

AVH504

Worship as Mission

An explication of the relationship between worship and mission, as seen in the “Evangelical Lutheran Book of Worship” and among some scholars within the fields of liturgy and missiology.

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1. Introduction

1.1. Subject matter and background:

Worship and *Mission* are two terms that give a variety of associations. I, myself, have often understood the term “worship” in relation to a specific type of expression or genre that has more or less been related to a type of Christian music, “worship music”. I have also understood the term “mission” in a somewhat limited way; as the practice of some Christians in “carrying out” the Christian faith to people who still haven’t heard the gospel. Lately, however, my awareness and understanding of these two terms has been expanded, mainly, as a result of the year I had as a student at Wartburg Theological Seminary, where these two terms were understood more in the sense of “what it means to be church”. *Worship* was used as an expression of what I normally would associate with the Norwegian term “*Gudstjeneste*”, and *Mission*, on the other hand, was first and foremost understood in terms of being an expression of the nature of the church. The two terms were intertwined, and worship was fundamentally understood as mission in its very doing.¹

This way of understanding the relationship between worship and mission is by no means a specific “Wartburg phenomenon”. It has been addressed by different scholars occupied within the disciplines of liturgical studies and also among missiologists, and it can also be found deep within the tradition of parts of the global church body. One of the churches that emphasizes the relationship between worship and mission is the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA). In a statement called *The Use of the Means of Grace: A statement on the Practice of Word and Sacrament* (ELCA, 1997), the “*means of grace*” is interpreted in relation to mission, and the missional intention of the means of grace is pointed to as something that needs to be recalled.

In the teaching and practice of congregations, the missional intention of the means of grace needs to be recalled. By God’s gift, the Word and the sacraments are set in the midst of the world, for the life of the world.²

In a book called *Inside Out*,³ ten worship professors in Lutheran seminaries throughout the United States, and one in Canada, have joined to explore the relationship between *Worship*

¹ See: Fritschel, Ann L. Nesson, Craig L. Persaud, Winston D. Loehe’s *Legacy and the Apostolic Calling of Wartburg Theological Seminary for the Church and World in the 21st Century*. 2010. published on <http://www.wartburgseminary.edu/uploadedfiles/pressroom/LoeheLegacy.pdf>

² UMG 1997, 56, Application 51b.

³ Schattauer. ed. *Inside Out: Worship in an Age of Mission*. (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1999). The contributors are: Michael B. Aune, Mark P. Bangert, Jann E. Boyd Fullenwieder, Robert D. Hawkins, Walter C.

and *Mission*. And in the preface of the book, editor Thomas H. Schattauer, a professor of liturgics at Wartburg Theological Seminary states:

Although there are differences in approach and even disagreement among us, we share this point of view: the assembly for worship is intrinsically connected to the mission of God in Christ for the sake of the whole world (*Missio Dei*), and consequently worship is integrally related to every form of the church's mission of witness and service.⁴

This is a statement that indicates a common point of departure among leading scholars in the field of liturgical studies within the ELCA. And a line of thought that has been adopted in the Evangelical Book of Worship (ELW), launched in 2006, as a result of the liturgical reform that took place within the ELCA. Here, this way of seeing the relationship between worship and mission has been given a significant emphasis, and is stated as an ultimate goal:

....this mission of the church, which is the mission of God in Christ for the world, is an ultimate goal of Evangelical Lutheran Worship. Through liturgy and song the people of God participate in that mission, for here God comes with good news to save.⁵

The same emphasis on the relationship between worship and mission is also to be found in the work of some missiologists. In Stephen B. Bevans and Roger P. Schroeder's book *Constants in Context*, the theme in *Inside Out* is used in their exploration of the relationship between worship and mission, and worship is included as an element in their mission definition. David Bosch defines worship as the "foundation of the whole mission of the church", and Thor Strandenaes addresses the relationship in a couple of articles that carry the titles, "Worship as Mission" and "Worship and Mission".

1.2. Research questions

These statements, from both a liturgiological and missiological viewpoints concerning the relationship between worship and mission, raise important theological questions about the understanding of the nature of both worship and mission, and I will therefore address three research questions:

- ✓ How are these statements between *Worship* and *Mission* to be understood?
- ✓ Can this understanding be beneficial for those occupied with the renewal of worship?
- ✓ Can this provide important insights for the discussion pertaining to the relationship between church and mission

Huffman, Gordon W. Lathrop, Mark O. Oldenburg, Thomas H. Schattauer, Mons A. Teig and Paul Westermeyer.

⁴ Ibid., viii

⁵ ELW 2006, 8. Emphasis mine.

1.3. Material/Sources:

In the search for an answer to these questions I will use the sources that I have addressed in this introduction. The materials I have chosen are:

The Use of the Means of Grace: A statement on the Practice of Word and Sacrament (ELCA, 1997), which is a central document within the ELCA, and a statement that is referred to in the material as a background for the understanding of the relationship between Worship and Mission.

As mentioned, the book *Inside Out: Worship in an age of Mission* (1999), provides an exploration of the relationship between Worship and Mission among the leading liturgiologists within the ELCA and it involves the central elements in Christian Worship: Proclamation, Baptism, Eucharist, the Liturgical year, Liturgical Space, Music, Ritual Practice and Occasional Services. I will emphasize the articles by Schattauer and Lathrop, together with articles by Teig, Fullenwieder and Bangert.

Evangelical Lutheran Worship (2006) is the result of the worship reform that took place within the ELCA, and this resource will be of central importance in my thesis, as it gives examples of how the relationship between worship and mission is understood and how this understanding is foundational on how worship is seen and should be practiced.

As mentioned, Bevans and Schroeder's *Constants in Context: A theology of mission for Today* (2004) picks up the theme of *Inside Out*, where the connectedness modeled by Schattauer is used as part of their presentation of "Mission as a Prophetic Dialogue" that functions as their concluding chapter in the book, and as a definition of the Mission for Today

David Bosch, in *Witness to the World* (1980) and his milestone *Transforming Mission: Paradigm Shifts in Theology of Mission* (1991), includes *leitourgia* in his reflection on the nature and scope of mission.

Thor Strandenæs is a Norwegian scholar who addresses how the relationship between worship and mission can be seen. Examples can be found in two of his articles: "Gudstjeneste og misjon" published in *Missiologi i dag* (2004) and "Gudstjeneste som mission" published in *Gudstjeneste som mission. Ny Mission nr.2* (2001)

1.4. Method:

The method I will use to answer the questions raised, is descriptive and normative, and it will be a hermeneutical and systematic approach, operating within the disciplines of Liturgy and Missiology. I will proceed by first explicating the relationship between *Worship* and *Mission* the way it is expressed, explicitly and implicitly, in the chosen material related to the ELCA. I will then explicate the relationship between Worship and Mission seen from a missiological viewpoint, based on both explicit and implicit statements, this in comparison with the view unfolded in the liturgical material. I will then briefly bring the material unfolded into a discussion with the last two research questions that is raised.

By explication I understand this in terms of being and detailed explanation where I seek to develop the implications that derives from explicit statements found in the material.⁶

1.5 Disposition:

This method will give the following disposition:

I will divide my thesis into three parts. The first will be based on the liturgical material and the second on the missiological. Each part will include an introduction where the material is further presented, this because of the interrelatedness that is seen in the liturgical material, and the different character of the work of the missiologists. In my third part I will bring the material into a discussion. Following, is the structure of my thesis:

- ✓ Part I *Worship and Mission seen from a liturgiological viewpoint*
- ✓ Part II *Worship and Mission seen from a missiological viewpoint*
- ✓ Part III *Worship and Mission - Benefits and <Insights:*
- ✓ Conclusion: *Worship and Mission, how are “they” related?*

1.6. A preliminary definition

Worship: When I use the term “worship”, I relate that to the principal service that includes the celebration of the *Eucharist*, and often *Baptism*. The different scholars, however, use different words for worship. Strandenæs uses the term “*gudstjeneste*” and also *leitourgia*; Bosch uses the word *leitourgia*; and Bevans and Schroeder use the word *Liturgy*. It is obvious from the content that they all refer to the principal service. For when other liturgical events are mentioned, they are defined more closely. I will therefore use the term worship, as an

⁶ Britannica Online <http://search.eb.com/dictionary?va=explication&query=explication>

overall term; the way it is used in *UMG*, *Inside Out* and *ELW*; in my explication. This definition will however serve more as a preliminary definition, because the scope of this thesis is fundamentally to explore the nature of worship, when worship is set in relation to mission.

1.7. Goal

The research questions that I addressed in this introduction could be defined as a main goal for my thesis. Here I have raised questions concerning whether the view that will be unfolded could be beneficial for those occupied with the renewal of worship; and if it could provide important insight into the understanding of the relationship between church and mission? These questions are developed as a consequence of my own background, both as a member, and as a church musician in the Church of Norway. This church is in the midst of an ongoing liturgical reform, and the relationship between church and mission is still a theme that raises theological disputes. As a theological student that is soon to be a serving pastor in this church, the answers to these questions, are, as I see it, both important and necessary.

2. Worship and Mission seen from a liturgical viewpoint.

2.1. Introduction

I will, in my explication of the view on how the relationship between worship and mission is seen from a liturgical viewpoint turn to sources that are related to the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America⁷ (ELCA) These sources are interrelated and I have therefore chosen to unfold how the relationship between worship and mission is seen, by integrating all of them in my explication. Together, the sources give a good overview of how the relationship is seen, and how the emphasis on mission, in relation to worship, has culminated in *ELW*; the result of the liturgical reform within ELCA. I will begin this introduction by providing some further background information on each one of the sources, and which part of the material I will emphasize.

The use of the means of grace: A statement on the practice of Word and Sacrament (UMG,) was a result of a year-long process within ELCA and this statement is “meant to enrich the sacramental life of ELCA congregations”⁸, and in the statement it says that the one who should have the most productive study is the one “who has a responsibility for the worship life of the congregation”.⁹ *UMG* was adopted for guidance and practice by the Fifth Biennial Churchwide Assembly of the ELCA in August 1997. *UMG* is divided up into four parts. The first three parts explore the meaning of the Word of God, Holy Baptism and Communion. And the last part is titled “The means of Grace and Christian mission”¹⁰. Here the means of grace is set in relation to mission. The sources for the statement are the scriptural witness, the confessional material that is to be found in Book of Concord, resolution documents within ELCA, worship material, and historical references including liturgical material and the writings of Martin Luther. The statement ends with a study help, so the document has an educational intent, and seeks to engage congregations and congregation members in the meaning of Word and Sacrament¹¹.

Inside Out (1999) provides an exploration of the relationship between Worship and Mission that is recalled in *UMG*.¹² In different articles, leading liturgiologists within ELCA, explore the central elements in Christian Worship: The worshipping assembly; Proclamation;

⁷ For further presentation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America see: <http://www.elca.org> . For literature on Lutheranism in USA and its historical background and development see: Nelson 1980.

⁸ *UMG* 1997, 61

⁹ *Ibid.*, 61

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 55

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 60-63

¹² *Inside Out* 1999, viii

Baptism; Eucharist; the Liturgical year; Liturgical Space; Music; Ritual Practice; and Occasional Services. In these essays, the missional dimension of the means of grace and other central elements in worship are explored with mission in mind. Schattauer and Lathrop's essays function as an introduction and conclusion in the book,¹³ and these, together with the essays related to the Word (Proclamation), Baptism and Communion will be emphasized in my explication.

