

SUMMER 2017

ONWARD

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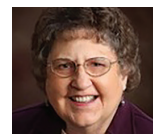
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During the early years at Southside Community Church in Vancouver, the church I helped plant and still pastor, we saw many people coming to church and making decisions to follow Christ, but then something began to change in the culture around us, and we recognized the need for change within our church as well. Things did not seem to work as much as they once had. We began to realize that God was using this shift to draw us into a different kind of relationship with Him, one that relied upon a different understanding of who He is and what that means for us as His people.

When we describe who God is, there are many things we can say: God is one, existing in nature as a unity of three distinct persons; God is Creator, the source of all and King over everything; God is Father, both gracious and holy. What about God as a missionary?

This is most certainly true. God is a missionary God. God both sends and is sent. He sends His word to draw people into relationship and to redeem all things. Since Genesis 1, He has sent His word into the world to create. In the Old Testament, He sent His word 220 times to lead His people toward life to the fullest. In the New Testament, He sent His Son, Jesus, the Word made flesh, to restore the relationship between man and God and to make all things new. Now He sends His Spirit to work in us in order to communicate the good news of the reality of the King and His Kingdom.

When we describe who we are, there are many things we can say: we are disciples of Jesus; we

are ambassadors for Christ; we are co-labourers in God's service. Indeed, we are a missionary people.

This means that we are His people—a chosen people. We are recreated—born again—and invited into His family. He becomes Father.

As Pierre Teilhard de Chardin said, “We are not human beings having a spiritual experience; we are spiritual beings having a human experience.”

We are also a holy nation, a royal priesthood. The old has gone and the new has come. We are being re-formed into the likeness of Christ, who redeems us and teaches us how to live life to the fullest. We not only learn of the ways of Jesus, we learn to *live within* the way of Jesus.

We are a people belonging to God. We have a new Father, live as Jesus lived, and, in essence, join the family business. There are many jobs, but one vocation. As Jesus was sent, we also are sent, locally, with the good news of Jesus and His Kingdom—to neighbours, coworkers, classmates, and teammates, not just to invite people to church, but to introduce them to the risen King.

It has been one of the greatest joys of my life to be part of what God is doing in the NAB. Yet even as the vice president of Missional Initiatives, the lessons on how to live missionally continue to come and the learning is slow. It is my hope that this issue of *Onward*, particularly Dan Hamil's article on page 12 about what it means to be missional, is challenging and encouraging and helps to paint a picture of where God is moving our conference.



Cam Roxburgh
Vice President of Missional Initiatives
North American Baptist Conference



Missional Theology in Paul's Epistle to Rome

Tim Willson

Director of Communications and Marketing
Taylor College and Seminary

Speaking at Taylor Seminary in March 2017, biblical scholar and theologian Dr. Michael Gorman suggested that a fundamental assumption we can make when reading scripture is about the “sentness” of the Church. Dr. Gorman proposed a three-part formulation of this rationale for a missional hermeneutic, or reading strategy:

- God is a missional God.
- Scripture is missional, bearing witness to God’s mission.
- The Church is a missional people, called and sent to participate in the divine mission.

Dr. Gorman quoted Swiss theologian Emil Brunner (1889–1966) when he said, “The Church exists by mission as fire exists by burning. Without mission there is really no Church.”

“The mission of the church is not a fringe activity, but is at its core,” he told the crowd gathered for the 2017 E.P. Wahl Lectures. He paused slightly, adding, “At least, it should be.”

The book of Romans has certainly been read non-missionally. One example is the popular Romans Road evangelism strategy, which relies on a handful of verses as the basis for a particular plan of salvation. One result can be an individualistic message that deals strictly with future salvation.

The common view of justification as being “merely a verdict of acquittal” is incomplete, Dr. Gorman argued, citing numerous scholars who find other important ideas behind that concept, including deliverance and allegiance. In Dr. Gorman’s view, Paul presents justification as the restoration of covenant relationship through co-crucifixion with Christ: a life that is patterned after the cross, participating in the life of God, and being transformed by it.

In the New Testament, nearly all of the commands and references to “you” are plural, not singular: “y’all,” to borrow the only available English equivalent of the plural form of the word. Indispensable in Paul’s view, according to Dr. Gorman, is how the Church exists together, how believers welcome each other, worship together, serve together; it is a profoundly counter-cultural Kingdom.

As Paul builds his argument towards chapter 15, he summons us to a “cruciform hospitality.” We become like Christ as we participate in the mission of God, the life of God. Dr. Gorman’s reading of Romans recognizes the theme of new creation and the communal nature of theosis, becoming Christ-like. He argues that the church is not merely called to believe the Gospel, but to embody it, living out the truth of God’s saving justice and glory; the church participates in the new creation while also anticipating it. ■



The 2017 E.P. Wahl Lectures were recorded and are freely available for listening or download at the Taylor Seminary website:
www.Taylor-Edu.ca/AudioArchives.



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BLUE OCEAN GROUP

The Blue Ocean Group is a one-year introduction to mission and formation that explores a renewed theological vision of the church on mission, serving as a sign, servant, and foretaste of the Kingdom of God. We meet three times throughout the year in three different cities across the United States and Canada for three- to four-day retreats.

For more information or to take next steps toward involvement in Blue Ocean Group

visit us online: www.nabconference.org
or email: lschmidt@nabconf.org



Partnering for Missional Ministry



Amber Dowd
Women's Ministry Leadership Team

The Women's Ministry Leadership Team (WMLT) is currently made up of a diverse group of five women representing several nationalities, NAB regions, life stages, and varied involvement in ministry. But within our diversity is a distinct commonality; we agree that the women we seek to serve—ourselves included—are called to be sent women. It is through this lens that we have developed our initiatives over the past several years. Looking ahead, we hope to continue encouraging women in this direction.

After our annual WMLT meetings this past April, it is clear that we are eager to continue extending the missional vision of the NAB specifically among female leaders. Women play a vital role in ministry, and we are dedicated to encouraging them to flourish. In the past we have done this through initiatives such as ministry grants, book resources, eJava articles, and the women's luncheon

at Triennial. Going forward, many of these projects will continue, but we also feel a desire to increase connection with NAB women on a more personal and practical level. Our hope is to discover and address the unique challenges that arise from being a woman in missional ministry. An example could be something like this: as NAB expands in church planting, we in turn reach out with support and connection for the women involved in these endeavors.

We recognize our most valuable asset is the real-life experience that each woman brings to the table as she follows God on mission. As the WMLT facilitates the intersection of paths of NAB women and keeps the missional conversation going, we can draw out stories and lessons God is teaching us. This will no doubt inspire the imagination of others, develop networks of prayer and support, and provide an opportunity for the NAB family to celebrate the good things God is doing in the lives of all of us.

Ladies, our team is grateful for how so many of you serve diligently in ministry, and we feel privileged to engage with you. We hope you will connect with us and ask about how we might serve you. And we hope to see you at our next women's luncheon during Triennial 2018 in Edmonton! ■



The Medium is the Message?



Greg Henson
President
Sioux Falls Seminary

Marshall McLuhan, a Canadian professor who earned his Ph.D. from Cambridge in 1942, coined the phrase, “The medium is the message.” In his book, *The Medium is the Message*, of which the title was a play on his own saying, he writes about how the way we send and receive information is more important than the information itself. While this has been discussed and debated for many years, there seems to be consensus around the fact that the way we structure information or the methods we use to communicate that information is not value neutral. Put another way, the methods we use for communication definitely have an impact on how others receive that information.

Since McLuhan’s time, we have also come to realize that this is not only true in the area of communication but also in the way we structure organizations, construct buildings, deliver academic programs, lead churches, and interact with people. To put it simply, the way we construct a church says something about our theology and the message we are trying to communicate. In the case of a seminary, the way we develop, implement, and deliver theological education says something about our theology and the message we are trying to communicate.

As Sioux Falls Seminary embraces the missional ethos as a seminary, we see several points in which the educational journey communicates and emphasizes the missional

nature of God’s people. Sioux Falls Seminary is not only missional because of what we teach, but also because of how we develop students and who is involved in this discipleship process.

To embrace the missional nature of the God we follow and in whose Kingdom we serve is to embrace the reality that each of us is called to grow where we are planted. In the States, I refer to this as our zip code plus four. That is to say, we are called to discover how God is working in our local neighborhood and then participate in that work.

The Kairos Project at Sioux Falls Seminary is built around this idea of being on mission. Students are required to stay where they are planted, to integrate theological education into their daily lives and ministries, and to invite others to join them in this process.

