learning community. For example, Jessie talked about her experience of accompanying youth members of the parish in their monthly visits to Indwell. “That was probably one of the most dramatic things that I saw. It left a huge impact on me” (Jessie, *e* Interview). Jessie continued, “It’s clear, no matter what we are doing, whether it’s

playing cards, or talking to somebody about school, or whatever it is, they look forward to it ... it contributes to their social health. It's somebody accepting them for who they are (Jessie, *e* Interview). Patrice also observed that our youth seemed to "just accept people as they are" (Patrice, *e* Interview). Patrice also spoke about her hope regarding how these experiences of the youth will be formative for the adults they become.

They might realize later, "I used to have a friend who had a tick," or "I know someone who stuttered" or "I played cards with someone who suffered from schizophrenia." I just think this sets them up to be less judgmental, just better people. (Patrice, *e* Interview)

In the Concert Project Focus Group (Concert-FG), Anita talked about her experience volunteering in St. Saviour's Concert Project and having the opportunity be a good neighbor for a young woman who had just had a bad experience being adjudicated in a music competition. Anita shared some of her own experience as a music teacher with the young woman and helped her to turn the negative experience into a learning opportunity. Anita shared,

(I told her) ... 'think about what was said, what can you learn from it, and now that you've got some ideas come back this afternoon and see what you can do with it.' She came in first place in the afternoon. ... You just never know what little conversations might do. (Anita, Concert-FG)

In the Messy Church Focus Group (MC-FG), Murphy talked about his experience of being able to practice neighborliness with people attending Messy Church.

I've had people share with me some significant struggles that they are having at home. I mean significant. The police have been called. People are hurting. And I don't have any answers; you can only listen. (Murphy, MC-FG)

In the focus group, Howard responded, "And that may be enough, that might help" (MC-FG). Murphy said, "I'm not saying it isn't. It is significant that they (the families in question) keep coming here because of the relationships that are being established" (MC-FG). Murphy continued,

It is this whole thing when all of a sudden someone who was a stranger at the beginning of the year, three or four months in, seeing the same person over and over again, and just chatting with them, and finally they come around and say, “I’m at my wit’s end, and the cops have been called,” and share difficulties like that. Its impressive. (MC-FG).

Dean responded, “I think that this is very significant. We’ve arrived at a very special place in terms of safety and trust for people to feel free to have that level of disclosure” (MC-FG).

Concern for Human Flourishing: Imagining a Better Future

Several respondents noticed how life in the neighborhood is not always ideal, and hoped for a better future for themselves and their neighbors. I note in particular, five important issues that surfaced in the data: (1) the housing crisis; (2) poverty issues; (3) divisions within the body politic; (4) social isolation; and (5) community policing.

The housing crisis. Wellington’s housing crisis was a theme that surfaced several times in the data. A dramatic story was told in refugee project focus group. The story was of a recent fire in the city where several people perished. The part of the home where the deaths occurred had been converted into an illegal rooming house. The space was illegal because it had not been properly inspected and did not have the emergency exits, nor the smoke and carbon monoxide detectors required by code.

The people who died in that attic in that apartment. And this is the real cost of what’s happening in this city. Capitalism run amok. Gentrification. People are being displaced from their homes and are being forced to choose accommodations that put them at risk. People are going to be forced to accept conditions that are less than safe. They were in an attic without any other available fire exit. It’s completely illegal and unsafe and they paid with their lives. It was literally a death trap. ... I’m afraid were going to see more and more of this. (Dean, Refugee-FG).

As Leah noted in her baseline interview, the housing crisis is related to the issue of gentrification. While gentrification is not the cause of Wellington’s housing crisis, it has

exacerbated the situation. The small housing stock available in the city is becoming increasingly expensive. People moving to Wellington from other nearby urban centers, where housing is even more expensive, continues to put pressure on the housing market, causing prices to rise. New housing that is being built is designed as luxury accommodation to meet the market of newcomers from more expensive markets. The housing crisis effects the most vulnerable in the city. The housing prices in the neighborhood do not allow for the average family. The working poor are excluded. In her end-line interview, Marlene said, “The entry level prices in the neighborhood just don’t allow for blue-collar workers” (Marlene, *e* Interview). Leah repeated the theme her end-line interview.

I just know that it is out of my reach. ... I would not be able to live, I would not be able to purchase in the neighborhood where I live, and love, and go to church, and work in. ... I feel sad.

Poverty issues. Poverty issues were raised several times as one of the broken realities within the neighborhood. Poverty and housing were often related in these conversations. Marlene talked about her experience in volunteering with Wellington Out of the Cold, an organization that provides a hot meal once per day for Wellington’s most vulnerable citizens during the winter months. She said that she would talk to guests who attended. “They weren’t homeless, but they were paying seventy-five to eighty percent of whatever money they had on housing every month. It was just insane” (Marlene, *e* Interview).

Marlene also referenced something she had learned recently about a surprising effect of poverty on education. Marlene had just read in the local newspaper how teachers in high school and middle school were relying upon social media networks to give

homework, assignments, and post class notes. The newspaper was raising a valid concern about the vulnerability of student privacy on such networks. Marlene observed, however,

Somebody has to realize that not every kid in the inner-city of Wellington has got access to computers, never mind the Internet. Because, in a large part, the money has to go towards rent. And food costs are obviously going up. There is a big pinch. And you know, the working poor are so hidden. (Marlene, *e* Interview)

Canada is sometimes thought of as a welfare state by people from other countries.

Poverty is a pernicious issue, however, and while social assistance is available, recipients languish far below the poverty level. The Refugee Project team discovered this when they began to plan for the arrival of the family sponsored by St. Saviour's. An agreement with the Canadian government set the level of support that St. Saviour's would be expected to provide the family. The agreement specified that the support could be no less *and no more* than the stated amount of support. The amount was to be based on social assistance rates in the province of residence. When the planning team began to organize for the family—completing such tasks as finding an apartment for them to live, arranging for public utilities, and making a preliminary budget—the team quickly realized the financial bind the family would be in. Comments often heard in team meetings were, “no one can possibly live on this amount.”

It's something we learned as we got into this. The money just isn't there. We had raised quite a bit of money. We really had more money than we needed. We had an abundance of money and the fact is, we know if we had asked, we could have raised more. People wanted to help this family. But we could only give them what the government said we could give them during this first year. The idea is that in case they can't work after the first year, and they have to go on social assistance after our support runs out, they will be able to live on social assistance, because that is the money they have been getting. But we could all see that no one can live on that amount of money. But everyone in the Province of Ontario on social assistance, that is what they have to live on. (Dean, Refugee-FG)

This was an important learning about the reality of poverty in the neighborhood.

Patrice talked about her experience as a former social-worker who dealt with clients living in poverty. Patrice believed universal daycare would make a significant impact on the reality of poverty in the neighborhood.

I think we should be talking about universal daycare. I think, quite honestly, that universal daycare would stimulate the economy. It would probably stop a whole lot of the familial CAS clients because I think that people don't really want to stay home with three children, but that's kind of where they are, where they have been, and they don't see any way out.¹ ... But if people could afford daycare, and women could go back to school, women could get into the workforce, and then I don't think we would have these, as many, fifteen and sixteen-year-old mothers, because there would be a way out. (Patrice, *e* Interview)

Divisions within the body politic. One of the difficulties that Wellington experiences in trying to make progress on its more complex issues and problems are the many ways the city is divided. Evelin noted,

One more problem with this city is the downtown and the suburbs are always fighting. And I never lived in another city where I realized that fight was going on. In the paper, it is every day. It's like, yes, we want the LRT, no we don't want the LRT.² Yes, we want to pour some more resources into the downtown, because actually everyone uses it, or no we don't, we want to make more pipelines that are going further out into the burbs. And just that tension between the two, instead of working together, that is draining. (Evelin, *e* Interview)

Dean was also very concerned about the divisions in the city. He said, "It seems to me that we are a very divided city."

And it's not just urban versus suburban. It's urban versus suburban versus rural. It's upper versus lower, it's east versus west, it's rich versus poor—that sort of thing. There are a lot of different ways in which the city seems to be divided and to me all of those seem more acute right now than at any time. (MC-FG)

¹ CAS, Children's Aid Society.

² LRT, Light Rail Transit. The Province of Ontario has offered to fund Light Rail Transit in the city of Wellington, but local politicians and citizens do not seem to be able to come to an agreement on whether the LRT is good for the city.

Social isolation. Jessie talked about how many young families move to the neighborhood surrounding St. Saviour's building with the expectation of belonging to a great neighborhood. She describes the situation,

And yet, when they arrived, especially if you've got a young family, you're not hanging around coffee shops and bars on (the) street. So, suddenly your idea of the neighborhood doesn't live up to the expectation. And you are left thinking, this sort of sucks, actually. So, it's isolating. So, that's why something like Messy Church actually works for a lot of people because they can come here and do something with their kids and meet other families. They can say, hey, this is my neighborhood (Jessie, *e* Interview).

Marlene is not unhappy that new people are moving into her neighborhood and she is not upset that they are coming from other cities. She is concerned, however, about the potential for the neighborhood to become a more isolated place.

There can be a tendency ... if people are paying more for a house, and they come in and they don't know anyone, they can quickly turn what used to be a neighborhood into a very isolated place. And I think that that is a concern. (Marlene, *e* Interview)

Community policing. Patrice was the only person to raise another important issue: the issue of community policing. A little historical context may be helpful. The summer of 2016 was a difficult time for police and community relations in North America. I attended a seminar at Luther Seminary in connection with this project on the weekend after Philando Castile was fatally shot by the St. Paul area police officer, Jeronimo Yenez. Castile's girlfriend, Diamond Reynolds live-streamed the shooting on Facebook. This incident took place just a few miles from the seminary. At one point during the seminar days, I attended the site of the shooting with seminar colleagues. The memorial had a profound effect upon me. During this same summer, there were other shootings. Alton Stirling was shot dead in Baton Rouge the day before Castile. Akiel Denkins had been killed by police in Raleigh earlier in the year, as had Gregory Dunn in Montgomery.

Soon after the Castile killing, Micah Johnson ambushed Dallas police officers killing five and injuring nine others. This very difficult summer brought to the world's attention what most African-Americans already knew too well: that African-Americans are at an extremely high risk when dealing with police. The Black Lives Matter movement became an international movement to campaign against violence and systemic racism towards black people and particularly issues of racial profiling, police brutality, and racial injustice in the criminal justice system.

While these issues are acute in the United States, they are not unique to that country. Canada has had many high-profile instances of police brutality. Robert Dzieñański, a Polish immigrant, was killed by members of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police at the Vancouver International Airport when he was tasered five times. Dzieñański was unarmed and detained alone in a secure room when the incident occurred. Sammy Yatim was killed by Toronto police in July of 2013. Yatim was suffering a mental breakdown at the time and was brandishing a knife on a Toronto streetcar. The streetcar had been cleared of all people and there was no danger of harm to civilians. Rather than de-escalate the situation, the police aggressively gave orders to Yatim. In the end Yatim was shot eight times by Toronto Police Service officer James Forcillo. Yatim was already lying on the ground when the last six shots were fired. Anthony Divers was killed by Wellington police on October 1 of 2016. Divers was unarmed and had his arms raised in surrender when he was fatally shot.

I interviewed Patrice before the fatal shooting of Divers had occurred in Wellington. She was very aware, however, that the city has serious policing issues. She asked whether I had seen a newspaper article about a man who had been stopped thirty-

five times by a single police division in the past two years. A physical disability, which gives one of his eyes an odd appearance, apparently causes him to be a target for police. He is constantly being stopped entering the building where he lives because, police say, they are concerned he is loitering, or perhaps entering without permission. Patrice asked, “What white guy is going to get stopped at the back of the building, going into his own building. I mean, come on!” (Patrice, *e* Interview).

While the Province of Ontario has brought in new regulations concerning the so-called “carding” of citizens on the street, making compliance with the police completely voluntary, Patrice is suspicious.

The police say they have stopped the practice. I don’t believe it. It may not be carding anymore but I think they still stop people. They probably just don’t write it down anymore and so it’s easy for them to say well we don’t stop people, but I think they do.” (Patrice, *e* Interview)

Patrice recalled a run-in her own son had with the police. It involved a minor incident when he was a teenager and no charges were ever laid. It was clear to Patrice, however, that police had shared information when her son moved from one school to another even though such sharing of information is illegal under Canadian law. Patrice also recalled how a young man, who is a city councilor in Wellington, has been carded many times by the police. “He was carded all of the time. And now that he’s a city counsellor he still carded. It’s ridiculous” (Patrice, *e* Interview).

Clearly, everything in the City of Wellington or its neighborhoods is not as it should or could be. The city and the neighborhood have many issues to overcome which limit human flourishing. Housing, poverty, divisions, isolation; and policing issues are just a few. There are others such as crime, traffic violence, and environmental concerns.

Desiring change. The end-line qualitative data showed that respondents have a desire to see change in the neighborhood that will address these concerns and issues in the city and neighborhood, promote the common good and human flourishing. The end-line questionnaire asked, “If you could change one thing about your neighborhood, what would it be.” Table 6.38 summarizes the frequencies of focus codes for the open-ended answers to the question, comparing baseline to end-line.

Table 6.38. Frequencies for Desired Change in the Neighborhood

Value	n_b (N = 55)	n_e (N = 62)	Percent b	Percent e
Increasing by percentage of respondent's choice baseline to end-line				
Increase Green Space	2	7	5.5	11.3
More affordable housing	4	7	7.3	11.3
Better care of property	1	4	1.8	6.5
More diversity and acceptance	3	3	3.4	4.8
More safety, less crime	2	3	3.6	4.8
Less control of traffic	1	3	1.8	4.8
Better neighbor relations	1	3	1.8	4.8
Enhance spirituality	1	3	1.8	4.8
Improve transit	1	2	1.8	3.2
More bike lanes	0	2	0.0	3.2
Build a community center	0	1	0.0	1.6
Improve accessibility for disabled	0	1	0.0	1.6
Less pollution	0	1	0.0	1.6
More third space	0	1	0.0	1.6
Decreasing by percentage of respondent' choice baseline to end-line				
More control of traffic	10	7	18.2	11.3
More neighbor interaction	9	6	10.1	9.7
Less expensive to live	1	1	1.8	1.6
Improve economic conditions for poor	2	1	3.6	1.6
More compassion	2	1	3.6	1.6
Living conditions improved	2	0	3.6	0.0
Improve sense of community	6	0	6.7	0.0
Improve communication	1	0	1.8	0.0
Better accessibility to health care	1	0	1.8	0.0
Enhance citizen participation	1	0	1.8	0.0
Noise reduced	1	0	1.8	0.0
Total	55	62	100.0	100.0

A question of imagination. The theme of imagination was raised by a number of respondents. Imagination involved a new way of seeing the people, needs, and possibilities resident in the neighborhood. Leah used the language of counter-cultural Christian values in her end-line interview. Leah had been visiting some of her extended family, and she related how she encountered some disagreement with the idea that Canada should be welcoming Syrian refugees. She realized that she simply had a different set of values than some of her family members. “It’s really this question that you asked about what it means for us to follow Jesus,” she said.

It means that we are making decisions that are not based in fear, but ... on the welcome that we saw Jesus have for people that he welcomed. ... It means that we live our lives according to a different set of values ... that are not rooted in a kind of self-preservation and hurt. (Leah, *e* Interview)

Leah said that she understood why her family and many others might disagree on the issues of refugee sponsorship. She continued,

And maybe some of it comes from being hurt or a kind of insecurity, I think there are a lot of reasons why people don’t believe in welcoming refugees. And I don’t want to dismiss the very real things that can be going on there that would influence people’s responses or opinions about it. But I still don’t think that the opinion is right. Because the Bible tells us something different. Christ’s example tells us something different. (Leah, *e* Interview)

Leah went on to say that the choices between competing values can be very stark in our world, but are, nevertheless, crucial and “decisive for communities and the health of the world.” Leah observed that the biblical record is full of stories where people hunker down out of fear and cut themselves off from one another, “even when they are given a choice to trust God and God’s generosity and abundance.” Leah argued, “people have to make these judgments, are you going to live in fear or freedom? This really is decisive for communities and the world, and as a church we have an opportunity to give some leadership around that” (Leah, *e* Interview).

Patrice noticed that she had become tired of listening to people complain about what is wrong with their city or neighborhood. Patrice feels that complaining is a sign of a lack of imagination that would allow a person to see what is good. “I think sometimes people spend their time complaining and then they don’t think about, ... all the other stuff that’s going ... that is pretty much perfect” (Patrice, *e* Interview). Patrice suggests, “just suck it up and get on with what’s good. Or change it. If something is really bothering you, try and change it” (Patrice, *e* Interview).