Evangelical Lutheran Worship (ELW) is the product of the liturgical reform and renewal that took place within ELCA and was launched in 2006. *ELW* covers over 1,200 pages with liturgical material. This includes: Ten settings for Holy Communion, Service of the Word, Morning, Evening and Night prayer. It includes resources for funerals, weddings and healing services. In addition to the material that describes and shapes the different patterns of worship, it also includes: The Church year calendar, the lectionary, Prayer resources, Martin Luther's *Small Catechism*, Book of Psalms, Service music, Hymns (Hymnbook) and daily lectionary.¹⁴ Most of these sections of material start with a preface, obviously with an interpretive and educational intent, and this, together with the introduction will be of central importance in my explication. The introduction is a short and compact text loaded with theological expressions and presuppositions and is of central importance to understand the relationship between worship and mission, as it is found expressed in the *ELW*. As a structural element for my explication I have chosen to divide the sections offered in the introduction into 16 paragraphs. The paragraphs are not titled or numbered. However I have chosen to number the paragraphs, in order to easily refer to the material.¹⁵

2.2. Mission

In *UMG*, *Inside Out* and *ELW*, mission is used as an expression for what worship is, as a term that is supposed to capture the nature of worship. In *UMG*, a missional intent of the means of grace has been given in one of the parts that builds a foundation for the body of the document: It is called *The Means of Grace and Christian Mission*.¹⁶ In this part, the missional intention of the means of grace is being recalled, or a recalling is asked for.¹⁷ *Inside Out* is written as an attempt to interpret what these statements in *UMG* might mean.¹⁸ This has obviously

¹³ Ibid., viii

¹⁴ *ELW* 2006, 5

¹⁵ The paragraphs are organized as followed: Page 6: Paragraph 1-4; Page 7: Paragraph 4-9; Page 8: Paragraph 9-16.

¹⁶ *UMG* 1997, 55

¹⁷ Ibid., 56, Principle 51B.

¹⁸ *Inside Out* 1999, viii

impacted *ELW*, where a missional hermeneutic is put to the front in the understanding of worship, and mission is stated as the “ultimate goal” for the *ELW*.¹⁹ I will therefore turn to some of these statements, and continue to unfold how *UMG*, *Inside Out* and *ELW*, see or understand the nature of mission.

2.2.1. Mission of God (*missio Dei*)

The term “mission of God (*missio Dei*)” plays a foundational role in *UMG*, *Inside Out* and *ELW* and it forms their understanding and use of the term “mission”. It is the expression that is found in *UMG* which is used to set a foundational groundwork in the *ELW*²⁰, and here, a trinitarian grounding is essential in the understanding of the *missio Dei*. Principle 1 in *UMG* describes the movement within the Triune God, between the Father, the Son and the Spirit, as a movement that is made present in the Word of God, as Jesus Christ, in the power of the Spirit. This presence, with the Word of God, Jesus Christ, in the power of the Spirit, is encountered in the means of grace, and in the means of grace the church is “gathered into God’s own mission for the life of the world”²¹ according to *UMG* and *ELW*.²² The movement is understood as God’s movement towards the world, and the church’s nature is to be part of this movement. In this way, the use of *world* as a term is used in a positive sense. God’s saving purpose is for the world, this is the mission of God.

It is important to notice that the traditional distinction between a general and specific revelation, that is so central in Lutheran theology, is not to be found in *UMG*, or the distinction is there, but it is expressed in the dialectic between Law and Gospel. But this dialectic as a whole is to be found in the Word of God, as Jesus Christ, and is therefore also encountered in the means of grace. This is richly illustrated in *ELW* where this dialectic is showed forth in using a multiform of meaning related to the Word. The introduction in the pattern for worship is an example of that, here the Word is stated as²³: “the saving Word of God”; “as Gospel”; “living Word, Jesus Christ”; “God’s word of law and gospel”; “As speech”; “Jesus’ own words”. It is not within the scope of this thesis to explore this further, but it is of central importance that *ELW* manages to put such an emphasis on the Word of God in its liturgy, and at the same time leave the discussion about the relationship between the Word of God, Jesus Christ, and the scriptural witness open, and also a distinction between

¹⁹ *ELW* 2006, 8, Paragraph 14.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 6, Paragraph 1.

²¹ *UMG* 1997, 7, Principle 2.

²² *ELW* 2006, 6, paragraph 1.

²³ *ELW* 2006, 91-93

general and special revelation. In doing so manages to understand worship as a totality or as a fundamental expression of the Word of God, Jesus Christ. I will continue to unfold this later on.

With this in mind, it is possible to state that the mission of God is understood primarily in the light of the Christ event, and is interpreted and emphasized through this. The dialectic between law and gospel is left open, and this creates consequences for how the mission of the church is understood and the relationship between worship and mission. It is therefore the Christ event that is the foundation for how *missio Dei* is understood, and to be able to unfold this, it is necessarily to continue to explicate how the mission of God and the mission of the church are seen as connected in *UMG*, *Inside Out* and *ELW*.

2.2.2. *Mission of the Church*

The connection between the church and the mission of God is mainly understood in *UMG*, *Inside Out* and *ELW*'s interpretation of the means of grace. This is the connecting point, and the "fundamental expression" of the mission of God. God is made present in the Word of God, Jesus Christ, in the power of the Spirit, and the church becomes part of this in its participation in the means of grace. Here *Augustana 7* shines through:

It is also taught that at all times there must be and remain one holy, Christian church. It is the assembly of all believers among whom the gospel is purely preached and the holy sacraments are administered according to the gospel.²⁴

The church is constituted in the gathering around the means of grace, and this is the same as participating in the mission of God according to *UMG*, *Inside Out* and *ELW*. In this sense, the mission of God is primarily understood according to what takes place in the means of grace, and the interpretation of the means of grace becomes the main source for how the Christ event is understood, and it reveals the nature of the mission of the church. It becomes the fundamental expression of the *missio Dei*, and the foundation for the mission of the Church. With this in mind, the statement that is found in the preface of *Inside Out* also needs to be understood, as quoted in the introduction of this thesis:

Although there are differences in approach and even disagreement among us, we share this point of view: the assembly for worship is intrinsically connected to the mission of God in Christ for the sake of the whole world (*Missio Dei*), and consequently worship is integrally related to every form of the church's mission of witness and service.²⁵

²⁴ The Book of Concord 2000, 42. German text Article vii

²⁵ *Inside Out* 1999, viii.

The church becomes intrinsically connected to the mission of God in Christ, and from and in that connection, the church carries out its mission, which is here defined as” witness and service” I will continue to unfold what this might mean later on in my thesis.

In order to answer what the mission of God is; understood in light of the Christ event; and then consequently the mission of the Church, it is necessary to turn to worship, and see how worship is understood, because in worship the nature of the mission of God that is seen in Christ, is revealed, and therefore the mission of the Church is revealed.

2.3. Worship and mission

As seen in the explication of how *UMG*, *Inside Out* and *ELW* understand the nature of mission it is necessary to examine how they see the relationship between worship and mission, and in turn, how this view impacts worship and how it is practiced. . Here, I will discuss the relationship between the different aspects of mission that I have explicated: The mission of God and the mission of the Church. In order to define the mission of God understood in light of the Christ event; and the mission of the Church’s participation in this mission; it is necessarily to unfold how *UMG*, *Inside Out* and *ELW* interpret worship, because in their interpretation of worship, the Christ event is showed forth, and seen. And in so doing, the nature of the *missio Dei* is revealed.

2.3.1. Worship and the mission of God

ELW calls upon *Augsburg Confession 7* and states that “the worship that constitutes the church is also the fundamental expression of the mission of God in the world”²⁶ The different aspects of meaning that “fundamental expression” opens up for, underscores *ELW*’s understanding. “Fundamental”²⁷ takes away the possibility of an interpretation that claims to cover the whole of the nature of the mission of God. It is not the fundament/foundation, but it is fundamental, the center. It fits well with the understanding that mission is first and foremost grounded in God and that in worship the assembly is participating in this mission by its very nature that is expressed in worship. At the same time it is not willing to reduce the significance of what takes place in worship, and relates this activity to the very nature of the mission of God, the center. “Expression”²⁸ makes it possible to capture the meaning of what takes place in the worshipping assembly in its worship. Worship can be related to the act of speech, of the very Word of God, Jesus Christ, and it emphasizes that expression is more than

²⁶ *ELW* 2006, 6-7, Paragraph 4.

²⁷ Oxford American College Dictionary 2002, 545

²⁸ *Ibid.*, 475

words. It can be expressed in feelings, in the body language, and in art and music. The sacraments are included in the act of expression. We can see this line of thought comes from *UMG* and its attempt to call upon the missional intention of the means of grace:

In every celebration of the means of grace, God acts to show forth both the need of the world and the truth of the Gospel. In every gathering of Christians around the proclaimed Word and the holy sacraments, God acts to empower the Church for mission. Jesus Christ, who is God's living bread come down from heaven, has given his flesh to be the life of the world. This very flesh, given for the life of all, is encountered in the Word and sacrament.²⁹

Or as *UMG* continues to state, "By God's gift, the Word and the sacraments are set in the midst of the world, for the life of the world"³⁰ Here it becomes clear how *UMG* interprets the gathering around the means of grace, as something that nourishes those who participate, but that this participation should continue, outside the gathered assembly. The distinction between church and world is seen, but the movement is one, the mission of God, Jesus Christ, who gave his flesh to be the life for the world. The statement in *UMG* is also reflected upon in Schattauer's article in *Inside Out*. Here he refers to the Johannine phrase (John 6:51) that is the fundament for this statement and that was "found in the Byzantine anaphora of St. Basil and popularized by the Russian Orthodox theologian Alexander Schmemmann".³¹ And from this perspective Schattauer expresses that the liturgical assembly is the visible locus of the *missio Dei*.³² Here, Schattauer points to how the worshipping assembly, themselves, becomes the expression of the mission of God, again understood in light of the Christ event. This Christocentric focus, throughout the material, is understood as an encounter with the Word of God, Jesus Christ, as the *missio Dei*. As referenced earlier, the opening phrase in *ELW* quotes *UMG* and states:

Jesus Christ is the living and abiding Word of God. By the power of the Spirit, this very Word of God, which is Jesus Christ, is read in the scriptures, proclaimed in preaching, announced in the forgiveness of sins, eaten and drunk in the Holy Communion, and encountered in the bodily presence of the Christian community...³³

Here it is seen how the different elements in worship are understood as the life giving presence of the *missio Dei*, and that this is the mission of the triune God that takes place in worship, and the mission of God is often expressed with this wholeness in mind, under the phrase: "The mission of God (*missio Dei*), in Christ for the world, for the life of the world."³⁴

²⁹ *UMG* 1997, 56, Application 51.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, 56, Application 51B.

³¹ Schattauer 1999, 9

³² *Ibid.*, 9

³³ *UMG* 1997, 6 and *ELW* 2006, 6

³⁴ *Inside Out* 1999, Viii; and *ELW* 2006, 8, Paragraph 14

It is God's action or God's gift, Jesus Christ that is encountered in Worship, and this is the fundamental expression of the mission of God, in the world, for the life of the world.

Schattauer points to how this understanding is a consequence of the shift that has taken place within missiology on the understanding of mission as an activity of God, rather than and activity of the church, and by that, has led to an ecclesiological reflection, that seeks to interpret Church as part of Gods mission, or sending, as its very essence, and he quotes the *Missional Church*:

Our postmodern society has come to regard worship as the private, internal, and often arcane activity of religionists who retreat from the world to practice their mystical rites. By definition, however, the ekklesia is a public assembly, and its worship is its first form of mission.... The reality of God that is proclaimed in worship is to be announced to and for the entire world.³⁵

It is obvious that this has impacted *ELW*, and has led to the missional hermeneutic that is highlighted in the understanding of worship, or as an "ultimate goal", as pointed to earlier.

