

ANDERSON UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY

**INCARNATION ALLEY:
EXPERIENCING AND REPRESENTING JESUS
IN THE WORLD**

**A PROFESSIONAL PROJECT SUBMITTED TO
THE DOCTOR OF MINISTRY STUDIES PROGRAM
IN CANDIDACY FOR THE DEGREE OF
DOCTOR OF MINISTRY**

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ABSTRACT

This professional project is based on the premise that Jesus is present in and to the world and he alone determines his mission. His mission, then, determines the nature of his community and the forms his community adopts as it participates in his continuing ministry with those he misses most, that is, 'the lost.' Therefore, it is the role of disciples to witness the meeting of Christ clothed in his divinity with Christ clothed in his humanity. This 'meeting of Christ with himself' takes place when God is pleased to uncover or reveal his Son in and to the wretched of the world. Such an uncovering of the Son is entirely the grace-filled work of the Godhead, and the only appropriate human response is faith.

Part One of this project surveys a selection of biblical material that 1) establishes the Temple of Jerusalem as sacred place, the center of Israel's symbolic universe, 2) identifies Jesus as the new presence of God among humankind, and 3) illustrates the seeking and saving activity of Jesus in the world through the outpouring of his Spirit upon all people and the 'unveiling' of the Son of God in individuals.

Part Two explores the nature of the church, the gathering of "two or more" followers of Jesus constituting a microcosm of the total community. It also identifies the tensions between the church and the world, as well as within the body of Christ resulting from diverse expressions of church forms and structures.

Part Three identifies four new alternative streams of Christianity emerging in Western culture. The project phase of this project reflects personal experience and an understanding of what it means to experience and represent Jesus

outside the boundaries of the traditional church. This is presented in narrative form as “Stories from the Alley.” It is in allowing Jesus to determine one’s participation in his mission that one also participates in his community. That community is always being renewed in the likeness of the Son by his continuing presence both in the church and in the world.