Jessie also talked about the need to engage in the neighborhood for the common good. Jessie had been talking about how many decisions are made by the market for the neighborhood. “When it comes to deciding, who can live in a neighborhood, much of that is decided by the market. Who can afford to live there?” (Jessie, *e* Interview). Jessie notices that we are all susceptible to the marketing that wants to sell us a *good neighborhood*. She says,

There’s this thing that you want to live in a good neighborhood. You don’t want to live in the bad neighborhood. Nobody wants to live in a bad neighborhood. People say you can fix your house but you can’t change in the neighborhood. But that’s not true. No, you can change the neighborhood, if you actively engage in your neighborhood. (Jessie, *e* Interview)

When respondents had first-hand experience and encounters with neighbors who were experiencing some of the hardships and issues that are experienced in the city and neighborhood many reported that their imaginations were stirred for what God might want to do in the neighborhood involved. As I described above, many had not realized the difficulties experienced by people in poverty who must subsist on social assistance rates far below the poverty line until they had tried to work out a budget for the refugee family St. Saviour’s was about to sponsor. Once the family had arrived we realized “they’re going to be spending an extraordinary level of their monthly income on housing”

(Marlene, *e* Interview). In her interview, Marlene stated that she feared that this challenge is a common picture. “I think it’s opening our eyes to the reality of the difficulty of housing by just watching what they’re going through” (Marlene, *e* Interview). Gladys talked about a similar theme when telling others in the Refugee Project Focus Group (Ref-FG), about the challenges the family were having with bed bugs. The housing team for the refugee project had been delighted to find an apartment for the family, even though it was technically more than the budget allowed. Unfortunately, what was not known is that the building is infested with bed bugs. Infestations are not unique to housing accommodations for low income persons. The special burden of the poor in such situations is, however, that normally they cannot afford to move or to pay for treatment of their apartment. The happy news is that St. Saviour’s was successful in assisting the family in breaking their lease and has found a single-family home for the family to rent. This is possible for this family only because of the church’s support (Gladys, Ref-FG).

Dean, a participant in the Refugee Project, talked in the Refugee Project Focus Group about how making friends with the family of newcomers to Canada (formerly refugees) had changed his view of the diversity in the neighborhood. “I look at people a little differently now.” Dean continued, “When I see people that dress different, and who don’t seem to speak English, I wonder what their stories are, and I wonder how I might connect with them. I wonder if they need a welcome and I wonder if they might welcome me” (Dean, Ref-FG)

In the same conversation, Anne observed that because she has a sense of belonging in the neighborhood, the presence of newcomers now pushes her to consider who else belongs. Patrice noted that sometimes we might intellectually understand that

others in the neighborhoods have different lived experience from us, or may have particular needs, because someone tells us. She notices, however, that it is completely different when we are talking about someone we know. “It is different when we have seen the real face of the need” (Patrice, Ref-FG).

Respondents noticed that there is a sense of timing for change. Jessie noted that the “‘Code Red’ series came along at just the right time when people were ready to pay attention.”³ And a number of people said let’s do something about that” (Jessie, *e* Interview). She also noted that there was a sense of timing about the way that people responded to St. Saviour’s Refugee Project. “The (Canadian federal) election had just happened and the pictures had been in the paper and everyone was annoyed and pissed off about it. People were saying, okay, now we are going to get involved. It was the right timing” (Jessie, *e* Interview). She continued, “It seemed to require a catalyst. The photographs of Alan Kurdi’s lifeless body on a Turkish beach and the dumbass things that came out of our Prime Minister’s mouth pretty well galvanized people” (Jessie, *e* Interview). Howard made the same argument in the Refugee Project Focus Group.

It was the whole country saying that we were going to do something. It was a crisis, but it also became an opportunity to do something that felt good. We had a new Prime Minister we were all going to do this together and you had the feeling that you were part of something that was bigger. (Howard, Ref-FG).

Rosanne observed, “everyone was talking about it; it was very much in the media. ... If people could have formulated a question, I think they would say, ‘what can I do?’ And we were ready to show them that they could do something. That’s why they joined in”

³ “Code Red” refers to an investigative report by Wellington’s daily newspaper. The report compared health risks across Wellington neighborhoods and showed that life expectancies in various neighborhoods varied dramatically. Shorter life expectancy seemed to be directly tied to poverty. For reasons of confidentiality, I do not provide a full citation.

(Ref-FG). “People were moved. People wanted to do something. And we just happened to come along at that time and say, hey, we’re organizing something would you like to be part of it. People jumped right on” (Zoey, Ref-FG).

Leah wondered whether the time was right for something to happen in the city around affordable housing. The housing crisis has been in the public attention. Leah said, “people are dying and I don’t know what the answer will be.” She continued,

Maybe it is somehow related to the Christians in the city taking a stand. Maybe we should give one seventh of our capital gain on a home to a housing charity like Indwell to build social housing. That’s a fairly modest proposal if you think about it: just one seventh. Just pay that forward when you cash it in. We have to think about something that we can do because I think that sense of hopelessness is related to fear. It tells us nothing can be done. And I don’t think that’s true. I just don’t think it’s the truth. (Leah, *e* Interview)

The concern expressed for human flourishing in the neighborhood and the imagination that was expressed by respondents for something better for themselves and their neighbors was impressive. For many respondents, the concern about the present, and an imagination for a better future, was related to their perspective and practice of the Christian faith.

Practicing the Faith

There was a close relationship between the axial code (*eC*) *practicing the faith* and the other two axial codes in the end-line qualitative data; several of the secondary-level focused codes identified with this axial were cross-listed to (*eA*) *concern for human flourishing* and (*eB*) *participating in the neighborhood*. There are a number of ways that these relationships can be traced.

Asserting alternative values. The secondary-level focused code, (*eC2*) *asserting values, subverting the status quo*, was cross-listed to all three axials. The proposal that

Leah made about “Christians in the city taking a stand” on the issue of affordable housing is a good example (Leah, *e* Interview). Leah is concerned about human flourishing in her city and neighborhood and knows that affordable housing plays a large role in this. Leah relates to her neighbors and has built multiple meaningful relationships, not only within her church community at St. Saviour’s, but with neighbors on the street, colleagues and clients at work, and others. Leah is also a *practicing* Christian. She has learned that the practice of her faith is not merely about having the correct ideas or feelings, it is also about behavior, how she responds to neighbors and the choices that she makes in her every day, ordinary life. Leah knows that a dominant view in her culture is that a capital gain, especially on one’s primary residence, entirely belongs to the person who owns and sells that property. Such capital gains are not, for example, even taxable under Canadian law. Leah’s Christian understanding of stewardship informs her view, however. Leah understands that when housing prices rise dramatically, the poor and marginalized, who have not found a place within the economic system, pay a price. Leah’s proposal for the stewardship of such capital gains suggests that the poor should not be forgotten in a more compassionate economy that takes account of all citizens.

Jessie is new to Christian faith and the language of faith does not come naturally to her. Nevertheless, Jessie observed that the presence of God in the world makes a difference and should make a difference in the way that we view the world. The mundane of everyday, ordinary life has taken on a new religious meaning for Jessie. “I think sometimes we have a tendency to put our life in different sub levels, (but when) ... we see that God is everywhere, no matter what you do there is some sort of implication for what you’re doing in some way whether big or small” (Jessie, *e* Interview). For Jessie, her

growing understanding of the nature of God and what God is up to in the world has meant that she looks at her neighbors and the concerns and issues facing her neighborhood and city in very different ways.

Christian practice. Several contributors to the end-line data commented on their appreciation for the emphasis on the *practical* aspect of faith. They are sometimes concerned that the faith is reduced to the world of belief or ideas, that we are left with a great deal to think about, so that the life of faith remains somehow all too theoretical. Marlene observed,

The one thing that strikes me at St. Saviour's, and I think it's just basically human nature, is that we have a hard time getting as excited, and getting a critical mass excited, in a theoretical issue. But if you sponsor a refugee family and it's concrete to us we can do it. So, that is a direction that I think would make sense for us to do. That we would be doing some concrete thing. (Marlene, *e* Interview)

The church and social capital. Respondents noted the value of social capital in making a difference for the common good. Evelin wondered if St. Saviour's had garnered some social capital through some of its projects and wondered how that capital might be invested or spent.

If we have new partnerships with some people who've aligned themselves with us or with whom we have aligned ourselves, what might be the next opportunity for St. Saviour's? It seems like we're exercising these gifts that we have right now but there may be other gifts that we still can exercise. I imagine that there is a next step. (Evelin, *e* Interview)

Jessie noted that the diocese has gained an enormous amount of "street-cred" from its work around the refugees in the past year. She told the story of how a friend had been saying very positive things about what the diocese had done and reported that she thought, "Hey, those are my people" (Jessie, *e* Interview). In the Refugee Project Focus Group, participants also wondered how the social capital amassed from that project might be spent. "We talk about single-parent families and that sort of thing, but if there was

something that the church kind of said we'd like to take this on, can you help us, then I think we might be surprised" (Patrice, Ref-FG). Christyn noted that many people in the community are now watching what St. Saviour's is doing with new interest.

I noticed that there are a lot of eyes on our St. Saviour's Facebook page. There's a lot of comments that are posted there who don't really attend worship here. They are connected through scouting or this project. ... But they are following and interested. They feel a connection to this place and they are watching what we are doing. (Ref-FG)

The willingness to take risks. The experience of the various projects connected with the intervention of creating a learning community also taught St. Saviour's something about the value of a willingness to take risks. "We learned something," said Marlene. "When you started the fundraising (for the Refugee Project), I'm sorry, but I didn't think we were going to need all the lanterns."⁴ Howard continued,

I thought it was a monumental task. I remember talking to you as you were starting in. I said it was a bit of a stretch, but that we had to do it, we had to try. But I think that the congregation as a whole is going to take on bigger tasks more readily. (Ref-FG)

St. Saviour's vocation in the neighborhood. The data also contained comments regarding St. Saviour's ongoing vocation within the *missio Dei in vicinia*. St. Saviour's vocation in the neighborhood involves: (1) building community; (2) prophetic engagement; (3) and, practical leadership.

Building community. Much of what was attempted in the various projects and activities connected with the formation of a learning community was designed to build community. One project was designed entirely as an attempt to make community among persons at risk for social isolation. That project focused on the residents at Artaban Place,

⁴ One lantern was lit in the church to signify each \$1,000 raised. We had asked for twenty lanterns to be placed in the church ready to be lit.

next door to the church; the residents of various Indwell residences; and isolated seniors in the neighborhood. Messy Church is a project designed to build community among young families that are sometimes at risk for social isolation. The concert project sought to build community with musicians and audiences, and to offer them the gift of hospitality. Although the Refugee Sponsorship Project was not originally conceived as one that would build community, the effect was a sense of bringing many people together from the neighborhood around a common cause.

St. Saviour's vocation of building community in the neighborhood is very much needed. Marlene talked about the influx of newcomers who are arriving in the gentrified neighborhoods of our city. Many are coming from other nearby urban areas that are even more expensive. Many of these people do not have family or other friends who live in Wellington. The danger with their arrival is that the neighborhood will increasingly be an isolated and isolating place. "Our vocation of making community ... really does fit with the influx of people who are trying to find a home. (It also fits with) ... what can be the negative effects of neighborhoods that change very quickly (Marlene, *e* Interview).

Prophetic engagement. The prophetic role is often a matter of naming things for what they are. The prophet points to that which belongs to the reign of God and calls it good, and to that which does not partake in the reign of God and calls it bad. In a world where there are many competing values, the prophetic role may be challenging, but it is all the more acutely needed. Evelin talked about how the casino that had been proposed for downtown Wellington a few years ago promised so many wonderful things: employment, new business, and tax revenue. Evelin appreciated the prophetic role that churches had played in saying that employment, business, and tax revenue were not signs

of the reign of God when the cost would be broken human lives and a desolate urban landscape around the casino. Evelin wondered how the church might play a prophetic role amid the other pressing issues faced by the neighborhood and city (Evelin, *e* Interview). Patrice hopes that churches in Wellington will find their voice to speak about civic issues, “whether it’s poverty, or housing, or carding of people, I think that if the church spoke out a little more, ... it might make a bit of a difference” (Patrice, *e* Interview). Leah hopes that the church will to point to the housing crisis in our city. “You just wonder what it will take for us to say were not going to allow this. ... Somehow, I think ... that the church has got to have a role at least in pointing prophetically to the fact that we can’t have this. There’s got to be a better way” (Leah, *e* Interview).

Practical leadership. One of the realities of St. Saviour’s life in the neighborhood is that leadership in the neighborhood is practiced in many different ways. Leadership is exercised formally by the church as an institution. Marlene talked about the leadership of the diocese on poverty issues and the bishop’s participation on the Wellington Poverty Roundtable, set up by the mayor of the city in the wake of the “Code Red” series. Evelin noted that the parish rector had organized other community religious leaders to speak into the issue of a proposed casino to be built in Wellington’s downtown core. But leadership in the neighborhood is also exercised in a robust way in the ordinary lives of individual persons who regularly worship at St. Saviour’s. Anita and Scott described this as “making a difference” in their baseline interviews. Marlene noted that when St. Saviour’s was beginning its Refugee Project, neighbors joined in largely because of individual connections with neighbors. “Oh yes, St. Saviour’s. That’s where my neighbor goes to church.” Marlene continued, “I think that is how a great deal of information got shared

with others. ... ‘This is what my church is doing.’ And that encouraged people to join in” (Marlene, *e* Interview).

In many ways, the Refugee Project is a superb example of how leadership is required from different levels to move a project forward. Our diocesan bishop had originally announced the diocesan project of which the parish refugee sponsorship project was a part. As rector of the parish, I had written a pastoral letter encouraging participation. It was not until a very wide conversation about the horrors of the humanitarian crisis being suffered by Syrian refugees in the summer of 2015 came to light that the project truly became a success. It required the entire neighborhood working together and nothing less.

Summary of Qualitative Data

The qualitative data in this research project were collected in the form of interviews and focus groups which were recorded and transcribed, together with written responses to open-ended questions on two questionnaires. These sources were coded at multiple levels, from *in vivo*, through two levels of focused codes. The focused codes were collated into axial codes and finally a theoretical level of coding described the relationship between the axial codes.

The theoretical coding of the baseline data described two spheres with multiple levels of contact. The first sphere was described as “life at St. Saviour’s,” and included the axial codes: (*bA*) Christian formation at St. Saviour’s, and (*bB*) participation in God’s mission at St. Saviour’s. The second sphere was described as “life in the neighborhood,” and included (*bC*) *care for neighbors, responding to needs*; (*bD*) *valuing relationships*; (*bE*) *building relationships*; (*bF*) *concern regarding social issues*; and (*bG*) *loving the*

neighborhood. Christian formation and mission at St. Saviour's forms people for life in the neighborhood. Respondents described how they enjoy their network of relationships as well as many of the other attributes of life in the neighborhood. Building relationships and valuing those relationships was closely related to caring for neighbors, the social issues faced by them, and responding to their needs. The theoretical coding of the end-line data described one unified sphere which included three axial codes: (*eA*) *concern for human flourishing*; (*eB*) *participating in the neighborhood*; and, (*eC*) *practicing the faith*.

Chapter Summary

The data collected in this PAR study tell a story the development of Christian practices of neighborliness and participation in the mission of God in the corporate gatherings and daily lives of the members of St. Saviour's Anglican Church. The quantitative data describes patterns of change across the sample, while the qualitative data provides a view of the depth of experience and reflection which was part of the PAR for several participants.

The analysis of quantitative data revealed statistically significant results confirming change occurred from baseline to end-line, during the PAR intervention, in the answers to three questions (see Table 6.24, above). The first had to do with participant's agreement—expressed on a Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree; 5 = strongly agree)—that there is a “direct connection between what we do in worship and how I live my daily life” ($\bar{x}_b = 3.89$ and $\bar{x}_e = 4.69$; $t_{(53)} = -5.654$, $p < 0.001$). The high level of agreement is striking.

The second question related to the practice of hospitality and asked, “In the past year how often have you listened to a stranger?” Responses were on a Likert scale (1 =

never; 5 = more than ten times). The baseline mean was 2.80 and the end-line 3.28 ($t_{(53)} = -2.040$, $p = 0.046$). There was a significant increase in the practice of listening to strangers.

The third question where there was a statistically significant result showing an increase in mean, baseline to end-line was related to familiarity with St. Saviour's projects to build community among persons at risk for social isolation ($\bar{x}_b = 2.46$ and $\bar{x}_e = 3.14$; $t_{(49)} = -3.420$, $p = 0.001$).

While there was no statistically significant change in the answers to other questions included in the questionnaire, I observe that in twenty-nine of the thirty-three questions the means increased, in two they remained constant, and in only two was there a slight decrease. The consistent direction of positive change is notable. This seems to suggest that if the PAR had been conducted over a longer period of time, or with a larger sample size, statistical significance would have been achieved in other areas.

The qualitative data bears out the fact that a number participants experienced a deepening of their faith and participation in the mission of God as they participated in the learning community of St. Saviour's and its various projects. Whether it was Messy Church, the project which brought and welcomed a family of Syrian refugees to the neighborhood, the Concert Project, or the various projects to build community with those at risk for social isolation, participants talked about their growth in the practice of their faith, their concern for human flourishing, and their participation in the life of the neighborhood.

CHAPTER SEVEN

CONCLUSION

Introduction to Conclusion

I have been addressing a question throughout this project:

How might a Participatory Action Research intervention, which utilizes a learning community to engage in the Christian practices of neighborliness, help the members of St. Saviour's Anglican Church engage more fully in God's mission in their corporate gatherings and daily lives?

The findings of this project were presented in chapter 6. The baseline data provided a snapshot in time as the project began, describing participants' engagement with practices of neighborliness. The analysis of the quantitative data provided a view of the breadth of engagement across the congregation, while the qualitative data provided insight into the depth of passion and understanding from a smaller sample.

The PAR intervention employed several parish projects and activities as learning opportunities to form the parish as a learning community around practices of neighborliness. These projects included a concert project, a refugee sponsorship program, Messy Church, and a project designed to assist the social integration of persons at risk for social isolation.

The end-line data, like the baseline, provided a snapshot of both the breadth of neighborly engagement across the congregation and the depth of passion and understanding within a smaller sample, following the PAR intervention. Comparison of

the baseline and end-line data provided the opportunity to observe change in the system that pointed to an answer to the research question.