The ongoing reflection that has taken place in ELCA since the missional intent of the means of grace was recalled in *UMG*, has influenced the *ELW*. In the explanation under "Sending" in *ELW*, it is stated: "God's mission includes the gifts of grace that we share in worship, and take also to the absent (sic); now, we are sent to continue our participation in God's mission."³⁶

The worshipping assembly's mission is to participate in the mission of God by gathering around the means of grace, around the Word of God, Jesus Christ; and in the sending out, thus continuing in the participation. This reveals how worship around the means of grace is seen as the event that brings the mission of God and the mission of the church together. In worship, the church is constituted around the means of grace, it is the *missio Dei* that constitutes the church. The Church's mission is then understood in relation to the mission of God, and this is formulated as participation. Worship then reveals the mission of God, and in worship the mission of God is made known to the world, or Jesus Christ is made known to the world, worship takes place for the world, and in the world. Or as Lathrop states in his article in *Inside Out*, "the mission of God planted in the heart of the liturgy"³⁷

Here it is seen how the mission of God: Jesus Christ, the Word of God, becomes the critical principle for what takes place in worship, or it defines worship, it also informs how the church should carry out its worship. The mission of God, understood in light of the Christ event, becomes the main principle to understand the nature of the mission of the church, and in this

³⁵ Schattauer 1999, 4: Quoting Darrell L. Guder 1998, 242.

³⁶ *ELW* 2006, 93

³⁷ Lathrop 1999, 201

dialectic between the mission of God and the Church's participation, the "fundamental expression" of the mission of God is showed forth.

Continuing to unfold this dialectic, I will now examine how the mission of the church is understood as expressed in worship.

2.3.2. *Worship and the mission of the Church*

To be able to explicate how worship and the mission of the Church are related, it is necessary to turn to the nature of worship, and unfold what *UMG*, *Inside Out* and *ELW* define as worship. As defined in the introduction, worship in this thesis is used as an expression for Liturgy; the principal service; or the Norwegian term "*gudstjeneste*". But it is important to look more closely into the term and see how the material provides a wide use of the term "worship", as it covers very many aspects. The content of *ELW* exemplifies this and by its name, *Evangelical Lutheran Worship*, it underscores that all the material it covers is classified as worship. This could also be said about the content of the articles in *Inside Out* where the liturgical year, liturgical space and music are given emphasis in three of the essays³⁸ Worship is also given meaning through other words and expressions: In the topical index of hymns in *ELW*³⁹ worship, subcategories include "adoration", "praise" and "thanksgiving"; and subcategories under these headings include "joy" and "celebration". The word "liturgy" is also used as an equivalent to worship, this is clear in both *ELW* and in *Inside Out* where the word is used interchangeably with worship.⁴⁰ In *UMG* words like "celebration" and "practice" are used as terms that express worship⁴¹ and *ELW* also states that "Christians are sent by God to continue their worship each day through lives of service"⁴² and thereby uses worship as an expression that can capture the whole of Christian life. Here the Orthodox Church and its expression, "the liturgy after the liturgy" is shining through, and has obviously impacted the *ELW*.⁴³ The reason for the wide perspective on worship can of course also be found in the lexical meaning of the word⁴⁴, but at the same time, what is important in this jungle of meanings is that throughout the material, a defined center exists, and here worship is placed in relation to an assembly that is gathered for worship around the means of grace. *UMG* states that "ELCA is committed by its statement of purpose" to worship God in proclamation of the

³⁸ *Inside Out* 1999, Huffman 107; Westermeyer 125; and Oldenburg 87.

³⁹ *ELW* 2006, 1178-1188

⁴⁰ *ELW* 2006, 8, Paragraph 14; and *Inside Out* 1999, 1.

⁴¹ *UMG* 1997, 56, Application 51.

⁴² *ELW* 2006, 295

⁴³ Stamooolis 1986, 99; Quoted in Bevans and Schroeder 2004, 295.

⁴⁴ Oxford American College Dictionary 2002, 1642

Word and administration of the sacraments⁴⁵. *ELW* interprets church as the worshipping assembly and understands by that *CA 7* as an expression of the center in worship, the very nature.⁴⁶ In *Inside Out*, both Lathrop and Schattauer are using the worshipping assembly as their reference point when they set worship in relation to mission. Lathrop talks about authentic worship as worship in word and sacraments⁴⁷ and Schattauer's article carries the title, "The Liturgical Assembly as Locus of Mission".⁴⁸

This way of speaking about worship is close to a Lutheran ecclesiology, and it could be stated that the way that the term "worshipping assembly" is being used, is the same as "church". Church and Worship are therefore linked together as two sides of the same coin. "The Lutheran confession describes the church in terms of the worshipping assembly"⁴⁹ It is not within the scope of this thesis to explicate this ecclesiological understanding of the church, but it is well worth having in mind when unfolding how worship and the mission of the church are seen as related.⁵⁰ Implicit worship and the mission of the church, become the same thing, and because of this the mission of the Church; which is seen as participation in the mission of God, is taking place in worship, in its very doing. Therefore the means of grace is foundational in identifying this mission, and revealing what the liturgiologists and *ELW* mean when they use the mission of God as a framework for expressing what takes place in worship. The exploration of the meaning of the missional shape of the means of grace, initiated in *UMG*, and examined by the different liturgical scholars in *Inside Out*, points to different ways of how this mission is seen, and the content of *ELW* and its choice of liturgical material also give meaning to mission. It is therefore necessary to unfold the understanding of mission, in relation to worship itself, and how it consequently impacts the church's mission. It is therefore the means of grace themselves, that reveal what the mission of God is, or what the church participates in. Here liturgical theology plays an important role, where the emphasis on the very doing of worship is foundational. It is not within the scope of this thesis to unfold

⁴⁵ UMG 1997, 8, Background 3A.

⁴⁶ ELW 2006, 6, Paragraph 2.

⁴⁷ Lathrop 1999, 203

⁴⁸ Schattauer 1999, 1

⁴⁹ ELW 2006, 6, Paragraph 2.

⁵⁰ For an understanding of worship as something that derives from a center see: Wengert 2007. It is written as a comment and tribute to *ELW* and it points to how this framework and understanding is reflected in *ELW*. The book draws on sources from the reformation, and the reformers view on worship. The center is to be found in the means of grace, and the Word of God understood as promise.

this further, but it is important to note.⁵¹ There is also criticism raised against this in the essay by Aune in *Inside Out*.⁵²

The means of grace as mission

So how are the means of grace and mission related? I will now turn to that question, and unfold how each of the means: The Word, Baptism and Communion are seen as mission. Here the *missio Dei*, and the church mission will be intertwined, but this exemplifies only what I have already unfolded up to this part of my thesis. Schattauer and Lathrop's words can function as an entrance into this understanding. Schattauer states:

More than a place for individuals to encounter word and sacrament as institutions of grace, the church in its assembly around word and sacrament enacts a ritual symbol of God's gracious purpose for the world and so participates in God's world-encompassing mission.⁵³

The centrality of the partakers is key here, and the assembly becomes in many ways, itself "a part of the means of grace", and the significance of the event that takes place is understood as pointing beyond the gathering itself. Lathrop's essay in *Inside Out* continues to unfold what Schattauer says:

And yet, like every gift of God, the gift of the assembly for worship also keeps on giving more widely and more surprisingly than we had expected. It turns inside out. It reaches out to give meaning and mercy not only to those of us who are gathered – those who call this assembly "our church" – but to anyone who would come near our gathering, to all people around our gathering, to the world itself.⁵⁴

This understanding of the worship as something that reaches beyond the gathering itself is strongly emphasized in *UMG*, *Inside Out* and *ELW*, in how the means of grace are seen connected to mission, and it informs how each of the means are interpreted, and are foundational for how the assembly itself becomes participants in the mission of God, that is the mission of the Church.

○ *The Word of God as mission*

The way of understanding the assembly's role in worship is strongly emphasized in *ELW*, especially in the way it understands the Word of God: "The word of God proclaimed within

⁵¹ In Liturgical theology the emphasis on the *lex orandi lex credendi*, "the rule of prayer is the rule of faith" is the central element. Here is theology interpreted and seen in the very doing of worship/liturgy, not only in the liturgical texts, but in symbols, and ritual actions, in the worshipping assembly's participation. Central works within liturgical theology are: Schmemmann 1996; Kavanagh 1984; Lathrop 1993.

⁵² Aune 1999, 174

⁵³ Schattauer 1997, 13

⁵⁴ Lathrop 1999, 201

and by the gathered assembly”⁵⁵ This is both in the scriptures, where the living Word, Jesus Christ, is present in the gospel reading, and in the proclamation that takes place in preaching, singing and in the confession of faith⁵⁶ This resonates well with the focus on the church mission understood as participation in the mission of God, in Christ for the world, through liturgy and song, that *ELW* places emphasis on,⁵⁷ and as pointed to in the introduction of my thesis. This is also seen in relation to the world, as stated in the introduction of the “service of the Word” in *ELW*: “We hear and proclaim the saving word of God for all the world.”⁵⁸ Worship is not only seen as an internal activity that “only” reaches those who attend, but as a witness for the world, in its very doing. Fullenwieder, in his essay in *Inside Out* quotes Luther and defines the worshipping assembly as “God’s mouth house”, because it is created by God’s word, Jesus Christ.⁵⁹ The speaking that takes place, God’s act of speech, is embodied in the worshipping assembly, in its gathering around the means of grace.

The words that speak the eternal life of God are not calling people into an ideology or methodology. The meeting with Christ is lively communion with one another. It is an event making all things new, a declaration of a will that cannot be broken. When we who are baptized take up our birthright to meet and to hear the scriptures, to recall or enact the visible words of washing, to eat and drink in accordance with the words of Holy Scripture, and to be sent forth to bear and do the words of eternal life, we are rehearsing a particular mind that is ours in Christ Jesus. Taking up the preaching and meal-keeping of Jesus, the assembly participates in Jesus by the power of the Holy Spirit active in these events. This whole is primary proclamation, primary witness.⁶⁰

Here it is clear how the Word of God is seen as becoming an embodiment of the whole worship event, and that the assembly themselves is seen as becoming bearers of the Word of God, and that this totality is seen as primary proclamation or primary witness. The embodiment expresses also the witness as communion. In worship, through communion (koinonia), proclamation and witness take place. Here, well known terms within missiology are recalled, and these expressions are often used as part of a definition of the total mission of the church-I will continue to show examples of this in Part II of my thesis.

○ *Baptism as being baptized into mission*

As seen, Fullenwieder also relates baptism to the primary proclamation that takes place, speaking about baptism as a *birthright*, to participate in worship, and baptism is very central

⁵⁵ ELW 2006, 92

⁵⁶ Ibid., 92

⁵⁷ Ibid., 8, Paragraph 14.

⁵⁸ Ibid., 210

⁵⁹ Fullenwieder 1999, 24

⁶⁰ Ibid., 27

in *UMG, Inside Out* and *ELW* understanding of mission, and the relationship between worship and mission, and it unfolds further how the mission of the church is understood. In his essay in *Inside Out*, Teig “focuses on several baptismal motifs that express the mission of God”⁶¹ and he begins “from the perspective that Jesus Christ is God’s liturgy/service and God’s mission for the sake of the world,”⁶² and he defines baptism as God’s mission activity: “Although we are cleansed through the ordinary experience of washing or bathing, the word brought to the water expands our vision and experience of God’s mission”.⁶³ This activity of God is seen as: “the participation in Christ’s death and resurrection”; “conversion, pardoning and cleansing”; “the gift of the Spirit”; “the incorporation into the Body of Christ”; “the sign of the Kingdom”⁶⁴ In one of *ELW*’s opening alternatives in the baptismal liturgy, this mission of God is expressed in the following way:

God, who is rich in mercy and love, gives us a new birth into a living hope through the sacrament of baptism. By water and the Word God delivers us from sin and death and raises us to new life in Jesus Christ. We are united with all the baptized in the one body of Christ, anointed with the gift of the Holy Spirit, and joined in God’s mission for the life of the world.⁶⁵

Based on this, it is possible to draw the conclusion that mission includes rebirth, cleansing, gift of the Spirit, incorporation into the body of Christ, sign of the Kingdom. This is the new life in Christ. Here the salvific dimension of the Christ event shines through. And this plays a foundational role in the whole understanding of the relationship between worship and mission. And in a sense, the salvific dimension of the Christ event is seen as being saved for mission. Here also the statements from *ELW* reflect an understanding where baptism is seen as being baptized into mission, or the very entrance point into the church’s mission, or the mission of God.

