

# HIGHLIGHTS

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Jimmy Martin  
Moving toward our  
Mission and Vision

MLC  
Leading Out  
of His Grace

Turkey, Moldova  
Get Involved  
in Missions

# Moving toward our Mission and Vision

“So, then... I was not disobedient to the vision from heaven.” Acts 26:19



by Jimmy Martin  
General Secretary

God is at work in and through IBC churches. Getting to travel to churches almost weekly, I rejoice to see God moving in and through our churches, changing people’s lives. Many are following in believer’s baptism. They testify to the goodness of Christ and the Gospel. Last year we saw new church planters arrive on the field in places like Panama City, Panama, and Rome and Vicenza, Italy, to begin the work God has called them to pursue. This year, there are plans in numerous places to add campuses, start daughter churches, and begin other new works. Some of our new workers are starting new churches; others are helping recently planted churches to grow. I am encouraged to see that *mobilizing and multiplying disciple-making churches* is not just our stated mission, but it is becoming a reality in some of our churches. I appreciate the energy and vision of younger pastors who are setting a good pace in moving their churches toward church planting and person-to-person discipleship. Older pastors are also giving us good examples to follow.

Last year, our new strategy and structure were unfolded. The structure is streamlined and simplified, making it easier for leaders to build teams and make decisions. I am thankful for our five core strategy directors. Each of them deserves your thanks AND your support. They are all busy people, yet they give many hours seeking to develop our five core strategies of Multiplying Churches (Darryl Evetts), Strengthening Churches (Gary Preston), Empowering Leaders (David Fresch), Building Connections (Scott Corwin), and Developing Resources (Judith Lynn Maxwell). Along with our presidents (David Packer, Richmond Ofori, and Tim Faulkner), they are strong voices who form a visionary and complementary team.

In a recent planning meeting our Executive Leadership Team gave challenge and support to one an-

other as each shared objectives for 2018, helping each other keep the focus on our IBC mission. Each core strategy director is seeking to accomplish much more than he or she can do alone. The vision for the future will be realized when it is shared by a growing number of leaders who connect with and are committed to the vision God has given us as a family of churches.

God is calling us forward. The word “movement” expresses our desire that not one or a few but all of us embrace God’s call to be “*global-minded churches reproducing healthy disciples, leaders, and congregations.*” I believe we can move toward our vision if we will hear God’s call to do three things.

**1. A call to pursue God above and in everything we do** – “Unless the Lord builds the house, its builders labor in vain. Unless the Lord watches over the city, the watchmen stand guard in vain” (Ps. 127:1). Our efforts at building and watching – creating and conserving – will either be the Lord’s doing or they will be fruitless. Activity does not equal progress or significance. The house we build and the city we watch over may even survive and thrive, but will the result be worth the effort? Only what is truly from God will remain strong and significant.

The psalmist said, “You are my Lord; apart from you I have no good thing” (Ps. 16:2). That is true self-awareness. And what is true of each of us is also true for our family of churches. Whatever we build or watch over, whatever we endeavor to do, we labor in vain unless we are pursuing and depending on the Lord.

We spent three years with a diverse team praying about and planning for the future of our family of churches. We received input from around the convention. We looked at all we were doing, trying to weigh the importance of our efforts together. Why

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Cover photo: Paul’s Pillar, Paphos, Cyprus by Jeremy Woods

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the IBC? What was/is God's plan for us? Our family of churches began in 1958 with two English-language U.S. military congregations in Wiesbaden and Frankfurt, Germany, with a vision to plant churches and make disciples of the nations. World events over the next 40 years helped to expand our vision and reach.

"Making disciples of all nations" is today much more a focus than before. It is God's heart that longs for the nations of the world to hear the Gospel and to come to Christ, to join the chorus of God-worshippers awaiting the return of Christ. We see the nations/peoples of the earth coming in and out of churches in the international cities where we are located. They are international business people and students and refugees and soldiers and nationals and others. And they ALL need to hear the Good News.

But like churches in the New Testament times and throughout history, if we are not watchful we are prone to replace the Lord's work with our own. This shift away from His mission may even go unnoticed in our busy-ness. The Laodicean church said, "I am rich; I have acquired wealth and do not need a thing." But it had become "wretched, pitiful, poor, blind and naked." The builders were building the house without the Lord. The Lord stood on the outside knocking, inviting anyone who heard His voice to open the door and allow the Lord of the church back into His own house (Rev. 3:20). The Spirit still speaks to God's churches, but we must be listening. He is calling us back to Himself. I hear that call in the challenges many churches are facing—problems of marriages and families, power plays in leadership, lukewarm participation in ministry, lack of harmony, decrease in conversions and baptisms, lack of generosity. All of these reflect heart problems that can only be solved as we pursue God individually and corporately.

With this in mind, we took advantage of the Lenten season to focus our praying. "Alive: A Response to the Gospel" was an IBC family-wide call to respond to God's grace through prayer. It is recognition that we desperately need the Lord. We as leaders must lead the way in humbling ourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may lift us up in due time, casting all our cares on Him, knowing that He cares for us (1 Peter 4:5-6).

IBC leaders must lead by modeling dependence on God. Our presidents are responsible to pray for and to mobilize our churches in united prayer for one another and for our common work together. They can lead us in doing that. We cannot merely assume prayer involvement; we must practice dependence on God, pursuing God in prayer as a first priority.

**2. A call to increase ownership in the IBC** – We are more than independent churches that enjoy benefits of a network. IBC churches have entered into



Photo by David Fresh

The ELT meets to vision and plan for the convention.

covenant with other churches – we are a covenant family. A covenant involves more than mutual obligations and benefits; it is about relationship. We are sister churches. We can do more together than we can do alone. We are autonomous but not independent churches; rather, we are utterly dependent on God. We are also interdependent—we rely on one another. If you are an IBC pastor, ask yourself how you can encourage and challenge other pastors and churches in their work.

