**Experiment – Conceiving and Launching New Ideas**  
**Stepping Stone Summary Sheet**

As new ideas emerge, *misional experiments* are conceived and launched in pairs or small groups in prayer and expectation. The Pastor Leadership Team continues to model and invite the congregation/small group into missional practices, conversation, and activities that have shaped their journey to this point and will lead to continued new insights and missional experiments. Special attention is given to matching the individual giftedness of all ages with missional experiments.

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<tr>
<th><strong>Initial Questions</strong> – The missional practices will continue to play a central role in shaping disciples and the shared experience of the congregation. The following questions will guide the Pastor Leadership Team in their ongoing discernment and planning:</th>
<th><strong>Initial Path Forward</strong> – Designing and constructing experiments are a critical part of the journey. It is important that individuals feel supported and that no one launch out on an experiment on their own. Blessings of Community, one our most valued Enduring Principles, should inform our approach to experiments. A number of the suggested steps below will be an adaptation of principles and steps suggested in Mark Lau Branson’s <em>Memories, Hopes, and Conversations: Appreciative Inquiry and Congregational Change.</em></th>
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<td>- How are we doing as a leadership team? Are we feeling tired, energized? What adjustments do we need to make so the burden and challenges of leadership is more equally shared? Are there burdens or challenges we should no long carry?</td>
<td>- Review “Connecting the Dots of Missional Practice, Experiences, Questions, and Insights”</td>
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<td>- How do we continue to keep our focus on missional practices while engaging in new experiments? Do we need to consider introducing a new missional practice or discontinuing an existing one that may not be as effective as hoped?</td>
<td>- Review “Constructing Experiments: Ground Rules and Guidelines”</td>
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<td>- How do we foster an innovative congregational experience where we provide appropriate support but do not hinder experimentation?</td>
<td>- Review “Discerning and Utilizing the Gifts of all Ages”</td>
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| - How do we set appropriate expectations for the nature of | **Note:** There is more detailed information on each activity suggestion in the LCM Field Guide Overview on pages 30-31.
experiments (some will succeed, some will not) as opportunities to learn and grow into Christ’s mission?

- What does a missional experiment look like? What are some parameters we can establish that will help increase the probability of a good experience?

- As we begin to experiment, how do we continue to deepen our encounter with God, with one another, and with the reality of suffering in our world? What missional practices do we need to deepen our encounter with the reality of suffering in our world and to bring healing and wholeness? Do we need to consider new ones to bring new life into the congregation?

- How do we step back from the process and evaluate and celebrate learning?

- How do we engage all ages in this process?

**Milestones**

Experiments are tangible expressions of a deepening awareness and understanding of the reality of suffering and the possibility of the gospel in bringing healing and wholeness. As the Holy Spirit shapes us, we develop a new sensitivity and unsettledness with the status quo and we feel compelled to live and embody the concerns and passion of Christ. Here are some specific indicators that the congregation is moving into experimentation:

- Individuals/pairs/small groups begin to respond in action to what they have seen, heard, and experienced through the missional practices and activities of the missional journey.

- Ideas emerge that are adaptive rather than tactical in nature. By this we mean the ideas are coming from the inspired well of prophetic imagination. Tactical ideas relate to doing more or improving what we already do. Adaptive ideas come from seeing new insights and having deeper understandings to incarnate (live out, embody) the gospel in specific and tangible ways.
• Ideas are emerging from congregational members and friends and not the Pastor Leadership Team. This is a strong indicator the culture is shifting from a leader driven to a member-initiated culture.

• Everyone has opportunity to express his or her gifts in mission. Here it is important to recognize that mission is broadly defined as the five Mission Initiatives. Whether a person connects through engagement in missional practices, sharing as a prayer partner for someone engaged in an experiment, or on the front lines of a new expression of ministry, they have found a place to connect and contribute.