I conclude, overall, that the PAR interventions, utilizing a learning community to engage in the Christian practices of neighborliness, did, indeed, help the members of St. Saviour's Anglican Church engage more fully in God's mission in their corporate gatherings and daily lives. The quantitative data revealed a number of statistically significant results with positive change from baseline to end-line. While I did not find statistically significant results in most neighborly practices into which the questionnaire inquired, it was notable that there was an increase in statistical means for frequency of practice in almost all instances, suggesting an overall trend. There was also evidence of meaningful engagement in practices of neighborliness and Christian discipleship within the qualitative data.

In the quantitative data, statistically significant results were found in three areas. The first had to do with whether respondents saw a connection between what is done in worship at church and how they live their daily lives. Respondents were asked about their level of agreement with the statement, "I believe that there is a direct connection between what we do in worship at church and how I live my daily life." Answers were given on a Likert scale (1 = no familiarity, 5 = very familiar). Paired t-tests showed a statistically significant result where there was an increase in mean from baseline to end-line ($\bar{x}_b = 3.89$, $\bar{x}_e = 4.69$, $p > 0.000$). Respondents grew in their understanding that there is a connection between the liturgical life of the parish and daily life.

The second area with a statistical significant result related to respondent's openness to engage with strangers. Respondents were asked to report a frequency on a

Likert scale (1 = never, 5 = more than 10 times) in response to the question, “In the past year, how often have you listened to a stranger?” Paired t-tests showed a statistically significant result where there was an increase in mean baseline to end-line ($\bar{x}_b = 2.80$, $\bar{x}_e = 3.28$, $p = 0.046$). Respondents clearly grew in terms their practice of engagement with strangers.

A third area of change with statistical significance had to do with participant’s familiarity with “what St. Saviour’s is doing to build community among persons at risk for social isolation.” Respondents were asked to rate their familiarity on a Likert scale (1 = no familiarity, 5 = very familiar). Paired t-tests showed a statistically significant result with an increase in mean baseline to end-line ($\bar{x}_b = 2.46$, $\bar{x}_e = 3.14$, $p = 0.001$).

Respondents grew in their understanding of the parish’s shared ministry among persons as risk for social isolation.

In the qualitative data, growth was noted in several areas. Participants noted that they had learned a great deal about neighborliness through their participation in the various projects connected with the PAR intervention. Jessie learned, for example, about the dramatic power of neighborliness in the simple visits by youth group members to persons suffering with mental illness in group homes. While Jessie was new to the Christian faith, she found that her experience helped her to gain a deeper understanding of a vision of human flourishing inspired by an imagination for the kingdom of God. Anita learned about the power of conversations, made possible through simple acts of hospitality, through her experience of volunteering in the concert project. Murphy learned that deep, caring relationships are possible, even across generational differences, when

you open your heart to listen to strangers who have become friends, as he volunteered in Messy Church.

The qualitative data also revealed a growing understanding and desire to respond to many of the real challenges neighbors faced in the city. Leah, for example, talked about the issues of gentrification with the related escalation of housing costs in her baseline interview. She had clearly been reflecting on these issues between interviews and talked about them more extensively in the end-line interview. Participants identified several issues shared and faced by neighbors, such as divisions in the body politic, social isolation, community policing, and a host of poverty issues. In each case, there was an understanding that a theological and biblical vision for the reign of God, as well as an understanding of the common good, would not leave room for such challenges to be ignored in the neighborhood. Many were thinking about ways in which they could work with neighbors to promote the common good and point to the reign of God.

The process of learning together in community afforded participants the opportunity to imagine a better future for the neighborhood. The refugee sponsorship project opened participants' eyes to the power of community. The neighborhood seemed to be ready for St. Saviour's to show leadership. When St. Saviour's presented the opportunity to welcome a family of Syrian refugees, the neighborhood responded generously. When St. Saviour's questioned its capacity to raise the funds required to sponsor a family, neighbors not directly associated with the church supported the project, not only with cash, but with significant contributions of volunteer hours.

Three emphases emerged around St. Saviour's vocation in the neighborhood; these included: (1) building community; (2) prophetic engagement; and (3) practical

leadership. Several participants have begun the process of imagining and discerning how God may be calling the parish to act prophetically around specific issues, such as affordable housing.

Importance of Findings

These findings are important for several reasons. The findings have importance not only for St. Saviour's Anglican Church, but for St. Saviour's neighbors, the city of Wellington, and the wider church.

Importance for St. Saviour's

These findings are important for St. Saviour's primarily because of what was discovered about the processes and shape of discipleship, spiritual formation, learning, and Christian education. The findings showed that participation in a learning community that focused on practical learning, assisted members of St. Saviour's to engage more fully in God's mission in their corporate gatherings and daily lives. The fact that the formation of such a learning community, with a focus on being a supportive community of practice, had such a positive effect, gives St. Saviour's an important insight for future efforts concerning spiritual formation and discipleship. As St. Saviour's seeks to join God in God's mission in the neighborhood, it will do so at its best as a learning community of practice.

A second reason that these findings are important for St. Saviour's has to do with what was discovered about the learning community's ability to help people grow in the practices of neighborliness. The literature would lead us to conclude that learning communities of practice are likely to be effective tools in many different spheres of learning. The findings of this study allow us to affirm that a learning community can be

an effective means for learning Christian practices of neighborliness. The biblical and theological literature affirmed that neighborliness is a primary way to understand Christian discipleship. Christians are called to follow Jesus in the way of neighbor-love. The practices of neighborliness gave a particular shape and framework for participation in God's mission among the members of St. Saviour's, in both their corporate life as the church gathered, and in their individual lives as the church sent and scattered.

The learning community formed in this PAR project allowed St. Saviour's to deepen this journey. This journey has not been completed with the close of this study, however. Like the Missional Church Conversation itself, the practices of neighborliness are not a passing fad, like emphases and approaches that the church adopts for a time, to abandon after a season for something new. We have become convinced that following Jesus in the way of neighbor-love is not something that will go out of style. This study's findings indicate an approach to Christian discipleship and formation that should remain life-giving and affirming for St. Saviour's future.

The findings of this study are also important for St. Saviour's in that they affirmed the congregation's vocation in the neighborhood. Corporately and individually, we learned that we have a role participating with God and others in the *missio Dei in vicinia*. The findings affirmed that through the PAR intervention, members of St. Saviour's grew in their sense of call towards the work of building community, prophetic engagement, and practical leadership. St. Saviour's has a clearer sense of itself, its identity, and role in the neighborhood because of this.

Importance for St. Saviour's Neighbors and the City of Wellington

The importance of these findings for St. Saviour's are related to their importance for St. Saviour's neighbors and the city of Wellington. St. Saviour's has learned that it has a role to play in the neighborhood and city that will contribute towards the common good for the sake of God's reign. This is good news for St. Saviour's neighbors. Rather than remain content to sit on the sidelines, many members of St. Saviour's have grown in their sense that practices of citizenship are among some of the most important practices of neighborliness and of faith. Following the conclusion of this study, a number of St. Saviour's parishioners had a renewed, shared concern and interest in the relationship between gentrification, the lack of affordable housing, and scandal of some of the deplorable living conditions for Wellington's most vulnerable citizens. Several parishioners came together to partner with agencies in the city to organize an event to discuss these issues and work together around some of the emerging possibilities for creating new affordable housing in the city. This is one extremely positive outcome for the neighborhood and city. There are many more.

St. Saviour's members are more aware of the issues faced by their neighbors and neighborhoods than ever before. Walkability, public health, environmental issues, food security, refugee issues, public safety, policing issues, housing issues, and gentrification are just a few of the important issues in our city, which are increasingly on the minds and hearts of St. Saviour's members.

As a result of this study, the parish is more aware of its vocation for building community. This is increasingly important as newcomers arrive from other nearby cities, and places further way, often looking for a sense of neighborhood and belonging, but

sometimes not knowing how to build or find it. Individual members of St. Saviour's have a greater understanding that they can play a role in building community in their local neighborhoods. Some have organized block parties and progressive dinners on their streets. Hospitality is being extended to newcomers and long-time residents alike. Corporately, St. Saviour's understands more fully its own vocation in building community.

Importance for the Wider Church

The findings of this study are also important because of the leadership role that St. Saviour's plays in the wider church. While I serve as the rector of St. Saviour's, I also have the privilege of serving the local Anglican diocese as the territorial archdeacon for Wellington. In that role, I occasionally coach and mentor colleagues around missional issues. I also bring a missional church perspective to the councils of the diocese. Because of these associations, St. Saviour's has a leadership role to play as it lives out its vocation in its own neighborhood. Local congregations that struggle to find meaningful connections with their neighborhood—as St. Saviour's did for a while in the recent past—look at what we have begun here.

St. Saviour's also has an influence beyond our own tribe of Anglican churches through its membership and participation with various congregations across the city with a missional outlook. These congregations are also interested in what we are doing and learning at St. Saviour's. If there are things to learn from St. Saviour's experience of learning in community through the practices of neighborliness, the wider church, our neighbors, and the city are certain to benefit.

Findings from Theoretical and Theological Perspectives

In chapter three, I introduced several theoretical lenses from literature in three broad areas: (1) spiritual formation and learning; (2) critical social theory; and, (3) neighborhoods and neighborliness. I added several theological frames and biblical perspectives in chapter 4. The theological frames included: the *missio Dei*; perichoresis; the kingdom of God; the parish; and Christian practice. The biblical perspectives included a number from Luke's Gospel on the theme of neighborliness; others from Mark that were illustrative of Jesus' teaching methods; and finally, several texts from John's Gospel that speak about discipleship in terms of participation in the divine life. These theoretical lenses, theological frames, and biblical perspectives offer assistance for considering the results of this present study.

Theoretical Lenses Revisited

Spiritual Formation and Learning

In chapter 3, I began my review of theoretical lenses asking a question about the nature of faith. I accepted Craig Dykstra's definition that faith is an "appropriate and intentional participation in the redemptive activity of God."¹ *Participation* is an important word in Dykstra's definition and emerges as a very important word in the results of this study. Through their participation in the PAR intervention, and the practices of neighborliness included in the intervention's various projects, respondents grew in faith and understood that they were, indeed, participating in the redemptive activity of God.

¹ Dykstra, "What Is Faith?," 55.

Another important definition was supplied by Dwight Zscheile. Zscheile defined spiritual formation as “the intentional communal process of growing in our relationship with God and becoming conformed to Christ through the power of the Spirit, for the sake of the world.”² This definition provides three important interpretive keys for understanding this study’s results: (1) the process employed in learning community was *intentional* and *communal*; (2) it moved participants towards being *conformed to Christ through the power of the Spirit*; and, (3) it was engaged in *for the sake of the world*.

The fact that the learning community focused its work around practices of neighborliness helped to make it clear that the spiritual formation that was being pursued was *for the sake of the world*, rather than a strategy for self-help or church growth. A focus on loving God and loving neighbor, assisted participants to develop a profoundly deep understanding of the connection between these two loves and enter into deeper relationships.

The learning community’s focus around practices of neighborliness also moved participants towards being *conformed to Christ through the power of the Spirit*. The practices of neighborliness themselves—especially those that emerged in this study, such as hospitality, discernment, and citizenship—were critical to Christian formation. Participants were conformed to Christ as they engaged in these practices, and through them gave of themselves to their neighbors. That this work was accomplished *through the power of the Spirit*, was quietly acknowledged in a number of interviews and focus groups, where participants talked about what they had learned about God through their participation.

² Zscheile, “A Missional Theology of Spiritual Formation,” 7.

Zscheile's definition of spiritual formation also describes it as an *intentional* and *communal* process. It was for this reason that this study pursued spiritual formation by creating a learning community around practices of neighborliness. I explored the idea of learning community chapter 3, by drawing upon the theoretical work of researchers in the field of education. I accepted John P. Bowen's suggestion that the church can be described as the school of Jesus, and Richard Bank's proposal for a kind of trade school that apprentices people as followers of Christ.³ Participants in this study entered a process that was both intentional and communal. Much could have been done to enhance the aspect of learning community, nevertheless, such a community was formed around the various projects which constituted the PAR. Participants intentionally came together to engage in and learn from practices. The interviews and focus groups that were part of this PAR provided opportunities for reflection and the consolidation of learning. For the process of learning community to continue in normal parish life, outside of this PAR, the opportunities for reflection, the sharing and consolidation of learning, will need to be replicated with other strategies. Some such strategies are in place at St. Saviour's as the conversation continues in small groups, Sunday worship, and in other venues.

Critical Social Theory

Critical social theory provided three helpful insights. The first was Habermas' notion of communicative social action. Such social action is aimed at the alleviation of human suffering and in creating communicative agreement in a way that is free from domination. Communicative social action becomes possible in a learning community that

³ Bowen, *Green Shoots out of Dry Ground*, loc. 289; Banks, *Reenvisioning Theological Education*.

is engaged in the Christian practices of neighborliness. Where listening to and understanding neighbors becomes a priority, communicative agreement on the best way forward for neighborhoods and communities can be achieved. In this study, practices of neighborliness helped participants to approach relationships from a neighborly stance. Such a stance is different from the colonizing stance too often witnessed in Christians who enter the neighborhood with an arrogance that claims, “we know what is best for you.” The Artaban Supper Club provides a good example of communicative social action. The parish’s Supper Club project empowered residents at Artaban Place to create the kind of community that they needed, rather than what others perceived as best. The friendships that were observed by adult leaders who accompanied youth in their monthly visits to Indwell, noticed that the model of friendship and neighborliness practiced there moved beyond the distinctions and power dynamics that are too often present between those who live with mental illness and those who care for them. When participants in this study, who themselves may not have a lived-experience of poverty, speak about poverty issues, they do not do so from a colonizing perspective, but as people who are friends and neighbors of the poor.

A second helpful insight from critical social theory is related to Gary Simpson’s five marks of a *communicatively prophetic, public companion congregation*. Simpson lists these as (1) conviction; (2) compassionate commitment; (3) connected (to God and the social and natural world as public companions); (4) critical and self-critical and communicative practice of prophetic engagement; and (5) creative. These five marks tend to describe the kind of community that began to emerge in the learning community created in this PAR study. It was fascinating to observe, that while Simpson’s proposal for

communicatively prophetic, public companion congregations was never explicitly discussed in the congregation, a desire for St. Saviour's to become such a congregation became apparent. This was evident especially in end-line interviews where Leah, Jessie, and Patrice talked about the opportunities they saw for St. Saviour's to exercise leadership in the neighborhood.

A third insight, rooted in critical social theory, emerges from John Mezirow's work around *transformative learning*. Mezirow built on Habermas' theories concerning communicative action, and proposed that transformative learning occurs where individual experiences are transformed into emancipatory actions.⁴ In transformative learning, individuals learn to make their own interpretations rather than rely upon the judgements supplied by others. Because Mezirow's concept relies upon individual and autonomous thinking, it may seem at first glance that the learning community employed in this PAR may be of an entirely different genus. While Mezirow does stress the experience of the individual, transformative learning remains a communal process, for the very reason it involves a communicative method.

Transformative learning requires discourse with the beliefs and experience of others. There were many occasions in this PAR study where transformative learning was at work. In the end-line interviews, for example, Jessie and Patrice talked about the power of the encounter with the perceived *other* to challenge assumptions about persons who have lived experience of mental illness. Transformative learning occurred on a large scale when St. Saviour's began its refugee sponsorship project. The assumptions that many held about the congregation's limited resources were challenged as the

⁴ Greenwood and Levin, *Introduction to Action Research*, 174.

congregation entered into a discourse with people in neighborhood about the project. As Howard said in the Refugee Project Focus Group, the congregation learned that the neighborhood “had our back” (Howard, Ref-FG). Assumptions held by participants about refugees, Muslims, the Islamic community in Wellington, and others, were challenged by experiences with the refugee family and other neighbors following the family’s arrival and as they were welcomed and integrated into the neighborhood. Evelin commented that previously she had never had a Muslim friend and described how her life had been enriched (Evelin, Ref-FG).

Greenwood and Levin assert that transformative learning is one of the strengths of Action Research and describe PAR as a child of critical social theory.⁵ Critical social theory, with its emphasis upon emancipatory and communicative action, and local knowledge, provides a helpful lens for understanding how, in this PAR, the congregation grew towards being a communicatively prophetic, public companion congregation.

Neighborhoods and Neighborliness

In chapter 3, I also developed a theoretical lens around the ideas of neighborhoods and neighborliness. I began by talking about some of the positive values articulated by advocates of New Urbanism. The power of community was explored, drawing upon the work of Peter Block and Scott McKnight. I explored the concept of social capital described by Robert Putnam and others. Finally, I briefly explored the relationships between global issues and local action. Each of these add layers of understanding for the results of this PAR study.

⁵ Ibid., 152.

The values articulated by advocates of the New Urbanism and writers such as Block and McKnight, were values that emerged in this PAR. The seven elements of satisfaction that Block and McKnight describe as arising out of abundant community are: (1) health; (2) safety and security; (3) the environment; (4) resilient economy; (5) food and food security; (6) raising children; and (7) care.⁶ This list compares with concerns listed in the findings of this PAR study. Each of these elements of satisfaction were named by respondents and are listed in the primary and secondary-level focused codes discussed in chapter 6 and listed in appendices L through N. Likewise, New Urbanism's values around walkability, connectivity, diversity, transportation, sustainability, and quality of life, were represented in the data.

Social capital is a concept that arose explicitly in the data. Participants in focus groups and interviews raised questions about the social capital that the congregation might bring to bear in order to participate in making the neighborhood a better place for all. Participants in the Refugee Focus Group recognized that the social capital of the congregation was both enhanced and invested in the refugee sponsorship project. Evelin talked about the congregation's capacity to organize action. "I think that was wonderful to have all of these people (from the neighborhood) participating through the church and I wish that the momentum could continue so that's we could continue to be involved together" (Evelin, Ref-FG). Leah talked about the relationship between the lives of individual members of St. Saviour's in the neighborhood and the social capital ascribed to the congregation as a whole (Leah, *b* Interview).