”We are united with all the baptized in the one body of Christ, anointed with the gift of the Holy Spirit, and joined in God’s mission for the life of the world”⁶⁶

And *ELW* continues to place emphasis on the significance of baptism in the principal service. Here, an alternative to “confession and forgiveness” in the beginning of service is the “thanksgiving for baptism”, and in the thanksgiving prayer the promise of forgiveness and

⁶¹ Teig 1999, 40

⁶² Ibid., 42

⁶³ Ibid., 42

⁶⁴ Ibid., 43

⁶⁵ *ELW* 2006, 227

⁶⁶ Ibid., 227

new life in Jesus Christ is recalled.⁶⁷ And in the introduction to the baptismal liturgy it is stated:

Although a person is baptized once, the gift of baptism continues throughout a Christian's life..... The additional orders in this section – Welcome to Baptism, Affirmation of Baptism, and Confession and Forgiveness – provide several ways by which God's people in worship may participate in the lifelong gift of baptism.⁶⁸

To participate in the lifelong gift of baptism is to participate in God's mission. And to participate in this mission includes confession and forgiveness, and this becomes consequently a part of the mission of the church. The baptismal focus is also explored when Teig argues for the need of lay people carrying out worship roles:

The need to affirm that this baptismal identity is one of the reasons lay people ought to serve as assisting ministries in worship, and all worshipers should be reminded that baptism ordains to priesthood in the world. The point of lay people carrying out worship roles such as proclaiming the scripture readings or offering the intercessions is not to make the baptized "parapastors" or assistants to clergy. It is rather to symbolize in worship their vocation in and for the world.⁶⁹

Here it is obvious that Teig sees baptism as an entrance into mission, and that this mission takes place both in worship and also in their vocation. In this sense, the vocation for each baptized could also be seen as a participation in mission. Here the connection between the special and general revelation of God is intertwined, as pointed to earlier. The outward focus of baptism is also emphasized in *ELW*. In the responsibilities listed for the parents who bring their children to baptism the outward focus of baptism is explicitly made clear in statements like:

"You are entrusted with responsibilities to.....proclaim Christ through word and deed....care for others and the world God made..... work for justice and peace"⁷⁰

To be baptized into mission, is here given meaning, and the mission of the church is therefore also seen in terms of justice and peace seeking, and in the caring for others and the created world. It could implicitly be claimed that diakonia is shining through as one of the elements that is seen as part of the church mission. The "outward" dimension of the responsibilities is standing alongside the "inward" dimensions. Here the parents commit themselves to help their children to be part of the mission that takes place in worship itself:

To live with them among God's faithful people...bring them to the word of God and the holy supper... teach them the Lord's Prayer, the Creed...⁷¹

⁶⁷ Ibid., 97

⁶⁸ Ibid., 225

⁶⁹ Teig 1999, 54

⁷⁰ ELW 2006, 228

And in the welcoming address from the gathered assembly to the newly baptized, *ELW* continues to unfold this understanding.

“We welcome you into the body of Christ and into the mission we share: join us in giving thanks and praise to God and bearing God’s creative and redeeming word to all the world.”⁷²

The inward and outward focus is seen both as mission; in giving thanks and praise to God in worship; and in bearing the Word of God, Jesus Christ, to all the world; both are seen as participation in the mission.

○ *Communion as a culmination of mission*

Communion is in many ways the culmination of how the relationship between worship and mission is seen. *ELW* provides ten settings of Holy Communion, and the turn towards a meal-centered worship is obvious. In comparison, *ELW* has one setting without the meal, “The service of the Word”. In the liturgy of the meal, the understanding of the church mission shines through, in the way the meal itself signifies the presence of the *missio Dei*, and here also creational aspects are brought into the liturgy. In the alternative thanksgiving for Ash Wednesday and Day of Pentecost it is stated:

.....Reveal yourself to us in the breaking of the bread. Raise us up as the body of Christ for the world. Breathe new life into us. Send us forth, burning with justice, peace, and love. Come Holy Spirit. With your holy ones, of all times and places, with the earth and all its creatures, with sun and moon and stars, we praise you, O God, blessed and holy Trinity, now and forever. Amen⁷³

And in *ELW* “a full thanksgiving also includes praise to God for creation and salvation”.⁷⁴

The liturgy of the meal also gives a good example of the outward focus. The words of institution are not identical with the words recorded in scripture: Here the phrase: “shed for you” is extended with “and for all people”⁷⁵. And the Christ event, understood as something that is meant for all, is emphasized in the sacrament itself. The interpretation of the Christ event as a totality plays, therefore, a more central role than an identical record of the scriptural passage where the words are to be found. *UMG* also points to the significance of this

⁷¹ Ibid., 228

⁷² Ibid., 231

⁷³ Ibid., 111

⁷⁴ *ELW* 2006, 93

⁷⁵ *ELW* 2006, 108

missional shape of the eucharist and together with Lathrop,⁷⁶ a quote from Luther is used as a key argument.

When you have partaken of this sacrament, therefore, or desire to partake of it, you must in turn share the misfortunes of the fellowship...Here your heart must go out in love and learn that this is a sacrament of love. As love and support are given to you, you in turn must render love and support to Christ in his needy ones . You must feel with sorrow all the dishonor done to Christ in his holy Word, all the misery of Christendom , all the unjust suffering of the innocent, with which the world is everywhere filled to overflowing . You must fight, work, pray, and—if you cannot do more—have heartfelt sympathy . . . It is Christ's will, then, that we partake of it frequently, in order that we may remember him and exercise ourselves in this fellowship according to his example.

This puts awareness of the act in it-self as a partaking in something that gives meaning to what should take place on the “outside”, it should be the same on the “outside”, as on the “inside”. Communion is understood as fellowship that should follow Christ’s example of self-giving love. Bangert, in his article related to communion found in *Inside Out*, interprets 1 Cor. 11:29, where Paul says, “For all who eat and drink without discerning the body”:, He argues for a focus on the body of Christ symbolized in the eating and drinking in the meal, and that part of Paul’s focus is “that the church’s internal division manifest themselves in the way communion is celebrated in their midst”⁷⁷ And he states:

The Living One is recognized in the icon of the community – real presence can be perceived both in the community’s eating and in the community itself. The meal is about people. The Lord’s supper is the liturgical epiphany of the church, and if authentic, cannot help but show forth the brokenness of humanity and at the same time enact signs on how life is to be lived.⁷⁸

Here the focus on the totality of the sacramental event is strongly emphasized and strongly claims the significance of the community’s role in the celebration, where it is understood in the sense of real presence or as an enacted sign on how life is to be lived.

As a summary of how communion is seen as mission, it could implicitly be stated that in communion fellowship and diakonia are intertwined, this again is based on the kerygma, the Word of God, Jesus Christ, that is present in the celebration of communion, and it is therefore seen as a witness for the world in how life is supposed to be lived, and in that it points to God’s purpose and future for the world.

⁷⁶ Martin Luther, "The Blessed Sacrament of the Holy and True Body of Christ, and the Brotherhoods," 9,12 . *Luther's Work's*, 35: 54, 5 6-57. Quoted in: UMG 1997, 59, Application 54b; and Lathrop 1999, 202-203.

⁷⁷ Bangert 1999, 66

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 66

2.3.3 *Worship and mission: different understandings of worship and mission*

As seen in the way *UMG*, *Inside Out* and *ELW* views the means of grace in relation to mission, and then consequently worship, I will now specifically turn to Schattauer's essay in *Inside Out*, where he reflects on how he means to discover how worship and mission are seen as related, within the church in the North American context. This is important because it creates the framework for Bevans and Schroeder's reflections on the relationship between worship and mission, that I will unfold in part II of my thesis. It is also important because Schattauer's observations can also function as an example for how the relationship between worship and mission is seen in the material that I have unfolded.

Schattauer points to three different ways he sees worship and mission as being related. The first two approaches to worship are labeled by Schattauer as "conventional" and "contemporary". The conventional approach to worship understands mission as an outward activity and worship as an inward activity, where the distinction between the two is clearly "*Inside and Outside*"⁷⁹; the descriptive term that Schattauer has given to this approach. In the contemporary approach, worship is turned into a missional activity, where worship is seen as an instrument to reach unchurched people. Mission and worship are seen as activities of the church, where the goal is separate from the activity in itself. It could be political, social or as a tool for the salvation of souls. Or the task of the church mission, whatever that may be, becomes the principal purpose of the church's worship, which Schattauer calls "*Outside In*"⁸⁰.

It is in contrast to these two models he exemplifies an understanding where worship is mission. He calls this the "radically traditional" way, and exemplifies it as a reversible jacket: Liturgy can be turned and worn "*Inside Out*"⁸¹. And he means to find this perspective in the "deepest movements of historic liturgical practice".⁸² This understanding turns worship from being "penitential, individual, retrospective, and institutional", according to Schattauer, and it becomes "Eucharistic, communal, prospective and symbolic".⁸³ And in the latter it enacts and symbolizes the *missio Dei* "in the midst of the symbolic world of contemporary popular culture"⁸⁴ For Schattauer, the Eucharistic nature is in contrast to the modern worldview that

⁷⁹ Schattauer 1999, 3

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 3

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, 4

⁸² *Ibid.*, 19

⁸³ *Ibid.*, 9

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, 18

“gives place to God, if at all, at the margins of life and confines the divine to what is private and personal. The God of Christian *eucharistia*, however, stands at the center of all things and is not limited to any sphere of life”⁸⁵ In its communal nature it points to the “one community that refers us ultimately to the fellowship that God establishes and promise to be the destiny of human existence”.⁸⁶ And finally, it is prospective because “Where there is doubt about the future, it constructs a framework of hope in God’s purpose for the world”.⁸⁷

It is obvious that *UMG, Inside Out* and *ELW*, mainly reflect this “radical traditional way”, an “Inside Out” approach, where worship is fundamentally understood as mission in its very doing. Therefore, in Part II of my thesis, I will compare this understanding of worship and mission with the work of some missiologists, examining how they understand the relationship and how their view fits with Schattauer’s observation.

2.3.4. *Mission as source for renewal*

It is also important to note how the understanding of the relationship between worship and mission has affected the liturgical reform that took place in the ELCA, resulting in the *ELW* that exists today.. Here a missional hermeneutic is put in the forefront and is used as an argument for why reform is necessary:

Because the worship that constitutes the church is also the fundamental expression of the mission of God in the world, worship is regularly renewed in order to be both responsible and responsive to the world that the church is called to serve.⁸⁸

For *ELW*, worship is first and foremost supposed to be truthful to the mission of God, in Christ for the World, because it fundamentally serves this mission. The Word of God, Jesus Christ, becomes then the main framework for how worship needs to be practiced, because in worship this mission takes place. The manner in which worship and mission are seen as related, impacts the understanding of worship, and in light of this it provides meaning to the statement that is found later on in the introduction of *ELW*:

Supporting the mission of the church, which is the mission of God in Christ for the world, is an ultimate goal of Evangelical Lutheran Worship.⁸⁹

And in *ELW*’s interpretation of parts of *CA7*; which is stated in *UMG*, the emphasis on “preaching according to the gospel and the sacraments rightly administrated” is interpreted as

⁸⁵ Ibid., 14

⁸⁶ Ibid., 16

⁸⁷ Ibid., 17

⁸⁸ELW 2006, 7, Paragraph 4

⁸⁹ ELW 2006, 8, Paragraph 14

an awareness of the fact that it is the mission of God, who is the main actor in worship, and it is the mission of God, the church is called serve, and to participate in.