Being missional is not simply about saying, “Each of us is a missionary.” It is about being present, opening a space for the Spirit to work, and following wherever that leads. In the process, we need to remember that how we serve and the buildings and methods of communication that we use say as much about our theology and our missional calling as the actual words we use. Being missional is about ensuring that everything we do, build, say, and use aligns with the missional nature of the God we serve. ■



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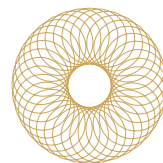
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Join us for Triennial 2018 at the Shaw Centre in Edmonton, Alberta, July 26–29.

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Youth on Mission



Joe Broesamle

Chair
Youth Ministry Leadership Team

Let's Go! Let's Roll!

Every time I hear those phrases, it gets me excited to move and to do something. Now admittedly, “Let’s go” usually is said in a sports context, and I most often hear “Let’s roll” when talking about going to eat lunch with others, but I still get that feeling of doing something. This is why I love it when Jesus says, “Go make disciples,” because it means we need to do something. I have said this and preached it in youth ministry for a long time now, but few have taken me up on it. Some have gone on to full-time ministry or full-time missionary work, which is definitely what Jesus was talking about, but very few figure out how to do it in their own hometown.

In just a few weeks from now, July 16–21, there will be 550 people from all over the NAB converging on Orange, California, to “go.” Every three years, the YMLT has the awesome opportunity to plan a mission’s experience called The Gathering. The Gathering is about as unique a trip as they come around Christian circles because we combine service opportunities alongside our sister churches in Southern California with a top-notch conference every night.

Did you know that this summer marks our third Gathering hosted at Chapman University in Orange? Chapman is located in the heart of Orange, which places many of our teams within walking distance of neighborhoods, just like



theirs at home, where they go to help rebuild someone’s life. We serve in so many different ways throughout the week, but I promise you it is more about what we give to someone’s heart than any amount of painting we do. Our goal is to give our SoCal sister churches a chance to follow up with these folks and see Jesus begin to grow in their hearts. More importantly, we hope that all the people coming from our NAB church families would have Jesus grow in their hearts in order to serve this same way in their hometowns.

One last thing before I board a plane to SoCal; I hope reading this article draws your heart to pray for The Gathering. Pray for our sister churches as they plan for all our participants coming alongside their partners to share the love of Jesus. Pray for the people who are coming; pray that they see God differently than they ever have before. Pray for Nations, our worship team coming from San Diego, California. Pray for our lineup of speakers who will be sharing each night. And please pray for the YMLT and all the people who have spent countless hours preparing for this trip. For more information, please visit our website, wewilloverflow.org. ■

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Proven Faithful

"Now it is required that those who have been given a trust must prove faithful."
(I Cor. 4:2 NIV)

For sixteen years, the NAB Foundation has faithfully served the NAB Conference with stewardship services. Over thirty-eight million dollars are expected to be utilized for the Lord's work through estate gifts. Consulting relationships with seventy capital campaigns assisted local NAB churches, missions, associations, and affiliate ministries to raise over forty-six million dollars.

At their annual meeting, the Foundation Board of Directors resolved to dissolve the NAB Foundation and transition its services to the NAB Conference. This decision has been under discussion for several years as a result of:

- a consistent decline of invitations for Foundation services,
- unpredictable reserves to sustain ongoing Foundation ministries, and
- a cost-effective strategy to integrate accounting and communication operations with those already functioning in the NAB International Office.

We are currently in the process of notifying and following up with individuals and organizations that have used Foundation estate planning or capital campaign consulting services. Questions regarding this information should be directed to Ron Norman at (605) 940-9595 or RNorman@nabconf.org.

We express our heartfelt thanks to NAB pastors, church leaders, and board members both past and present, as well as the many NAB friends we have been privileged to serve. God bless you all as you continue to be generous stewards of His provisions. We are confident and encouraged that the NAB Conference will continue this ministry with excellence. ■



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Words and Meanings and YOU

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NAB Heritage Commission

My great-grandfather Kohrs had a profound conversion experience in Germany in the 1880s. He was later called to Oak Street Baptist Church in Burlington, Iowa, to preach in his native German to a group of fairly recent German immigrants. They knew they wanted and needed the preaching of the Word of God in their new homeland.

Imagine a world where everyone speaks the same language! If it existed, my great-grandfather would never have needed to leave Germany, but it once was real. We know from the Bible that it wasn't until the Tower of Babel that different languages came to be, suddenly scrambling communication so people did not understand one another anymore (Genesis 11:1–9).

To me, one of the new words that is a part of English now is “missional.” It isn't in my current dictionary, which is admittedly thirteen years old already. Thankfully I found the solution to my answer in Dan Hamil, whose article you can read in this issue of *Onward*.

The word missional has to do with a “renewed theological vision of the church on mission.” As we talk about what it means to be missional, I find that it combines a lot of what we used to think of as missionary work, but going further. The way Dan and others talk about it makes me want to spell it mission-ALL!

All of us who call ourselves Christians are involved in missions. Aren't we? In the archives at the NAB Heritage

Commission in Sioux Falls, South Dakota, we have records of the work accomplished by everyday people, only some of them were called missionaries.

Take my great-grandfather's story; he could be considered a missionary coming to America from Germany, but what about the students learning how to preach in Rochester, New York, yearning to start Baptist churches in places they knew needed the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ?

There are also the people who wrote articles to inspire and encourage others in their faith. The Heritage Commission has copies of *Der Sendbote*, the German-language publication that emerged from those efforts, as well as copies of *Baptist Herald*, the English-language magazine that was published concurrently with *Der Sendbote* and continued after the latter was no longer relevant for the mostly English-speaking congregations.

And that involvement touched the hearts of men and women who longed to share their faith in other lands, such as Cameroon, West Africa, Japan, China, Brazil, and . . . to the ends of the earth!

Yes! Missional! Think mission-ALL! All of us.

Until the Lord calls us Home! ■



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PERSPECTIVE:

seeing the church as missional,
seeing ourselves as sent



Dan Hamil
Executive Director
North American Baptist Conference

Historically, the North American Baptist Conference of churches arose as the fruit of a missionary mindset and outreach endeavors. A key founder of our conference of churches was an evangelist and pastor by the name of Konrad Anton Fleischmann. Born in Germany in 1812, he arrived on the shores of New York in 1839 after a stop in Bristol, England, where he visited and learned from George Müller and his faith-filled ministry to orphans. In North America, Fleischmann “saw the spiritual need of the German immigrants and decided that bringing the Gospel to them was to be his mission.”¹ Moving as an itinerant evangelist to Pennsylvania, Fleischmann brought God’s good news to German-speaking immigrants and saw the Spirit move mightily, experiencing extraordinary revival in one particular county in 1941. Speaking of his evangelistic meetings, he wrote:

[These meetings] were celebrated by the children of God in that time. No sacrifice was too great for the people, no distance too far, no snow too deep, no night too dark, and no hill too steep to come to the meetings. . . . This was one of the most precious periods of time I have enjoyed in America.²

Reaching out selflessly and bringing God's good news to German-speaking immigrants was the very heartbeat of early NAB ministries and efforts.