⁶ Block and McKnight, *The Abundant Community*, 7.

Respondents were also implicitly talking about social capital when they asked questions and pointed to the vocation of the congregation going forward. Participants in various focus groups talked about the leadership role that St. Saviour's can play in the neighborhood. The Artaban Supper Club Focus Group alluded to what the Messy Church Focus Group named explicitly, namely: St. Saviour's vocation in building community in the neighborhood. The Refugee Project Focus Group wondered about St. Saviour's capacity to provide leadership around other important issues in the neighborhood. The Concert Project Focus Group acknowledged that the congregation's profile in the neighborhood and wider city has grown dramatically through the relationships built with musicians, audiences, and the local press.⁷

Some of the interview respondents talked about the divisions that exist in Wellington. Divisions in the body politic arose as a concern raised in both responses to questionnaire, focus groups, and interviews. Dean named the divisions between upper and lower city; east and west; north and south; urban, suburban, and rural; old city and amalgamated municipalities. The question about whether St. Saviour's, with its partners and neighbors, can help to bridge some of these divisions is also a question about social capital. The data revealed a greater awareness among participants that the congregation is a steward of social capital, with a responsibility to invest it wisely for the common good.

St. Saviour's refugee project in particular provided a great deal of learning about the connection between participation in the mission of God locally—the *missio Dei in vicinia*—and God's mission in the wider world. As the adage suggests, members of St. Saviour's, together with their neighbors, *thought globally and acted locally*, when they

⁷ St. Saviour's was featured in a major front page article in Wellington's major daily newspaper.

sponsored and welcomed a refugee family. Many people feel powerless to address the terrible consequences of the civil war in Syria and the developing humanitarian crisis with the displacement of persons in that conflict. Participants in the refugee project, however, found they could take meaningful action to alleviate suffering. While nation-states and the world's superpowers seemed powerless to intervene, individual and groups of citizens living their lives in local neighborhoods were empowered to make a difference.

On January 30, 2016, a family of four Syrian refugees arrived in Wellington by the way of Jordan because of the efforts of the people of St. Saviour's and its allies in the neighborhood. In the months that followed these refugees were welcomed with open arms into the lives of their new neighbors. The adult parents are mastering the English language. The children are in school. Everyone is thriving and the neighborhood has been enhanced by these new relationships. On January 30, 2017, the husband and father in the family said the following at celebration dinner in honor of the first anniversary of their arrival in the neighborhood:

One year of hope, one year of love, one year of brotherhood. We abandoned our lives, our memories and our family because of the war in Syria. Three years in a camp there was no hope—we worked like machines just to survive. When I was thirteen my father said to me try to build a house everywhere. I did not understand. He meant try to find family, friends. Now I understand. I have many houses here in Canada, many families and I love them.⁸

Through this PAR study the congregation learned a powerful lesson about the connection between global issues and local action.

⁸ These powerful words spoken by a newcomer to Canada sponsored as a refugee by St. Saviour's Anglican Church. A full citation is not provided here for reasons of confidentiality.

Theological Frames Revisited

The theological frames developed in chapter 4 of this thesis were designed to provide a focus on missional church, neighborhood, and Christian practice from a theological perspective. The missional church perspective was explored by looking at the *missio Dei* and related themes, as well as the theological concepts of the kingdom of God and the common good. I examined the idea of neighborhood by exploring the theological emphasis of the *missio Dei in vicinia*, and a theology of place. Finally, I explored Christian practice, drawing primarily on the work of Alasdair MacIntyre, Dorothy Bass, and others from the Christian practice movement.

Missio Dei

The theological emphasis of the Missional Church Conversation on the *missio Dei*, has had a renewing influence for the church, reminding Christians that God has a mission in the world, and that God—not the church—is the primary agent of this mission.”⁹ In chapter 4, I argued that the theological emphasis on the *missio Dei* describes the content and method—the *what* and the *how*—of God’s mission. The question of *what*, speaks to the purpose of God’s mission and its end (telos). The end of the *missio Dei*, as described in the biblical narratives, can be described in terms of redemption, human flourishing, wholeness, and justice. The *how* of God’s mission is closely related to the *what*. God accomplishes this mission in ways that are commensurate with the mission’s goals. The *how* of God’s mission involves humility,

⁹ This emphasis can be found in Bosch, who points to Barth as one of the first theologians of the twentieth century to articulate that mission is first an activity of God and has to do with the very nature of God. See Bosch, *Transforming Mission*, 399.

sacrifice, beauty, healing, love, redemption, wholeness, and justice. It also involves the patient formation of a people (Israel and the church), who are called to live their lives in a way that reflects God's intention for all of creation.

The theological emphases of perichoresis and *imitatio Trinitatis*, are closely related to an understanding of the *missio Dei*. *Perichoresis* is a term that refers to the relationship between the three persons of the triune God, and refers to the mutual indwelling, interpenetration and intimacy, of the divine persons. Various theologians have argued that because of this intense relational nature of God, human beings are invited into relationship with God.¹⁰ "Come, Join the Dance of Trinity" is the title of a hymn often sung at St. Saviour's.¹¹ This hymn celebrates God's invitation to the church to join in God's own perichoretic dance. The theological concepts of *imitatio Trinitatis* and participation in God expand on what it means for human beings to enter into such a relationship with God.

Imitatio Trinitatis is an understanding that the Christian life is a vocation to live fully into the reality that human beings are image-bearers of God. This understanding insists that the nature of God's being is integral to understanding the calling of a Christian life. As Volf points out, "we are baptized into the triune name, attesting to the fact that we do not merely respond to God's call, but enter into communion with the triune God. The character of this triune God is imitated by Christian disciples."¹²

¹⁰ Such as those of the Communio school (von Balthazar, de Lubac, Ratzinger, and others).

¹¹ Richard Leach, "Come, Join the Dance of Trinity," in *Evangelical Lutheran Worship* (Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg Fortress Press, 2006).

¹² Volf, "Being as God Is," 3.

These theological emphases support what I argued was important for faith formation, namely, that faith refers to an appropriate response to, and participation in, the redemptive activity of God in the world, and that faith formation therefore corresponds to being formed in Christ, through the power of the Spirit, for the sake of the world.¹³ The concept of the *missio Dei*, together with the emphases on perichoresis and *imitatio Trinitatis*, provided a theological understanding for the faith formation undertaken in this PAR.

Kingdom of God and the Common Good

The theological concept of the kingdom of God and an understanding of the common good, belong to the field of theological inquiry known as eschatology. The Missional Church Conversation draws upon both an inaugurated and social gospel-oriented eschatology. An inaugurated eschatology emphasizes the reality of the kingdom of God in the world as *present* and *not-yet*. The reign of God is *present* and at work in the world, but often in ways that are hidden and difficult to recognize. The reign of God is *not-yet* in the sense that the world awaits its fullness.

The concept of the common good relies more heavily upon a social gospel-oriented eschatology and recognizes that there are ways in which human beings can participate with God in moving communities closer towards God's preferred future. My discussion of the concept of the common good drew on the work of Miroslav Volf and

¹³ I am indebted to Dykstra and Zscheile for these insights. See Dykstra, "What Is Faith?."; Dwight J. Zscheile, ed. *Cultivating Sent Communities: Missional Spiritual Formation*, Missional Church Series (Grand Rapids, MI: W.B. Eerdmans Pub. Co., 2012); Zscheile, "A Missional Theology of Spiritual Formation."

Walter Brueggemann, who agree that the crisis of our time is one of the common good and of neighborliness.¹⁴

This PAR study sought to help the members of St. Saviour's Anglican Church grow in their engagement with the mission of God in the corporate and individual lives. The dual concepts of the reign of God and the common good provided a language for thinking, talking, planning, and participating together in mission. These concepts, and the rich biblical narratives from which they arise, provided a framework for participants as they sought to imagine what God's preferred future for their neighborhood and wider communities might look like.

Missio Dei in Vicinia

The *missio Dei in vicinia* is a theological emphasis that I have developed in my papers written in this Doctor of Ministry program at Luther Seminary. This emphasis remembers that God is particularly interested in the flourishing of persons and communities, and that this is uniquely expressed in local contexts. In chapter 4, I asserted that Newbigin's argument for the necessity of the local congregation as a *hermeneutic of the gospel*, is essential to understanding the mission of God. I also argued that in the *missio Dei in vicinia*, the perichoretic dance is extended between the persons of God, congregation, and neighborhood.

This understanding opens the possibility of thinking about the findings of this study as they relate to St. Saviour's as a congregation within its own neighborhood, and the neighborhoods where its people live. Through this PAR study, the people of St.

¹⁴ Brueggemann, *Journey to the Common Good*, 1, 29; Volf, *A Public Faith*, 73.

Saviour's grew in their relationship with their neighbors, their understanding of the challenges and issues faced by their neighbors, and gained a few experiences of action to address the same. The congregation's work, through the various projects and activities, in welcoming strangers, building community, and practicing citizenship, enhanced the congregation's capacity to act as a hermeneutic of the gospel. The good news of God's reign is perhaps more intelligible within St. Saviour's particular neighborhood because of the presence of a congregation who believes and lives that good news, because of a people who practice a faith that participates in the redemptive reign of God.

Theology of Place

My discussion of a theology of place, in chapter 4, reviewed something of the history of the displacement of place within the modern tradition, in favor of space and time. I recalled the importance of place, both in the biblical and sacramental traditions. I drew on the work of Brueggemann, Inge, and Bartholomew to articulate a theology of place. In such a theological understanding, God, people and place are not separated; the place of sacramental happening is important and intrinsic. Bartholomew's stress upon the practice of a moral craft in place as essential to neighborliness, is important to this understanding. The word, *inhabit*, means to dwell in a place. It shares a Latin root (*habi*), with the word, *habit*, which can refer to an acquired behavior, or customary practice. When we inhabit a particular neighborhood, it is not simply a matter of geography, but a bringing to bear in a particular place on an entire vision of life and human flourishing. The Anglican parish tradition is a resource for a renewed interest in placemaking that can potentially move the local church from the insularity of parochialism to neighborliness.

I discussed contextual theology as a way of thinking about the relationship between the inherited theological tradition, the local traditions and realities of any given place, and the communicative process involved as the gospel crosses boundaries and becomes contextualized in new cultural settings. In chapter 4, I alluded to the use of Bevan's synthetic model of contextual theology as participants talked about the work of the concert project and thought about how both the language theology and of music speak to the beauty of God, and debated how and in what ways one might be more satisfactory than the other. Participants in a PAR Leadership Team meeting agreed that it seems we need both music and theology. On the whole, however, I did not find the frame of contextual theology particular helpful for thinking about the results of this PAR study.

Participants in this study began by *inhabiting* their neighborhoods, yet it was clear, that their participation with God in God's redemptive work in their neighborhoods was enhanced through the PAR intervention of becoming a learning community. The practices of neighborliness that were constituent of the various projects and activities became part of the life of the congregation and its members in new ways. At the end of this study, participants expressed a desire to grow deeper in these habits.

Christian Practice

The idea of such habits was explored explicitly in my discussion of Christian practice in chapter 4. I traced the background for the Christian practice movement through thinkers such as Alasdair MacIntyre and Stanley Hauerwas. The latter argued that becoming a disciple of Jesus is not a matter of accepting a new or changed

understanding, but becoming part of a different *community* with a different set of *practices*.¹⁵

Craig Dykstra, whose definition of faith I found so helpful for this project, appears again in the Christian practices movement. Dykstra and Bass define Christian practices as “things Christian people do over time in response to and in light of God’s active presence for the life of the world in Christ Jesus.”¹⁶ Authors in the Christian practice movement have written countless books on various distinct Christian practices. A number of these appear in the bibliography of this thesis. In chapter 4, I discussed two practices which I thought would be of particular import for this PAR study, namely, hospitality and citizenship.

Hospitality was an important practice of neighborliness as this PAR study unfolded. Welcoming the stranger, and the experience of being welcomed, was a central practice to each of the projects. Participants connected with the universal need for hospitality and learned to address the fear of the stranger in profound ways. Hospitality became a place of learning. Openness to an encounter with the other demands a receptiveness that opens one up to the kind of transformative learning through communicative action that I have discussed above.¹⁷ The participants in this PAR study learned countless things about God, themselves, and their neighbor, through their participation in the practice of hospitality.

¹⁵ Hauerwas, *After Christendom?*, 107.

¹⁶ Bass and Dykstra, “Practicing Our Faith,” loc. 552-553.

¹⁷ See Spellers, *Radical Welcome*; Murray and Badini Confalonieri, *Receptive Ecumenism and the Call to Catholic Learning*.

Citizenship as a Christian practice demands that Christians play a role in participating in the variety of institutions that are important for the common good of the neighborhood. Participants in this study gave witness to what Gary Simpson refers to as the colonization of the lifeworlds of ordinary people by the market and the state. The market and the state have taken on such vast powers in North American society, so that ordinary people find they have little agency to make real differences in their communities and neighborhoods. The issue of affordable housing—particularly the lack of safe and livable housing for the city’s most vulnerable citizens—that arose as an important issue concerning participants in this study, is an example of a case where such colonization was experienced and named. The market, through gentrification and the rise of property values, has created a crisis. The state, for the most part, seems uninterested to respond. In the face of these realities, the presence of a communicatively prophetic, public companion congregation, seems more important. Such congregations, and the individuals within them, can align themselves with partners and institutions within the neighborhood that contribute to the common good. Many participants in this study were keenly aware of the need to build up the social architecture of the neighborhood and wider community and to participate with other citizens for the common good.

Biblical Perspectives Revisited

In addition to the theological frames discussed above, chapter 4 of this thesis explored a number of biblical perspectives. These also offer assistance in thinking about the results of this PAR study.

Neighborliness and Discipleship in Luke

I explored the themes of neighborliness and discipleship in Luke's Gospel by reviewing the texts found in Luke 9:51–10:42. This section of Luke's Gospel begins, "When the days drew near for him *to be taken up*, he set his face to go to Jerusalem" (Lk 9:51, emphasis added). The journey begins with the end in mind, and what is clearly in view is the redemptive work of God, where Jesus is taken up in his death, resurrection and ascension. Jesus' own participation in the *missio Dei in vicinia* takes him through several neighborhoods on the way to Jerusalem. Place plays a major role. The journey is an exercise of *imitatio Trinitatis*. It takes Jesus and his disciples through Samaritan country, where they are rejected, not so much because of their identity as their destination. Following Jesus in his redemptive work demands commitment.

In Luke 10:1-9, Jesus sends his disciples out into various neighborhoods. This important passage has been a touchstone for St. Saviour's for many years and I traced a number of important themes for the congregation in chapter 4. The stress laid upon the practice of hospitality and openness to the other, I believe, may have had an impact on preparing St. Saviour's for the work of this PAR study, long before it began.

The parable of the good neighbor in Luke 10:25-37, answers the important question, "Who is my neighbor?" (Lk 10:29b). The parable suggests that because God's redemptive activity encompasses all, a neighbor is any person in need. This is more than good moral advice. Jesus' discussion with the lawyer implies that this has to do with what it means for Israel to be Israel, and by extension, what it means for the church to be the church. In this story, Jesus makes it clear that neighbor-love crosses boundaries and

makes neighbors of people from whom we might have otherwise have found ourselves separated by culture and practice.

Finally, I argued that Luke 10:38-42, the account of Jesus' in the neighborhood and home of Martha and Mary, continued to emphasize the radical message of the love and grace of God. I made the argument that the relevance of this passage is not so much in its contrast of an active and contemplative form of spirituality (as I have argued that faithful living requires both), but in the fact that Jesus affirms Mary's place as a would-be leader and teacher, crossing the gender boundaries of that social context. Again, the importance seems to be that boundaries we might assume to be firmly in place, are made meaningless—or at least put in their proper perspective—when the redemptive activity of God is at work.

This was the experience of participants in various projects who were challenged to cross boundaries to meet neighbors. The refugee sponsorship project may have been the most obvious example of this. A number of participants referenced the fact that before participating in this project they had never really known anyone of the Muslim faith, and certainly not considered them as friends and neighbors. Building community with persons at risk for social isolation, especially among those with a lived-experience of mental illness, was a boundary-crossing experience for many. This biblical perspective offers St. Saviour's the opportunity to ask the question concerning the identity and needs of neighbors in relation to all manner of persons. This includes the musicians and audiences welcomed in the concert project. This includes the many people who come into the neighborhood daily to enjoy the shopping, coffee shops, and other amenities that are offered in the neighborhood.

Jesus' Teaching Ministry in Mark

I looked at Jesus' teaching ministry as I explored the passages, Mark 1:14-45 and 8:1–10:52. In Mark 1:17, Jesus invites the discipleship of the fishermen, Simon and Andrew, by inviting them to “fish for people.” Where Simon and Andrew were fisherman, Jesus invites them to take up a new trade. The theme of discipleship expands in Mark as the disciples follow Jesus through various neighborhoods where he accomplishes the things he “came out to do” (1:38). He casts out demons and sets people free, heals the sick, gathers community, feeds the hungry, and teaches about the reign of God. In the passage from Mark 8:1–10:52, Jesus uses diverse occasions and events to teach his disciples: disputes, challenges, happenings, observations, questions, and comments. Jesus uses failure and conflict among his followers, the presence of children, the sick, prostitutes, everyday objects and various activities as teaching moments. The learning community and apprenticeship in the practices of neighborliness that were part of this PAR likewise challenged participants to learn in many different modes.