Consumer Christianity is not only a danger in the pew; it easily creeps into the pulpit. We, too, quickly call or write or pray for one another only when a crisis arises. We, too, quickly suffer in silence, not making known struggles until the problems overwhelm or destroy us. The truth is, we need one another. God has given you to me and me to you. The Apostle Paul wrote to the Philippian church, "I have you in my heart" (Phil. 1:7). And he was certain that the believers in Corinth had him in their hearts because their prayers had helped him. Paul prayed for the Ephesian church that they would have power *together with all the saints* to "grasp how wide and long and high and deep" the love of Christ was (Eph. 3:18).

We are a family. Let's own our family through friendship that leads to fellowship that leads to partnership. It is a privilege to be part of the larger movement of God. Leaders will be the ones to involve their churches in the life of our family we call the IBC. If you don't do it, it will not get done.

**3. A call to increase engagement in the IBC's strategy** – We are communicating with pastors and other leaders to get your input and cooperation to make the IBC more effective in mobilizing and multiplying. We can do more working together than we can individually. Can you picture a family of churches where its ministry was helping every church to be healthy and growing and mobilized? Can you picture a family of churches where we talk about "us"

rather than “them”? Can you picture a family where pastors and leaders took ownership and then got engaged in an area of ministry that benefited other churches and in the process enjoyed the benefit of being a blessing to others?

Currently, people from less than one-third of our churches serve in some capacity on one of our ministry teams. We can do better than that. We must do better if we are going to reproduce healthy disciples, leaders, and congregations in ALL our churches. We have a strategy to do that, but it requires more of you stepping up in some capacity to serve.

Liaisons are one way you can broaden your participation and input in the larger IBC family. Has your church named your liaisons? They can help you to know what is going on through our churches and to find ways to engage. I want to express my appreciation to the churches who brought lay leaders to the Ministry Leadership Conferences in Argentina and Cyprus earlier this year. They represent the kind of greater engagement that we need. I pray your leadership teams left with a renewed vision and commitment to lead more effectively.

Our core strategy directors have shared objec-

tives and goals as well as opportunities for you to engage. Each core strategy has room for some to serve in big and small ways. You can do something. And if we all do something, our vision will begin to become a reality.

Join us in having at least 35 of our churches directly involved in serving on one of our teams. Make it your goal for you or someone in your church to serve. Our core strategy directors will continue to share their visions and make their needs known.

Lift up your eyes and see the potential of multiplying disciples, leaders, and congregations. We can make it a movement bigger than any of us if we will all commit to do our part. If you need to know some of the opportunities to serve, let us hear from you.

The Christian life is all about movement – straining toward what is ahead and pressing on toward the goal. The verse at the top of this article was Paul’s statement of movement toward the vision God gave him. And we as a family of churches must move ahead together toward the vision God has given us. I hope you will join us. 

## First-Ever Latin America Ministry Leadership Conference Held

Pastors from all over South and Central America gathered together in Buenos Aires, Argentina, from 27 February-3 March for the first-ever Latin America Ministry Leadership Conference.

The idea was to give pastors from the Latin America region the opportunity to meet for a time of ministry, focusing on some of the unique challenges in their region.

The theme of the conference was “Drawing Deep from the Well,” and speaker Tom Blackaby shared on how as leaders we all

need to draw deep from God’s presence, grace, assurance, and rest as we face our failures and weaknesses. It was a very powerful time together. With Melanie Driedger, a qualified counselor, also sharing and ministering through individual sessions, as well as David Fresch and Jimmy Martin teaching, the conference was a time of deep ministry.

There was also ample time for fellowship as the group visited key sights in and around the city including witnessing a live tango show and visiting the world famous

Colon Opera Theatre. The group also enjoyed a dinner at the home of one of the local participants.

Everyone went back to their homes edified and blessed, and it is clear that this will not be the last gathering of its kind in the region. We are thankful for the opportunity that was given to the pastors in Latin America to be ministered to in this way.

*Werner Swart*

*United Community Church, Buenos Aires, Argentina*



photos by David Fresch



# Leading Out of His Abundance of Grace

The Bible study with Bob Marsh is one of my favorite parts of the IBC Ministry Leadership Conferences. During our first morning session in Larnaca, Cyprus, Bob jumped into a study of Peter and began with John 21:15-19. This is the story where Jesus extends grace to Peter after his betrayal at the crucifixion and asks him to “tend my sheep.” Bob paraphrased it in this way: “Peter, I’m not through with you yet. I have things for you to do. The best things are still ahead.” To me, that’s what the MLC is always about – a reminder that in spite of our inadequacies, failures, and struggles serving in international churches, God is not through with us yet. The best is yet to come.

The teaching followed this theme all throughout the weekend. Bob Marsh focused on Peter, and Richard Blackaby spoke about Elijah. I loved seeing the parallels in their stories. God gives them both a high calling, and they both fail in different ways. Yet, Jesus appears to Peter, and God sends Elijah the angel with the freshly baked bread. He encourages them to get up and to take the next step of obedience because He still plans to use them in mighty ways. He will equip them to follow the path placed before them. I was encouraged to draw near to God and seek Him diligently - in the days that feel like a wilderness, in the days that seem fruitless or insignificant, in the days of failure, in the days that require brave steps of obedience, and in the days of victory - so that I can lead and serve out of His abundance of grace.

In between teaching sessions, we squeezed in a tour of the ancient cities of Paphos and Kourion. It was humbling to see the location in Paphos where Paul might have been flogged and then early Chris-

tians built a church. We visited “The House of Dionysus,” the home of a wealthy Roman ruler or Paphos citizen and saw beautiful mosaic floors from the second century A.D. All three buses ended up at the theater of Apollos in Kourion around the same time, and we gathered together for a group photo on the 2000-year-old steps. My favorite moment was when our tiny but enthusiastic tour guide, Demetria, glanced at the unmanned entrance counter and quickly ushered us into the Sanctuary of Apollos Hylates. She was determined to sneak in a quick visit before they closed for the day. Stepping among the ancient ruins, surrounded by yellow flowers with the sea in the background was a beautiful way to end our tour.