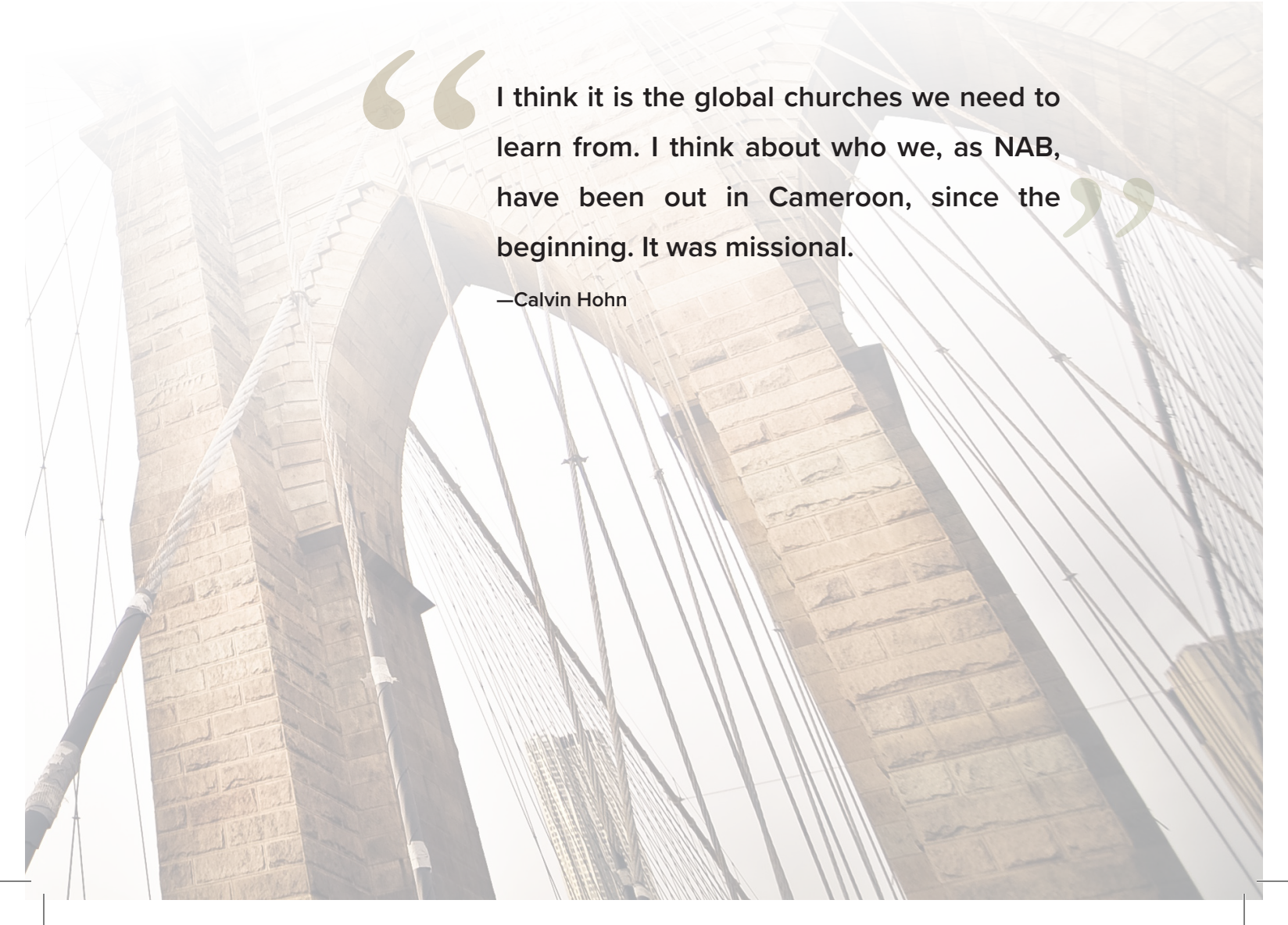
Due to our rich heritage of missionary leaders in those formative years of our conference, an unmistakable impulse to be a missionary people runs deep within the heart of those who call an NAB church their home.

Over the last five years, the current leadership of the NAB have sought to reinvigorate this long-held missionary impulse and renew our direction as a missional people. In short, leadership is laboring to facilitate an environment where a missional movement of God may continue and communities of people all over North America and the world can experience the very presence of God in a redemptive and transformative way.

Recently I gathered some key leaders in our conference to discuss what missional means for us in the NAB. Joining me were Ken Solberg, the regional minister for the Saskatchewan Baptist Association; Cory Seibel, associate pastor at Central Baptist Church, Edmonton, and affiliate professor at Sioux Falls Seminary; and Calvin Hohn, NAB missionary and field director to Cameroon. Together we explored how we can continue to communicate this missional movement and spur NAB churches and people to join God on His mission to reconcile all things under the Lordship of Jesus Christ. I want to give thanks to Ken, Cory, and Calvin for wise input and advice. The following paragraphs are the fruit of those conversations.

¹ Frank J. Woyke, *Heritage and Ministry of the North American Baptist Conference*, 28.

² Woyke, *Heritage and Ministry*, 29.



“ I think it is the global churches we need to learn from. I think about who we, as NAB, have been out in Cameroon, since the beginning. It was missional.”

—Calvin Hohn

What Is Missional for the NAB?

There are many definitions of missional; some miss the true mark of the biblical concept, but others are more helpful for us in this unique setting as a conference of churches. John 20:21 provides a core biblical understanding of the word missional when Jesus, appearing to the disciples who had locked themselves away from the authorities in fear after Jesus's crucifixion, summons peace to their hearts and then instructs, "As the Father has sent me, even so I am sending you" (ESV). Simply said, being missional focuses on being sent disciples of Jesus Christ.

To further our discussion of the meaning of missional, we define the NAB missional movement as a "renewed theological vision of the church on mission, serving as a sign, servant, and foretaste of the Kingdom of God."


Missional for the NAB is a *renewed theological vision* because it returns us to a genuine biblical and theological understanding of God as a missionary God who sends Himself into this world as its Savior and Lord.³ It focuses on the *church on mission* because the church as the community of those called out and presented as the bride of Christ stands central in God's continuing plan to reconcile the world to Himself.⁴ The church functions as a *sign* because it is a directional pointer or indicator to the reality of the Kingdom; a *servant* because it aids, through the Spirit, in the unveiling of the Kingdom; and a *foretaste* because it is a sample or suggestion of what lies ahead in the eternal Kingdom. The concept of the *Kingdom of God* reminds us of the Lordship of Jesus Christ over all things. In the scriptures, the rule and reign of Christ was prophesied centuries before His birth. Announcing Jesus at the launch of His ministry years, a Jewish preacher named John appeared in Galilee and preached a simple yet direct message: "At last the time has come! The Kingdom of God is near! Turn from your sins and believe this Good News!" (Mark 1:15). In His incarnation and life, Jesus came as the King, calling people to follow Him as the long-expected Messiah and Lord. He invited many to follow Him and enter His Kingdom. In His sacrificial death on the cross and resurrection, He provided for the ultimate forgiveness of sin. A missional people will present and proclaim Jesus as Savior, Lord, and King and call others to enter His Kingdom.⁵

³ A true biblical and theological understanding of missional is necessary. Missional is not simply another program of the church. As Darrell Guder states, "The real issues in the current crisis of the Christian church are spiritual and theological." (Darrell L. Guder, ed., *Missional Church: A Vision for the Sending of the Church in North America*, 3.)

⁴ "All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation: that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting people's sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation. We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ's behalf: Be reconciled to God. God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God." (2 Corinthians 5:18–21 NIV)

⁵ Theologians speak of the Kingdom as "already, but not yet." It is indeed present, but will one day be fully realized in the victorious return of King Jesus to earth.





“It is all about the Gospel. It is to live a Gospel life, to preserve Gospel unity and to proclaim Gospel truth. It is to do this in the face of a hostile world, a deceptive enemy and our own sinful natures. And it is to pray to a sovereign God for Gospel opportunities. Advance comes through godliness, unity, proclamation and prayer.”

—Timothy Chester

What Are the Core Characteristics of the NAB Missional Movement?

A Redeemed Identity⁶

When my children hit driving age (no pun intended by the word “hit”), they would regularly desire to borrow the car to attend some gathering of their friends—perhaps at a sporting event, concert, or school function. As they rushed with the car keys out the back door of our house, I would simply but firmly say, “Remember who you are!” Knowing their identity both as members of our personal family and members of God’s family, I believed, would ground them in their decision-making. Identity shapes behavior.

A missional movement affirms a number of deep truths about our identity as missional people that will ultimately shape how we behave.

⁶ The framework for this was developed by Cory Seibel. His article in *Direction* (Vol. 39 No. 1) provides a more in-depth examination of this framework.

A missional movement affirms a number of deep truths about our identity as missional people that will ultimately shape how we behave.