Discipleship as Participation in God in John

Finally, I explored a number of the Gospel passages from John that are appointed by the Revised Common Lectionary (RCL) for reading in public worship on the Sundays of Easter in Year C. In *John 20:19-31* (The Second Sunday of Easter), the resurrected Jesus appears to his frightened disciples behind the doors that they have locked for fear of their neighbors. The doors that lead to emancipatory and communicative action—the doors to participation in God's mission—are firmly closed. Behind these locked doors, Jesus explicitly commissions the disciples to move out into the neighborhood. Jesus says, “As the Father has sent me, so I send you” (Jn 20:21b). Disciples are sent, as Jesus was,

continuing the work of incarnation and mission, participating in God's redeeming purposes in the world.

The pericope of *John 21:1-19* (The Third Sunday of Easter) describes a miraculous catch of fish by the disciples, who have returned to their fishing nets. The passage also contains a restoration narrative for Peter. A significant aspect of Peter's restoration is understood only when we observe the different words used in the passage and translated in the NRSV as *love*. Jesus twice asks Peter, "do you love (*agape*) me?" (vv.15b, 16b). Peter demurs, but confesses *phileo*-love. On the third asking, Jesus changes his question and asks Peter, "do you love (*phileo*) me?" (v. 17b). On this third asking Peter feels hurt that Jesus asks this question, and adds, "Lord, you know everything, you know that I love (*phileo*) you" (v.17c). The pericope ends, however, with Jesus speaking about the "kind of death" by which Peter "was to glorify God" (Jn 21:19). Peter will indeed lay down his life, as Jesus did. Peter will participate in the kind of sacrificial, self-giving love that God has for the world.

In the passage, *John 13:31-35* (The Fifth Sunday of Easter), Jesus says, "I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another" (vv.34-35). Again, the stress is upon the followers of Jesus bearing the same love for one another (and their neighbors) that Jesus himself has for them, the same love of God the Father, who sends the Son into the world. Another aspect of this same pericope has to do with the anxiety experienced by the disciples, and framed by Jesus words, "Where I am going, you cannot come" (v.33).

This same anxiety is alluded to and takes on a more mysterious tone in the passage, *John 14:23-29* (The Sixth Sunday of Easter). Jesus says, “I am going away, and I am coming to you” (v.28b). Jesus’ “going away” is a reference to his impending death. His assurance, “I am coming to you,” seems to be a reference to the coming gift of Jesus’ presence in and through the Holy Spirit. Jesus says, “Those who love me will keep my word, and my Father will love them, and we will come to them *and make our home with them* (v.23, emphasis added). In the context of this thesis, Eugene Peterson’s rendering of this phrase striking: “we’ll move right into the neighborhood!” (v.23b, *The Message*). God moved into the neighborhood in the incarnation (see Jn 1:14, *The Message*). In sending the Holy Spirit upon the church, God moves into the neighborhood to make a permanent home. The word, “Advocate,” in verse 26, is an English translation of the Greek word, “paraclete,” literally meaning, “the one who comes alongside.” The Paraclete is the neighboring Spirit.

The *missio Dei in vicinia*, framed by the concepts of perichoresis, participation in God, and neighborliness, are again in view in the passage, *John 17:20-26* (The Seventh Sunday of Easter). The context of Jesus’ High Priestly Prayer brings the mystery of Trinitarian theology into view as we witness God praying to God. The content of the prayer also addresses the mystery of the relationality within the Godhead, as well as the participation and deification of Jesus’ followers. Jesus prays, “As you, Father, are in me and I am in you, may they also be in us ...” (v.21b). Jesus prays for the relationship and deification of his followers that is purposeful, or in other words, *missional*. Jesus prays that “all may be one ... *so that* the world may believe that you sent me” (v.21a, c, emphasis added). More than the unity of church is in view here. Jesus is praying for the

mystical union between God and God's people. This unity serves mission by confirming that God has made a home in the neighborhood in the power of the Spirit and in his people.

The RCL calls for *John 14:8-17* to be read on Pentecost Sunday in Year C. In this passage, Jesus speaks about his works and invites Philip to believe on the basis of the works that Jesus does, or to be precise about Jesus' description, the works of "the Father who dwells in me" (v.10). To put this in the theoretical and theological words we have employed above, Jesus invites belief on the basis his *communicative action*, and *practice*: "believe in me because of the works themselves" (v.11b). Jesus goes on to offer the assurance that the neighboring Spirit (paraclete) will continue the communicative, learning process Jesus has begun. This "Spirit of truth" accompanies the community of Jesus' followers and forms them as a learning community of practice. Jesus claims that people will know the Father—which is to say that they will know the missional, neighborly ways of God—by seeing the works (communicative actions) of Jesus himself. Jesus goes on, however, to make the more astounding claim that his followers "will do *greater works* than these" (v.12b). The learning community of Jesus will grow in their practice because the neighboring Spirit comes along side.

The biblical perspectives on discipleship that I have described above, especially those which arose in the texts for preaching in the Easter season during the PAR intervention of creating learning community, were foundational. Following Jesus into the neighborhood was really at the heart of this PAR study. These texts gave the congregation a way to talk about this vocation in the context of public worship and in the

conversations that arose in various places, within the PAR projects, as well as in focus groups and interviews.

Summary of Findings from Theoretical, Theological, and Biblical Perspectives

At the end of chapter 4, I argued that these lenses, frames, and perspectives came together with particular focus on the question of Christian discipleship and spiritual formation. I argued that this literature gives us a view of the vocation of Christian congregations which are incarnational, participatory, communicatively prophetic communities of neighbors. Before this PAR study began, St. Saviour's was living into such a vocation. The PAR intervention of intentionally creating a learning community around practices of neighborliness helped the congregation and its members to live more fully into this vocation and has pointed to some directions for continuing growth in discipleship.

Generalizability of These Findings and Limitations

This PAR project was conducted at St. Saviour's Anglican Church in Wellington, Ontario, between November 2015 and October 2016. The results of this study speak confidently only to this one congregation at this particular time. The overall generalizability of the study is low.

Many congregations do struggle with similar questions, however. The deep questions of ecclesiology and mission, with which congregations struggle in these times of discontinuous change, and which I raised in chapter 2, are questions faced by many congregations in our post-Christendom, post-modern era in North America. What does it mean to be the church? What does it mean to engage in the work of spiritual formation? What does it mean to do this work in the particular context called the neighborhood?

How should we respond when much of our congregational life seems detached from local realities? This study helped St. Saviour's to answer such questions for itself and may point others in helpful directions.

The findings of this project showed that the process of PAR provided an opportunity for learning at St. Saviour's. This was not a surprise based on what had been learned in the literature. What we had learned about PAR and its use in other fields led the PAR Leadership Team to believe that this process would likely provide important learning at St. Saviour's. There is every reason to suggest that similar PAR projects—even if not as formal as what might be required for a Doctor of Ministry thesis project—would offer similar opportunities for learning and growth in other contexts. The literature suggests that the communicative process, especially as it is expressed within PAR, holds promise for any learning community.

The findings of this project also affirmed that there was much learned at St. Saviour's through practice. This was also no surprise based on what had been learned from the literature. Christianity is as much a set of practices embedded within a community of practice as it is a set of beliefs. By engaging in Christian practice together, we learn and grow in the faith. The literature suggests that congregations will benefit from an approach to discipleship and spiritual formation that emphasizes practical learning and cycles of action and reflection.

Many congregations have participated in projects like those that were employed by St. Saviour's as part of the learning community associated with this PAR. In St. Saviour's local Anglican diocese, and across the city of Wellington, many parishes and congregations of various denominations engaged in refugee sponsorship. St. Saviour's

experience suggests that these experiences have much to teach about Christian discipleship, and what it means to follow Jesus in the way of neighbor-love.

Questions for Future Research Arising from These Findings

Several questions arise from these findings that may be worthy of future research. St. Saviour's had been engaged in the Missional Church Conversation for several years before engaging in this PAR. *How might different congregations benefit from such an intervention?* Congregations are often at very different places in terms of their missional discernment and engagement in their neighborhoods. Similar research across a variety of congregations in the same city might reveal whether similar intentionality around faith formation and practices of neighborliness would result in enhanced engagement in mission. I would particularly be interested to see similar research conducted across several congregations in the same city.

What elements might be most effective in creating a learning community component? In this project the PAR intervention of creating a learning community primarily consisted mostly in two elements. The first element involved those things put in place to accomplish the various projects and activities that provided occasions for learning community. The Messy Church project, for example, involved the Messy Church Leadership Team, wider circles of volunteers, and the actual Messy Church gatherings which brought people together. Each of the four main projects and activities involved similar structures, opportunities for gathering, and interactions. No additional opportunities for reflection or the consolidation of learning were added to the basic elements of these projects of the parish, other than what might have been part of the normal course of these activities. The second element of the PAR intervention of creation

a learning community was formed by PAR instruments themselves, including, PAR Leadership Team meetings, the baseline and end-line questionnaires, interviews, and focus groups. The focus groups surrounding each of the parish projects were particularly meaningful learning opportunities for participants. Further research into what elements might enhance the creation of a learning community would be very helpful.

I was surprised by the finding that there was change that was statistically significant even among *people who did not engage with the interventions in a particularly robust way*. Because I did not interview people who were among the low participation groups, I can say very little about the change that was observed, and can only make some tentative suggestions as how to account for the change in this group. I suggest, for example, that asking the questions by means of the questionnaire was perhaps enough to highlight the importance of neighborly practice and that this, in itself, may have influenced behavior. I would like to interview some of the people who fit this category in attempt to ascertain how and why this growth took place. It would be helpful to understand how discipleship and spiritual formation occurs among those people who do not normally participate in these types of opportunities.

Chapter Summary

This chapter began by stating my conclusion that the findings of this study showed that the PAR interventions, utilizing a learning community to engage in the Christian practices of neighborliness, did indeed help the members of St. Saviour's Anglican Church engage more fully in God's mission in their corporate gatherings and daily lives.

I discussed the importance of these findings for St. Saviour's Anglican Church, St. Saviour's neighbors and their wider community, as well as for the wider church. St. Saviour's grew as a learning community of practice. The congregation gained important insights into its work of Christian spiritual formation and discipleship and grew in its understanding of its identity and vocation as a communicatively prophetic, public companion congregation. St. Saviour's neighbors benefit from the presence of a congregation of people who have a greater understanding of and passion for engaging with God in God's mission in the neighborhood, working towards the alleviation of suffering, through prophetic and communicative social action. The importance of this for the wider church is related to this one congregation's learning about spiritual formation and missional engagement, and the suggestions found in the literature about the usefulness of learning community for transformative learning.

I reviewed the theoretical lenses, theological frames, and biblical perspectives that informed the design of this PAR. The theoretical lenses included those that explored the themes of spiritual formation and learning, critical social theory, theories around neighborhoods and neighborliness. The theological lenses included the *missio Dei*, the kingdom of God and the common good, a theology of parish (*missio Dei in vicinia*, and a theology of place), and Christian practice. The biblical perspectives included texts describing neighborliness and discipleship in Luke; Jesus' teaching ministry in Mark; and, discipleship as participation in God in John.

While the generalizability of the findings of this study are low, I argued that many congregations find themselves wrestling with similar questions about engaging with God in God's mission in meaningful ways in their own neighborhoods. I also suggested that

many congregations wonder about how to approach the work of spiritual formation. Based on the strength of the literature around Christian practice, learning through practice, faith formation, and *the missio Dei*, I suggest that the formation of a learning community around practices of neighborliness may be a fruitful exercise for other congregations to pursue.

Finally, I made a few suggestions for further research. The most important of these for St. Saviour's is the question about what strategies might be most effective for creating and sustaining a learning community of practice in the congregation. While this is not likely to be the subject of formal research at St. Saviour's, the congregation's learning, as well as my own, demands that this question be pursued.

EPILOGUE

Over the last several years, I have been engaged in a journey of discovery as I participated in the Doctor of Ministry program in Congregational Leadership and Mission at Luther Seminary. While engaged in this program, I have learned a great deal about myself, the vocation to which I have been called, the mission of God in the world, and the church, called by Christ to participate in God's mission. The context for this learning has been the seminary, interactions with seminary colleagues (professors and fellow students), the parish church and diocese of which I am a part, the parish neighborhood where I live and work, and all the neighbors God has put in my life.

I have been engaged in the work of pastoral ministry for more than thirty years. At the beginning of my career in ministry, it was becoming clear to many of us in the church that the days of Christendom were over. No longer could the church demand the privileged position it once claimed in Western society. It was also becoming clear to many of us that this dramatic change in the status-quo, which had remained largely unchallenged since the day the Emperor Constantine became a Christian, was ultimately going to serve God's mission well. The church would never be the same as it was displaced from power. But the church was never intended to be in power, but to live its life as a distinct community of practice where God's love for the world could be witnessed.

The Missional Church Conversation, in which I have been immersed through this program of study, has been a gathering place where the important theological, theoretical,

and practical work for this time of great change and renewal of the church has come together. I am deeply grateful that I have had the opportunity to explore the important questions about the nature of God, God's mission in the world, the church, and the neighborhood with other committed Christians and scholars.

I have learned that as a missional leader I do not need to meet the expectations sometimes placed upon me to provide the answers, but simply encourage people to ask the question about what God's redemptive reign may be seeking to accomplish. Such leadership relies on the fact that the Holy Spirit continues, as Jesus promised, to lead the church into the truth. It also relies upon a robust engagement with healthy processes of discernment.

In this research project, I have learned about the power of neighborly congregations that are incarnational, participatory, communicatively-prophetic faith communities. Such congregations help their members grow in the practice of their faith and proclaim the gospel of Christ intelligibly, precisely because they are communities who believe and live this good news.

I completed my tenth year as the rector of St. Saviour's Anglican Church while I was writing this thesis. After a decade of ministry in this place and with these people, I feel the call to ministry here more strongly than ever. There are a great number of exciting challenges and opportunities as we grow as a learning community of practice and seek the common good with neighbors and partners across the city.

As I come to the end of this journey of discovery and reflect on all that I have learned about the missional church, the words of Jesus which are read at the Holy Eucharist on the Second Sunday of Easter continue to be very meaningful. "As the Father

has sent me, so I send you” (Jn 20:21b). The importance of this passage lies for me, not in the fact that we as a church are sent, but in *how* we are sent. “*As* the Father has sent me, so I send you,” says Jesus (emphasis added). As we seek to follow Jesus in his incarnational, neighborly love, we catch glimpses of God’s reign. As we work together for the common good, we hear rumors of glory.

This journey taken together has left St. Saviour’s better equipped to grow even more fully into our vocation in the neighborhood. I believe we understand that none of this will save the church or bring us any glory. On the contrary, we are learning to give our lives away. We are, however, finding our place in God’s mission, and learning the meaning of the words with which we typically conclude our Eucharistic celebrations: “Glory to God, whose power working in us can do more than we can ask or imagine. Glory to God, from generation to generation, in the Church and in Christ Jesus, for ever and ever. Amen.”¹

¹ The General Synod of the Anglican Church of Canada, *The Book of Alternative Services*, 214. See Ephesians 3:20.

APPENDIX A

BASELINE QUESTIONNAIRE WITH IMPLIED CONSENT LETTER AND COVERING LETTER

ID No.

Survey of Practices of Neighborliness

(Baseline/Endline Questionnaire 2015/2016)

Introduction

The survey takes approximately fifteen minutes to complete. Your participation is greatly appreciated. Please complete *only* this hardcopy questionnaire *or* the online version. Personal answers will be kept confidential with only summary data totals being used for analysis.

This survey is aimed at discovering some of the practices, values, attitudes, and concerns that might shape the Church of St. Saviour's participation in God's mission in our neighborhood and how each of us engage in God's mission in daily lives in the places where we live.

Please see the attached letter, which describes and explains your implied consent in completing and returning this questionnaire, the researcher's commitment to strict confidentiality, and other ethical matters.

Please answer all questions to the best of your ability and as honestly as possible. Contact David Anderson if you have any questions about this survey at [REDACTED]

Section One: Thoughts, Beliefs and Attitudes on Neighbourliness

Please consider each of the following statements and indicate your level of agreement with each. Please choose only one response for each question.

1. "I feel that Church of St. John the Evangelist (SS hereafter) does a good job engaging with God in God's mission in the neighbourhood."

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Both agree and disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	Don't know
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
1	2	3	4	5	6

2. "I feel that I do a good job in engaging with God in God's mission in my neighborhood."

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Both agree and disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	Don't know
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
1	2	3	4	5	6

3. "I believe that there is a direct connection between what we do in worship at church and how I live my daily life."



Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Both agree and disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	Don't know
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
1	2	3	4	5	8



4. "I think that I understand the primary needs and issues faced by people in my neighborhood."

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Both agree and disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	Don't know
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
1	2	3	4	5	8

5. "I think that I understand the primary needs and issues faced by people in my city."

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Both agree and disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	Don't know
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
1	2	3	4	5	8

6. "I believe that global issues can be substantively approached through local action. 'Think globally, act locally.'"

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Both agree and disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	Don't know
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
1	2	3	4	5	8

7. "I feel that I have meaningful relationships with my neighbours."

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Both agree and disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	Don't know
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
1	2	3	4	5	8

8. "I believe that I understand Jesus' command to love our neighbours."

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Both agree and disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	Don't know
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
1	2	3	4	5	8

9. "I feel that I am obedient to Jesus' command to love my neighbour."

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Both agree and disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	Don't know
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
1	2	3	4	5	6

10. "I believe that I am doing my part helping to address the needs in my neighbourhood."

