



# **The Ministry of the Missional Church: A Community Led by the Spirit**

*Craig Van Gelder*

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Join the missional church conversation

There's a different kind of church conversation going on these days--one that moves beyond just focusing on purpose, strategies, or recovering early church practices. Craig Van Gelder argues that understanding the *nature* of the church is foundational for clarifying the *purpose* of the church and for developing and organizing its ministry.

Moving beyond methods and techniques to create or sustain church growth, Van Gelder shows that when a church is focused on Spirit-led ministry, growth and development are the natural outcome.

*The Ministry of the Missional Church* brings together theology and organizational theory in a way that inspires biblical and theological imagination about how to let the church be the church--a Spirit-led, missional community that seeks to participate fully in God's mission in its particular place in the world.

"Van Gelder is a master at mapping the history of social structures and ideas. Here he applies that mastery to the missional activities and organizational structures of the church, framing the complex of dynamics in which leadership and decision making take place. This is an important resource for anyone who cares about the future of congregations in America."--George R. Hunsberger, professor of congregational mission, Western Theological Seminary

"This is no mere 'cookbook' for effective ministry, nor is it a 'self-help manual' for struggling ministers. It is rather a richly biblical and theological meditation on how the church should minister to the world, and how ministers should minister in the church. Craig Van Gelder skillfully joins the best theology with the best organizational theory in a way that will help leaders lead and congregations grow. His book takes us to the next level in understanding what it is to be a missional church."--Stephen Bevans, Louis J. Luzbatek, SVD Professor of Mission and Culture, Catholic Theological Union

Craig Van Gelder serves as professor of congregational mission at Luther Seminary in St. Paul, Minnesota. He is the author of *The Essence of the Church* and the editor of *Confident Witness--Changing World*.

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