Of course, I always enjoy our time together at the MLC. During the group sessions, seminars, and small group time with IBC strategy directors and affinity groups, we were able to learn from each other, encourage each other, and find ways to better serve our churches and the IBC. I always appreciate the opportunity to step outside of my context and spend time with people who understand international church ministry life. There were a lot of laughs and hopeful words spoken over breakfasts by the ocean, walks by the beach, and late night dinners on the strip. Now that I’m back in Paris, I’m missing the people, the sun, and the halloumi cheese. But I’m thankful for the MLC and look forward to meeting together again in Dubai next year!

*Rachel Hendricks  
Paris, France*



Richard Blackaby



Bob Marsh



Photo by Judith Lynn Maxwell

The group gathers for photo at the Theatre of Apollos in Kourion.

# Making Disciples In Transient Communities



By Darryl Evetts,  
Director of Church  
Multiplication

The world is on the move! Millions of people are moving at any given time in a multitude of directions. In today's fast-paced world of globalization, not even national boundaries slow people down. According to United Nations statistics, more than 200 million people were living outside of their home country in 2010. The world is increasingly on the move as international companies form in increasing numbers, as relationships between nations demand larger embassy staff, as military personnel and their families are stationed in overseas postings, as graduate students seek higher education at international universities, and as migrants and refugees seek better living conditions across national borders.

No one knows for certain exactly how many millions of expats are moving around the world today, but the increasing numbers present tremendous opportunities and challenging implications for those who minister to expats in international congregations. An estimated 1,000 English-language congregations are serving people all over the world. These international churches function primarily in the English language and have the majority of their people from other countries. These global people, living in local areas or "glocal" communities, make unique congregations. They have a multi-cultural

diversity with a greater global perspective than typical congregations in their home countries. International churches have two main distinctives. They are very international (multi-cultural), and most of their members are transient. Transient members typically know when they arrive that they will be in that city for a short period of time. They know they are not permanent residents, and they know it from the beginning. There is a distinct sense of the temporary; they are sojourners.

This transient reality of the international church presents challenging implications in every area of church life and in every task of the church's mission. One international pastor put it this way, "It is like pastoring a parade!" It is imperative that disciple-making endeavors be approached with the transient nature of the international church in mind. It is critical that those who minister in international settings understand the need for contextually appropriate approaches to disciple making in transient communities. Those ministering in international settings must learn to disciple the moving target.

## A DISCIPLE-MAKING ETHOS

The God-designed motive for mankind is to bring Him glory. Making disciples is the mission that flows

## MULTIPLY Conference Explores Disciple Making in Transient Communities

Perhaps the best yet MULTIPLY Conference was held on 13 March following the International Baptist Convention's Ministry Leadership Conference in Larnaca, Cyprus. Nearly 50 IBC leaders gathered to tackle the critical subject of "reproducing disciples in transient communities." There was a tremendous exchange of ideas, and great principles and practices were explored. *Darryl Evetts*



photos by Debra Evetts

from that motive. Christ came to make disciples and commanded the church to do the same. Making disciples is the mission of the church.

Jesus' ministerial disposition was to make disciples. Jesus taught and healed and served people, but His underlying and predominant purpose was to make disciples. Christ made disciples and expected them to reproduce by making other disciples. Paul's natural and prevailing tendency was to help others grow toward maturity in Christ, in other words, make disciples. Making disciples was the dominant mission for both Jesus and Paul.

For a church to effectively make disciples, disciple making must be the highest priority for that church. The senior pastor of the church must be an advocate of discipleship. It requires a church culture in which the concepts and practice of disciple making permeate everything the church does. All ministry programs must be intimately aligned with and supportive of discipleship outcomes.

A "disciple-making ethos" is necessary for any church that wishes to be highly effective in making disciples. The disciple-making mission should be the underlying sentiment that informs all the beliefs and practices of the church. It should be the dominant disposition of the church. A church with a disciple-making ethos as the prevailing characteristic of the culture of the church would have the greatest probability of effectively making disciples.

#### A TRANSIENT COMMUNITY CONSCIOUSNESS

Churches desiring to make disciples in transient communities must maintain a "transient community consciousness." Churches of transient communities need to be fully aware of and sensitive to the dynamics of transient people and contextualize their approach to disciple making accordingly.

Jesus was conscious of the transient nature of His relationship with His disciples. He had a limited time to make and develop disciples. Jesus said, "I am with you for only a short time, and then I go to the one who sent me" (John 7:33). He used the time He had to prepare His disciples to carry out and expand His mission after His ascension into heaven. Jesus took the transient nature of His relationship with His followers into significant consideration as He developed His disciples.

The Apostle Paul likewise was aware of his temporary time with those he disciplined. Paul's spiritual parenting approach resembled foster parenting. He assessed the maturity of those he disciplined and provided them with the appropriate level of parenting

needed to move them further toward full maturity in Christ. Those Paul disciplined either moved on to be further disciplined by someone else or to begin discipling others or both.

There are several characteristics of the transient community that should be taken into consideration for effective disciple making, but the predominant characteristic is that transients only live in that community temporarily. Churches endeavoring to make disciples in transient communities need to capitalize on the transient reality. Transiency needs to be seen as a positive and not a negative dynamic. The church needs to stop viewing people's departure as losing people and start viewing it as an opportunity to intentionally send people on mission.



While churches in the U.S. struggle to keep their back doors closed in order to keep people in the church, the transient community needs to open the exit doors wide and strategically send people. Effectiveness needs to be measured more by sending capacity than seating capacity. The transient church needs to operate according to the constant flow of the transient community and develop effective access, growth, and exit strategies for disciples.

#### INTENTIONAL MOVEMENT

Intentional movement in disciple making is absolutely necessary. According to Scripture a disciple's life is to be transformed more and more. People are not supposed to remain the same over time. There should be progression and movement.

## C.A.L.L.E.D.

C.A.L.L.E.D. is a simple, reproducible, and transformational *process* for discipling. It describes a flow for a disciple-making conversation and emphasizes our role as equippers and disciplers.