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Both agree and disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	Don't know
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
1	2	3	4	5	6

11. "I believe that I am doing my part in helping to address the needs in our city."

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Both agree and disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	Don't know
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
1	2	3	4	5	6

Section Two: Practicing Neighbourliness

Please choose only one response for each question.

12. How likely are you to attend four evening sessions offered at SS to learn with others what practices could help us to love our neighbours?

Very unlikely	Unlikely	Both likely and unlikely	Likely	Very likely	Don't know
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
1	2	3	4	5	6

13. "I welcome strangers into my home."

Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Very often	Don't know
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
1	2	3	4	5	6

14. "I vote in civic elections when they are held."

Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Very often	Don't know
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
1	2	3	4	5	6

Section Three: About You

Now, a few facts about yourself. Please answer each question fully.

37. What is your gender?

- | | |
|------------------------------|---|
| ☐ Male | 1 |
| ☐ Female | 2 |

38. What is your marital status?

- | | |
|---|---|
| ☐ Never married | 1 |
| ☐ Married | 2 |
| ☐ Separated | 3 |
| ☐ Divorced | 4 |
| ☐ Widowed | 5 |
| ☐ Engaged | 6 |
| ☐ Other (please describe below) | 8 |
-

39. Do you have any children?

- | | |
|---------------------------|---|
| ☐ Yes | 1 |
| ☐ No | 0 |

40. What was your age at your last birthday?

41. What is your annual gross family income before taxes?

- | | |
|--|----|
| ☐ Under \$19,999 | 1 |
| ☐ \$20,000 to 39,999 | 2 |
| ☐ \$40,000 to 59,999 | 3 |
| ☐ \$60,000 to 79,999 | 4 |
| ☐ \$80,000 to 99,999 | 5 |
| ☐ \$100,000 to 119,999 | 6 |
| ☐ \$120,000 to 139,999 | 7 |
| ☐ \$140,000 to 159,999 | 8 |
| ☐ \$160,000 to 179,999 | 9 |
| ☐ \$180,000 to 199,999 | 10 |
| ☐ \$200,000 or more | 11 |

42. How long have you attended Church of St. John the Evangelist church? (Please state number of years.)

43. How many years have you attended any church? (Please state number of years.)

44. On average, how often do you attend worship at Church of St. John the Evangelist?

- | | |
|--|---|
| ☐ More than weekly | 7 |
| ☐ Weekly | 6 |
| ☐ Almost weekly | 5 |
| ☐ Several times a month | 4 |
| ☐ About once a month | 3 |
| ☐ Occasionally | 2 |
| ☐ Two times a year or less | 1 |

45. What is the highest level of education that you have attained?

- | | |
|---|---|
| ☐ Elementary | 1 |
| ☐ Secondary | 2 |
| ☐ Trade | 3 |
| ☐ Undergraduate College/ University | 4 |
| ☐ Graduate | 5 |
| ☐ Post Graduate | 7 |

46. Are a presently a member of Church of St. John the Evangelist Parish Council? (Choose one.)

- | | |
|---------------------------|---|
| ☐ Yes | 1 |
| ☐ No | 0 |

47. Have you been a member of Church of St. John the Evangelist Parish Council within the past three years? (Choose one.)

- | | |
|---------------------------|---|
| ☐ Yes | 1 |
| ☐ No | 0 |

48. Which worship service(s) do you (and your family, if applicable) most often attend?

(Choose all that apply.)

- | | |
|--|---|
| ☐ Early Service | 1 |
| ☐ Discovery Service | 2 |
| ☐ Choral Service | 3 |
| ☐ Messy Church | 4 |
| ☐ Other | 5 |

49. What neighbourhood do you live in?

50. What is your postal code?

51. How long have you lived in your neighbourhood? *(Please state number of years.)*

52. How long have you lived in the same city where you now live? *(Please state number of years.)*

53. In what cities have you lived previously? *(Name the three most significant places, if any.)*

<i>Place</i>	<i>How long?</i>
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Here are just a few questions about any small group involvement you may have in the church. Please answer each question.

54. Are you ***presently*** a member of a small group that meets on a regular basis for bible study or other learning, prayer and fellowship?

- | | |
|---------------------------|---|
| ☐ Yes | 1 |
| ☐ No | 0 |

If so, how long have you been part of this group? *(Please state number of years.)*

55. Did you ever ***in the past*** participate in a small group that meets on a regular basis for bible study or other learning, prayer and fellowship? *(Choose one.)*

- | | |
|---------------------------|---|
| ☐ Yes | 1 |
| ☐ No | 0 |

If so, how long did you participate in this group? *(Please state number of years.)*

56. Are you now part of *any* type of small group connected with Church of St. John the Evangelist? For example, the knitting circle, craft group, choir, parish council, youth group? (*Choose one.*)

- ☐ Yes 1
☐ No 0

If so, how long have you been part of this group? (*Please state number of years.*)

Some people didn't grow up in the Anglican Church. Please indicate which faith traditions you have participated in and the length of time you were connected with it. (*Please answer for each category.*)

	Yes 1	No 0	If "yes," how many years?
57. Anglican	☐	☐	
58. Associated Gospel	☐	☐	
59. Baptist	☐	☐	
60. Brethren	☐	☐	
61. Christian Reformed	☐	☐	
62. Congregational	☐	☐	
63. Eastern Orthodox	☐	☐	
64. Lutheran	☐	☐	
65. Mennonite	☐	☐	
66. Missionary Alliance	☐	☐	
67. Non-denominational	☐	☐	
68. Pentecostal	☐	☐	
69. Presbyterian	☐	☐	
70. Roman Catholic	☐	☐	
71. United Church	☐	☐	
72. Hinduism	☐	☐	
73. Islam	☐	☐	
74. Judaism	☐	☐	
75. Other (which one)	☐	☐	

Section Four: Your Neighbourhood, Your City

Just a few more questions. Thank you; you are almost done. Please provide short answers of five words or less.

76. Please name what you consider *the* major issue facing our city.

77. Please name what you consider *the* major issue facing your neighborhood.

78. What are your *three* favourite things about the neighbourhood where you live?

79. What are your *three* favourite things about the city where you live?

80. If you could change *one* thing about your neighbourhood, what would it be?

81. If you could change *one* thing about your city, what would it be?

82. In your opinion, what are the *three* top things that make for a great neighbourhood?

83. Are you willing to be interviewed about these issues? If so, please provide your information below. (Remember, your information will remain confidential.)

Name: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Please review to check that you have completed all questions. It is easy to miss a page!

Thank you for completing this questionnaire. Please return this questionnaire in the addressed postage-paid envelope provided, return it to the church office, or place it in the receptacle at the back of the church. Thanks again!

APPENDIX B

END-LINE QUESTIONNAIRE WITH IMPLIED CONSENT LETTER AND COVERING LETTER

ID No.

Survey of Practices of Neighborliness

(Endline Questionnaire 2016)

Introduction

The survey takes approximately ten minutes to complete. Your participation is greatly appreciated. Please complete *only* this hardcopy questionnaire *or* the online version. Personal answers will be kept confidential with only summary data totals being used for analysis.

This survey is aimed at discovering some of the practices, values, attitudes, and concerns that might shape St. Saviour's Anglican Church's participation in God's mission in our neighborhood and how each of us engage in God's mission in daily lives in the places where we live.

Please see the attached letter, which describes and explains your implied consent in completing and returning this questionnaire, the researcher's commitment to strict confidentiality, and other ethical matters.

Please answer all questions according to the instructions given to the best of your ability and as honestly as possible. Contact David Anderson if you have any questions about this survey at

[REDACTED]

Section One: Thoughts, Beliefs and Attitudes on Neighbourliness

Please consider each of the following statements and indicate your level of agreement with each. Please choose only one response for each question.

1. "I feel that St. Saviours (SS hereafter) does a good job engaging with God in God's mission in the neighbourhood."

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Both agree and disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	Don't know
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
1	2	3	4	5	6

2. "I feel that I do a good job in engaging with God in God's mission in my neighborhood."

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Both agree and disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	Don't know
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
1	2	3	4	5	6

3. "I believe that there is a direct connection between what we do in worship at church and how I live my daily life."

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Both agree and disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	Don't know
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
1	2	3	4	5	6

4. "I think that I understand the primary needs and issues faced by people in my neighborhood."

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Both agree and disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	Don't know
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
1	2	3	4	5	6

5. "I think that I understand the primary needs and issues faced by people in my city."

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Both agree and disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	Don't know
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
1	2	3	4	5	6

6. "I believe that global issues can be substantively approached through local action. 'Think globally, act locally.'"

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Both agree and disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	Don't know
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
1	2	3	4	5	6

7. "I feel that I have meaningful relationships with my neighbours."

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Both agree and disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	Don't know
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
1	2	3	4	5	6

8. "I believe that I understand Jesus' command to love our neighbours."

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Both agree and disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	Don't know
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
1	2	3	4	5	6

9. "I feel that I am obedient to Jesus' command to love my neighbour."

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Both agree and disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	Don't know
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
1	2	3	4	5	8

10. "I believe that I am doing my part helping to address the needs in my neighbourhood."

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Both agree and disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	Don't know
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
1	2	3	4	5	8

11. "I believe that I am doing my part in helping to address the needs in our city."

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Both agree and disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	Don't know
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
1	2	3	4	5	8

Section Two: Participation in SS's Neighbourhood Projects

Please indicate your level of involvement, if any, in the following SS neighbourhood projects.

12. In the past twelve months, how often did you participate in **Messy Church**? (Messy Church is a worship experience designed for families and is held at SS on the third Thursday of most months.) Please choose only one response.

Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Very often	Don't know
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
1	2	3	5	6	8

13. If you participated in Messy Church in any way during the past 12 months, please indicate the nature of your participation. Please check all that apply. If you did not participate in Messy Church, please continue to the next question. Please check all that apply.

- ☐ Prayer support ¹
 - ☐ Planning team ²
 - ☐ Craft preparation ³
 - ☐ Meal preparation or serving ⁴
 - ☐ Table leader, worship leader, storyteller, or assistant ⁵
 - ☐ Other (please describe below) ⁹
-

14. In the past twelve months, how often did you participate in SS's **Concert Project**? (SS's concert project seeks to contribute to the common good of our neighbourhood by making community with musicians and audiences.) Please choose only one response.

Never Rarely Sometimes Often Very often Don't know
☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
 1 2 3 5 6 8

15. If you participated in the **Concert Project** in any way during the past twelve months, please indicate the nature of your participation. Please check all that apply. If you did not participate in the concert project, please continue to the next question.

- ☐ Prayer support ¹
☐ Financial support ²
☐ Concert attendance ³
☐ Volunteer ⁴
☐ Steering committee, or other administrative or organizational support ⁵
☐ Other (please describe below) ⁹
-

16. In the past twelve months, how often did you participate in SS's **Refugee Sponsorship and Welcome Project**? (SS raised funds to sponsor a refugee family and welcomed a Syrian family of four who arrived in February 2016.) Please choose only one response.

Never Rarely Sometimes Often Very often Don't know
☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
 1 2 3 5 6 8

17. If you participated in the **Refugee Sponsorship and Welcome Project** in any way during the past twelve months, please indicate the nature of your participation. Please check all that apply. If you did not participate in the concert project, please continue to the next question.

- ☐ Prayer support ¹
☐ Financial support ²
☐ Steering or other organizational/planning committee ³
☐ Practical assistance (moving, decorating or furnishing apartment) ⁴
☐ Direct contact with family (driving, hospitality, child-minding, orientation to the neighbourhood or city) ⁵
☐ Other (please describe below) ⁹
-

18. In the past twelve months, how often did you participate in SS's **ministries designed to connect with persons at risk for social isolation**? (Specifically, the Artaban Supper Club, the Knitting Circle, Senior's Luncheons, the Youth Group's visits with Indwell.) Please choose only one response.

Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Very often	Don't know
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
1	2	3	5	6	8

19. If you participated in SS's **ministries designed to connect with persons at risk for social isolation** in any way during the past twelve months, please indicate the nature of your participation. Please check all that apply. If you did not participate in the concert project, please continue to the next question.

- ☐ Prayer support ¹
 - ☐ Attended Artaban Supper Club ²
 - ☐ Attended Knitting Circle ³
 - ☐ Attended Senior's Luncheon ⁴
 - ☐ Attended Youth Group visit to Indwell ⁵
 - ☐ Other (please describe below) ⁹
-

Section Three: Practicing Neighbourliness

Please choose only one response for each question.

20. "I welcome strangers into my home."

Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Very often	Don't know
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
1	2	3	5	6	8

21. "I vote in civic elections when they are held."

Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Very often	Don't know
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
1	2	3	5	6	8

Section Four: Your Neighbourhood, Your City

Just a few more questions. Thank you; you are almost done. Please provide short answers of five words or less.

50. Please name what you consider *the* major issue facing our city.

51. Please name what you consider *the* major issue facing your neighborhood.

52. What are your *three* favourite things about the neighbourhood where you live?

53. What are your *three* favourite things about the city where you live?

54. If you could change *one* thing about your neighbourhood, what would it be?

55. If you could change *one* thing about your city, what would it be?

56. In your opinion, what are the *three* top things that make for a great neighbourhood?

Please review to check that you have completed all questions. It is easy to miss a page!

Thank you for completing this questionnaire. Please return this questionnaire in the addressed postage-paid envelope provided, return it to the church office, or place it in the receptacle at the back of the church. Thanks again!

APPENDIX C

INFORMED CONCENT FORM FOR INTERVIEWS

INFORMED CONSENT FORM

Transforming Communities and Creating Disciples Through the Practices of Neighborliness:

Apprenticeship in the Ways of Parish Life for the Twenty-first Century

You are invited to be in a research study of the Christian practices of neighbourliness. You were selected as a possible participant because of your participation in the baseline questionnaire that was part of this research. We ask that you read this form and ask any questions you may have before agreeing to be in the study.

This study is being conducted by David J. Anderson as part of a Doctor of Ministry thesis project in Congregational Mission and Leadership at Luther Seminary. The thesis advisor is Dr. Craig Van Gelder.

Background Information

The purpose of this study is to learn more about how congregations can engage in God's mission in their local neighborhoods.

Procedures

If you agree to be in this study, we would ask you to participate in some or all of the various learning opportunities that will help us to learn and practice neighbourliness and to participate subsequent focus groups.

There may be as many as four iterations of learning, practice, and focus groups. Participants may attend any or all learning group meetings and focus groups. Participants who expect to be able to participate fully will be asked to attend a special version of the focus group. All focus group participants will be asked to complete this consent form.

Risks and Benefits of Being in the Study

The study has no risks for participants. Participants are asked only to give their time.

There are no direct benefits to participating in the study. Indirect benefits to yourself, or the general public, of participation are an improved connection between the parish, its members and the neighbourhood, as well as the contribution to the body of knowledge concerning the church, discipleship, and the church's mission with God in the neighbourhood.

Confidentiality

The records of this study will be kept confidential. If I publish any type of report, I will not include any information that will make it possible to identify you. All data will be

kept in a locked file at *the St. Saviour's Anglican Church*. Only my advisor, Dr. Craig Van Gelder, and I will have access to the data and, if applicable, any tape or video recording. If the research is terminated for any reason, all data, and recordings will be destroyed. While I will make every effort to ensure confidentiality, anonymity cannot be guaranteed.

Recordings are to be used only for the purposes of transcribing data. No one but the researcher will have access to the raw data.

Raw data will be destroyed by May 31, 2020.

Voluntary Nature of the Study

Your decision whether or not to participate will not affect your current or future relations with Luther Seminary and/ or with other cooperating institutions, *the St. Saviour's Anglican Church*, or David J. Anderson. If you decide to participate, you are free to withdraw at any time without affecting those relationships.

Contacts and Questions

The researcher conducting this study is David J. Anderson. You may ask any questions you have any now. If you have questions later, you may contact David Anderson at [REDACTED]. Alternatively, you may contact, Dr. Craig Van Gelder, Luther Seminary, St. Paul, MN, USA.

You will be given a copy of this form to keep for your records.

Statement of Consent

I have read the above information or have had it read to me. I have received answers to questions asked. I consent to participate in the study.

Name (please print)

Signature _____ Date _____

Signature of investigator _____ Date _____

I consent to be audiotaped (or videotaped):

Signature _____ Date _____

I consent to allow use of my direct quotations in the published thesis document.

Signature _____ Date _____

APPENDIX D

BASELINE INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

Interview Protocol for Baseline Interviews

1. Tell me about your involvement at SS and your connection with your own neighbourhood.
 - a. What can you tell me about your neighbours?
 - b. What is the biggest issue facing our city?
 - c. What is the biggest issue facing your neighbourhood?
2. What do you think are the two-or-three most significant things that SS| does to connect with its neighbourhood?
 - a. What excites or encourages you about these?
 - b. What concerns you?
3. What are two-or-three critical needs in this city that you feel God might be calling us to help address?
4. What are two-or-three critical needs in this neighbourhood that at you feel God might be calling us to help address?
5. How would you describe the relationship between your faith and what you do in your everyday life?

APPENDIX E

END-LINE INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

Interview Protocol for End Line Interviews

1. What do you think were the two-or-three most significant things SS has done in the past few months to connect with its neighbourhood? What has excited you? What has concerned you?
2. What, if anything, do you think that we have learned about God, what it means for us to follow Jesus, and/or what it means to love our neighbours.
3. Has your perception of the neighbourhood changed in any ways? How you view your neighbours? How you view the issues facing our city? How you view the issues facing your neighbourhood?
4. What do you know think are the two-or-three critical needs in this city or neighbourhood that you feel God might be calling us to help address?
5. How would you now describe the relationship between your faith and what you do in your everyday life?
6. Is there anything pertaining to this project that you would like to add?