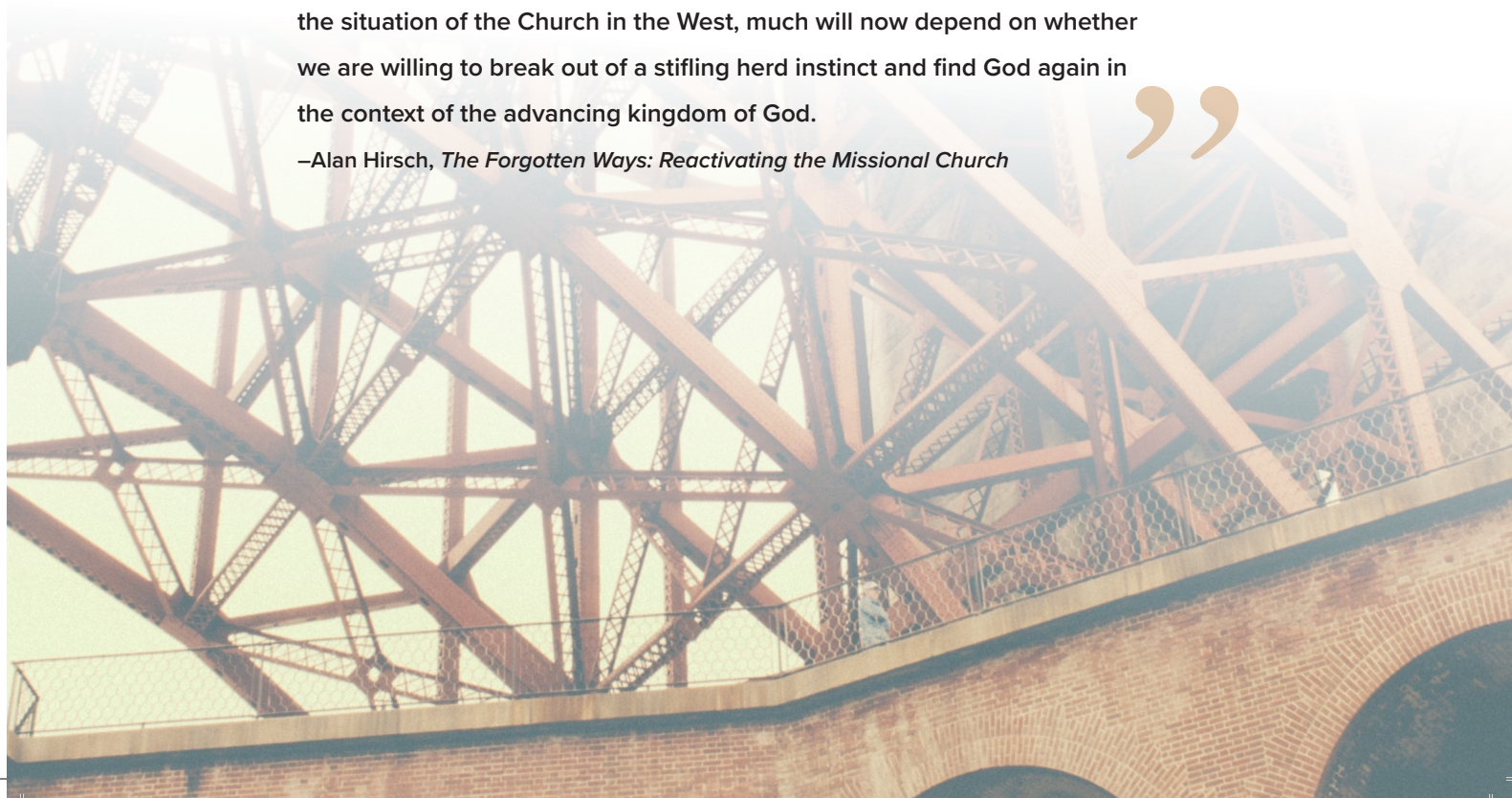
First, we have a unique identity because the God we worship and obey is a missionary God. Our NAB Statement of Faith affirms that: “We believe in the one living and true God, perfect in wisdom, sovereignty, holiness, justice, mercy, and love (2 Timothy 1:17; Psalm 86:15; Deuteronomy 32:3–4). He exists eternally in three coequal persons who act together in creation, providence, and redemption (Genesis 1:26; 1 Peter 1:2; Hebrews 1:1–3).” These truths about the character of God are non-negotiable for us. In addition, though, we believe that God is a missionary God, who, despite our rebellion, so loved the world that He sent His one and only Son that those who believe in Him might experience genuine new birth (John 3:16–17). How refreshing to remember that we are a people who join a missionary God on His mission to our neighborhoods and communities.

Second, we have a unique identity because we are a missionary people. As Cory Seibel suggests, “Churches that are growing into a sense of themselves as missional communities are tapping into their identity as a sent people who have been sent by Christ into the world by the power of the Holy Spirit to continue His mission. . . . We are living into a particular vision of who we have been called to be.”

In my childhood years, I watched many people called missionaries come to give presentations at my small Baptist church. They came wearing clothing reflective of some distant culture. They told stories of eating strange food (and they didn’t even have McDonalds). They spoke foreign languages. They talked about living quite differently among some far-off people group. With this mindset of missionaries being distant, different, and distinct, you can imagine why I grew up thinking that a missionary was only someone who served God far, far away in a very different culture. In my mind, my dad, mom, brothers, and I—and the rest

“If we’re going to impact our world in the name of Jesus, it will be because people like you and me took action in the power of the Spirit. Ever since the mission and ministry of Jesus, God has never stopped calling for a movement of “Little Jesuses” to follow him into the world and unleash the remarkable redemptive genius that lies in the very message we carry. Given the situation of the Church in the West, much will now depend on whether we are willing to break out of a stifling herd instinct and find God again in the context of the advancing kingdom of God.

—Alan Hirsch, *The Forgotten Ways: Reactivating the Missional Church*



“Our home church in Cameroon, Mt. Carmel Baptist, God repositioned us, hinging us between the Muslim district and the red light district. The pastors and elders realized that God had put them there for a reason. They decided that on the second Sunday of every month the congregation would pray and have a brief exhortation from the Word, and then they go out to build relationships and find tangible ways to love and care for the neighbors. The Christians at Mt. Carmel give up church once a month to go and be the church.”

—Calvin Hohn

of the congregation—certainly weren’t missionaries; we were attenders, members, and believers. But not missionaries.

It was later in life when I learned that indeed my true identity was as a sent follower of Jesus Christ. I was called by God to join Him on mission in my neighborhood, community, and nation to call others to repent, be baptized, and follow Jesus (Matthew 28:19–20). The church is not merely filled with members or attenders (as important as that might be). All followers of Jesus Christ are missionaries. And in community together as the church, we are called to go and proclaim and present clearly the Gospel of Jesus Christ. We are a missionary people.

Third, we have a unique identity because we are an exile people. We live “in the world, but not of the world.” Peter reminds us that we are strangers and aliens who are to live “such good lives” in the midst of fallen cultures that we draw people to Christ (1 Peter 2:11–12). And as a people on the margins of culture, we strive not to allow culture to squeeze us into its mold (Romans 12:1–2). While the world creates consumers, we fight to purify our churches from having a consumer mentality, especially in seeing

success in terms of attendance, offering amount, or new facilities (known tongue-in-cheek as “bottoms, bucks, and buildings”). While culture elevates individualism, we remind ourselves that we are called to be the body of Christ, united by our love for each other and committed to live in genuine community with each other. While the world sees the church as just another institution, we know the church is a living and vibrant community of followers, gathering each week to celebrate the God who is working in this world and to disciple and motivate each other to be sent into our neighborhoods to join God on His mission (1 Thessalonians 5:14).

We are striving to help churches who understand that God is a missionary God and that they are a missionary people who are living as exiles in the present world, calling others to follow Jesus as Lord. To borrow a definition from W. Rodman MacIlvaine III, “A missional church is a unified body of believers, intent on being God’s missionary presence to the indigenous community that surrounds them, recognizing that God is already at work.”⁷

⁷ W. Rodman MacIlvaine III, “What is the Missional Church Movement,” *Bibliotheca Sacra* 167 (January–March 2010) 89.

A Renewed Imagination

Those who desire to be a sent people, living out their missionary identity, must also have a renewed, Spirit-empowered vision of how they see the world. A missional people need an expanded imagination of what God might be doing in this world. Imagination is all about seeing differently. Imagination is not fantasy, but it arises when we are able to connect the dots of life in a new and creative manner under the empowering of the Spirit. Using a renewed imagination, what if we saw our neighborhoods as mission fields where relationships with unbelievers could be built and the reality of an abundant life in Christ could be demonstrated? What if we saw the circumstances of our lives or others' lives as opportunities to demonstrate that God's goodness and grace is real?

Ken Solberg tells the story of a snowstorm hitting his community in Regina, Saskatchewan, on a Sunday morning. Wanting to get to church, Ken opened the garage door, fired up his snowblower, and began the hard work of clearing the snow in his driveway. The storm was piling up feet upon feet of snow, especially at the end of his driveway. After investing considerable time and energy, and with a now clear driveway, Ken walked back toward his garage to start the car and begin his trek to church. But with new eyes, he looked down the street and saw neighbor upon neighbor using shovels to dig themselves out of snow-blocked driveways. He saw his neighbors as those he could

serve and love. So believing God was somehow working through a snowstorm, he spent the rest of his morning using his snowblower to help dig out his neighbors. Now Ken is not one to skip Sunday morning services, but with Spirit-driven imagination, he saw his snow-packed neighborhood as a mission field white unto harvest (pun intended). To this day, Ken has relationships with unbelievers in his neighborhood because of that very act of service and care.