**C = Celebrate.** Start with celebrating what the Lord has done *in* you, *around* you, or *through* you. “Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice!” (Philippians 4:4).

**A = Accountability.** The goal of accountability is to encourage the disciple(s) as they strive to be faithful to what they’ve heard the Lord tell them to obey. “Let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds” (Hebrews 10:24).

**L = Learn it.** Utilize a Discovery Bible Study together, giving the Holy Spirit room to “*teach you all things and ... remind you of everything I have said to you*” (John 14:26). What a joy this part is, taking time to discover what a passage says and what it means.

**L = Live it.** This is where the disciple learns to be still and wait, listening to discern the Spirit’s leading. This is the most important part of the process, so don’t rush it. The disciple will listen to the Lord and write down what his or her faithful response to the passage will look like.

The E. and D. emphasize our role in the context of a genuine relationship with those we disciple.

**E = Equipper.** We want to equip others with experiences, skills, and tools for their journey with Jesus and their journey of discipling others.

**D = Disciple.** Our role as a disciple is to come alongside the other person(s) in a life-on-life relationship always encouraging them to become more like Jesus.

*Developed by Shawn Sullivan, Crossbridge Community Church, San Antonio, Texas.*

Jesus’ pattern of disciple making facilitated intentional, progressive movement. Jesus used a pattern that moved disciples through assimilation, transformation, and mobilization. It was systematic, developmental, and progressive. Jesus began with the end in mind, and everything He did with His disciples purposefully moved them toward that end. Jesus’ pattern was sequential in nature and integrated throughout.

In *The Master Plan of Evangelism*, Robert Coleman describes Jesus’ pattern of intentional movement as an eight-step disciple-making model. The first step was selection. Jesus called a few men to follow Him. Association was the second step. Jesus spent time with His disciples. The third step was consecration. Jesus required their obedience. Impartation was the fourth step. Jesus gave Himself to His disciples. The fifth step was demonstration. Jesus showed His disciples how to live and minister. The sixth step was delegation. Jesus assigned work for His disciples to accomplish. Supervision was the seventh step. Jesus followed up on the disciples’ efforts. The final step was reproduction. Jesus expected His disciples to reproduce themselves.

One of the clearest models of intentional movement is the purpose-driven model. In *The Purpose-Driven Church*, Rick Warren describes the two simple concepts that the purpose-driven model is organized around: the circles of commitment and the life development process. Warren says, “The goal of the church is to move people from the outer circle (low commitment/maturity) to the inner circle (high commitment/maturity).”

An assimilation, transformation, mobilization process should form the framework for making disciples. Both in the context of personal and corporate disciple making the process should help move disciples along with intentional, developmental, progressive movement. It is not enough to have discipleship programs or activities. All ministry programs and activities must be aligned and sequential and facilitate movement toward maturity in Christ. Without movement, the church is just running ministry programs, and the programs are an end to themselves.

### RELATIONAL CONTEXT

Disciple making is most effective in the context of genuine and personal relationships. Jesus and Paul both illustrated the effectiveness of focusing on the few. In the context of genuine personal relationships both Jesus and Paul were able to adapt their discipling to the needs of their disciples. The personal re-

# Get Involved in a Missions Opportunity

relationship is more organic than the classroom and affords itself to adaptability and tailoring to fit the needs of individual disciples. Programs and classrooms are typically synchronized and regimented. Disciple making in the context of personal relationships can be personalized and customized. The smaller the number of people, the more flexibility there is to personalize the discipling. From a purely logistical perspective it is much easier to schedule meetings between two or three disciples than to schedule classes to accommodate dozens of people at the same time.

The curriculum for Jesus' and Paul's disciple-making process was the teaching of God's Word and modeling it in their life and ministry. This teaching-modeling approach is best accomplished in the context of personal relationships. Programs tend to be focused on information. Relationships can be focused on intimacy and accountability. This is more likely to lead to greater internalization, transformation, and ultimately multiplication.

While disciple making is more effective in the context of relationships than in programs, there needs to be some programmatic elements. There should be sequenced knowledge and skill acquisition. There should be a systematic approach to learning doctrinal content and developing spiritual disciplines. This should all be done in the context of personal relationships for the most effective transformation to occur.

With the transient nature of the international church in mind, these four principles point to our greatest opportunity for effectiveness. First, disciple-making processes should be motivated and supported by the church's disciple-making ethos. Second, disciple making should be designed and carried out with a transient community consciousness. Third, the most effective disciple making will facilitate progressive, intentional movement leading to transformation. And fourth, genuine and personal relationships are the context that lead to the most effective disciple making. 

## TURKEY

Ertan Cevik, president of the Turkish Baptist Alliance, and his daughter are hosting their annual summer camp for young adults (18-30 years of age) 24-29 June. They have asked that the International Baptist Convention send a team of 8-10 people to support their camp with a speaker and a small team to enjoy the fellowship of the experience.

Justin Hendricks from Emmanuel International Church, Paris, France, is going as the speaker. His wife as well as two others are also going, but we still have places for six more young adults. The team could do any of the following: participate/play with the worship team, lead some group games, participate in the events, go see some of the sights, and enjoy the fellowship.

The camp begins the evening of 24 June and concludes with breakfast on 29 June. The camp is located one hour from Izmir. You can fly into Izmir or Istanbul and the local team will pick you up and take you by van/bus to the camp. The cost of the camp is 100€ which does not include travel to and from Turkey.

If you are interested in participating, please contact Scott Corwin, Director of Building Connections, at [connections@ibc-churches.org](mailto:connections@ibc-churches.org).

## MOLDOVA

For the last several years, Aviano Baptist Church has been raising money to purchase firewood needed by poor families in Crihana Veche, Moldova. Moldova is the poorest country in Europe. The average family lives on 6,000 Moldovan Leu per month – about \$325. Many of the poorest people live on just 1,200 Leu per month – about \$65. Most of the homes are heated with just a single wood-burning stove; however, with such limited incomes, poor families cannot afford to buy firewood to heat their homes. In addition, a team goes each year to help with the firewood distribution, visit people in their homes, pray with them, and spread the Gospel. More than just warmth and food, this ministry has eternal impact as nearly 200 people have trusted Christ in the last couple of years as a result of this ministry.