APPENDIX F

FOCUS GROUP PROTOCOLS

Focus Group Protocol: Refugee Sponsorship Project

1. Let's quickly go around the circle and have people say something about their own involvement and interaction with the Refugee Sponsorship Project at SS this year.
2. What did you experience when interacting with neighbours through the project this year? Is there some specific experience that stands out for you? What was the most important thing you learned about our neighbours, our neighbourhood, about yourself, and/or about God?
3. What ways, if any, has your experience the Refugee Sponsorship Project at SS influenced what you do at home or in your neighbourhood? What, if anything, has the experience of this project taught you about loving your neighbours?
4. What difference, if any, has this project had upon the life of our church? What, if anything, has the experience of this project taught us about loving our neighbours?
5. What have we not talked about that you would like to add?

Focus Group Protocol: Concert Project

1. Let's quickly go around the circle and have people say something about their own involvement and interaction with the Concert Project at SJE this year.
2. What, if anything, do you think that God is up to in the midst of this project?
What does this project have to do with the mission of God in the neighbourhood?
Why should SJE be engaged in this project?
3. What did you experience when interacting with neighbours through the project this year? Is there some specific experience that stands out for you? What was the most important thing you learned about our neighbours, our neighbourhood, about yourself, and/or about God?
4. What ways, if any, has your experience this project influenced what you do at home or in your neighbourhood? What, if anything, has the experience of this project taught you about loving your neighbours?
5. What difference, if any, has this project had upon the life of our church? What, if anything, has the experience of this project taught us about loving our neighbours?
6. What have we not talked about that you would like to add?

Focus Group Protocol: Messy Church

1. Let's quickly go around the circle and have people say something about their general impression of having participated in Messy Church this year.
2. What did you experience when interacting with neighbours through Messy Church this year? Is there some specific experience that stands out for you? What was the most important thing you learned about our neighbours, our neighbourhood, about yourself, and/or about God?
3. What difference, if any, has your experience at Messy Church influenced what you do at home or in your neighbourhood? What, if anything, has the experience of Messy Church taught you about loving your neighbours?
4. What difference, if any, has our Messy Church made in the life of our church? What, if anything, has the experience of Messy Church taught us about loving our neighbours?
5. What have we not talked about that you would like to add?

Focus Group Protocol: Supper Club

1. Let's quickly go around the circle and have people say something about their general impression of having participated in the Supper Club at SS's this year. What did you experience when interacting with neighbours through Messy Church this year? Is there some specific experience that stands out for you?
2. What was the most important thing you learned about your neighbours, your neighbourhood, and/or about yourself?
3. What difference, if any, has your experience at community dinners made for your sense of belonging or participation in your neighbourhood?
4. What difference, if any, has the Supper Club made among your neighbours?
5. What have we not talked about that you would like to add?

APPENDIX G

INFORMED CONSENT FORM FOR FOCUS GROUPS

INFORMED CONSENT FORM
Transforming Communities and Creating Disciples
Through the Practices of Neighborliness:
Apprenticeship in the Ways of Parish Life for the Twenty-first Century

You are invited to be in a research study of the Christian practices of neighbourliness. You were selected as a possible participant because of your participation in the baseline questionnaire that was part of this research. We ask that you read this form and ask any questions you may have before agreeing to be in the study.

This study is being conducted by David J. Anderson as part of a Doctor of Ministry thesis project in Congregational Mission and Leadership at Luther Seminary. The thesis advisor is Dr. Craig Van Gelder.

Background Information

The purpose of this study is to learn more about how congregations can engage in God's mission in their local neighborhoods.

Procedures

If you agree to be in this study, we would ask you to participate in some or all of the various learning opportunities that will help us to learn and practice neighbourliness and to participate subsequent focus groups.

There may be as many as four iterations of learning, practice, and focus groups. Participants may attend any or all learning group meetings and focus groups. Participants who expect to be able to participate fully will be asked to attend a special version of the focus group. All focus group participants will be asked to complete this consent form.

Risks and Benefits of Being in the Study

The study has no risks for participants. Participants are asked only to give their time.

There are no direct benefits to participating in the study. Indirect benefits to yourself, or the general public, of participation are an improved connection between the parish, its members and the neighbourhood, as well as the contribution to the body of knowledge concerning the church, discipleship, and the church's mission with God in the neighbourhood.

Confidentiality

The records of this study will be kept confidential. If I publish any type of report, I will not include any information that will make it possible to identify you. All data will be kept in a locked file at *the St. Saviour's Anglican Church*. Only my advisor, Dr. Craig

Van Gelder, and I will have access to the data and, if applicable, any tape or video recording. If the research is terminated for any reason, all data, and recordings will be destroyed. While I will make every effort to ensure confidentiality, anonymity cannot be guaranteed.

Recordings are to be used only for the purposes of transcribing data. No one but the researcher will have access to the raw data.

Raw data will be destroyed by May 31, 2020.

Voluntary Nature of the Study

Your decision whether or not to participate will not affect your current or future relations with Luther Seminary and/ or with other cooperating institutions, *the St. Saviour's Anglican Church*, or David J. Anderson. If you decide to participate, you are free to withdraw at any time without affecting those relationships.

Contacts and Questions

The researcher conducting this study is David J. Anderson. You may ask any questions you have any now. If you have questions later, you may contact David Anderson at [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] Alternatively, you may contact, Dr. Craig Van Gelder, Luther Seminary, St. Paul, MN, USA.

You will be given a copy of this form to keep for your records.

Statement of Consent

I have read the above information or have had it read to me. I have received answers to questions asked. I consent to participate in the study.

Name (please print)

Signature _____ Date _____

Signature of investigator _____ Date _____

I consent to be audiotaped (or videotaped):

Signature _____ Date _____

I consent to allow use of my direct quotations in the published thesis document.

Signature _____ Date _____

APPENDIX H

MESSY CHURCH

The following excerpt is from St. Saviour's website.



≡ TEXT

What is Messy Church?

Messy Church is a fresh new way of experiencing church.

It's for all ages. It's fun. It's family friendly.

Every month, it's built around a theme – activities, celebration and a meal.

It happens when you arrive - the doors open at 5:00 pm but you come as you are able. It's creating, worshipping and sharing a meal together.



APPENDIX I

REFUGEE SPONSORSHIP

The following is an excerpt from St. Saviour's website.

What Can We Do to Help Refugees?

The Syrian refugee crisis is in the news every day, and it makes us feel helpless: what on earth can we do?

Churches have often taken the initiative in responding to this kind of crisis, and this situation is no exception. Churches of every stripe in every community are already organizing—raising funds and creating teams to bring refugee families to Canada and help settle them. Some have already received “their” Syrian families!



If you would like to give some money, or volunteer time to help, consider doing it through a church near you.

Here at [REDACTED] Anglican Church [REDACTED], we just welcomed a family of refugee newcomers to Canada from Syria. We can use all of the help we can get.

You do not have to be a member of any church, or to believe anything in particular, in order to help out! Everybody's help is appreciated, and there are no strings attached. Really.

APPENDIX J

GUESS WHO'S COMING TO DINNER

The following is a bulletin insert that was published to describe Guess Who's Coming to Dinner.

GUESS WHO'S COMING TO DINNER?

Introducing "Guess Who's Coming to Dinner?" to [REDACTED]. GWCTD is an experience in hospitality, welcome, giving, and receiving. The idea is to find yourself sitting around a dining room table with people you may have seen, but have not really met, or do not yet know very well.

On **Friday, June 17, at 6:30 p.m.**, a number of dinners will be hosted across the parish. None of the hosts know who is coming, and none of the guests know who their hosts will be.

All we ask is that you sign up by giving us your name, telephone number, and email address. We will assume that you are willing to be a guest, and you can let us know if you would be willing to host. All adults are welcome to participate. Adults from the same household registered together will dine together.

The dinners themselves will be a form of "potluck." Hosts are responsible to set a table for eight, provide beverages, and a main course (nothing fancy or expensive). Guests are responsible to provide either an appetizer, a salad, or a dessert (as assigned when they receive their invitation on the Monday before the dinner).

Guests will receive an address, but no information about their hosts or other guests. Hosts will know only the number of guest they are expecting.

A very brief discussion guide will be offered for this dinner. The guide relates to the research being conducted by David Anderson. No personal information about participants will be included in this research project, but participants will have the option of participating in a questionnaire and/or focus group at a later time.

We hope that GWCTD will help us to build a greater sense of community among us, and also provide us with the opportunity to reflect on the experience of our friends, [REDACTED], newcomers to Canada, and what it means to extend and receive hospitality and welcome.

Names of all participating together from your household	
Email Address	Telephone
I would be willing to be a host if needed.	☐
Please note any food allergies on the reverse.	

APPENDIX K

CONCERT PROJECT

The following excerpt from a local newspaper story on St. Saviour's Concert Project.

Jul 21, 2016

Locke St. church ready to rock with new stage, lighting, sound system

"The Rock on Locke" is ramping things up to a new level



By Graham Rockingham

The Church of [REDACTED] has had the nickname [REDACTED] for many years. You could search out all sorts of theological inspirations behind the nickname — *"upon this rock I will build my church"* (Matthew 16:18), for example — but its origin probably has to do with that 11-foot-tall slab-of-limestone sign that sprouts out from the corner of Locke and Charlton announcing the church's presence.

But this week, with the installation of a \$20,000-plus stage, lighting and sound system in the church's sanctuary, the nickname is taking on a whole new meaning. [REDACTED], as in popular, secular music.

The 160-seat Anglican church has been hosting concerts for several years, as have many others city churches. It is home to the increasingly popular Hammer Baroque series and was a classical venue for last year's Juno festival.

The new sound system — complete with a 32-track mixing board and removable red oak stage — is ramping things up to a new level. A chamber ensemble of Boris Brott's National Academy Orchestra is performing two concerts there this week (Wednesday, 7:30 p.m., and Thursday, 2 p.m. and 7:30 p.m.).

And on Friday night, the [REDACTED] sanctuary will provide centre stage for a record release party, featuring four contemporary pop acts plus craft beer tall boys and wine. Yup, you heard it right. #BoozeinthePews.

OK, let's not let things get out of hand here. This isn't going to be your wild rock 'n' roll debauch. It'll be respectful and delicate, perhaps even a little highbrow ... with tall boys.

The performing bands: Twin Within, a local eight-piece art-pop ensemble; a folk-rock string/flute band called Coszmos Quartet, featuring Brad Germain of the Dinner Belles; Toronto singer-songwriter Luka; and respected Hamilton cellist Kirk Starkey, who is releasing a new instrumental CD called "Songs of Sudbury."

The musical church upgrade is the brainchild of parishioner Steven McKay, who happens to be one of the two lead singers of Twin Within, and Archdeacon David Anderson, the church's rector for 10 years.

Anderson doesn't see the concerts — and he is hoping to host many more similar ones — as a way of bringing in money to the church or adding members to the flock (such things would be side benefits).

He sees the concerts as a way of building community, something he considers one of his church's primary vocations.

Anderson is aware the Locke Street area is home to a large number of the city's musicians. He wants to provide them with a place to play and be heard, maybe even earn some money.

Rentals are relatively inexpensive and the congregation is willing to provide volunteers to help put on a show. The mixing board, sound and light system are part of the deal. Money earned by the church from the shows will go back into further enhancing the concert experience.

"Here's a chance to connect with the neighbourhood and the people who live here," says Anderson. "We saw this opportunity to work with musicians and audiences as a perfect fit in terms of building community and participating in the common good. It's a chance to do something beautiful in people's lives and we want to be part of it."

McKay has a diverse background, having played drums in the rock band Bruce Peninsula and worked as production manager for Toronto's elite Tafelmusik baroque orchestra. He's also a mortgage broker for the Personal Mortgage Group, which has its offices a block-and-a-half away from the church and provided \$10,000 to help finance the building's sound upgrade (another \$10,000 came from the Diocese of Niagara).

McKay, who grew up singing in the [REDACTED] choir, got the idea to stage concerts at [REDACTED] after performing with Bruce Peninsula in Toronto's St. George the Martyr Anglican Church, which hosts regular jazz and rock shows under the name, the Music Gallery.

With the agreement of Anderson, McKay has been gradually increasing the number of concerts at the church over the last two years, bringing in fellow musicians like baroque guitarist/vocalist Bud Roach and Tafelmusik.

Originally, McKay saw the concerts as a way to bring in funding to the church. But now, he like Anderson, sees it as a way to support the community.

"This place is for somebody who wants to play to 150 people and wants them to listen," says McKay.

Celebrating a new home for musicians on Locke Street

What: A concert with Twin Within, Kirk Starkey, Luka, and Coszmos Quartette.

When: Friday, July 22. Doors open at 7 p.m. Show starts at 8 p.m.

Where: [REDACTED]

Admission: \$10, 19-years of age or older

APPENDIX L

QUALITATIVE DATA FROM BASELINE QUESTIONNAIRE

Table L.1 Primary Focused Codes by Frequency: Major Issue for the City

Please name what you consider the major issue facing our city.	n (N = 68)	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Poverty	28	41.2	41.2
Housing	10	14.7	55.9
Jobs	9	13.2	69.1
Homelessness	4	5.9	75.0
Youth	2	2.9	77.9
Pollution	2	2.9	80.8
Hospitality	2	2.9	83.7
Economic factors	2	2.9	86.6
Care	2	2.9	89.5
Urban renewal	1	1.5	91.0
Transit	1	1.5	92.5
Neighbors	1	1.5	94.0
Isolation	1	1.5	95.5
Infrastructure	1	1.5	97.0
Healthcare	1	1.5	98.5
Addiction	1	1.5	100.0
Total	68	100	

Table L.2. Primary Focused Codes by Frequency: Desired Change for the City

If you could change thing about your city, what would it be?	n (N = 68)	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Living conditions improved	11	17.2	17.2
Economic conditions improved	8	12.5	29.7
Pollution decrease	8	12.5	42.2
Urban revitalization	7	10.9	53.1
Transit improved	5	7.8	60.9
Politics improved	4	6.3	67.2
Diversity increase	3	4.7	71.9
Crime decrease	2	3.1	75.0
Traffic control increase	2	3.1	78.1
Spirituality improved	2	3.1	81.3
Citizenship enhanced	2	3.1	84.4
Addiction reduced	2	3.1	87.5
Traffic control decrease	1	1.6	89.1
Compassion increase	1	1.6	90.6
Homelessness reduced	1	1.6	92.2
Tax reduced	1	1.6	93.8
Cleanliness improved	1	1.6	95.3
Bike lanes reduced	1	1.6	96.9
Health care improved	1	1.6	98.4
Reputation improved	1	1.6	100.0
Total	64	100.0	

Table L.3. Primary-Level Focused Codes by Frequency: Desired Change for the Neighborhood (Baseline)

If you could change thing about your neighborhoods, what would it be?	n (N = 55)	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Traffic control increase	10	18.2	18.2
Neighbor interaction increase	10	18.2	36.4
Community enhanced	6	10.9	47.3
Affordable housing increase	4	7.3	54.5
Diversity increase	3	5.5	60.0
Green space increase	2	3.6	63.6
Crime decrease	2	3.6	67.3
Economic conditions improved	2	3.6	70.9
Compassion increase	2	3.6	74.5
Traffic control decrease	1	1.8	76.4
Living conditions improved	1	1.8	78.2
Neighbor relations improved	1	1.8	80.0
Expense of commodities decrease	1	1.8	81.8
Care of property improved	1	1.8	83.6
Spirituality improved	1	1.8	85.5
Third space increase	1	1.8	87.3
Transit improved	1	1.8	89.1
Infrastructure improved	1	1.8	90.9
Parking increased	1	1.8	92.7
Communication improved	1	1.8	94.5
Health care more accessible	1	1.8	96.4
Citizenship enhanced	1	1.8	98.2
Noise reduced	1	1.8	100.0
Total (N)	55	100.0	

Table L.4. Appreciated Aspects of Life in the City

What are your favorite things about the city where you live?	n (N = 195)	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Nature	39	20	20.0
Cultural	24	12.3	32.3
Pride	18	9.2	41.5
Diversity	11	5.6	47.1
Neighbors	11	5.6	52.7
Services	11	5.6	58.3
Hospitality	10	5.1	63.4
Growth	7	3.6	67.0
Healthcare	6	3.1	70.1
Citizenship	5	2.6	72.7
Family	5	2.6	75.3
Affordability	4	2.1	77.4
Parks	4	2.1	79.5
Safety	4	2.1	81.6
Education	4	2.1	83.7
Size	4	2.1	85.8
Walkability	4	2.1	87.9
Location	3	1.5	89.4
Jobs	3	1.5	90.9
Urban renewal	3	1.5	92.4
Clean	2	1	93.4
Housing	2	1	94.4
Care	2	1	95.4
Church	1	0.5	95.9
Belonging	1	0.5	96.5
Built heritage	1	0.5	97.0
Vibrancy	1	0.5	97.5
Quiet	1	0.5	98.0
Transit	1	0.5	98.5
Poverty Reduction	1	0.5	99.0
Property-care	1	0.5	99.5
Compassion	1	0.5	100.0
Total	195	100	