God calls the church to exercise care and fidelity in its use of the means of grace, so that all people may hear and believe the gospel of Jesus Christ and be gathered into God's own mission for the life of the world.⁹⁰

2.4. Summary

In Part I of my thesis, I have explicated how the relationship between worship and mission is seen in *UMG, Inside Out* and *ELW*; material which is related to the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. I have unfolded that worship is, primarily seen as mission in its very doing. This is both explicitly and implicitly stated. It is also seen that mission is first and foremost understood as the mission of God (*missio Dei*) which is made present in the Word of God, Jesus Christ, in the power of the Spirit, through the means of grace. It is also pointed to, that the distinction between a general and special revelation of God, which is so prominent within Lutheran theology, is intertwined in the emphasis on the Word of God, as *missio Dei*. The Christ event becomes therefore the main key in understanding the mission of God.

It is also explicated that in worship, a defined center exists, and this center is worship around the means of grace; Word of God, Baptism and Communion; here the church is constituted, and therefore the worship event becomes the foundation of the mission of the Church, and the fundamental expression of the mission of God. Worship and Church are seen as two sides of the same coin. Worship, in itself, is therefore showing forth what the mission of the church is, and is supposed to be. The means of grace, and the assembly that participates in the means of grace, function as a totality as a primary witness, in its proclamation, fellowship and in its service for each other, and this takes place in the world, for the sake of the world. Well-known terms within missiology are therefore identified in worship, and in doing so, these terms express how the church, in its worship, participates in the mission of God. And this is fundamentally expressed as a witness in *Kerygma*, *Diakonia* and *Koinonia*. In Baptism, the baptized person becomes part of this mission, and the salvific dimension is understood in terms of new life in the body of Christ for the sake of the world, for the life of the world. The worship that occurs should be carried out in the church's life, as the worshipping assembly continues their worship each day, through lives of witness and service.

⁹⁰ UMG 1997, 7, Principle 2; and ELW 2006, 6, end of paragraph 1. Emphasis mine

I have also unfolded how this view of worship and mission reflects an “Inside Out” understanding of the relationship, and that mission has been foundational for the renewal of worship, and mission is stated as the “ultimate goal” for *Evangelical Lutheran Worship*.

3. Worship and Mission seen from a missiological viewpoint.

3. 1. Introduction

In my explication of the view on how the relationship between worship and mission is understood from a missiological viewpoint, I will turn to four different scholars, who have each done some reflecting on the relationship between worship and mission. These scholars are Thor Strandenæs, David J. Bosch, Stephen B. Bevans and Roger P. Schroeder. In two articles, Strandenæs explores the relationship between worship and mission, and his main purpose is to show forth worship *as* mission. Strandenæs doesn't explicitly discuss mission, and therefore my explication pertaining to Strandenæs view on mission is based mostly on implications derived from his argumentation and exemplified with some specific claims. Strandenæs' articles focus mainly on giving concrete examples of which aspects of worship are mission, or what are the reasons for why they can be seen as mission. Because of this, Strandenæs' articles are more in line with the approach done in the material explicated in the first part where mission is used as a framework, but not discussed specifically. In contrast, the works of Bosch, Bevans and Schroeder, provides a wealth of explicit statements, as well as discussions on the different theological foundations that are reflected in the different approaches that are taken. When it comes to the relationship between worship and mission, their emphasis is, however, different. Bosch makes certain explicit claims about the relationship between worship and mission, but the practical sides of this view are only mentioned briefly in direct relationship with worship, so implicit consequences need to be unfolded. Here, Bevans and Schroeder's work is similar to what can be seen in the work of Strandenæs, because they discuss explicitly how the relationship between worship and mission could be understood, and they give concrete examples from the nature of worship itself. And as mentioned earlier, use parts of the material that I have explicated in Part 1 as references and framework.

This is not a comprehensive study of the understanding of mission that is found in the works of Bosch, and Bevans and Schroeder, but I seek to find some of their key arguments in their mission understanding, that are important in the understanding of how they see the relationship between worship and mission.

I will structure this part in the same manner as I did in part 1. First I will explicate the different definitions of mission that are to be found. I will unfold how the definition of mission affects how each of the missiologists understands the purpose of worship and how it

should function. This will be done by comparing their views, as well as in comparison with the understanding of mission in *UMG*, *Inside Out* and *ELW*, which is explicated in the first part.

3.2. Mission

The shift that has occurred during the last half of the last century, moving towards an understanding where mission is, first and foremost, seen as an activity grounded in God, rather than a specific church activity, has set a new agenda for the understanding of mission. This shift in understanding has been adopted by most of the global church body, although with different emphases, thus leading to different understandings of mission. The main key to these differences is to be found in the understanding of the trinity, and how the inner life of the Father, Son and the Holy Spirit is to be understood in relation to creation, redemption, and consummation. It is not within the scope of this thesis to go any further into these major questions and disagreements, but some of these differences are explicitly discussed and showed forth in the different missiologists' work, and these differences shape how the relationship between worship and mission is to be understood, and in that manner they will be mentioned.

In all of the scholars' work, the term "mission of God (*missio Dei*)" is used, but with different understandings and emphases. Their definitions of the mission of God shape how the nature of mission is seen, and in which way the participation or relationship between the mission of God and the mission of the Church is understood. I will, therefore, unfold how each of the scholars use and understand the mission of God, because this again sheds light on how the relationship between worship and mission is to be understood.

3.2.1 Mission of God (missio Dei)

Bevans and Schroeder understand the mission of God (*missio Dei*) in its classical meaning, as an expression of the inner life of the Trinity; in God the Father sending the Son, and God the Father and the Son sending the Spirit⁹¹; and this becomes one of three theological foundations that are part of their synthesis. The centrality of this foundation is expressed clearly in their work:

⁹¹ Bevans and Schroeder 2004, 286-304

“Richly theological, thoroughly ecumenical, eminently practical, basing the foundation of mission on the fact that Christians participate in the trinitarian life and mission of God is, of all three theological foundations that we discuss.... the most promising”⁹²

The participation in the trinitarian life, as the mission of God, is brought together with two other theological foundations; the continuation of the mission of Jesus to preach, serve and witness to the justice of God’s “already” but “not yet” reign; and in the proclamation of Christ as the world’s only savior.”⁹³ The *dialogue* reflects the life of the Trinity, “but that dialogue is one that is *prophetic*” according to Bevans and Schroeder.⁹⁴ The prophetic element is to be found in the two other foundations, and in this totality the Church participates in God’s mission, that is a *prophetic dialogue*, truthful to six constants. The three theological foundations inform how the constants need to be carried out. This whole movement is again expressed in the terms of the mission of God. “The point is that there is one mission: The mission of God that is shared, by God’s grace, by the church.”⁹⁵ This mission, God’s mission, is therefore seen through the church’s mission, and I will continue to unfold this later on.

Bevans and Schroeder quote Bosch in their concluding remarks on the trinitarian foundation for mission⁹⁶, and this statement can serve as a good example of how Bosch grounds mission in the mission of God.

“Mission has its origin in the heart of God. God is fountain of sending love. This is the deepest source of mission. It is impossible to penetrate deeper still; there is mission because God loves people”⁹⁷

Bosch also understands the mission of God (*missio Dei*) in the classical meaning of the word⁹⁸, but he categorizes this as “the heart of God”. This heart of God is showed forth in Christ, in six salvific events that Bosch identifies, and in this way, it is the six salvific events that are defining the mission of God. In doing so, Bosch understands the mission of God more within a Christological framework than what is explicitly mentioned in the work of Bevans and Schroeder. These six salvific events that Bosch identifies are: The *incarnation*, the *cross*, the *resurrection*, the *ascension*, *Pentecost* and the *parousia*. And he states:

“Looked at from this perspective, mission is, quite simply, the participation of Christians in the liberating mission of Jesus, wagering on a future that verifiable experience seems to belie.

⁹² Ibid., 303

⁹³ Ibid., 348

⁹⁴ Ibid., 349

⁹⁵ Ibid., 394

⁹⁶ Ibid., 303

⁹⁷ Bosch 1991, 392

⁹⁸ Ibid., 389-393

It is the good news of God's love, incarnated in the witness of a community, for the sake of the world.⁹⁹

Bosch's understanding of mission is highly Christological, and therefore the mission of God is first and foremost understood in relation to Jesus Christ.

Strandenæs also defines the mission of God in relation to the Christ event. "The mission of God started when Jesus was sent to the world, to reconcile the world with himself"¹⁰⁰.

Strandenæs emphasizes three of the salvific events that Bosch identifies: The *cross*, the *resurrection* and the *parousia*, and these shape his understanding of mission, the mission of God. Strandenæs, however, has a broader understanding of the term "mission of God". In a statement where the mission of God is related to worship, he states:

"Worship is in itself an expression of the mission of God. It is a witness of his creation, saving work and salvation will, towards the world, in the reconciliation taking place through the suffering, death and resurrection of Jesus, and in the hope for eternal life"¹⁰¹

Here, Strandenæs includes creational aspects, but it appears this is not understood in relation to the Christ events that Strandenæs emphasizes, but through a Lutheran understanding of God's general revelation through creation. But he doesn't define this in more detail, or how this distinction in the mission of God can be understood in relation to the nature of the Triune God. It is of importance, however, because it affects how Strandenæs understands the church's mission. This also reveals the main difference between Strandenæs and Bosch in their understanding of the mission of God. When incarnation, ascension and Pentecost are "left out", as seen in Strandenæs understanding of the salvific nature of the Christ event(s), the result will be a different interpretation of the three salvific events that Strandenæs emphasizes. And this impacts how the mission of God is understood, and how Bosch and Strandenæs arrive with different understandings. I will unfold this further in relation to how this affects the view on the relationship between the mission of God and the mission of the Church, and again, how it informs the view on the relationship between mission and worship. Bevans and Schroeder have tried to bring together these differences in their synthesis, and this is especially clear in the theological foundations for the prophetic elements in their synthesis. I will continue to explicate this in relation to how it affects the understanding of the relationship between God's and the Church's mission, and in relation to mission and worship.

⁹⁹ Ibid., 519

¹⁰⁰ Strandenæs 2004, 204

¹⁰¹ Ibid., 204, translation mine

3.2.2. Mission of the Church

The relationship between the mission of God and the mission of the Church is understood differently in the works of the scholars; this is evident, even if Bosch uses the same key word that Bevans and Schroeder use to describe the connection: *Participation*. Bevans and Schroeder state:

“The point is that there is one mission: the mission of God that is shared, by God’s grace, by the church. It has two directions – to the church itself (*ad intra*) and to the world (*ad extra*)”. Mission to the church itself is necessary so that the church can shine forth in the world for what it is, a community that shares the identity of Christ as his body. Mission to the world points to the fact that the church is only the church as it is called to continue Jesus’ mission of preaching, serving and witnessing to God’s reign in new times and places.¹⁰²

For Bevans and Schroeder, these two directions of the *missio Dei*, unfold their understanding of how the *missio Dei* is present: It is present in God’s grace as the connection point; which makes it possible for the church to share the identity as the body of Christ. And it is present when the church continues Jesus’ mission. This totality is the *missio Dei*. Consequently, Jesus’ mission then becomes the key to understanding the church’s mission, because the church is fundamentally understood as “only the church as it is called to continue Jesus’ mission”, but this always needs to be understood within a trinitarian framework. Bevans and Schroeder point to these in quoting Adam Wolanin:

It is from the salvific Trinity, and more precisely from the mission of Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit, that we come to know the true foundation of this same mission, and consequently, of the Church’s mission as well¹⁰³

And this mission needs to be truthful to the six constants that Bevans and Schroeder have identified throughout the church history, and the scriptural witnesses are part of this history and are not seen separated from it, and here their catholic background is apparent. These constants are: *Christology, Ecclesiology, Eschatology, Salvation, Anthropology and Culture*, and through six identified *elements*:¹⁰⁴ “Witness and proclamation”; “liturgy, prayer and contemplation”; “commitment to justice, peace and the integrity of creation”; “the practice of interreligious dialogue”; “efforts of inculturation”; “the ministry of reconciliation”; the church receives and participates in the *missio Dei*, in *dialogue* and this participation is *prophetic*, truthful to the six *constants* that are identified throughout the church’s history, in ever changing *contexts*.