Many of our churches are learning to see their neighborhoods with

new eyes. Missional communities within NAB churches are reaching out to local schools, sports clubs, homeless shelters, and youth drop-in-centers to begin the work of building relationship. The early seeds of missionary work are being planted. Pathways to present and proclaim the Gospel are being forged. A renewed imagination for creative ministry is drawing unbelievers into a relationship with missional people and with Jesus Christ (1 Corinthians 9:19–23). Praise God!



“The reality is, of course, as soon as you think seriously about it, that the mission field is everywhere, including your own street – wherever there is ignorance or rejection of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.”

—Christopher J. H. Wright, *The Mission of God's People: A Biblical Theology of the Church's Mission*

A Reinvigorated Initiative

We are disciples of Jesus who are on mission. That is our focus. That is our calling. Our life truly is not about the money we earn or the education we gain or even the thrill we find in being parents or family members. Our *raison d'être* is to be a missionary people. We lift our heads from our pillows in the morning and pray, “God, let us join You on mission to the people around us.”

Cory Seibel says, “Ultimately, missional needs to be expressed in our real lives.”

Our missional initiative must be to go and make disciples (Luke 10:1–2). “Going” is active, not passive. “Going” is intentional in the choices we make. “Going” takes advantage of opportunities to connect with unbelievers and present and proclaim the Gospel. “Missional churches will be willing to take risks for the sake of God’s Kingdom,” says Cory

Seibel. “To join on God’s mission is to be willing to step out in risk on God’s mission.”

In his book *Surprise the World*, Michael Frost says that we can spread the Gospel of Jesus Christ using five habits. The BELLS, as he calls them, are: Bless others, Eat together, Listen to the Spirit, Learn Christ, and understand yourself as Sent for God into others’ lives. Blessing, Eating, Listening, Learning, and being Sent will open opportunities for you to see those around you who desperately need the saving and redeeming grace of Christ.

Our missional initiative must also proclaim the good news of Jesus Christ and His Kingdom. Ken Solberg reminds us, “One of the key principals of the church is the proclamation of the Gospel. It needs to be stated that this is a foundational principle.”

Leslie Newbigin, a missionary and church statesman decades past, is often considered a key voice in the missional movement. He writes:

I have spoken of mission in three ways. It is the proclamation of the kingdom, the presence of the kingdom, and the prevenience of the kingdom. By proclaiming the reign of God over all things, the church acts out its faith that the Father of Jesus is indeed ruler of all. The church, by inviting all humankind to share in the mystery of the presence of the kingdom hidden in its life through its union with the crucified and risen life of Jesus, acts out the love of Jesus that took him to the cross.⁸

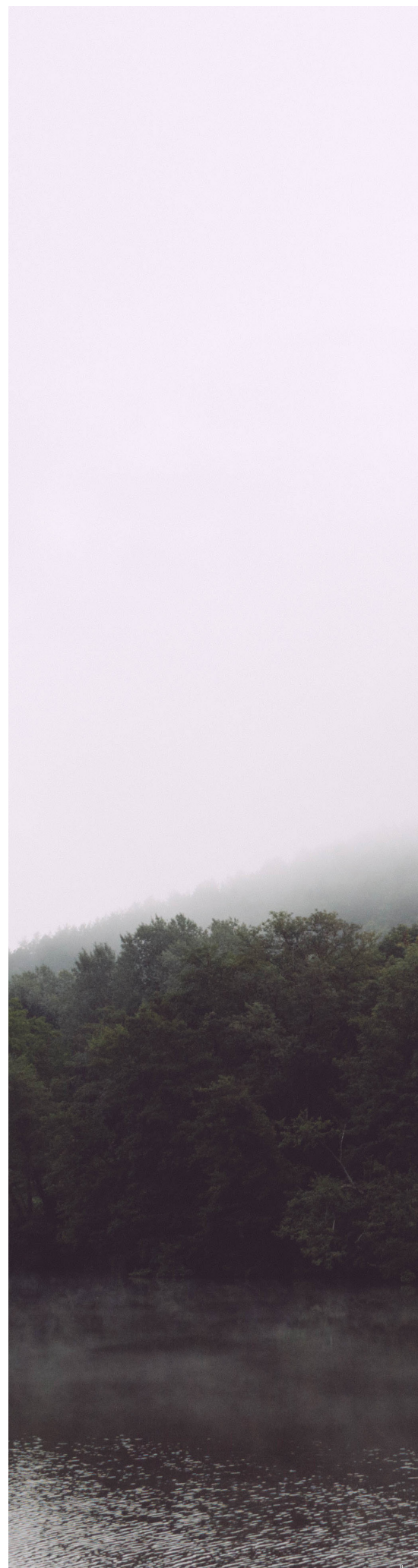
The missional impulse urges us to take the initiative to go into our neighborhoods and tell through our lives and our words.

Final Thoughts

After more than 160 years of ministry in Canada and the United States, the North American Baptist Conference continues to resonate with God’s call to be a missional people, sent by Him and with Him on His mission to reconcile all things under His Kingship.

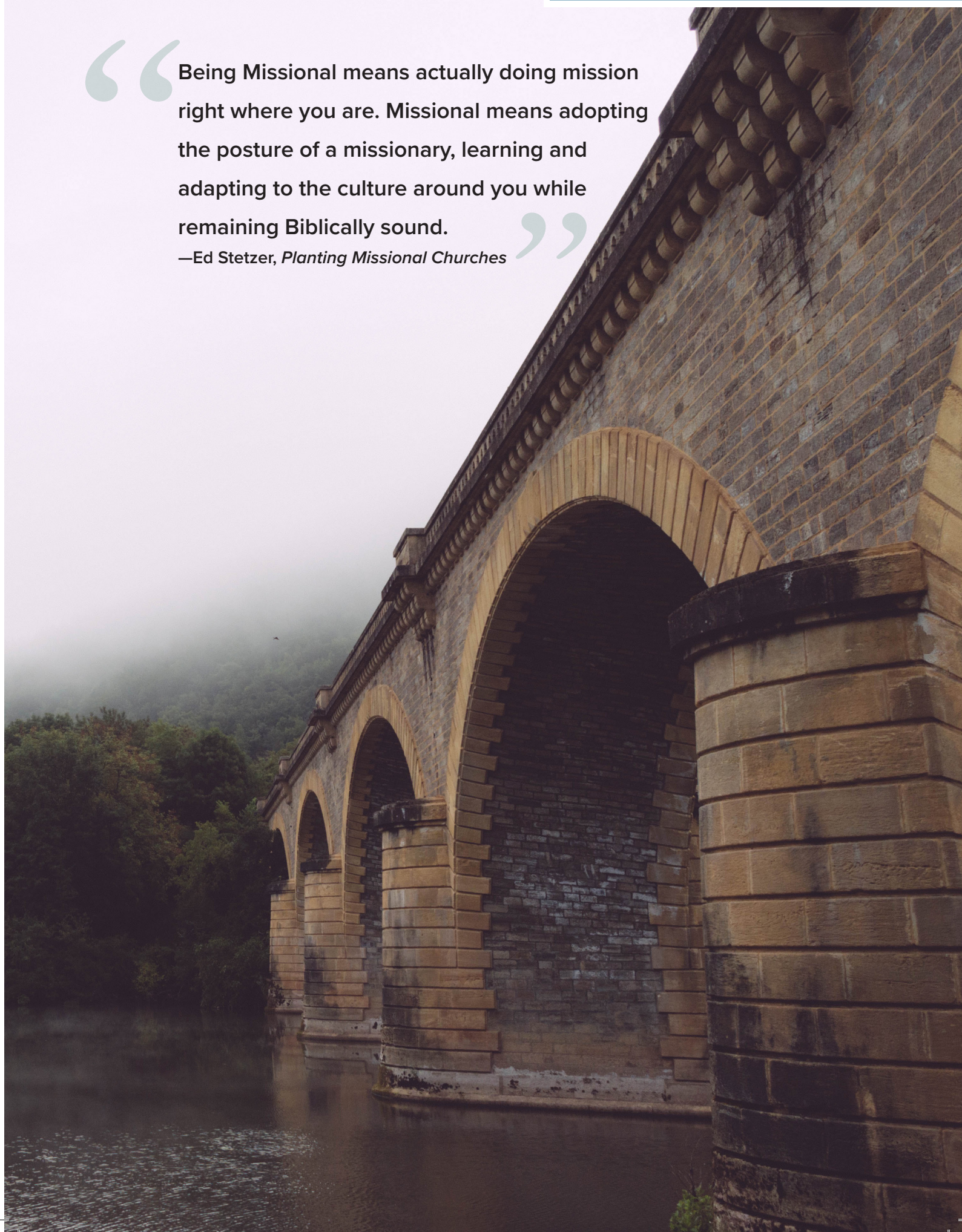
We continue to have a profound dependence on the power and work of the Holy Spirit in our lives, in our churches, and in our conference. Calvin Hohn so rightly says, “We are not going to be missional as churches or as individuals without an inner transformation happening first.” We continue to journey on the work of ministry God has given us, seeking to be shaped for mission by a God of transformation and mission. ■

⁸ Leslie Newbigin, *The Open Secret: An Introduction to the Theology of Mission*, 64–65.