A team of seven people from ABC were just there in February. Firewood and food was delivered to many homes, and 87 people made decisions for Christ in the three days the team was there.

For more information about how you or your church can be involved, contact Pastor Barry Cole at [pastor@avianobaptist.church](mailto:pastor@avianobaptist.church) or visit ABC's website: <http://www.avianobaptist.church/moldova-mission.html> 



Moldova – firewood delivery

# Holy Set Apart is Theme for Youth Conference

We are very excited about what we expect to be a great week at Euroventure 2018. Euroventure is designed for students who have completed 6th – 12th grades or the European equivalents (ages 12-19 years old). Euroventure is sponsored by the International Baptist Convention and will be held 7-12 July in Grindelwald, Switzerland. The theme for the week is “Holy Set Apart.”

Euroventure is filled with a good balance of spiritual growth, physical activity, fun and games, fellowship, and worship. This summer we will once again offer some amazing activities during the week of camp, including whitewater rafting, a ropes course, and hiking in the gorgeous Swiss Alps.

Please take note that we will be offering a special training time for youth workers and volunteers during the breakout sessions. We are very excited about the opportunity to have youth pastors and lay leaders from all over Europe together for a time to be encouraged, receive training and resources, and connect with other leaders.

Speakers for the week will be Ellison Tsang and Tom Hufty.

Ellison is the +Plus Groups Pastor at The Vine, an international English-speaking church in Hong Kong. He joined the team at The Vine after serving seven years as youth minister at another international church. Born in Hong Kong, he spent much of his teenage years in the U.K. His vision for the groups he works with at The Vine is to provide communities where people can thrive in their relationship with God and with each other.

Ellison is married to Brittney, who is a true Texan girl.

Tom is first and foremost a believer in and follower of Jesus Christ. At the age of 17, God captured his attention, and Tom gave his life to Jesus. He has an unquenchable thirst for God’s Word and a desire to “make Jesus look good” everyday and to everyone he meets.

Tom is husband to Rhonda, dad to Zac and Mackenzie, FIL (Father-In-Law) to Nicole and D.H., and Poppy to granddaughters Emmalyn, Kaylin, Vivian, and Pearl, and grandson Jack. To say Tom is passionate about his family would be an understatement.

Tom is currently the senior pastor at First Baptist Church, Maryville, Illinois (USA). Prior to serving at FBCM, he served as vice president at Hannibal-LaGrange University, Hannibal, Missouri; and, before that, Tom served several churches in the area of student ministry, family ministry, and music ministry. Tom is the author of two daily devotional books, “*Time Alone With God*,” and “*180°*.”

For the past 21 years, Tom and Rhonda have served as the U.S. coordinators for Euroventure.

Tom’s “Best Days” are spent with family and dear friends. He enjoys recreational activities such as golfing, skiing, beach walking, and mountain climbing. For personal relaxation and enjoyment Tom plays the piano and acoustic guitar.

In addition to Ellison and Tom, we will have a team of volunteers from Oklahoma Baptist University, Hannibal Lagrange University, and churches throughout the U.S. and Europe supplying leadership in the roles of small group leaders, breakout session teachers, music, and drama leaders.

Euroventure is a unique camp bringing English-speaking students from nations all over the world for a camp that for so many has become a place of spiritual growth and where lifelong friendships have been formed, right in the heart of Switzerland in the middle of God’s majestic creation of the Swiss Alps.

## COST:

Before 1 May: 240 Euro

1 May: 260 Euro

1 June: 280 Euro

1 July: 300 Euro

Two or more family members attending save 20 Euro each.

All Sponsors pay 240 Euro.

Online registration is available at <http://ibc-churches.org/events>



Hufty



Tsang

# Don't Give Up!

I want to quit! Have you ever felt like saying that to God about something in your life? I have. Maybe it's a commitment that became bigger or more demanding than it ever was supposed to be. It could be a relationship that always takes and never gives back. Sometimes working on a new discipline or trying to break a bad habit can leave us feeling drained. We become weary, and we just want to give up.

When we are in the will of God and yet we feel this way, God can use our situation to develop perseverance in us. So, how can we draw the strength we need to persevere?

## 1. PERSONAL TIME WITH GOD

When we are struggling to find the strength to keep going, our personal time with God each day is vital. We need to allow God to strengthen us and guide our way. It is when we are alone with Him that we quiet our own voice and allow Him to speak to us. *"Let the morning bring me word of Your unfailing love, for I have put my trust in You. Show me the way I should go, for to You I lift up my soul"* (Psalm 143:8).

Satan tempted Jesus in the desert, and Jesus used Scripture to respond to him. God's Word is powerful! Memorizing Scripture that applies to our situations can be used as a weapon to fight back discouragement. 2 Corinthians 9:8 can bring hope in our most difficult situations: *"And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work."*

## 2. KEEP THE RIGHT PERSPECTIVE

When we feel our spirits growing tired, it is an important time to stop and check our perspective. Are we looking at our situation from a self-centered viewpoint, or are we viewing it as ministry and service for the Lord? Jesus is the perfect example of a servant leader. We need that example because in our flesh, voluntary servanthood can chafe against our pride. We can grow resentful when those to whom we are serving or ministering do not appreciate our hard work or criticize us instead of showing gratitude. We need to live out Colossians 3:23-24: *"Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for men, since you know that you will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward. It is the Lord Christ you are serving."*

It is crucial to remember that our time here on earth is very short in the grand scheme of eternity. Holding onto this truth can help us see that there will be an end to the struggles we are facing now. 2 Corinthians 4:16-18 offers this encouragement:

*"Therefore we do not lose heart. Though outwardly we are wasting away, yet inwardly we are being renewed day by day. For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all. So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen. For what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal."*

## 3. THE REWARDS

God in His goodness tells us that there are special rewards for our continued labor when things are difficult. In James 1:4 we read, *"Perseverance must finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything."* And in Galatians 6:9 we read, *"Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up."* Maturing in our spiritual life and the promise of a harvest one day are just two of the blessings that can motivate us to stay steadfast in the midst of a difficult season.