¹⁰² Bevans and Schroeder 2004, 394

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*, 332

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, 351

The mission of God is therefore present in this totality; in the church's receiving and participation, and here Bevans and Schroder bring together the dialectic between receiving (grace) and participation.

This is also reflected in the work of Bosch; he states:

We have to distinguish between *mission* (singular) and *missions* (plural). The first refers primarily to the *missio Dei* (God's mission), that is, God's self-revelation as the One who loves the world, God's involvement in and with the world, the nature and activity of God, which embraces both the church and the world, and in which the church is privileged to participate. Missions (the *missiones ecclesiae*: the missionary ventures of the church), refer to particular forms, related to specific times, places, or needs, of participation in the *missio Dei*.¹⁰⁵

Here the same dialectic that is pointed to in the work of Bevans and Schroeder is also found, between God's initiative and the church participation. For Bosch, the dialectic needs to be understood within the six Christ events that he categorized as the mission of God, and therefore Christ is present as the mission of God, "not only" in an "outside ourselves" sense, but in creation itself. The distinction between these two elements is also exemplified in how Bosch sees the two dimensions melting together.

Mission is *missio Dei*, which seeks to subsume into itself the *missiones ecclesiae*, the missionary programs of the church. It is not the church which "undertakes" mission; it is *missio Dei* which constitutes the church."¹⁰⁶

Fundamentally, *missio Dei* becomes the only source for the church's mission, and therefore church is the same as participation in the *missio Dei*, in God's self-giving love for the world, understood in and through Christ's salvific events.

It can seem that Strandenæs understands the relationship between the mission of the church and mission of God in a more "result-oriented" way. That the church carries out its mission *when* people come to faith, so to say, or *when* God continues his work of salvation. Here a clearer distinction between the two dimensions of mission is seen. The mission of God is God's movement towards creation, but it is separated from God's movement in creation, and also in a way separated from the church. The mission of the church is the church's movement towards God, and this movement is understood as a response, and only when a response is given; understood as coming to faith or conversion, is the church doing its mission, and God's mission is taking place. Christ is then "only" present in conversion/fait. This results in that Strandenæs mainly interprets the church mission as "missionary; leading people to faith in

¹⁰⁵ Bosch 1991, 10

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, 519

Christ; to salvation. The two terms, “the mission of God”, and “the church mission”, are intertwined, but not as participation. The Church mission is seen more as an activity of the church, rather than an activity of God. And a consequence of this view is the goal for the church mission is God’s mission, understood as salvation/conversion, seen in light of the three Christ events mentioned earlier. But the source of the church mission is not only to be found in the mission of God, but in God’s general revelation in creation. In comparison to Bevans and Schroeder, the mission of the church needs, first and foremost, to be truthful to one of the constants, *salvation*, which Bevans and Schroeder identified as part of God’s mission. Compared to Bosch, the church needs to be truthful first and foremost to three of the salvific events that Bosch identified, and therefore, the manner in which the church mission should be carried out needs also another reference point, and the general revelation of God in creation becomes the source. All the scholars, however, identify a connecting point between the mission of God and the mission of the church, and it is here that worship plays a significant role for all of them. I will continue to unfold this later on.

In comparing the missiologists’ understandings of the relationship between mission and worship to what is seen in *UMG, Inside Out* and *ELW* it is possible to find similarities. It was clear in *UMG, Inside Out* and *ELW* that the mission of God was, first and foremost, grounded in the Triune God. This is the same as in the works of Bosch, and Bevans and Schroeder, where all ground the mission of God in the movement within the trinity. *UMG, Inside Out* and *ELW* emphasize the Triune God’s presence in the Word of God, understood as Jesus Christ. This is also the same in the works of Bosch and Strandenæs. However, the dialectic that existed within the Word of God, Jesus Christ, in relation to the distinctions of law, gospel, and scriptures, was left open, and in doing so, the distinction that can be found in Strandenæs’ use of the term *missio Dei*, is not found in *UMG, Inside Out* and *ELW*. Regarding this point, *UMG, Inside Out* and *ELW* are similar to Bosch, when defining “everything” in Christ.

3.3. Mission and Worship

I will now unfold each of the missiologists view on the relationship between mission and worship, and draw parallels to their understanding of mission, and compare it with each other and what is seen in *UMG, Inside Out* and *ELW*.

3.3.1. Bevans and Schroder

For Bevans and Schroeder, the relationship between mission and worship is seen in their synthesis, where worship (liturgy) is one of the six identified elements of mission. And statements like “Liturgy is mission in prophetic dialogue” and “liturgy.....is an exercise of prophetic truth” can serve well as an introduction to their view on the relationship. As unfolded, the prophetic dialogue; with its three theological foundations; truthful to the six constants; identified in six elements; is the fundamental framework for Bevans and Schroder’s mission definition. This makes worship an integral part of their whole mission definition: Worship is mission, or mission is worship. It is participation in the *missio Dei*; a participation that is a *prophetic dialogue*.

The liturgy revolves around “proclaiming the death of the Lord until he comes” (1 Cor 11:26) and so is radically *Christological*; in fact, Christ himself is the principal actor in the liturgical action. It is deeply *ecclesial*, since the assembly, as Christ’s body, is the celebrant. It is *eschatological*, because even though the church waits “until he comes,” it experiences in sign the eschatological banquet and eschatological shalom. This eschatological sign points to the nature of *salvation* as communal and dialogical and is based on a profound *anthropology* of human wholeness. Finally, liturgy, when done well, is a celebration of the holiness of *culture*, from the vestments worn to language used to the music and gestures that are sung and performed.¹⁰⁷

Here all the identified constants are seen as integral parts of worship and the different elements in worship are embodied, or should be embodied in the church’s truthfulness in witnessing to the constants. The same is true for the six elements of mission, as pointed to earlier, because they are “all distinct from one another and yet intricately intertwined as well.”¹⁰⁸

Bevans and Schroeder are referring to Schattauer’s article in *Inside Out*, and his models for understanding the relationship between worship and mission (“Outside In”, “Inside and Out”, and “Inside Out”) create their framework for how they see the relationship. The nature of their mission definition results in a positive attitude towards these three models, even if they state that they believe that Schattauer is “basically correct in his judgment”.¹⁰⁹ In their view, the models are intertwined, because they are in a sense truthful to the constants, and are based in the three theological foundations.

An *Inside and Out* understanding takes into account the nourishment that takes place in worship; the assembly is nourished on the inside for what should take place on the outside,

¹⁰⁷ Bevans and Schroeder 2004, 366

¹⁰⁸ Ibid., 394

¹⁰⁹ Ibid., 362

quoting Walter C. Huffman's essay in *Inside Out*, they state, "Worship becomes a 'ritual rehearsal' for ministry."¹¹⁰ They continue to use examples from the eucharist, and quote *UMG* in their application. "We are nourished by the bread of the Word and share the bread and cup of the Lord's body and blood in order to become ourselves God's Word and Christ's presence "in the midst of the world, for the life of the world".¹¹¹ This nourishment transforms the assembly for worship, into what it is – transforms it into mission.¹¹²

Worship is also "*Outside In*" as it is an act where the world and the events of the world are in dialogue with the assembly. Here they raise criticism similar to Schattauer, regarding turning worship into a church strategy for reaching unchurched people, or adjusting worship to fit certain social or political agendas. But it is positively understood in terms of an opportunity for "letting the 'outside' in, evangelizes the liturgical assembly, so the assembly can better be church in the world."¹¹³

Perhaps most important, is the "*Inside out*" understanding, they state:

It is in the church assembled God's mission is constantly being accomplished in forming this community into a prophetic sign of God's reign; on the other hand, liturgy always needs to be done with a missionary intent, recognizing that the word proclaimed, the meal shared, the vocation being celebrated, the reconciliation being offered are moments of evangelization – for the evangelized and the unevangelized in the congregation alike.¹¹⁴

The center of the connection point between the mission of God and the mission of the Church is seen as worship, and implicit worship becomes the "action" where the mission of God is formed in the church, but it is not only done for its "own sake" but for the world; it is "inside out".

The church is most the church when it is assembled for worship: the Christian is most a Christian when he or she is in attentive dialogue with God; prayer and liturgy are the center of Christian life, and yet that center will only hold if Christian eyes are not on the center but on its periphery.....to encounter God at the center is to participate in God's life at the boundaries; to participate in God's boundary-crossing mission is to be drawn always to the center. A life of liturgical celebration.....is constitutive of the church in mission.¹¹⁵

When Bevans and Schroder use language of "more" or "most", it is important to understand this in light of their mission definition, and that the church is only the church when it is in mission. Here it is the truthfulness to the six constants that is the critical principle. In this sense, the same can be said about worship - the church is most in mission when they are at

¹¹⁰ Huffman 1999, 111; Quoted in Bevans and Schroeder 2004, 362

¹¹¹ UMG 1997, 56, application 51b; Quoted in Bevans and Schroeder 2004, 363

¹¹² Bevans and Schroeder 2004, 364

¹¹³ Ibid., 364

¹¹⁴ Ibid., 362

¹¹⁵ Ibid., 362

worship. Worship, when done well, includes all the aspects of mission, and it is the constitutive element of a church in mission. The individual aspect of a Christian needs also to be understood in light of the church and in its participation in the mission of God, because to be a Christian means to be a part of the church. Here, their view on baptism is of importance for the understanding, because baptism is seen as a call to mission, in a “single but complex reality”¹¹⁶, the *missio Dei* is stated to be received at baptism.

Baptism is the sacrament par excellence of mission, and every baptismal liturgy is a prayer and a challenge for all Christians present to renew their own baptismal call. The mission received at baptism is sealed by the Spirit in the sacrament of confirmation. The sacrament of reconciliation is not simply about the forgiveness of sins done in the past. Its grace is not just given retrospectively but prospectively: it calls us to live a life truly worthy of our calling (2 Thes 1:11; Eph 4:1), and it gives us the strength to do it.¹¹⁷

Implicitly, baptism becomes a main connecting point between the *missio Dei* (ad intra) and the *missio Dei* (ad extra), as unfolded earlier in their understanding of the *missio Dei*. And in baptism, the baptized receives the *missio Dei* (ad intra), and participates in the *missio Dei* (ad extra). Baptism is an act of worship, and it is also a moment for renewal of the baptismal calling; a life of receiving and participation, a life in worship, turned “inside out”.

3.3.2. Bosch

Bosch understands the relationship between mission and worship in a similar way. In his reflection on the nature of the mission of the church, he includes worship as part of this mission, and defines it as the “fountain of the entire mission of the Church”.

