

# Missional Incubator National Capital Presbytery

**Missional:** Loving people. Engaging community on their terms and their turf.

**Incubator:** Space to dream. Growing dreams into reality.

## TASK ONE: Defining our identity

The purpose of this task is to discuss together the beliefs and the values that will ground your work and to come to a shared way of understanding and talking about key components of this venture. Your team will ultimately develop a written Identity Statement that articulates core beliefs about Jesus, Church, witness, gospel, disciples, justice, salvation, missional compelling business, missional social enterprise, and your understanding of mission.

### Bible Study:

Ask everyone in the group to respond to the question, “When was the first time God’s love for you in Christ Jesus became real?”

Read Matthew 16:13-20 (NRSV)

13 Now when Jesus came into the district of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, “Who do people say that the Son of Man is?” 14 And they said, “Some say John the Baptist, but others Elijah, and still others Jeremiah or one of the prophets.” 15 He said to them, “But who do you say that I am?” 16 Simon Peter answered, “You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God.” 17 And Jesus answered him, “Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah! For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father in heaven. 18 And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not prevail against it. 19 I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.” 20 Then he sternly ordered the disciples not to tell anyone that he was the Messiah.

Questions for the Group:

- What phrases or ideas jumped out at you in this passage?
- What is your answer to Jesus’ question: “Who do you say that I am?” Who is Jesus to you?

Read Matthew 16:13-20 (MSG)

13 When Jesus arrived in the villages of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, “What are people saying about who the Son of Man is?” 14 They replied, “Some think he is John the Baptizer, some say Elijah, some Jeremiah or one of the other prophets.” 15 He pressed them, “And how about you? Who do you say I am?” 16 Simon Peter said, “You’re the Christ, the Messiah, the Son of the living God.” 17-18 Jesus came back, “God bless you, Simon, son of Jonah! You didn’t get that answer out of books or from teachers. My Father in heaven, God himself, let you in on this secret of who I really am. And now I’m going to tell you who you are, really are. You are Peter, a rock. This is the rock on which I will put together my church, a church so expansive with energy that not even the gates of hell will be able to keep it out. 19 “And that’s not all. You will have complete and free access to God’s kingdom, keys to open any and every door: no more barriers between heaven and earth, earth and heaven. A yes on earth is yes in heaven. A no on earth is no in heaven.” 20 He swore the disciples to secrecy. He made them promise they would tell no one that he was the Messiah.

### Content to Ponder:

Consider how you described who Jesus is to you. Did you use “churchy” language to describe Jesus? Or did you describe Jesus in such a way that someone who has never intersected with Christianity could understand?

Discuss as a group the following questions as time allows. For homework before the next gathering, have everyone write out their answer to the following questions in a sentence or two.

**Who is Jesus?**

**What is Church?**

**What is witness?**

**What is “gospel” (good news)?**

**What is a disciple?**

**What is social justice?**

**What is salvation?**

*The National Capital Presbytery perceives a need for a more proactive, intentional approach to establishing new worshiping communities and new expressions of existing churches. The decline in church membership, the increasing pace of church closures, and the growing disconnect between current ministries and a postmodern culture create an urgency for a different strategy. This strategy will need to include projects that incorporate a mixed economy ministry which can provide income streams to the mission while, at the same time, increasing opportunities to engage with individuals who would not be attracted to a more traditional church. This approach will require the starting of missional compelling businesses and missional social enterprises.*

**What is a “missional compelling business”?**

**What is a “missional social enterprise”?**

**What defines a program/social enterprise/compelling business as a part of “our mission”?**

**What is a “new expression of church”?**

**What is a “new worshiping community”?**