“Being Missional means actually doing mission right where you are. Missional means adopting the posture of a missionary, learning and adapting to the culture around you while remaining Biblically sound.”

—Ed Stetzer, *Planting Missional Churches*





Freedom

Les Collins

President
Church Investors Fund

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Mike Merrill was short of cash in 2008, so he decided to incorporate himself—but not in the way that most people start a shareholder company. He decided to sell shares in himself, with the return being made from the income he would earn from a second job. **Each share was worth \$1** and he tried to sell 100,000 of them.

Unfortunately, he decided beforehand that any shares that were unsold would be non-voting, so when he sold less than a thousand shares, he was stuck with these few shareholders having say over his life. This was because anyone who bought a share in him was not only to receive a return from his second job, but would also have a voting right to any major decisions he would make in his life. These voting rights included where he would live, whom he would date, whether he would move in with his girlfriend, along with any other important decision that most of us would take very seriously.



It is a strange notion for sure, but it is not a new one. For most of history people could be bought and sold, often by their own parents, to cover a debt or to make restitution for a loss. In fact, when Paul talks about Christians in 1 Corinthians 6 he says, **“we are bought with a price. Therefore, honor God with your bodies” (v. 20).**

This notion of being purchased might seem out of date in our world, but it is not; there are more slaves today than at any time in history. The reality is that most are not aware that they are slaves. This is because we can all be slaves to many things—and to many different ideas. True reality is that three quarters of Americans live paycheck to paycheck. These people may think they are free, but they are not. Simply telling themselves they are free is merely a way they cope with their situation.

As Proverbs 22 tells us, **“the debtor is a slave to the lender” (v. 7).** This isn’t meant as a hyperbole or some form of exaggeration, it is stated because it is true and accurate. Paul warns us as Christians again in 1 Corinthians 7, **“you were bought with a price, so don’t be enslaved by the world” (v. 23).**

The reality is that so many things in this world are enslaving. This can happen when we give up authority for decision-making over ourselves without realizing it; it is then that we are easily entrapped. If, however, you view your life as Paul did, or even Mike Merrill, then you realize how important the need is to consult others before you make any important decisions.



You see, for those who call themselves Christians, they are obligated to ask both God, in the form of prayer, and other Christians, in the form of advice, before they make important decisions. This is because we are no longer our own; we are owned by another. This becomes automatic when we accept Christ’s sacrifice. We have been bought and paid for, and so your obligation is then to consult those whom God has ordained for us to check in with. **It is no longer a choice whether you should do it or not.**

So, if you find yourself buried in debt, or enslaved in a world of

>>continued on next page >>

>> Freedom, continued

your own making, then you really have only one recourse. The **first step** is deciding who your master is, and **the second** is to get out from any other master that you have become a slave to, with the help of godly advice.

The crazy thing is this is the only way that any of us becomes free.

—The Loan Arranger ■

If you would like to read more blogs similar to this, we invite you to visit us at www.ChurchInvestorsFund.org. There are many other articles that share the passion God has placed on the hearts of our leadership and staff. We have a few different bloggers, and so we are certain you will find something that you are equally passionate about.

Change in Rate Structure

If you have invested with Church Investors Fund in recent years, you may be familiar with our Jumbo Investment Rates. We offered a bonus for investments over \$100,000. As of May 1, 2017, we have eliminated our Jumbo rates and added a couple new tiers. We still offer higher rates for higher amounts invested, only we believe the new tiers will bring better clarity to our investors.

If you are interested in learning more about our various investment options, and you would like to make a difference by using a portion of your savings to help build churches, please visit our website at www.ChurchInvestorsFund.org, or call us at 1-800-543-2343. ■



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Uncover
the
Facts



Living H₂O

"Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."

Matthew 28:19–20





8 Questions

with **Dr. Helen Marie Schmidt**

Retired Missionary
Cameroon

Q: Would you tell us a little bit about your ministry in Cameroon?

HMS: *I went to Cameroon in August of 1969. At the time there was only one physician in the 160-bed Bansa Baptist Hospital. On the first day I arrived, they had my first patient ready and waiting. My training was in general medicine and general surgery. Therefore, my primary work was in the hospital, not in evangelism. People came to the hospital, where we had chaplains and daily devotions in the ward. This is where patients heard the Gospel. A large part of my testimony is that I was a part of them, and I simply lived as Christ would have me live. I was a Cameroonian. Whether it be celebrations, life or death, I was a part of the Cameroonian culture. It was the best part of my life. After thirty-four years, coming back home to Spokane, Washington, was not easy.*

Q: What led you to becoming a medical missionary?

HMS: *I grew up in an NAB Baptist Church in Spokane, Washington, and attended many camps. It was crystallized at a youth camp that God was calling me to the mission field as a physician. It was at these camps that I met Dr. Chaffee, who was the first missionary doctor in Cameroon, and Dr. Laura Redding. Also, we would frequently have missionaries in our home, as they passed through and visited with our church. So, I knew the missionary field well.*

Q: Is there any challenge you found particularly difficult?

HMS: *My challenges were in education. I was not a great student. I failed organic chemistry and had to retake it. I also struggled in physics. When in medical school, I had to repeat my second year, again because of chemistry. The Woman's Medical College in Pennsylvania, now part of Drexel University, was determined to help everyone they admitted to succeed. That door opening was what I needed—and God directed. God does not only use those with the highest of IQs, but all of those who are willing to go and do what He wants them to do.*

Q: What would you say to someone who might feel God nudging them towards being a missionary?

HMS: *Get to know missionaries and what they are doing, and*

then get involved. Take a trip to the mission field to see what it is like. And surround yourself with people who are knowledgeable in what missions is all about. God will surround you with these people and help you in that direction. I was once asked, "Why don't you stay here and send someone else?" My response was, "Yeah, well...like who?"

Q: Is there a certain memory that stands out to you?

HMS: *I was trained in general surgery, but because there were so many with eye diseases, I needed training in this area as well. I went to an eye hospital in Nigeria for some of this training, and I remember so specifically this time we took the bandages off this grandmother, and she saw her grandchildren for the first time. I still get teary-eyed every time I think about it. A simple thing like a cataract extraction gave her new life.*

Q: What legacy do you most want to be remembered for?

HMS: *The Cameroonians always gave us a lot of praise for what we did, but I like to emphasize that when we came, there were*

foundations already in place from the ones who had gone before us. I was then able to do my part in building on top of those foundations; and now even more amazing things are being done by the next generation. I was a part of a long road of people working in Cameroon—and I just did my part.



Q: Where do you see an urgent

need in Cameroon?

HMS: *Much prayer is needed for Cameroon and the current political situation. The conflict has come to a head and masses of people are being affected by it. Also, training is going on for Christian physicians as surgeons and internal medicine specialists. There is a continuing need for short- and long-term physicians to be involved in continuing this training.*

Q: How is God using you today?