“The total *missio* of the Church under the biblical concept *martyria* (witness) which can be subdivided into *kerygma* (proclamation), *koinonia* (fellowship) and *diakonia* (service)...We should in fact add a fifth aspect, that of *leitourgia*, liturgy, that is the encounter of the Church with her Lord. This is, in the last analysis, the fountain of the entire mission of the Church and the guarantee for her distinctiveness.”¹¹⁸

For Bosch, the three dimensions of witness are interrelated and, as a totality, they are expressed in worship, or they spring out of worship, so to speak. The mission of God takes place in worship, and in worship the *missio Dei* “seeks to subsume itself into the *missiones ecclesiae*”¹¹⁹. And in it, and from it, the church participates in the *missio Dei*. This is the guarantee for her distinctiveness, because “only in the Church is his headship acknowledged

¹¹⁶ Ibid., 351

¹¹⁷ Ibid., 363-364

¹¹⁸ Bosch 1980, 227

¹¹⁹ Bosch 1991, 519

and confessed.”¹²⁰ For Bosch the understanding of what mission is, gives insight into how he sees worship; he points to how worship is the fountain of the entire mission of the church, here understood as witness showed forth in fellowship, service and proclamation. In *Transforming Mission*, he raises critique against his own view expressed in *Witness to the world*: “We do need a more radical and comprehensive hermeneutic of mission”¹²¹ And here the six “salvific events” as pointed to earlier, provide this new hermeneutic. And he states:

“The six Christological salvific events may never be viewed in isolation from one another. In our mission, we proclaim the incarnate, crucified, resurrected, ascended Christ, present among us in the Spirit and taking us into the future as “captives in his triumphal procession”¹²²

Bosch ends his book in a similar way to how *UMG*, *Inside Out* and *ELW* expressed the same centrality and meaning of the whole worship event, in the Johannine phrase, “*In the midst of the world for the life of the world*”:

Looked at from this perspective mission is, quite simply, the participation of Christians in the liberating mission of Jesus, wagering on a future that verifiable experience seems to belie. It is the good news of God’s love, incarnated in the witness of a community, for the sake of the world.¹²³

Indirectly, Bosch states that this takes place in worship, and in that sense the understanding of mission affects how worship is seen, understood and practiced. This is similar to the way Bevans and Schroder understand worship; where worship is both part of the mission definition and is mission in its very doing, when it is truthful to the six constants, and the six elements are intertwined.

For Bosch it is the six salvific events that informs how this mission needs to be showed forth in the mission of the Church, and therefore also in worship, that is the fountain of this mission. Bosch’s interpretation of these six salvific events gives a constructive framework for how worship should function. It is not within the scope of this thesis to explicate the underlying theological reflections that Bosch has done with regard to these six events, and I will therefore limit myself in referring to some of Bosch’s statements, and unfold how Christ, seen through the six salvific events, understood as God’s mission, and therefore the Church’s mission, gives significant consequences for worship.

¹²⁰ Ibid., 222

¹²¹ Bosch 1991, 512

¹²² Ibid., 518

¹²³ Ibid., 519

The *incarnation*, emphasizes that “the practice of Jesus has indeed much to say about the nature and content of mission today.”¹²⁴ And it should therefore create the framework for how worship needs to be practiced. The practice of Jesus should form practical consequences in worship; this means embodied in the worshipping assembly, and not “only” preached.

There is no single way to witness to Christ, however. The word may therefore never be divorced from the deed, the example, the “Christian presence”, the witness of life. It is the “Word made flesh” that is the gospel. The deed without the word is dumb; the word without the deed is empty. Words interpret deeds and deeds validate words, which does not mean that every deed must have a word attached to it, nor every word a deed.¹²⁵

Bosch’s understanding of the incarnation is of crucial importance in his mission theology, and thus the “Word made flesh” becomes a fundamental framework also in relation to the other salvific events. In relation to the *cross* this becomes more than “Christ died for my sins on the cross”. “Jesus death on the cross should not, however be isolated from his life. The extensive introduction ”to the gospels are themselves already passion stories. Jesus’ *kenosis*, his self – emptying, began at is birth,”¹²⁶ this should therefore be reflected in worship as the fountain of the whole church’s mission. Quoting Newbigin, Bosch relates baptism in relation to the cross as salvation, but also in relation to the ministry of Christ, his self- emptying.

The Baptism which the Church gives is the act by which we are incorporated into that baptism of Christ with its focus in the cross. It is not baptism just for our own salvation... Rather, it is our incorporation into the one baptism which is for the salvation of the world. To accept baptism, therefore, is to be committed to be with Christ in his ministry for all men¹²⁷

The *resurrection* points to the here and now, and worship should be a sign of this reality.,

Bosch states:

Missiologically this means, first, that the central theme of our missionary message is that Christ is risen, and that, secondly and consequently, the church is called to live the resurrection life in the here and now and to be a sign of contradiction against the forces of death and destruction – that is called to unmask modern idols and false absolutes.¹²⁸

The ascension points to how “The principle of self-sacrificing love is....enthroned at the very center of the reality of the universe... and this principle has to be transparent in our missionary praxis”,¹²⁹ an implicit in worship. The *Pentecost* and “the era of the Sprit is, furthermore, the era of the church. And the church in the power of the Spirit (Moltmann) is itself part of the message it proclaims. It is a fellowship, a *Koinonia*, which actualizes God’s

¹²⁴ Ibid., 513

¹²⁵ Ibid., 420

¹²⁶ Ibid., 513

¹²⁷ Bosch 1980, 226

¹²⁸ Bosch 1991, 515

¹²⁹ Ibid., 516

love in its everyday life and in which justice and righteousness are made present and operative”¹³⁰ The worshipping assembly as *Koinonia* needs to actualize God’s love in its practice. Here Bosch uses examples from the eucharist:

The church exist only as an organic and integral part of the entire human community, “for as soon as it tries to understand its own life as meaningful in independence from the total human community it betrays the only purpose which can justify its existence”. Even its worship, its celebration of the Eucharist, does not fall outside this frame of reference. The Orthodox churches teach us that the Eucharist is the most missionary of all the activities of the church. On the one hand it is a celebration and anticipation of the coming triumph of God; on the other hand it is, each time we celebrate it, an invitation to share our bread with the hungry”¹³¹

The *parousia* means “that, in the Christian faith, the future indeed holds the primacy. Mission can be understood only when the risen Christ himself has still a future, a universal future for the nations,”¹³² and the church in its mission and therefore in its worship “lives and ministers as that force within humanity through which the renewal and community of all people is served”¹³³

Bosch understanding of mission is informative in his understanding of worship, in worship “the word becomes flesh” and the word needs to be understood in relation to the six salvific events. Here Bosch ends up in a similar way as Bevans and Schroeder, even if they have a different theological background, and uses different terms in expressing the mission of God. Worship is seen as mission, or mission can be seen as worship, for both. They also share the significance of the Christ event, and understand fundamentally the *missio Dei*; the church mission; and the church’s worship in relation to Christ. In this sense they are also in tune with what is seen in *UMG, Inside Out* and *ELW*.

3.3.3. Strandenæs

The aim of Strandenæs’ articles is to show forth how worship is mission, as indicated earlier, and it has therefore been necessary to search for an implicit understanding of Strandenæs’ view on mission. And I have pointed to how the distinction between revelation and creation seems to be of central importance in his understanding. In his reflection on the nature of worship he states:

Any form of worship - Christian or not – is an expression of the human quest for God. Any expression of love, grace and mercy, is a reminder of God's existence, whether

¹³⁰ Ibid., 517

¹³¹ Ibid., 517

¹³² Ibid., 517

¹³³ Ibid., 518

the true God is known or not. It is because we are humans - and natural religious, - that worship can function as an event and a way of communication. In other words, worship relates to the natural religious longing in human beings. All adoration, theologically speaking, expresses the desire for a reconciled relationship with God. Her is also the act of worship's main connection point to the human race and an important prerequisite for being missionary. The new, which is communicated through Christian worship, is the Gospel and God's action for the salvation of people through word and sacraments. Each time this message of grace and new life in Christ reaches people, which has sought the worship, it is missionary, whether they belong to the Christian church or not.¹³⁴

Here Strandenæs reveals an understanding where “the new” meets “the old”, *the* revelation meets the general revelation so to say, they are intertwined. In worship through sacramental and sacrificial elements the assembly for worship carries out this dialectic.¹³⁵ In this sense Strandenæs defines a distinction within worship, where some of the elements are seen as expressing the mission of God, but others are expressing, or participation in the general revelation of God. Worship is therefore not understood in terms of participation in the *missio Dei*, but something that leads to the *missio Dei*. The act of worship is more an expression of the general revelation, but through worship the new is communicated, so to say. Worship then becomes primarily understood as part of the church's missionary practice. However, sometimes in his reflection, this distinction seems to overlap each other.

The church's worship is missionary because it is an encounter with the Triune God, with a main emphasis on the celebration of the resurrection of Jesus and the new hope he has brought. God acts and speaks, people call upon him, and respond to his indictment. In worship God's actions and revelation melt together with his word and with the church's response to God in various liturgical texts. His revelation is communicated through the reading of the scriptures, in the sermon, in psalms and hymns. But God and his salvation is also known through the church's response to God's initiative, through confession, the creed, through the singing of hymns, in prayers, offering and other diaconal expressions.¹³⁶

Strandenæs here points to how the act of worship communicates *the* revelation, but it can seem that he understands communication more in the sense of words spoken or in song, than word embodied in the actions that takes place. Actions and words are therefore not intertwined in the same way as it has been unfolded in the work of Bevans and Schroder, and Bosch. This can also be seen in his way of speaking about communion and baptism. Here he states that “the sacraments express God's salvation will”¹³⁷, that's why they can be seen as missionary, at the same he also claims that the means of grace is part of the *missio Dei*. “Because worship communicates God's revelation and his grace to his creation (Norwegian: Skapninger), it is part of God's mission to the world, and his service for the people of the

¹³⁴ Strandenæs 2001, 21, translation mine

¹³⁵ Strandenæs 2004, 199-200

¹³⁶ Strandenæs 2004, 212, translation mine

¹³⁷ Strandenæs 2004, 212

world”¹³⁸ What the element of communication is based on is not unfolded clearly, but it can seem like the actions, for example, in communion; the eating and drinking, the assembly that comes forth, everything that takes place around the meal, are not seen as part of the communication that expresses the *missio Dei*. But that the expression of the *missio Dei* is mainly linked to scripture. In this sense, the assembly for worship themselves is not part of the expression, related to the *missio Dei*, but expresses the natural longing in the human being after a reconciled relationship to God, and the *missio Dei* is bound to scripture, expressed in the sacraments. The centrality of worship is therefore not emphasized the same way as in the work of Bosch, and Bevans and Schroeder. It has primacy in being the most central place where Christians gathers, but worship is not seen in terms of being constitutive, either for mission or for the church.¹³⁹ Strandenæs however points to many examples in how worship should or could function as missionary. And he summarized it in the following way in his conclusion in *Gudstjeneste og misjon*:

Worship is functioning as missionary, because: it leads people to conversion and faith, it communicates the means of grace, it makes people part of the hope for redemption and eternal life, and it liberates them to live a reconciled life in the world.¹⁴⁰

As a totality, Strandenæs view on the relationship differs from both, Bosch, Bevans and Schroeder, and also what is seen in *UMG, Inside Out and ELW*. And this is mainly due to his understanding of mission.

3.4. Summary

In this part of my thesis I have explicated how the relationship between worship and mission is seen from a missiological viewpoint in the works of Bevans and Schroeder, Bosch and Strandenæs. I have explicated how each of the scholars understands the nature of mission. Here it was made clear that all of them used the term “the mission of God (*missio Dei*)”. Bosch, and Bevans and Schroeder had similar understanding of this term; grounding the mission of God in the movement within the triune God. Strandenæs used the mission of God in relation to the Christ event, and understood the mission of God in relation to salvation, understood in terms of coming to faith. I unfolded how these interpretations impacted the manner in which the relationship between the mission of God and the mission of the Church was seen. For both Bosch, and Bevans and Schroeder, the mission of the church was understood in terms of participation in the mission of God. For Strandenæs, the mission of the

¹³⁸ Strandenæs 2004, 200, translation mine

¹³⁹ Strandenæs 2004, 201-203

¹⁴⁰ Strandenæs 2004, 219, translation mine.

church's is not seen as participation in the mission of God, but as the church's missionary responsibility, thus more as an activity that leads people to the mission of God.