Table L.5. Appreciated Aspects of Life in the Neighborhood

What are your favorite things about the neighborhood where you live?	n (N=196)	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Nature	24	12.2	12.2
Neighbors	23	11.7	23.9
Location	22	11.2	35.1
Services	21	10.7	45.8
Quiet	16	8.2	54.0
Hospitality	13	6.6	60.6
Walkability	13	6.6	67.2
Parks	9	4.6	71.8
Safety	7	3.6	75.4
Clean	6	3.1	78.5
Diversity	6	3.1	81.6
Affordability	5	2.6	84.2
Transit	4	2.0	86.2
Church	3	1.5	87.7
Pride	3	1.5	89.2
Built heritage	3	1.5	90.7
Education	3	1.5	92.2
Gardens	3	1.5	93.7
Care	2	1.0	94.7
Streets	2	1.0	95.8
Property-care	2	1.0	96.8
Third-space	2	1.0	97.8
Family	1	0.5	98.4
Housing	1	0.5	98.9
Institutions	1	0.5	99.4
Cultural	1	0.5	100.0
Total	196	100	

Table L.6. Primary Focused Codes Listed Alphabetically

Primary Focused Codes		
1. Addiction	29. Gardens	57. Pollution
2. Addiction reduced	30. Gentrification	58. Pollution decrease
3. Affordability	31. Green space increase	59. Poverty
4. Affordable housing increase	32. Growth	60. Poverty Reduction
5. Aging	33. Health care improved	61. Pride
6. Belonging	34. Health care more accessible	62. Privacy
7. Bike lanes reduced	35. Healthcare	63. Property-care
8. Built heritage	36. Homelessness	64. Quiet
9. Care	37. Homelessness reduced	65. Reputation improved
10. Care of property improved	38. Hospitality	66. Safety
11. Church	39. Housing	67. Services
12. Citizenship	40. Infrastructure	68. Size
13. Citizenship enhanced	41. Infrastructure improved	69. Spiritual
14. Clean	42. Institutions	70. Spirituality improved
15. Cleanliness improved	43. Isolation	71. Streets
16. Communication improved	44. Jobs	72. Tax reduced
17. Community enhanced	45. Living conditions improved	73. Third space increase
18. Compassion	46. Location	74. Third-space
19. Compassion increase	47. Marginalization	75. Traffic control decrease
20. Crime decrease	48. Nature	76. Traffic control increase
21. Cultural	49. Neighbor interaction increase	77. Transit
22. Diversity	50. Neighbor relations improved	78. Transit improved
23. Diversity increase	51. Neighbors	79. Urban renewal
24. Economic conditions improved	52. Noise reduced	80. Urban revitalization
25. Economic factors	53. Love it as it is!	81. Vibrancy
26. Education	54. Parking increased	82. Walkability
27. Expense of commodities decrease	55. Parks	83. Youth
28. Family	56. Politics improved	

Table L.7. Secondary-level Focused Codes from Baseline Questionnaire

Focused Codes	
1. Accepting others.	20. Concern for persons suffering from addictions
2. Acting with compassion and care.	21. Concern regarding gentrification.
3. Appreciating a sense of belonging.	22. Concerns for seniors.
4. Appreciating a sense of safety and security.	23. Concerns regarding city infrastructure.
5. Appreciating access to transportation.	24. Concerns regarding economic factors
6. Appreciating accessibility for persons with disabilities.	25. Concerns regarding education
7. Appreciating accessibility to nature and parks in the city and neighborhood.	26. Concerns regarding housing issues.
8. Appreciating affordability.	27. Concerns regarding poverty issues.
9. Appreciating availability of healthcare	28. Concerns regarding public transit.
10. Appreciating cleanliness, quietness, care of property	29. Concerns regarding social infrastructure, robust institutions.
11. Appreciating cultural opportunities.	30. Concerns regarding streetscape, design, planning.
12. Appreciating St. Saviour's.	31. Concerns regarding traffic.
13. Appreciating urban gardens.	32. Concerns regarding transforming hearts.
14. Appreciating walkability.	33. Observing employment issues.
15. Appreciating Wellington.	34. Observing good neighbors.
16. Appreciating Wellington's built heritage.	35. Participating in civic life as citizen.
17. Building community with persons at risk for social isolation.	36. Participating in St. Saviour's ministries.
18. Building relationships with neighbors.	37. Practicing spirituality.
19. Concern for environmental factors.	

Table L.8. Axial Codes for Baseline Questionnaire with Focused Codes

Axial Codes/Focused Codes
A. Appreciating the city, neighborhood and their amenities. 1. Appreciating a sense of belonging. 2. Appreciating a sense of safety and security. 3. Appreciating access to transportation. 4. Appreciating accessibility for persons with disabilities. 5. Appreciating accessibility to nature and parks in the city and neighborhood. 6. Appreciating affordability. 7. Appreciating availability of healthcare 8. Appreciating cleanliness, quietness, care of property 9. Appreciating cultural opportunities. 10. Appreciating St. Saviour's. 11. Appreciating urban gardens. 12. Appreciating walkability. 13. Appreciating Wellington. 14. Appreciating Wellington's built heritage. B. Appreciating and participating in social aspects of city and neighborhood life. 1. Accepting others. 2. Acting with compassion and care. 3. Appreciating affordability. 4. Appreciating availability of healthcare 5. Appreciating cultural opportunities. 6. Appreciating St. Saviour's. 7. Building relationships with neighbors. 8. Observing good neighbors. 9. Participating in civic life as citizen. C. Participating in Christian life and witness. 1. Accepting others. 2. Acting with compassion and care. 3. Appreciating a sense of belonging. 4. Appreciating St. Saviour's. 5. Building community with persons at risk for social isolation. 6. Concerns regarding transforming hearts. 7. Participating in St. Saviour's ministries. 8. Practicing spirituality.

Table L.8. Axial Codes for Baseline Questionnaire with Focused Codes (*continued*)

Axial Codes/Focused Codes
D. Concerns regarding infrastructure in the city of neighborhood.
1. Concerns regarding city infrastructure.
2. Concerns regarding public transit.
3. Concerns regarding social infrastructure, robust institutions.
4. Concerns regarding streetscape, design, planning.
5. Concerns regarding traffic.
E. Concerns regarding social issues and realities.
1. Building community with persons at risk for social isolation.
2. Concern for environmental factors.
3. Concern for persons suffering from addictions
4. Concern regarding gentrification.
5. Concerns for seniors.
6. Concerns regarding economic factors
7. Concerns regarding education
8. Concerns regarding housing issues.
9. Concerns regarding poverty issues.
10. Concerns regarding social infrastructure, robust institutions.
11. Observing employment issues.

APPENDIX M

QUALITATIVE DATA FROM BASELINE INTERVIEWS AND PAR LEADERSHIP

TEAM MEETINGS

Table M.1. Focused Codes from Baseline Interviews and PAR Leadership Team**Meetings**

Value	Value
1. Appreciating the grittiness and reality of Wellington.	21. Making a difference in the lives of neighbors.
2. Appreciating the labour history of Wellington.	22. Meeting needs in the neighborhood around St. Saviour's.
3. Being a presence in the neighborhood around St. Saviour's.	23. Meeting people in the neighborhood.
4. Caring for children.	24. Noticing newcomer neighbors from other cities.
5. Caring for persons in poverty.	25. Noticing neighbors with specific challenges.
6. Caring for persons with addictions issues.	26. Noticing Wellington's shifting economy.
7. Caring for refugees.	27. Participating at St. Saviour's.
8. Caring for seniors.	28. Participating in Messy Church
9. Concern for persons who have lost their pensions.	29. Practicing hospitality at St. Saviour's.
10. Concern regarding affordable housing.	30. Practicing hospitality in Messy Church.
11. Concern regarding gentrification.	31. Practicing hospitality in the Concert Project.
12. Concern regarding schooling.	32. Sharing in reciprocity.
13. Concern regarding traffic.	33. Taking pride in place.
14. Conversing with neighbors.	34. Taking pride in Wellington history.
15. Experiencing a sense of safety and security.	35. Telling St. Saviour's story of mission.
16. Feeling at home in Wellington.	36. Valuing diversity.
17. Find a church.	37. Valuing the neighborhood.
18. Finding refuge at St. Saviour's.	38. Valuing walkability.
19. Knowing and being known.	
20. Living the faith in everyday life.	

Table M.2. Axial Codes for Baseline Interviews and PAR Leadership Team**Meetings with Focused Codes**

Axial Codes/Focused Codes
A. Concern for neighborhood issues. 1. Concerns regarding schooling. 2. Concerns regarding traffic. 3. Noticing neighbors with specific challenges. 4. Concerns regarding gentrification. 5. Concerns regarding housing. 6. Concerns regarding persons who have lost their pensions. B. Concern for neighbors. 1. Making a difference in the lives of neighbors. 2. Caring for children. 3. Caring for persons living in poverty. 4. Caring for persons living with addictions. 5. Caring for refugees. 6. Caring for seniors. 7. Meeting needs of the neighborhood. C. Developing relationships with neighbors. 1. Being a presence in St. Saviour's neighborhood. 2. Conversing with neighbors. 3. Knowing and being known. 4. Meeting people in the neighborhood. 5. Noticing newcomer neighbors from other cities. 6. Sharing in mutuality and reciprocal relationships. D. Living the faith in everyday life. 1. Living the faith in everyday life. E. Practicing the faith in church. 1. Finding a church home. 2. Finding refuge at St. Saviour's. 3. Participating at St. Saviour's. 4. Participating in Messy Church. 5. Practicing hospitality at Messy Church. 6. Practicing hospitality at St. Saviour's. 7. Practicing hospitality in the concert project. 8. Telling St. Saviour's story of mission.

Table M.2. (continued)

Axial Codes/Focused Codes
F. Valuing the nature of the city and neighborhood.
1. Appreciating the grittiness and reality of Wellington.
2. Appreciating the labor history of Wellington.
3. Experiencing a sense of safety and security.
4. Feeling at home in Wellington.
5. Noticing Wellington's shifting economy.
6. Taking pride in place.
7. Taking pride in Wellington history.
8. Taking pride in Wellington.
9. Valuing diversity.
10. Valuing the neighborhood.
11. Valuing walkability.

APPENDIX N

QUALITATIVE DATA FROM END-LINE QUESTIONNAIRE

Table N.1. Primary Focused Codes: End-line Qualitative Data

Primary Focused Codes from End-line Qualitative Data			
Accepting others	Disability issues	Knowing neighbors	Practicing the faith
Accessibility to buildings improved	Diversity	Living conditions improved	Practicing vocation
Addiction	Diversity increase	Location	Pride
Affordability	Economic conditions improved	Making community	Privacy
Affordable housing increase	Economic factors	Nature	Quiet
Appreciating beauty	Ecumenism	Neighbor interaction increase	Refugee
Appreciating God's abundance	Education	Neighbor relations improved	Reputation
Appreciating health, concerns for	Environmental stewardship	Neighbors	Safety
Asserting that the common good is not middle class	Expense of commodities decrease	Noise reduced	Seeing God in the neighborhood
Asserting values, subverting the status quo	Family	None	Services
Belonging	Finding belonging	Noticing divisions	Size
Bike lanes increase	Gentrification	Parking increased	Spiritual
Bike lanes reduced	Green space increase	Parks	Spirituality improved
Breaking bread	Growth	Policing issues.	Streets
Building community	Health care improved	Politics	Tax reduced
Complacency	Health care more accessible	Politics improved	Third space increase

Table N.1. Primary Focused Codes: End-line Qualitative Data (*continued*)

Primary Focused Codes from End-line Qualitative Data			
Concern for affordability of housing	Healthcare	Pollution decrease	Traffic control decrease
Concern for affordability of living	Homelessness reduced	Poverty	Traffic control increase
Concern regarding employment	Hospitality	Practicing Christian witness	Transit
Concern regarding so-called “Christian values”	Housing	Practicing friendship’	Transit improved
Concern regarding traffic	Infrastructure	Practicing good stewardship	Urban revitalization
Concern regarding transportation	Infrastructure improved	Practicing healing	Valuing diversity
Crime decrease	Isolation	Practicing hospitality	Valuing joy, having fun
Cultivating imagination	Knowing and being known, valuing intimacy, friendship	Practicing mutuality	Valuing safety and security
		Practicing neighborliness	Walkability
			Youth

Table N.2. Secondary Focused Codes: End-line Qualitative Data

Secondary Focused Codes	
1. Appreciating beauty and natural environment	14. Making community
2. Asserting values, subverting the status quo	15. Naming the economic issues
3. Building community	16. Participating in SS's projects
4. Celebrating and caring for children	17. Practicing Christian witness
5. Celebrating diversity, acceptance and belonging	18. Practicing citizenship
6. Concern for affordability of housing	19. Practicing good stewardship
7. Concern for neighbors with addictions	20. Practicing neighborliness
8. Concern for persons living in poverty	21. Practicing the faith
9. Concern for refugees	22. Practicing vocation
10. Concerns for persons living in social isolation	23. Valuing physical infrastructure, services, access and walkability
11. Enhancing health and wholeness	24. Valuing safety and security
12. Enhancing social infrastructure	25. Valuing the neighborhood
13. Knowing and being known, valuing intimacy, friendship	26. Participating in St. Saviour's projects

Table N.3 Three Favorite Things about the Neighborhood

What are your three favorite things about the neighborhood where you live?	n	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Walkability	24	17.3	17.3
Services	16	11.5	28.8
Location	6	4.4	33.2
Care	1	0.7	33.9
Education	1	0.7	34.6
Parks	7	5.0	39.6
Quiet	12	8.6	48.2
Diversity	4	2.9	51.1
Neighbors	17	12.3	63.4
Built heritage	5	3.6	67.0
Hospitality	9	6.5	73.5
Clean	2	1.4	74.9
Growth	1	0.7	75.6
Church	2	1.4	77.0
Business opportunity	1	0.7	77.7
Nature	21	15.1	92.8
Safety	10	7.2	100.0
Total	139	100.0	

APPENDIX O

PARTICIPATION IN INTERVENTION PROJECTS AND ACTIVITIES

Table O.1. Frequency of Participation in Concert Project

In the past twelve months, how often did you participate in St. Saviour's <i>Concert Project</i> ?	n (N = 71)	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Never	37	52.1	52.1
Rarely	9	12.7	64.8
Sometimes	12	16.9	81.7
Often	7	9.9	91.5
Very often	5	5.5	98.6
Don't know	1	1.4	100.0
Total	71	100.0	

Table O.2. Frequencies for Forms of Participation in Concert Project

In the past twelve months, how did you participate in St Saviour's Concert Project?	Yes n (%)	No n (%)	N
Prayer	3 (4.2)	67 (94.4)	70
Donated financial support	6 (8.5)	65 (91.5)	71
Attended a concert	20 (28.2)	51 (71.8)	71
Volunteered at a concert	18 (25.4)	53 (74.6)	71
Participated in concert steering committee	7 (9.9)	64 (90.1)	71
Stage hand, physical set-up	2 (2.8)	69 (97.2)	71
Assisted with advertising, promotion, or information	1 (1.4)	70 (98.6)	71
Other	4 (5.6)	67 (94.4)	71

Table O.3. Frequency of Participation in Messy Church

In the past twelve months, how often did you participate in <i>Messy Church</i> ?	n (N = 71)	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Never	44	62.0	62.0
Rarely	8	11.3	73.2
Sometimes	2	2.8	76.1
Often	4	5.6	81.7
Very often	13	18.3	100.0
Total	71	100.0	

Table O.4. Frequencies for Forms of Participation in Messy Church

In the past twelve months, how did you participate in St Saviour's Messy Church?	Yes n (%)	No n (%)	N
Prayer	4 (5.6)	67 (94.4)	70
Planning team	8 (11.3)	63 (88.7)	71
Craft preparation	5 (7.0)	66 (93.0)	71
Meal preparation	5 (7.0)	66 (93.0)	71
Table leader	13 (18.3)	58 (81.7)	71
Set-up, clean up	2 (2.8)	69 (97.2)	71
Participant	5 (7.0)	66 (93.0)	71
Visitor	2 (2.8)	69 (97.2)	71

Table O.5. Frequency of Participation in Refugee Project

In the past twelve months, how often did you participate in St. Saviour's <i>Refugee Sponsorship and Welcome Project</i> ?	n (N=71)	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Never	15	21.1	21.1
Rarely	21	23.1	50.7
Sometimes	22	31.0	81.7
Often	7	9.9	91.5
Very often	6	6.6	100.0
Total	71	100.0	

Table O.6. Frequencies for Forms of Participation in Refugee Project

In the past twelve months, how did you participate in St Saviour's Refugee Project?	Yes n (%)	No n (%)	N
Prayer	38 (53.5)	33 (46.5)	71
Donated financial support	38 (53.5)	33 (46.5)	71
Served on steering committee	13 (18.3)	58 (81.7)	71
Offered practical assistance	15 (21.1)	56 (78.9)	71
Had direct involvement with family	14 (19.7)	57 (80.3)	71
Other			

Table O.7. Frequency of Participation in Ministries Designed to Connect with Persons at Risk for Social Isolation

In the past twelve months, how often did you participate in St. Saviour's <i>ministries designed to connect with persons at risk for social isolation</i> ?	n (N = 71)	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Never	44	62.0	62.0
Rarely	7	9.9	71.8
Sometimes	7	9.9	81.7
Often	5	7.0	88.7
Very often	8	8.8	100.0
Total	71	100.0	

Table O.8. Frequencies for Forms of Participation in Ministries Designed to Connect with Persons at Risk for Social Isolation

In the past twelve months, how did you participate in St. Saviour's ministries designed to connect with persons at risk for social isolation?	Yes n (%)	No n (%)	N
Prayer	13 18.3	58 81.7	71
Artaban Supper Club	4 5.6	67 94.4	71
Knitting Circle	7 9.9	64 90.1	71
Senior's Ministry	17 23.9	54 76.1	71
Indwell	5 7.0	66 93.0	71
Visitation Ministry	1 1.4	64 91.5	65

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