Hang in there! Whatever we face, we do not face it without the Lord. Our challenges here will have an end one day. Take comfort in these wonderful truths!

Trace Odom

IBC Women's Team, Metterich, Germany



## Jurbise, Belgium

ONE OF THE PREVIOUS PASTORS of the International Bible Church, Jurbise, Belgium, once said, “Pastoring an international church is like pastoring a parade!” In many of our churches, the so-called “revolving door” is a challenge to any kind of ongoing leadership development. How do we rise to the challenge?

Each year at IBC Jurbise we offer a 32-week coaching experience called Mentorship in Biblical Leadership (MBL). MBL is a three-phased transferable mentorship designed to respond to the urgent need of developing disciple-making leaders of integrity for the local church.

Phase 1 (12 weeks) of MBL focuses on the leader’s person – his/her character, spiritual gifting, personality, and formative experiences. By the end of this first phase the participant has: (1) evaluated his/her own life in view of the biblical character qualities of a servant leader (1 Timothy 3; Titus 1); (2) clarified his/her ministry match based on S.H.A.P.E. (Spiritual Gifts, Heart, Abilities, Personality, Experience); and (3) begun a life-to-

life coaching experience with the facilitator, taking inventory of life direction and priorities.

Phase 2 (10 weeks) focuses on the leader’s purpose in life along with personal priorities in seven areas of life management: family, finances, emotional/mental health, physical health, social life, work, and spiritual growth. These are sometimes called the “seven ways out of ministry” when not managed from a biblical perspective. During this phase the participant also writes a life vision and mission statement in light of biblical priorities.

Phase 3 (10 weeks) focuses on the process of discipleship and the people the leader influences. In this phase we look at Jesus’ master plan of making disciples and how to apply these principles in view of multiplying disciples today.

Throughout all three phases the participants are involved in a specific area of ministry in the life of the church. This allows them to immediately implement in practice what they are learning in theory.

Beyond the weekly group sessions (of



approximately 1-1½ hours), the participant is engaged in a life-on-life coaching experience. This one-on-one interaction focuses upon the weekly reflection assignments requiring approximately 15-30 minutes of personal study and evaluation.

Over these past three years, more than 20 people in our church have completed MBL. Several of these are now elders, deacons, or deployed into fields beyond as servant leaders to Christ’s church.

If you are interested in knowing more about how you can implement this mentorship process in your local church, contact David Stevens at [pastor@ibc-jurbise.org](mailto:pastor@ibc-jurbise.org).  
*David Stevens*

## In Memoriam



### Herbert Stout

2 December 1927 -  
10 January 2018

A TRIBUTE BY  
JIMMY MARTIN

A dear friend of mine and many others in the IBC family has joined the “cloud of witnesses” who set an example of faith for many, and who now cheer us on as we live and serve Christ our Lord. Herbert Stout died on 10 January after spending several months in hospice care in Fayetteville, Arkansas. Herbert and his identical twin brother, Herman, first came to Germany as U.S. military members just after World War 2. While in Wiesbaden, Germany, they joined other Christian soldiers who ministered to German children, many left homeless after the war. The Stout brothers were reassigned, but both felt a call

from the Lord to return to Germany one day to plant English-language churches. Herman returned in 1957 and Herbert in 1958, along with their families, to start churches in Wiesbaden and Frankfurt. These two churches cooperated in starting 30 new churches and missions in the next 6 years. The Stout brothers described this work: “God led all the way, and He blessed beyond the wildest dreams that the Stouts ever had.” These churches were the genesis of the IBC.

I met Herbert when he was in his 80s, still serving the Lord along with Mary, his wife. Even in his late 80s, he was leading Bible studies in the nursing care facility where he and Mary lived. The Stouts raised children who continue to love and serve the Lord.

It is often not until something or someone is gone that we come to truly appreciate their legacy. Although we know that Herbert is with the Lord and the community of saints that are cheering us on

as we continue this “pilgrim journey” on earth, we also feel deeply Herbert’s absence among us. Separation is the pain of love. We grieve; we mourn; we cry. But we do so with confidence, with hope. Herbert is with the Lord. And we who have placed our trust in Christ know we will join Herbert one day.

We who serve in IBC churches stand on the shoulders of Herbert and Herman, the churches they began, and other pioneers who preached and taught and served and shared – many faces who lived out their faith in many places over the years. Their vision to see English-language disciple-making churches planted and flourishing continues to be our vision.

Herbert’s legacy continues in us. We are together in a Gospel partnership, and that partnership, by God’s grace and predetermined plan, will continue until the Lord returns.



## Zürich, Switzerland

### THE WOMEN AT THE WELL

*“Those who refresh others will themselves be refreshed.” (Proverbs 11: 25b)*

On 2 September 2017, the International Church of Zürich saw a relaunch of its women’s ministry, together with a new name. In an international church, the feeling of community can be challenging to achieve with people living further away from each other, often meeting only briefly after church on Sundays.

In biblical times, women would meet together at the well as they refilled their water jugs, where no doubt they would talk and fellowship with one another, sharing their troubles and worries as well as their good news and joy. So, in the same spirit “The Women at the Well” ministry group was formed. The aim of this fellowship is to encourage women to come together and to grow, share, support, and encourage each other in their Christian walk.

For the first event, approximately 30 women gathered together at the church for a morning of fellowship. Following an opening time of prayer, the women were treated to a very interesting and thought-provoking devotional by Anne McVicar (wife of our interim pastor). Anne encouraged the women to consider how the Bible shows God moving in the lives of men and women to fulfil His purpose and plan. Moving through a number of books of the Bible and reading various passages, Anne highlighted examples of God working in the lives of Abraham, Nebuchadnezzar, Daniel, Cyrus, and Esther. As with the men and women of biblical times, everyone was reminded of the call to step out of their comfort zone in faith and to rely on God.

