

**“My Mission Story” Presentation**

**Due date: September 19, 2025**

**Length: 5-7 minutes**

During our first weekend of class, we will be exploring our experiences of mission. You will have 5-7 minutes to share your mission story. As you prepare to share your story, you can reflect on the following questions:

- When you were growing up, how was mission talked about? Who did mission? What did they do?
- If you didn't grow up in church, what were your associations with “missionaries”?
- What were your first experiences in mission? How did they form you?
- Have you had events that changed your understanding of mission? If so, how did they change your view?
- In one paragraph or less, how would you presently define mission?

**“My Ministry & Mission Context” Presentation**

**Due date: October 17, 2025**

**Length: 15 minutes**

During our second weekend of class, we will spend time exploring our ministry and mission contexts together. You will have 15 minutes to present to the class on your context, utilizing any variety of multimedia, including (but not limited to) photos, video, PowerPoint, music, artifacts, food, art, poetry and prose, as well as verbal communication of observations and data: whatever would best convey to the rest of the class the ethos and reality of your context.

What do we mean by your “ministry and mission context”? This could be your church, the community in which your congregation is located or where you live, a nonprofit with which you are involved, your hobby, school, or neighborhood—it’s up to you! Just know that whatever you pick will continue to be your dialogue partner throughout this class as we engage with faith and culture and ways of contextualizing the Good News. If you’re having trouble figuring out your context, send your instructors an email and we can explore some possibilities together.

You do NOT need to do external research for this presentation. Share what you know, stories you’ve heard, questions you have. The following questions may be helpful to get you started, even if you don’t share on these topics in your presentation:

- What brought you to your context? How involved are you and in what ways?
- Who are the people in your context? What are their demographics? Is there much diversity or is it a homogenous group? What is/are their culture(s)? What do they value? How do they relate to others outside of your context?
- Who are the stakeholders in your context—that is, who wields power or influence? Are there areas of tension between those with power/privilege and those without?
- What is the geographic space of your context? Is it one location or spread out? How do the people relate to their space? What is the significance of their space?
- What do you know of the history of your context? What stories do they tell about participating in mission in the past (either “doing” mission or on the receiving end)? What was the outcome of those efforts? How did they feel about mission as a result?
- What are the challenges of your context? What are the joys? What makes you care about your context?
- What confuses you about your context? What questions do you wish you could have answered? What are you pondering as you think about your context?

## **“Learning More” Presentation**

**Due date: November 14, 2025**

**Length: 15 minutes**

The purpose of this month’s presentation is to take a deeper dive into your ministry and mission context. You will have 15 minutes to present to the class, utilizing any variety of multimedia, including (but not limited to) photos, video, PowerPoint, music, artifacts, food, art, poetry and prose, as well as verbal communication of observations and data: whatever would best convey to the rest of the class the ethos and reality of what you are discovering.

To prepare for this presentation, please do some additional research on your context. Perhaps you could check out the [Association of Religion Data Archives](#) for your neighborhood. Or, maybe you could take a walk or drive through your neighborhood and see what you notice. Maybe you could find books or articles about your context, look through old church newsletters, or find other resources for stories or information about your context. **Conduct at least two interviews.**

**Interview #1:** Interview an individual (or small group, if culturally appropriate) who is a civic leader. This could be a government official, leader of other non-Christian faith communities, a nonprofit leader, business owner, or first responder—be creative! This leader may NOT be a member of your church or organization. You’ll need to design questions that are helpful for you, but some of the questions from your “context” presentation (history, challenges, gifts, stakeholders, etc) might be useful.

**Interview #2:** Interview an individual (or small group, if culturally appropriate) who does not identify as a Christian. You are not allowed to argue with them, try to persuade them, or assert your opinion. Tell them you are in a class and you are doing research and it's your job to learn. Stay humble. Practice listening and curiosity. Be open and generous toward what they have to say, even if it disagrees with you. Some sample questions:

- What is your religious background? Did you grow up with a religious tradition? How would you identify now? Would you consider yourself a religious person? How did you get to this identity? Does it feel fluid or fixed?
- Have you had spiritual experiences? Would you be willing to tell me about them? How did they impact you?
- What do you think of Jesus? Do you find him compelling? Interesting? Boring? Or have you mostly avoided Jesus due to negative experiences?
- What do you think people in our neighborhood need most to live fulfilled lives? What gets in the way of our neighborhood’s flourishing?

As you reflect on what you’ve learned over the last month, you might consider the following questions—these may or may not be helpful in preparing your presentation:

- What did you discover that surprised you? Why? Was it a pleasant surprise or a challenging surprise? How did you respond when you discovered this?
- In reflecting on your context, do you feel hopeful, discouraged, or something else? Why? Is your response in reaction to something about your context or something in yourself?
- Did you hear God at work in the lives of those you interviewed? Did you hear longings or prayers? Where did they seem closer to the gospel than you expected?
- How does the gospel answer the questions they are asking? How does Jesus long to meet them where they are?
- Where do you see intersections between your identity and experiences and the identity, experiences, gifts, and challenges of your context? How does [your deep passion meet your context's deep hunger](#)? And vice versa?
- How has the Holy Spirit been evangelizing you through your context? In what ways are you being called to stretch, change, or repent?
- Looking to the future, what do you still want to explore? What are you curious about?
- What lingering questions do you have: About your context? About the way you fit into or respond to your context? About yourself?

## **“Good News for My Context” Presentation**

**Due date: December 15, 2025**

**Length: 15 minutes (recorded and posted in our online classroom)**

By this point in the semester, you hopefully will have started to think critically about the nature of the Good News for people in your ministry and mission context. Contextualizing the gospel for this assignment is not about using clever vocabulary or metaphor (i.e. biker or gaming language) to convey the same old message, but about expanding what, in the past, have been truncated understandings of the gospel.

For your final presentation, you will have 15 minutes to share with the class a message of Good News for your context. You can use any medium you'd like: a piece of art, music, or poetry, a video or sermon, a children's story, a website—the sky's the limit. Whatever medium you choose, be prepared to explain why you chose that medium as well as why the message is good news specifically for your context. We all appreciate something clever, but if the medium doesn't fit the message and if either is out of sync with your context, you haven't thought this through well enough. For this presentation, we're more concerned with seeing that you understand your context, respond to it with compassion, and are developing a message of Good News that will engage with real people in real life.

Feeling a little stuck on how to get started? Try one of these exercises:

- Read through one of the gospels (we suggest Mark or Luke). As you read, notice when one of the characters (or references to the people or the crowd) feels familiar. Imagine some of the people in your context in that character's place. How are they experiencing Jesus? What do they need from him? What does he offer to them? If you feel bold enough, talk with them about the story and take note of their responses, questions, and observations.
- On a big piece of paper or whiteboard, write down words or phrases that have jumped out at you this semester. What have you learned about your context that makes you question the Gospel? Wrestle with your questions for a while instead of trying to find easy answers.
- Go for a walk in your community. Pay attention to the people, animals, buildings, and other objects that you see. Pay attention to how people interact with each other and their surroundings. Try to observe without judging, labeling, or trying to fix anything. Ask the Holy Spirit to open your eyes, ears, nose, and heart.
- Read back through your forum posts for the semester and watch for themes in what you noticed. Where have you seen God's presence in your context? In what ways have you been surprised by the Holy Spirit? How have you been changed by your interaction with others in your context? How does the Good News for you intersect with the Good News for others?