



Blackhawk Presbytery

Supporting thriving faith communities in northern Illinois

MISSIONAL ANALYSIS PROCESS (MAP)

Blackhawk Presbytery's Missional Analysis Process (MAP) is designed to help existing faith communities to be healthy and thriving in their ministries. The process is asset based and uses facilitated conversations among congregation members to identify the congregation's core culture, enacted beliefs, gifts, and skills that together describe the "personality" of the church. Then, using demographics and Natural Church Development's¹ eight characteristics of thriving faith communities, congregations identify the missional challenges that God may be calling them to engage in today, as well as important issues that need congregational focus.

MAP is designed to be used with congregations in times of transition, such as calling a new pastor or reconfiguring building usage, with congregations experiencing external changes such as community growth or decline, and with congregations looking to take a fresh look at their ministry and mission and God's purpose for them today.

MAP works through a series of facilitated discussions among members of the congregation—face-to-face communication is a key part of the process. Participant congregations are assigned a trained facilitator who works with them throughout the process in a way that best meets their needs. There is no cost to congregations who participate in MAP. MAP is supported with funds from funds allocated to the Mission Committee through the presbytery's mission funds.

Congregations that participate in MAP must select a leadership team to guide the process on the congregation's behalf and to be responsible for congregational communication, meeting arrangements, liaison with the Session, and preparation of the final report. Some leadership teams choose to facilitate various sessions, after training from the presbytery facilitator. Others prefer to use the presbytery facilitator during most of the process.

Steps in MAP include:

Introductory overview and discussion of change issues

- Identifying and understanding the congregation's core culture
- Identifying and understanding the congregation's enacted beliefs
- Identifying the congregation's gifts and skills
- Understanding the community
- Discerning a vision for ministry
- Assessing programs, facilities, passions using Eight Characteristics of Thriving Faith Communities
- Developing ministry plans

Because MAP requires face-to-face interaction, the length of the process is dependent on many factors. Some congregations, particularly those using MAP in preparation for calling a new pastor have completed the process in 3-6 months. Others are in a multi-year process. It's important to remember that MAP is a tool, not an end in itself. At the close of the process, you will know who you are as a congregation and what you discern as God's purpose for you today. You have a "map"—the work of ministry still remains.

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The first step in the decision process for MAP is a meeting of the Session with one of the MAP coordinators. The coordinator will present a brief overview of the process, discuss the congregation's current situation and interest in MAP, and respond to any questions from the Session. If a Session chooses to use MAP, the MAP coordinator will assign a facilitator and ask the Session to select and appoint a leadership team. The leadership team and the assigned facilitator will plan the details of the process for the congregation.

For more information, please contact Rev. Dr. John Rickard (johnrickard@blackhawkpresbytery.org) at 815.732.6111 ext 603.

¹Schwarz, Christian A. *Natural Church Development: A Guide to Eight Essential Qualities of Healthy Churches*. St. Charles, IL: ChurchSmart Resources, 1996.

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