

Missions Conference Highlights Day 2

An Intentional Joint Mission led by Dan Dueck and his staff challenged us to look for service areas while providing relationship building opportunities. This happens through pastoral and lay leadership sharing the vision and having consistent communication to help create a presence in the community.

Following Jesus' Lead: Make Disciples by Greg Finke and Mike Lange demonstrated the importance of making disciples that make disciples. "When we talk about church planting or discipling, we need to start with the end in mind," Lange said. Later in the session, Finke added, "We don't need to know it all to follow Jesus. We trust that He knows it all." Disciples seek the kingdom, become more like Jesus and show others how to do the same.

How to have a Mission Trip into Everyday Life with Greg Finke offered five missions practices to adopt. Seek the Kingdom, hearing about Jesus, talking with people, doing good and ministering through prayer. We can't just be benefactors of grace, but also agents of grace.

Ted and Marty Hartman's *Ripples of Reality* led a workshop focusing on prayer. Intercessory prayer is the most powerful evangelical witness. God gives up direction in prayer throughout the gospel of Luke, including boldness in our prayers.

HOP Day (Helping Other People) with Debi Lancina gave stories and examples of serving in the community. This process brings great joy in sharing the love of Jesus in your community as we take on the role of a servant. It starts with helping meet the needs of others and growing ministry areas to invest in.

Striving to be an IRRESISTIBLE Church from Debbie Lillo was an introduction into Disability Ministry. Signs of an Irresistible church include being welcoming and prepared, Spirit-led and biblically sound, non-judgemental, relational, inclusive, actively building relationships and creativity outside of existing programs.

Debbie Lillo hosted an afternoon session called *Autism and the Church*. She went about disproving myths regarding autism and pointing to biblical mandates about welcoming the disabled and their families.

The verses cited were John 9:1-3, 1 Corinthians 12:21-24 and Luke 14:21-28.

Christian Community Development: What's it Look Like? with Aaron Putnam focused on rebuilding our relationship with Jesus and also broken relationships around us. To do so, we need a changed mind for a changed heart to see action. A relationship with Christ leads to fixed relationships in our daily lives.

We need to focus on development and long term relationship strategies.

Can Exorcism Play an Important Role in Our Evangelical Efforts? is a difficult topic to tackle, but Andry Randrianasolo did so in the breakout sessions. Citing the example of the Malagasy Lutheran Church, he notes the growth they are having is directly connected to the power and authority given to Scripture. Seeing exorcism as an evangelical tool used by the Holy Spirit is under that umbrella.

Mapping for Mission in Multiple Neighborhoods by Brent Smith brought to light how we can use technology to better connect our neighborhoods. One resource is MappingCenter.org. We also want to BLESS people. That means bonding with people, learning as we listen and observe, engage by going deeper, serve them with love in action and finally sharing our testimony.

Greg Finke gives Missions road map

Greg Finke, author of *Joining Jesus on His Mission*, gave numerous action steps to take in joining Jesus. Getting to know and growing our neighborhood is achieved by a simple formula. Unhurried time + proximity + activity (food) gives us conversation. Playing out those conversations over time gives us friendships.

Five questions to constantly ask each other are:

1. How did you see God in your life this week?
2. What has God been teaching you through His word?
3. What kind of conversations are you having with pre-Christians?
4. What good can we do around here?
5. How can we help you in prayer?

Finke added a disciple follows Jesus, joins Jesus on His Mission and in the process becomes more like Jesus. A disciple follows Jesus and shows others how to do the same.

President Harrison speaks at the Convention

LCMS Synodical President Rev. Dr. Matthew Harrison spoke at the Convention on Saturday morning. He highlighted the overwhelming successes LCMS is having internationally, including in Ethiopia and Madagascar.

"Internationally, it is the Missouri Synod's moment," President Harrison said.

Domestically, it has been challenging times with an 18 percent decline in the past 40 years. The most successful areas are more secular/rural areas.