

I. Group 2/2 God's Mission

1.

4 „traditional” models of Western (German) Mission in 19th Century creating “unequal relationships”

- A **soteriological** model, which focused on the commitment to save individuals from eternal damnation.
- An **ecclesiological** model focused primarily on founding new churches. Thus, denominationalism also entered the world.
- Associated with the model of **salvation history**, which assumed that the kingdom of God would come into the world with the worldwide spread of the Christian faith.
- A **cultural** model that was dedicated to the idea of bringing European achievements

Incidentally, all four approaches **still exist today** and can be assigned to different Christian groupings and imprints.

2.

Parallel alternative in 19th century: inculturation

Combining indigenous traditions with an invitation to the Christian faith without losing the identity of both sides

3.

Paradigm shift: “Missio Dei” – missionary God

- since 1952
- **cooperation** with Christians in the South: partnership on eye level
- anticipation of the Kingdom of God
- Church for others: Justice, peace, preservation of creation

4.

Mission as conviviality and accompaniment

- since 1986
- mutual learning and self-understanding, no mission from a/the center, no paternalism
- multicultural reality offers an opportunity for mission from/with the margins: *“We have the almost historic opportunity to understand ourselves as a church in the encounter with the marginalized of most different situations and to become a common learning and living community.” (Dally)*

“Method”: Global Learning in Ecumenical Perspective – safe places: Mission thus becomes a joint effort to bear witness to the love of God in word and deed.

Such understanding of mission, which does not understand other believers/people as objects, enables and encourages **interreligious dialogue**.

Being transformed: in churches' joint engagement and "communication of the Gospel" (Western) churches have to be open to radical transformation (Pentecost 2.0) God's Spirit creates community of people from different cultures and languages

5

Negative, challenging, puzzling experiences

Inter-cultural community and cross-regional cooperation are challenging and even against the readiness for mutual engagement, Western-Non-Western relations prove to be still problematic. See liberalism. We struggle with cultural and contextual differences and it needs extreme attention, trust and good will to be able to create and use *safe spaces*

II. What I heard? Concluding remarks.

1. We rejoice in the amazing gifts of God: we have a common language/narrative to praise Him together for His eternal love; we can worship together and share the Lord's table; we can pray and sing together in deep connection with Him and with each other; we can enjoy fellowship, friendship, experience conviviality rooted in Him.
2. We all struggle in our own respective contexts of how we fulfil our mission as church in a way that it is inviting, faithful, and coherent. And we fail too often.
3. Still we feel the pain and weariness caused by cultural, human separation, of – as it seems – often unnecessary, ideologically motivated inter-cultural, inter-contextual hurdles when we are committed and engaged in an exchange among disciples of Christ "on eye level". Within Europe, where we share both a joint theological tradition and the challenge through the changing social landscape, we are puzzled in these days of how we as churches can address social and political development so differently, in an environment of growing ideological and political hostility in the name of Christianity.
4. Aware of the tiredness, there is no other way forward than what is suggested in the paper we discuss: offer and live out an inviting, holistic communication of the Gospel which includes in a plausible and coherent way those principles which shall guide the Church's work for the best of the city/society
5. For our sake, dare to be changed and transformed by God's love. Being part of God's mission starts here. You have tremendous gifts, you have a tremendous legacy in terms of theological reflection, of critical self-reflection, of considerate professional engagement with all those social injustices which you identify as opposing the Gospel values dear to you. You have tremendous resources after all spiritual, liturgical, personal, intellectual and last financial resources. Dare to use them for change. And thank God for the pluralistic society which necessitates you to get ready to be transformed and revitalized by His Spirit.