This was followed by worship through

singing and a pause for some tasty refreshments. Next, in small groups, the women took some time to complete questionnaires and discuss what everyone wanted from the women’s ministry, what their priorities were, and how best to communicate with one another. One outcome from this activity has been the setting up of a WhatsApp group to be used primarily for prayer requests, and this is already being put to good use.

To complete the morning, all of the women had the opportunity to decorate their own ‘water scoop’ to mark the beginning of what will hopefully be many returns to the well for fellowship. These ‘water scoops’ - actually plant pot holders - were decorated using various materials, and a plant was chosen by everyone to put in it and take away with them.

Following on from the success of this first event, the women met together again in December, this time at the restaurant

of one of the members of the group, for a festive meal. Dubbed “Christmas Around the World,” the women had a fantastic time learning about Christmas traditions from Hungary, Romania, Germany, and Russia, where some of the women come from. In between courses of delectable food prepared by IBCZ’s gem of a chef, Debbie Serodio, everyone took part in a quiz that challenged them on their knowledge of Christmas facts versus Christmas customs and traditions. The evening was brought to a close with the singing of Christmas carols.

The women’s ministry leadership team came together again in January 2018 to seek the Lord in prayer for the year’s events and ministries that would best serve the women of IBCZ. The next event was held on 7 April, when once again the women of IBCZ gathered at the well, for fellowship and with their figurative water pots ready to be filled.



## Join the MULTIPLY Conference!

*Dear IBC Pastors & Church Leaders,*

The IBC has a dream! It’s a huge dream that’s only possible with God... and you! We dream of becoming a church multiplication movement with every one of our IBC churches participating in starting new disciple-making churches around the world. Please join us for a dedicated day of conversations at our MULTIPLY Conference on Thursday, 25 October, the day following the Annual Convention Meeting in Madrid, Spain.

**Time:** The one-day conference is from 9:00-15:00.

**Meal:** Lunch is included at no cost to participants.

**Focus Topic:** How can EVERY IBC church participate in planting other churches?

*Blessings,  
Darryl Evetts*

## Paris, France and Hoensbroek, The Netherlands

FROM 2-4 MARCH, the Emmanuel International Church of Paris had their annual men's retreat. As a former member of EIC Paris, I suggested to Paul Ho (EIC men's minister) and Parker Windle (EIC senior pastor) that a group of men from Emmanuel Baptist Church of Hoensbroek, The Netherlands, join them this time. In total, a group of approximately 30 men were together for the weekend.

EIC Paris has gathered their men in an evangelical centre on the beautiful coast of Normandy for several years. This is a time when everyone can not only get to know each other better in fellowship but also learn what the Word of God expects from men.

This year our main speaker was K.J. Pugh, who recently joined EIC Paris as a church planting missionary for a new church in the heart of Paris. K.J. led us on a four-session journey over the hills and valleys of Romans 1-8. He insisted on the importance of living as sons of light, re-

membering Christ is the only way and trusting in His Spirit to transform burdens into blessings.

We were blessed to have four pastors with us who were brave enough to face a Q&A session after every teaching. This allowed us to treat very important themes and see them with the filter of the Bible.

Our group was very international, with every continent represented as well as different cultures. Our discussions in small groups as well as the time of fellowship allowed us to understand and share each

other's joys and struggles as brothers.

We also had some time to discover the beauty of the region, including the historical sites of D-Day, the splendor of the coast, and the hidden jewels of some nice villages. And, of course, the local gastronomy!

This was a time very well spent and everyone left hoping to see each other again, in Paris, Hoensbroek, or wherever the Lord will guide us!

*Grégoire Gaffet and Paul Ho*



photo by Paul Ho

## Eindhoven, The Netherlands

ON 4 MARCH, the International Baptist Church, Eindhoven, The Netherlands, held a special Community Connect. On this Sunday, extra activities were organized to create an additional opportunity for fellowship and building relationships. During the morning service, all members of our different worship teams collective-

ly led us in worshipping our Lord and a guest speaker, Pastor Erik Nielsen from First International Baptist Church, Copenhagen, Denmark, preached the Word of God. After the service, an abundant fellowship meal was shared, in which church members contributed wonderful meals from their home countries.

In the afternoon, every one could choose from three activities. Erik Nielsen conducted a seminar on Worship, including topics such as What is Worship?, Why do We Worship?, How should We Worship?, and How to Lead Others in Worship? There was also a flower arranging

workshop in which Jan Poot taught how to decorate a birdhouse with lovely flowers and greenery. This workshop resulted in a lot of laughter and the loveliest creations! Finally, the children could exercise their treasure-hunting skills in an outdoor quest in the streets surrounding the church. Directions and 27 sometimes cryptic questions guided the children through the biblical street names. The winning team answered 25 questions correctly – a great achievement!

All participants on this special day experienced the blessing of connecting to one another in a different setting.



Decorating birdhouses



Erik Nielsen, Copenhagen, preaches during Eindhoven's Community Connect.

## Gießen, Germany

“WE ARE YOUR CHURCH...”

As in any family, there are changes and phases in the history of a church that need embracing. Our church in its very beginning served the American soldiers stationed in the region so that they might have an English-language service and a piece of “home away from home.” Gradually, international students formed part of the congregation for much the same reason, and the location change to the Freie Theologische Hochschule brought with it a number of students from both the school and nearby university.

Recently, a more balanced congregation has emerged: a mix of current students, former students, and other internationals and locals who work and live in the area. We have also experienced an increase in the number of babies, toddlers, and children. With all these developments, though, it is nice when something remains by-and-large the same. Regardless of the make-up or the size of our congregation, there is one constant characteristic that has remained throughout the history of our church – we love to sing!