HMS: *It's fun! I'm working 4–5 hours a day, five days a week at House Calls Primary Care, a part of Kindred at Home. We have ten nurse practitioners seeing over 1,400 patients, who go out and see them in their home situations, assisted by eight medical assistants in the office. Most of these people cannot get out to see a doctor, and so we go out to where they are. This is now my mission field, and I am thrilled at the opportunity. I have people in my office every day who I can influence by my life. You live your life and don't know how you impact other people, until they start coming in. ■*



Mission Hill Church Calgary, Alberta

Church Investors Fund was blessed to partner with McKenzie Towne Church when the then church plant first bought their building. It was a bumpy road for several years, with many concerns of ever making it. But after years of following God's guiding hand, McKenzie Towne Church flourished and grew to the point of recently planting a new church in the Alberta area. **Aaron Weiss was called to pastor Mission Hill Church.** And although Aaron doesn't feel he can offer his expertise on being a missional church plant, he was willing to open his heart to us.

My experience of church planting has been one with incredible challenges and the observation that the focus of "being missional" quickly fades from view when facing the challenges presented in planting. It has only recently occurred to me that being busy with good things may be the worst distraction and prevent us from being involved in the right things. In this manner, I believe that **if missional living is not present in the simple rhythms of one's life, it will be incredibly difficult to cultivate or achieve within a church community.**

Our planting story is unique. Mission Hill Church was planted rather quickly from the faithfulness of McKenzie Towne Church in November 2015. With hearts of generosity and a desire to share the Gospel to other parts of their city, McKenzie Towne sent Mission Hill out with their ongoing support. We launched in our new community after observing many plants moving to the suburbs of our city and fewer churches moving inwards to older and more established communities. We chose to go against the grain and plant closer to our city center, within a community that did not have a church. Perhaps **our first step in being missional was allowing our mission to select our location, rather than allow our location to dictate our mission.** We launched

Who am i?



After sailing on the SS Rotterdam to England and then on a banana boat, I arrived in Cameroon in 1961, where I served for 41 years. I served in administration, nursing, midwifery, and professional management at

Banso, Mbem, Mbingo, and Yaoundé, and I played a big role in setting up the Health facility in Douala.

Do you think you know who I am? Find out by visiting www.CeIF.org, emailing epond@cifinc.org, or calling Ellie Pond at 800-543-2343, ext 233. ■

with roughly sixty people in attendance on an average Sunday and have steadily grown to 120 in our first year—we pray that we can keep growing.

It is a different focus, moving from an established church ministry to pouring absolutely everything into a brand new start-up ministry within a new community. Everything you do is from a desire to gain momentum and grow. While it is easy to feel missional when everything you do as a church planter is consumed with growing the church, there comes a moment when you realize the distinction between doing church stuff and being the church body. Now, please allow me to clarify: I am thrilled by any effort a church may make to go beyond its walls in sharing the Gospel. **There is, however, a distracting pull for many believers to establish the amenities of church as quickly as possible that it can easily overtake a missional focus.** Programs and weekly ministries are not bad; in fact, they can serve as tremendous engines for evangelism, discipleship, and outreach. **These things can also be distractions from doing the one thing your congregation is gifted to do better than anyone else!** Imagine a church which naturally spends its focus and resources on those outside the church without prompting, coercing, or bribery. What if your church's main focus was renewing and equipping people with the transforming news of the Gospel, and then releasing them to be the missionaries and evangelists within your community? Pastors, our job would be less about sharing of our ministry efforts to inspire others and more about celebrating the stories of our church's ministry to fan the flames burning in our congregations!

Consider your people. Who has the Lord blessed you with? For example, if you want to meet a generous church, I'd encourage you to visit McKenzie Towne Church—they literally sent enough people out to form another church in order to see others come to know Jesus. Much of what I've observed to be natural connections for missional living is simply equipping people to keep doing what they would normally be doing with the transforming news of the Gospel. In this manner, **our goal has been to equip people with the Gospel and send them back out to their workplaces, friends, and families.** For example, a lady who attends our church drives a bus. She's been filled to the brim with a love for Jesus and passion for how the Gospel has changed her and can change others. One morning while picking up her kids, she observed a mother crying uncontrollably while dropping off her kids. So, she put the bus in park and got out to speak with the woman. She said, "When I'm done with my route, I'm coming over for tea." And she did just that. She came back and spoke the love and hope of Jesus into this woman's life in her home. Awesome!

Please do not hold me, or Mission Hill Church, as an exemplary model in missional ministry. We are still learning a lot. But one observation which continues to spur me onwards and ignite the passions of believers within our church is the passion to see those we care most about come to know Jesus (our friends and our family). There is little need to motivate or contrive connection opportunities with the people we desperately love already; and when people are being renewed in Jesus and sent out with the life-changing power of the Gospel to those they love, missional living happens. For this reason, I think **missional living begins where we are, in how Jesus has wired us.** ■



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Church Investors Fund's mission is to assist local churches with facilities development - helping them respond to God's call to make disciples.

Imagine Missional



Keir Hammer
Director
White Cross Canada

Being missional requires a “renewed imagination,” as we read in Dr. Hamill’s centerpiece article. How is your imagination? The NAB has been significantly involved in Cameroon for a long time, but it is the Cameroon Baptist Convention (CBC) that is leading and doing the work of ministry and outreach. However, we must remain fully committed to our partnership and to being missionally minded.

Recently I received some information from Maureen Moody and Nancy Palmer about how the work of White Cross is helping the CBC Health Services reach out in love and effectively care for people. These are not emotionally charged stories; they are real accounts of how your commitment, sacrifice, and ongoing partnership are helping in real and practical ways.

Have you heard about the hospital beds and other medical equipment that have been secured and sent over to Cameroon? Maybe you helped with that in some way. A Cameroonian nurse shared about a patient who had an operation on her eye and was experiencing pressure and pain and was vomiting. Normally, with the non-adjustable, flat beds from the 1950s and '60s (which were amazing at that time), the nurse would have needed to find bricks or pieces of wood to stick under the legs of the bed to elevate the

patient’s head. Now, with “new” beds that have been shipped over, she says that she can just crank up the head of the bed and relieve the patient’s pain and avoid aspiration. She writes, “The new beds made it easy for me, and it really helped the patient.”

What about rolled bandages? Perhaps you help out with those? Did you know that they are used in many creative ways, not just holding bandages on wounds? When surgical instruments are autoclaved (a sterilization process), they need to be taped closed with autoclave tape, which changes colour when the process is completed correctly. The tape is very important in the process, but very expensive. However, instead of using the tape to wrap the entire bundle, as one medical professional shared, they “tear the [rolled] bandages in thirds lengthwise, then use this to tie the bundle. A two- to three-inch piece of tape is then added to indicate the efficacy of the autoclave process. This saves the hospital a lot of money each year!”

Those involved with the CBC Health Services are working sacrificially to demonstrate and share the love of God in their context. As missional people, we can partner and celebrate with them. They are so thankful for each aspect of White Cross, which helps them more easily serve. Maureen and Nancy write, “Thank you to all the women and men who work hard to collect, sort, refurbish, pack, and send us these lightly used items and equipment. And of course, we also thank all those who have been faithfully cutting, sewing, and sending the traditional White Cross items.”



I am excited about how God will continue to use this partnership. Keep an eye out for the new handbook, which will give updated instructions about how we can more efficiently and effectively participate in the work in West Africa! ■



For more information about the work of White Cross in Canada and the United States, visit:

Canada: www.taylor-edu.ca/wahlcentre/whitecross

United States: www.nabconference.org/white-cross/

SUNDAY

MONDAY

TUESDAY

WEDNESDAY

INTERCESSOR

JULY 2017

2 Pray for the women of the Japan Baptist Conference who will be taking part in the Women's Seminar this week.

3 Pray for VP of Ministry Outreach, Norm Poehlke, as he goes on sabbatical the next couple of months. Ask God to fill him, form him, and inspire him.



4 On this American Independence Day, pray for the leaders of whatever country you call home. Ask God to provide them with wisdom to serve your nation.

5 Pray for the Bible camps happening this summer. Ask God to use the counselors and teachers to reveal Himself to the students.

9 Pray for the continued development of Camp Falcon Rock in Romania. Pray for NAB missionaries Paul and Tanya Gericke and Vern and Gloria Wagner as they lead ministries at the camp while acquiring permits and building infrastructure.

10 Pray for NAB work in Cameroon. Pray for the Cameroon Baptist Convention leadership and our partnerships there. Pray, too, for the Hohn family as they are closing their year on home assignment.

11 Pray for Gateway, specifically for Director Randy Schmor and the important work he does training churches and missions teams for missional engagement through long-term partnerships with mission fields around the world.

12 Pray for Mayette Ativo-Bueno and her work with the Bicol Center for Christian Leadership in the Philippines as she works to train leaders and pastors.