I continued to unfold how these understandings informed how the relationship between worship and mission were seen. For both Bosch, and Bevans and Schroeder, it led to an understanding where worship is understood as part of their mission definition, and the very center in the church's mission. For Strandenaes, worship was also understood as mission, but with a "result-oriented" focus; worship is mission when people come to faith. According to Strandenaes, mission is seen as separate from worship in its very doing, but mission can be "missionary" in its doing; it can lead to the mission of God. However, I also referred to how Strandenaes' mission definition included the creational aspect, but it was only mentioned briefly, and it was evident that Strandenaes related the creational aspect to the general revelation of God. In addition to comparing and contrasting the views these missiologists, I have compared them with the material in the first part of my thesis, concluding that the works of Bosch and Bevans and Schroeder appear to have a similar understanding of the relationship between worship and mission as in the UMG, Inside Out and ELW.

4. Worship and Mission - Benefits and <Insights:

In my introduction I posed three questions. The first research question has been used as a guiding principle while unfolding the material in parts two and three. I will now suggest how some of the aspects that are unfolded from liturgical and missiological viewpoints could provide some answers to my other two research questions: Firstly, if this understanding could be beneficial for those occupied with the renewal of worship and, secondly, if it could provide important insights for the discussion pertaining to the relationship between church and mission? The discussion that I raise is brief, and functions as an attempt to identify some key elements that I see as important, pointing to aspects that could lead to a further theological reflection on the relationship, placed in a specific context. I will first address four elements in relation to how I see the understanding of the relationship between worship and mission as beneficial for those occupied with the renewal of worship.

Worship as mission, beneficial for renewal¹⁴¹?

1. *The relationship between worship and mission has a theological grounding within both theological disciplines.*

When the two theological disciplines of worship and mission both emphasize aspects of the relationship between worship and mission, it would not be an exaggeration to state that for those who are occupied with the renewal of worship, whether it be scholars, church bodies, or local congregations, it could be wise to explore how the relationship between worship and mission is understood within their own context, possibly providing some important insights into the process of renewal of worship.

2. *Mission significantly impacts how worship is understood and practiced.*

Since, according to the scholars in the field, the understanding of *mission* has a significant impact on how *worship* should be practiced, then a reflection on the relationship between *worship* and *mission* could be beneficial. It could be helpful in defining what worship is; what the purpose of worship is; or if worship has a goal. Of course this will create new challenges, because, as seen in the material, mission is understood and emphasized quite differently. Therefore, it would be necessary for those occupied with worship reform to explore how

¹⁴¹ It is important to make the reader aware of the fact that this reflection is mainly influenced by my own background in the Church of Norway, and that the church of Norway is in the midst of a worship reform.

mission is understood within their own tradition and context, before the two terms could be brought together. Here, different resources pertaining to mission could be helpful in providing background information. As seen in the material related to the ELCA, diakonia is also integrated into their understanding of mission and the same can be seen in the works of Bosch, and Bevans and Schroeder. Therefore, information concerning diakonia could be of central importance in the exploration of how mission is understood within a specific context, and could provide insights into how worship could and should be practiced.

3. A focus on the relationship between worship and mission could be beneficial by involving the laity in the process of reform.

As seen in the material, the two terms cover many theological concepts, including Christology, ecclesiology, soteriology, the relationship between scriptures and the tradition, and the relationship between creation and salvation. A negative effect could then be, that the “real questions” and disputes are not addressed, and that the term mission, is only covering what is really at stake and in so doing are misleading. I assume that this could easily be claimed by those with a theological education, either scholars within the different fields, or pastors. However, the renewal of worship also includes those without formal theological educations as is the case within my own tradition, the Church of Norway.¹⁴² In a positive sense, involving the laity could provide an opportunity where these traditional discussions could be talked about within a “new type of framework” with a “new language”. Most people involved in church are already familiar with the two terms, “worship” and “mission”. Their understandings and definitions may differ from one another, and may include negative and positive associations with the terms. However, I think that a renewal that seeks to bring the operative understanding of these two terms to the table could create an atmosphere of dialogue where traditional distinctions might find a common ground.

4. Mission could function as a term that could be helpful when a congregation is faced with different alternatives for how worship could be practiced.

In a situation where a local worship committee is responsible for making decisions regarding how worship should be practiced, based on a set of provided alternatives, a dialogue focused

¹⁴² In the reform that takes place within the Church of Norway, the suggested reform is based on a high level of flexibility, three core values are stated: “Indigenization” “Involvement” and Flexibility”. Here the local congregation is responsible for developing their own local pattern for worship, based on liturgical resources and a set structure that is provided. Here the involvement of the laity is of crucial importance. For more information on the worship reform in the Church of Norway, see: Den Norske Kirke 2010. Or <http://kirken.no/?event=showNews&FamID=112585>

on how each of the members of the committee understands mission could reveal why certain alternatives might be preferred, while others are rejected. This discussion could also provide an opportunity to raise questions such as: What is the role of the assembly? What kind of cultural symbols are appropriate? Is the focus individual or collective? Is local or global awareness important? Is worship, in fact, important, and for whom? How should the celebration of the sacraments be practiced? How often should communion be celebrated? What is the assembly's role during baptism?

As the material unfolded in my thesis indicates, the understanding of the term "mission" affects the answers to these questions. I assume that the same could be the case amongst the members of a local worship committee. An obstacle that is important to note, is that if those entering this dialogue have fundamental disagreements on a range of topics, focusing on the relationship between worship and mission may not provide answers with substance. For example, if differing understandings of salvation or the role of scriptures, are at play, the discussion needs to address this. These are important topics, and it might be the case that a discussion will end up addressing these central elements. However, approaching these questions from another angle, could be beneficial in providing a different, more neutral climate for the discussion, possibly opening up for a wider understanding of the different opinions, avoiding placing each other in different boxes.

I think that these four elements that I have addressed indicate important aspects that would be beneficial for those occupied with the renewal of worship. And that an examination on how these elements could be applied within a specific context could be of high value. This brings me to the last question I posed in my introduction.

Worship as Mission and its relevance for the relationship between Church and Mission

The four elements that I have addressed are also relevant in relation to a discussion on the relationship between church and mission. In the material related to the ELCA, worship formed the understanding of church; it was the constitutive element of the church. This was also seen in the works of Bosch, and Bevans and Schroeder, where their understanding of worship was seen as constitutive for the mission of the church, and therefore indirectly the nature of the church. According to what is unfolded in the material, I would assume that a discussion related to the relationship between church and mission needs to address the question of how worship and mission are seen as related. And that an attempt to define the

church as missional by its very nature, also needs to discuss the aspect of how worship fits into this definition. In an article by Knud Jørgensen, he speaks of how a missional understanding of the church, is in contrast to a Constantine understanding of church. And in a reflection on the distinction between these two understandings he states:

The marks of the Constantine Church, are corresponding to a Lutheran understanding of the church as where the gospel is preached and the sacraments are administered. A missional church will say that the church is where God's people – in the succession of Christ – are participating in the mission of God in being, word, and by deeds lived in everyday life.¹⁴³

It is obvious that Jørgensen's distinction raises important questions concerning how a Lutheran emphasis on worship as constitutive for the church has been understood and practiced, and how this is seen in contrast to what he understands as the true nature of the church as being missional. But the interesting thing is that exactly the missional dimension Jørgensen is pointing to, is integrated in the material related to the ELCA in its understanding of what takes place in the gathering around the means of grace, in their interpretation of *Augustana 7*. Here, the participation in the mission of God is understood in relation to the means of grace, and being, word, and deeds are integrated into the understanding of what is fundamentally expressed, and signifies how life is supposed to be lived. Based on this, I think that the way worship is placed in relation to mission in the material, could provide important insights into the discussion on how church and mission are seen as related.

In closing I believe that a discussion on the relationship between church and mission could culminate in how the relationship between worship and mission is understood.

¹⁴³ Jørgensen 2004, 7, translation mine.

5. Conclusion

Worship and Mission: How are “they” related?

The statements quoted in the introduction of this thesis indicated an understanding of worship as mission. In my search for an answer to the question: “How are these statements between “*Worship*” and “*Mission*” to be understood?”, it could be concluded that in the material related to the ELCA and in the work of the missiologists, the term “mission” is foundational for their understanding of worship, and in many ways defines what worship is, because worship is; or ends up; or is suppose to be; *Mission*.

Worship is also included in the mission definition of both Bosch, and Bevans and Schroeder. And it is defined as the “fundamental expression” of the mission of God, in *ELW*.

It has become evident that the understanding of the term *missio Dei* (the mission of God) is of central importance, and that it is a term that significantly impacts how *Mission* is understood. The understanding of *the missio Dei* is the concept that more or less defines the church mission, and therefore defines *worship*.

In the material, two main distinctions can be traced in the way the relationship between worship and mission is understood.

1. Worship is understood as mission in its very doing, it is foundational for the church’s mission, and it is foundational for the nature of the mission of the church. When this is emphasized, mission is fundamentally understood as participation in the mission of God and the mission of God is mainly understood in relation to the Christ event. Here the three dimensions: *Kerygma*, *Koinonia* and *Diakonia* are integrated as a whole, and this totality is seen as a primary *witness*. This view is evident in the material related to the ELCA and in both the work of Bevans and Schroeder, and Bosch.
2. Worship can be mission because it is part of the church’s missionary responsibility; because it leads people to faith. When this is emphasized, mission is fundamentally understood as leading to the mission of God and this is also understood in relation to the Christ event, but with a different emphasis. Here mission is first and foremost understood as missionary; understood *witness*. *Koinonia* and *diakonia* are not seen in terms of being part of this mission, they function as two separate elements. This is evident in the work of Strandenaes.

The main reason for this different understanding is to be found in how the Christ event is interpreted, and how it is communicated.

In the first understanding, the Christ event includes the aspect of God's saving grace, but also an understanding of how life is supposed to be lived, and this is integrated as a whole, into the Church mission, and it is communicated as a whole in worship; in *kerygma*, *koinonia* and *diakonia*. The dialectic between grace and action is to be found in the worship event itself, also in the proclamation and the sacraments (Baptism and Communion). It is integrated as a whole.

In the second understanding, the Christ event is mainly interpreted in relation to God's saving grace, as something that is separated from life itself. Here mission is understood as communicating this reality, and this takes place in worship, as *kerygma* expressed in the proclamation and in the sacraments (Baptism and Communion).

The dialectic between grace and an action is not to be found in the proclamation and in the sacraments, but between this and the other dimensions of worship. To communicate God's grace is mission (missionary), but the action that takes place as response is not mission. A stronger distinction between the different elements in worship is to be found and only parts of the worship event are understood as mission.

It could be concluded that this results in the dialectic between grace and action, occurs in two different places in *worship*. The first understanding, places the dialectic within the whole or entire worship event; a distinction is not to be found between the proclamation, the sacraments and the assembly. The second understanding places the dialectic between the assembly for worship, and the proclamation and the sacraments.

In the first understanding, worship is understood as participation in the *missio Dei*, and it is the Christ-event that becomes the main critical principle for the whole worship event, and worship, as a totality, is understood with this in mind, and should reflect the Christ-event in its practice.

For the view where worship is seen as an activity that leads to the *missio Dei*, as seen in second understanding, the dialectic needs to be maintained between the proclamation and the assembly's role. The Christ-event is the critical principle for the proclamation and the sacraments. But an understanding of God's general revelation becomes the critical principle for how worship should and could be practiced, as long as it leads people to the *missio Dei*. As stated in my introduction, the main goal for this thesis was to explore whether the understanding between worship and mission, which is seen in the presented material could "be beneficial for those who are occupied with the renewal of worship and if it could provide

important insights for how the relationship between church and mission could be understood.

I believe my thesis has provided answers to these two questions.

It has become clear throughout my explication that when mission defines worship and worship is part of the definition of mission , the nature of both changes in relation to the understanding of each. They are intrinsically connected, as was stated in the introduction of *Inside Out*.

The awareness of this could be of significant importance for any who are occupied with the renewal of worship, and for any discussion pertaining to the relationship between church and mission.

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