

HIGHLIGHTS

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Jimmy Martin

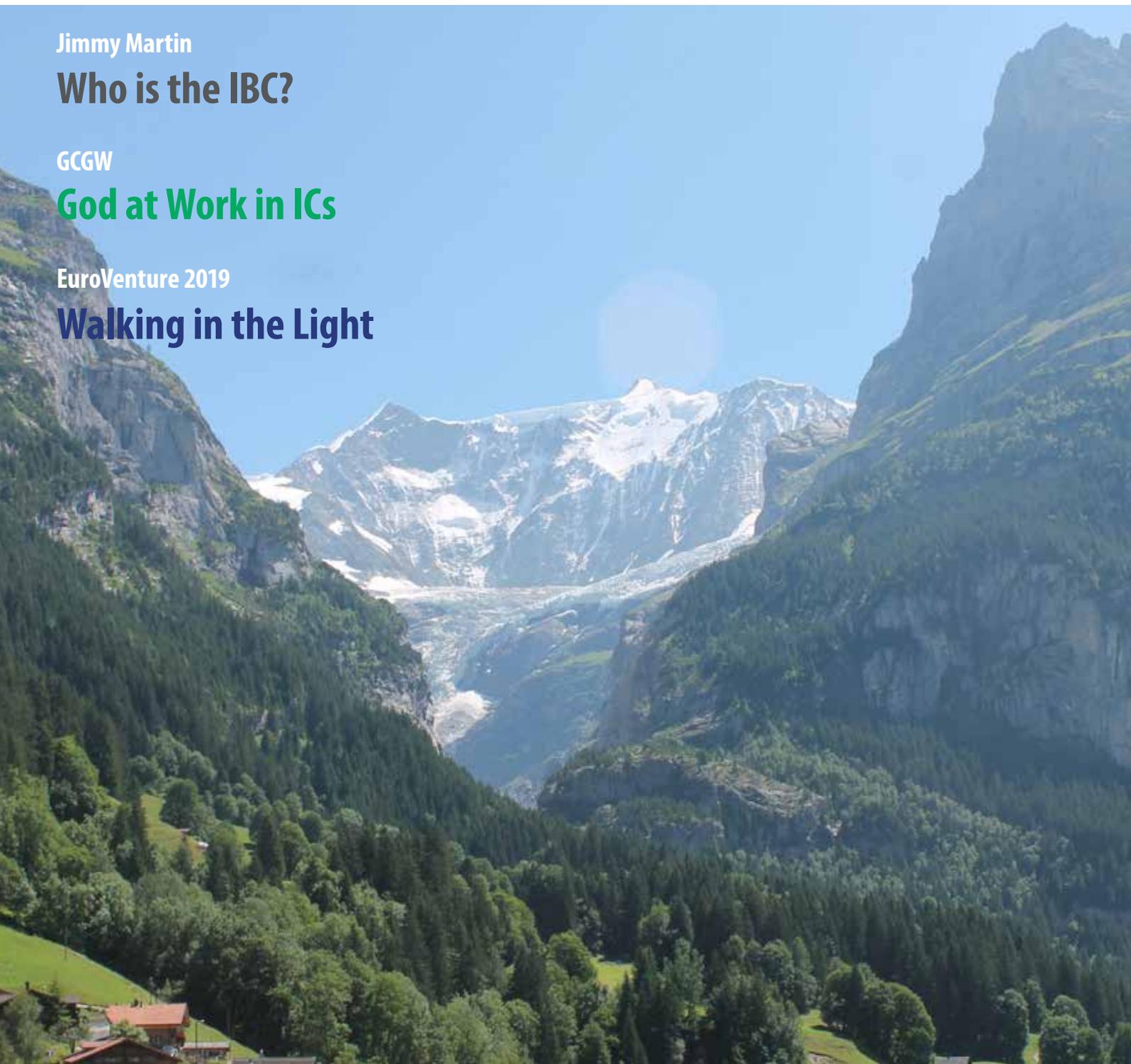
Who is the IBC?

GCGW

God at Work in ICs

EuroVenture 2019

Walking in the Light



Who is the IBC?

“Who do people say I am?”... “Who do you say I am?”



by Jimmy Martin
General Secretary

The Gospel of Mark centers on the question of Jesus’ identity. A key question of the book is, “Who do you say I am?” After spending time with Jesus, hearing His teaching and watching His actions, Peter answers for himself and the other disciples, “You are the Christ” (8:28-29). Later, an unexpected confession comes from a Roman soldier who observes Jesus’ death: “Surely this man was the Son of God!” (15:39).

Since Jesus is the One who founded the church, His identity is tied to that of His followers. The term “Christian” tied the early followers of Jesus to Him. So it is for us. We are the church of Christ. Our identity, our stories, our very existence are inseparably linked to Him. He is unique! By belonging to Him, so are we!