16 Pray for the students and leaders attending The Gathering in Orange, CA, put on by the YMLT. Ask God to meet them in the service projects and the nightly speakers.



17 Pray for the speakers, artists, and special guests at The Gathering. Pray as well for the service projects the students at The Gathering are undertaking, as well as the people they will be serving.

18 Pray for the search for an RM for the Northern Plains Region. Lift up the candidates and search committee to God, asking Him to make His choice known.

19 Pray for regional ministers Dr. James Renke (Upper Mississippi Region), Pastor Larry Burd (Atlantic Association), and Dr. David Ewing (Eastern Association). Ask God to continue to give them wisdom as they serve the pastors and churches in their area.

23 Pray for Bud Fuchs as he partners with churches and campus ministries in Utah to reach international students for Christ.

30 Go through each of the ministries of your church and pray for them by name, asking God to use them.

24 Pray for any single parents at your church or in your community.

31 Pray for the Ministry Resource Fund summer offering, which helps provide the necessary funds for the International Office to serve NAB churches.

25 Pray for Chain of Love in Brazil as they seek to hire a full-time pastor to work on their campus.

26 Pray for the Cameroon Baptist Seminary in Kumba, which is working to complete additional classrooms to provide more space for learning.

THURSDAY

FRIDAY

SATURDAY

1 On this Canada Day, thank God for the freedom to worship Him freely. Pray for those around the world who aren't able to freely profess their faith.



6 Pray for the details and vision to come together as Triennial 2018 is being planned.

Shaped
Triennial 2018

7 Pray for the regional ministers and search committees who are in the process of searching for new pastors for NAB churches. Pray for God's wisdom and guidance as they seek to fill these open positions.

8 Ethos is a two-year journey for leaders and churches to be formed in the image of Christ and be sent into their neighborhoods. The NAB is currently working in two regions teaching churches. Please pray for this work of joining God on mission.

Missional
ENGAGEMENT

13 Pray for Kristi TenClay, who arrived back in Cameroon last month after a year in the United States on home assignment. Ask that God would help her transition go smoothly.

14 Pray for the medical missionaries in Cameroon as they work with the ministries, staff, and patients at Banso Baptist Hospital and Mbingo Baptist Hospital.

15 Pray for Nick and Iris as they travel through Canada and North Dakota this month visiting churches while on home assignment. Ask God to give them rest in the midst of their travels.

International
MISSIONS

20 Pray for regional ministers Rev. Dan Heringer (Central Plains Region), Rev. Terry Holley (Great Lakes Association), and Dr. Bob Krahn (British Columbia Association). Ask God to continue to give them wisdom as they serve the pastors and churches in their area.

21 Pray for regional ministers Dr. Jim Leverette and associate Dr. Terry Fossen (Alberta Baptist Association) and regional minister Rev. Chris Gorman (Northwest Region). Ask God to continue to give them wisdom as they serve the pastors and churches in their area.

22 Pray for regional ministers Pastor Ken Solberg (Saskatchewan Baptist Association), Rev. Rick Weber (Northern California Association), and Rev. Bob Klein (Southern California Association). Ask God to continue to give them wisdom as they serve the pastors and churches in their area.

Leader
FORMATION

27 Pray for Julie Stone, who is visiting the International Office today while closing out her last month on home assignment. Ask God to help her transition smoothly back to life in Cameroon.

28 Pray for NAB churches serving refugees. Ask God to supply them the resources to provide for them and the love and care to treat them like Christ.

29 Pray for pastors who serve in multi-ethnic churches, that God would give them a special sensitivity and encouragement as they serve people of different languages and cultures in their city.

Ethnic
PARTNERSHIP

SUNDAY

MONDAY

TUESDAY

INTERCESSOR

AUGUST 2017

Missional ENGAGEMENT

6 Pray for the fruit from mission trips churches across the NAB took this summer. Pray for servant hearts for these summer missionaries and for God to continue to use them mightily.

7 Pray for Elsie Lewandowski as she comes on home assignment this month. Pray for her transition from working with homeschool families in Cameroon to visiting churches and supporters in North America.

1 Our conference vision is accomplished through missional engagement, international missions, leadership development and formation, and ethnic partnerships. Pray that God would bless these ends with fruit.

8 Pray for the Ewing family as they return to Japan, minus Noah, who will be attending college in the United States. Ask God to cover them in grace.



International MISSIONS

13 Pray for the small group leaders and Sunday school teachers who serve your church. Pray that God would use them in powerful ways to teach His Word with accuracy and integrity as they seek to transform lives.

14 Pray for the Jones family, who are raising funds to join Lyndell Campbell-Réquia in Brazil, training ministers of the Gospel through theological education.

15 Pray for the children's ministry pastors and leaders at your church. Pray that God would encourage them and guide them as they begin preparing for fall ministry opportunities.

Leader FORMATION

20 Pray for the Women's Ministry Leadership Team as they seek to connect women across the NAB with each other and with God.



21 Pray for regional ministers Dr. Jim Leverette and associate Dr. Terry Fossen (Alberta Baptist Association) and regional minister Rev. Chris Gorman (Northwest Region). Ask God to continue to give them wisdom as they serve the pastors and churches in their area.

22 Pray for the SoCal Association Lead Pastors' Retreat currently happening in Indio, CA. Pray for meaningful fellowship, a time of rest, and a deep awareness of God's presence.

Ethnic PARTNERSHIP

27 Pray for the pastors in your church today. Pray their ministries would be fruitful and would call people to a deeper engagement with God's love, mission, and plan in your neighborhood.

28 Thank God for Geoff Hartt and his work leading Hispanics for Christ. Pray that God continues to use this ministry to encourage Hispanic pastors and establish ministry hubs in underserved areas.

29 Pray for the international church today. Pray for those countries where religious freedoms do not exist and Christians are persecuted. Ask God to protect those who have followed His call to spread His Word in these areas of the world.

WEDNESDAY

2 Pray for your neighbors. Ask God how you can best serve them.



THURSDAY

3 Pray for White Cross as they provide for direct and tangible participation in the compassionate care ministry of the North American Baptist Conference.

FRIDAY

4 Pray over the Southwestern Association meetings today and tomorrow. Pray for Regional Minister Dan Heringer to lead with Godly wisdom and grace.



SATURDAY

5 Pray for a greater depth of understanding and love today in your own life for the call of God to join Him on mission in your neighborhood and city.

9 Pray for volunteer pathologists to cover for Rick Bardin October–December while he and Debbie are on furlough in the United States to visit their daughter and soon-to-be-born granddaughter.

10 Pray for the NAB work in Cameroon, especially our partnership with the Cameroon Baptist Convention. Thank God for this relationship, which has lasted for more than 60 years, since the CBC's inception.

11 Pray for the work being done by NAB missionaries in Japan. Pray for the continuing partnership with the Japan Baptist Conference.

12 Lift up to God the next generation of leaders in your church. Pray for their growth as men and women of God and as servants of Christ, filled with the Holy Spirit.

16 Pray for our national missionaries serving across the globe, like Marijana Cizmanski serving in Serbia with Community Health Evangelism.

17 Pray for the NAB partnerships in theological education with seminaries in Brazil, Cameroon, Moscow, and North America.

18 Pray for Dennis and Nancy Palmer as they prepare to leave Cameroon on home assignment. Pray for safe travel home and good time with family and friends.



19 Pray for the spread of the Gospel in closed countries around the world, especially the NAB work in East Asia. Pray that God's favor and protection would be rich and His grace abounding.

23 Pray for regional ministers Dr. James Renke (Upper Mississippi Region), Pastor Larry Burd (Atlantic Association), and Dr. David Ewing (Eastern Association). Ask God to continue to give them wisdom as they serve the pastors and churches in their area.

24 Pray for regional ministers Pastor Ken Solberg (Saskatchewan Baptist Association), Rev. Rick Weber (Northern California Association), and Rev. Bob Klein (Southern California Association). Ask God to continue to give them wisdom as they serve the pastors and churches in their area.

25 Pray for regional ministers Rev. Dan Heringer (Central Plains Region), Rev. Terry Holley (Great Lakes Association), and Dr. Bob Krahn (British Columbia Association). Ask God to continue to give them wisdom as they serve the pastors and churches in their area.

26 Pray for the female leaders at your church, that God would grant them patience, endurance, and joy in their service.

30 Pray for the leaders of your country, both on the local and the national level. Ask that God, who established their authority, would guide them to lead justly.

31 Pray for the new students at Taylor Seminary who are taking part in orientation today.



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North American Baptists

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