Sometimes it can seem that the number of songs that we sing in a typical Sunday service simply is not enough, and that everyone could quite happily continue worshipping. With this in mind two members of the Sunday service music team came together to create a Worship Night series which, one year on and despite initial low turn-out, has become quite the event. Nowadays, a regular Night can attract 50 worshippers, with the highest attendance

to date being 80 people. It is true that the majority of these are students who may have brought their friends along, but it has never been advertised as a student event, so there really is a wide spectrum of people in the crowd.

Chairs are removed, to allow for freedom of movement and comfort; fairy lights are hung up, while the main part of the room remains darkened; and there are no orders of service or collection plates. Each Worship Night has a theme and the evening is structured around it, with times of silence and personal prayer, Bible readings and a short input. Last Worship Night, for example, was based on “For who You are” and focused on the different names and identities of God and our response to them. In the input, the speaker used the anecdote of watching his friend react passionately to a goal scored by his favorite football team – do we respond to God in the same way, even if something doesn’t happen in our favor? He created us and loves us – that deserves our unending praise! Afterward, the singing continued with “Praise is Rising (Hosanna)” by Paul Beloeche and Brenton Brown.

Drawing mainly from the song-base that we have at our church, the Worship Night team have always sought to include a variety of songs – old and new, German and English, slow and up-beat, but their final selection has always been based on their musical interest and the message and meaning of the lyrics. Split into sets of four, there is always a chance that a song could be repeated, as it had a



*Love our God, Love His World*

particular resonance in a previous Worship Night and it fits that Night’s theme. One new song has become a firm favorite, Rend Collective’s “Build Your Kingdom Here.” While it may not fit every time with the evening’s underlying theme, it has been played as a last song for nearly all the Worship Nights so far, and there is a particular reason why. At the end of the Worship Night, it is easy to feel that you have met with God and received from Him, as one person mentioned, and as a result have had your spiritual batteries recharged and gained a new energy and enthusiasm. The question that hangs in the air, according to one of its founders, is “What now?” The way forward is what this closing song reminds us of: the call to make disciples, to act and live out our faith beyond the Worship Nights and church services we go to. It is a commandment as true for the early church as it is for everyone and every church today – no matter the size or constellation of the congregation. “WE PRAY REVIVE THIS EARTH.”

*Karen Spenler*

## “You Can Change Your World” ANNUAL CONVENTION MEETING

Immanuel Baptist Church  
Madrid, Spain  
22-24 October



## Hoensbroek, The Netherlands

EACH MONTH, Emmanuel Baptist Church, Hoensbroek, The Netherlands, holds a women's fellowship event. In February, the theme of our event was "Teapots and Tea." We shared a time of prayer, a spiritual devotional related to the theme, and a Russian tea ceremony and finished with a tea party.

The women were encouraged to bring one or more teapots from home and share a story about their teapots. "Every teapot has a story to tell!" Yes indeed, to everyone's surprise we started sharing interesting stories related to these beautiful teapots – in different shapes, sizes, designs, and brands. The stories were all diverse in nature from a part of a gift, a souvenir, an antique collection, a 40th birthday treat, a special treasure inherited from mom, a keepsake from an ex-boyfriend, a memory from a family reunion ... and the stories go on and on!

A short devotional entitled "Teapots and Tea" was shared during the event.

A teapot is a beautiful piece of art, carefully moulded, crafted by the potter, strengthened through heat, and laid out on the table as a vessel of service! As a Christian, we can be a vessel for service, "God's Little Teapot." Many might still remember the song – "I'm a little teapot short and stout, here is my handle and here is my spout. When I get all steamed up, hear me shout: 'Tip me over and pour me out.'"

What happens to the tea bag when it is immersed into hot water? When life steams you up – be it emotions, fear, anger, or worry, what is poured out of you?

Teapots come in different styles but are

crafted for the same goal – to be the vessel for a steeped, fragrant, flavored antidote to quiet a restless heart, to warm a troubled soul, to soothe the clanging pressures built up in the mind, or just to let us be still and relax for a few minutes. We are all God's masterpiece created with a purpose.

There are three ways God deals with us:

- He touches us
- He teaches us
- He transforms us

1. God touches us. We are touched by God through the Holy Spirit. The very moment that our lives meet His, just like a tea bag when it hits hot water, is when His work begins. Our recognition of Him might be muffled in circumstances and the world around us clanging for our attention, but once God claims us as His own, there is no undoing the grace and mercy that comes through His holy touch.

2. God teaches us. It is only through continued immersion that we become stronger. A famous quote by Eleanor Roosevelt says: "People are like tea bags, you never know how strong they are until you put them in hot water." Everyone has had or will experience that hot water experience. God is allowing His master-crafted plan of our life to be unveiled. He is pulling out and exposing gifts of strength, courage, and tenacity within us that we did not even know that we were capable of having. God's wisdom and strength has been infused into us through the Holy Spirit. God teaches us through different experiences, through others, and through

worldly insights, but one of His most favored ways is to teach us through His Word. There lies His heavenly wisdom which surpasses our earthly wisdom. As the psalmist writes in Psalm 32:8: "I will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go; I will counsel you with my loving eye on you."

3. God transforms us. Just as the tea bag has been transformed into the steeped, flavored, fragrant antidote for restlessness – be it the circumstances that surround us or the inward struggles that we cannot seem to steer free of, we are being equipped with the strength, power, and might of the Holy Spirit. This is where our true, unblemished trust comes into play. Day by day we are being transformed. But we have to trust that God is working even if the outcome is still blurry. It is a gradual process that has no timelines or boundaries, and it is being done through the very hand of God.

So God has touched us, is teaching us, and is transforming us, but how will we know when are we ready to be poured out? The answer is now, every day! For we are being poured out unto this world, and we are a reflection of what God's touching, teaching, and transforming look like. We are a people of purpose, and our primary purpose is to know God and seek His face. God has poured out His love generously on us, and we too are called to pour our love generously on others!

A question to ponder: "When you get all steamed up what is poured out of you?"

*Leena Sundaram*