Who is the IBC? The IBC is a family of churches. We are not a church per se but a family of like-minded churches joined in covenant with God and with each other. Rather than choosing to be independent, every IBC church has expressed its intention to be totally dependent on Christ and interdependent on the other IBC churches. We are a family – a diverse, widely scattered family of English-language churches. We share finances through our Cooperative Program of giving to help every church when needed and to enable the ministry and mission efforts we agree to pursue. We share experiences of life and ministry every time we meet – learning from each other, encouraging one another, challenging one another, and supporting one another. We share a common goal of reaching the world with the gospel. We share a deep commitment to the Bible as our standard of belief and life. We share a common vision and mission.

We partner with each other to pursue our mission of “mobilizing and multiplying disciple-making churches.” We pray for one another on a regular basis, especially in times when churches face challenging situations. We rejoice with each other when God wins victories in our churches and with individuals. We plan together to increase our effectiveness as vessels of evangelism and missions to the multitudes of expats and other internationals scattered in the 24 countries where we are located and in the many other places where we have ministries. We worship in our churches with people representing more than 130 nations of the world.

Who is the IBC? The IBC is the people who make up our churches. It is the pastor and leaders of each church and the many who serve in visible and not-so-visible ways. It is the “trophy of God’s saving grace” whose lives are being touched and transformed into the likeness of Christ. It is the refugee who fled his home country due to war, economic devastation, or political danger only to find a home in a Bible-centered, Christ-honoring gospel church that ministers to him and shares the Good News of Jesus Christ.



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Cover photo: Grindelwald, Switzerland is the site of EuroVenture
each year by Judith Lynn Maxwell

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It is the international business person who, along with her family, has found a place and a people who welcome them as fellow pilgrims on the journey of life and commit to love them, disciple them, and be discipled by them for the time they are together. It is the young military member whose family has found an oasis in the midst of the turmoil of loneliness, deployments, stress, and uncertainty. It is the young person who is never comfortable answering the question, “Where are you from?” because he has moved so many times, and yet he is making lifelong friends at EuroVenture and in his youth group.

It is the national who had never heard the gospel until she visited an English-speaking church in a country where English was not the official language or who found a Christian home in his home country when he visited a church made up of many nationalities from all over the world. It is the diplomat who discovers that her most important citizenship is in heaven and that heaven’s kingdom is made up of people of faith from every nation, tribe, people, and language.

It is the international student who, at a formative time in life, joins with other students and people of all ages for fun and fellowship, and in the process makes life-changing commitments that will go with her for the rest of life. It is the single adult who finds a church family where he is welcomed and accepted fully. It is these and others who find themselves in IBC churches where learning and growing and doing life together develops disciples who love and follow Christ, where people are accepted regardless of their baggage, and where spiritual and practical help are offered by others.

Who is the IBC? I could put a name to every type mentioned above. And the churches of these people are beacons of life engaged in effective ministry. A church translates into German, Korean, and Arabic every week to make it possible for more to hear the gospel in their own language. Another church with few financial resources regularly serves an orphanage in Ghana and ministers to parents and children in Rwanda who still suffer from the results of the genocide in that country. And it is the numerous other churches that have partnered with them in this effort.

Another church located in a city with many scientists and students of science offers an annual forum on how Christianity speaks to science. Another church offers a food kitchen to feed the homeless in their international city. Another helps to sponsor a ministry in a large refugee camp in Greece to be the hands and feet of Christ to those in need. Another sponsors an annual soccer camp for refugees, locals, and internationals, opening the door to share Christ with them. Another sees the desire of some members to plant a church in a nearby city not as a challenge of fewer members in their own building and a depletion of needed resources but rather an opportunity for greater kingdom impact, selflessly getting behind the project in every way.

Another helps to support a ministry that extends Christian compassion and practical help to women trapped in human traffick-

ing or unwanted pregnancies. Another church joins with church planting ministries in Moldova, Iraq, Latvia and other places to reach people with the gospel. Another church crosses the border every year into Nicaragua to reach young people and their parents with the gospel. Another works to support the drilling of water wells in countries where water is scarce, empowering the local church to reach its community with water and the Water of Life. Another church supports student workers who are sharing Christ on university campuses. Another supports a village in Moldova by providing needed firewood for the winter, as well as a gospel witness.



Another church has surveyed its city, one of the largest in the world, with a view of planting English-language churches to reach the hundreds of thousands of English-speakers scattered throughout the city. Another church, small in size, works with other churches to plant churches in several neighboring cities. Another joins with military chapels to share Christ and minister to military families who struggle with life and who need the gospel. Another church supports missionaries going from the church to serve in various places around the world.

These IBC churches and others look beyond themselves to go into their Jerusalems, Judeas, Samarias, and ends of the earth. At the same time, people from the ends of the earth are coming into their churches or meeting their members. Many of them are eager to hear the Good News.

Who is the IBC? The IBC is a book full of pages with inspiring stories that are being written because of God’s transforming work. It is the story of an Iranian family who flees their home country for political reasons and finds Christ when they move into a city where an IBC church is located. Upon hearing the gospel from the IBC pastor they begin a journey of new life that brings them into four countries throughout Europe. In each country Farsi-speaking Bible studies and churches have been formed to bring the Good

News to many who are eager to hear. It is the story of a Chinese student doing Ph.D. work who begins attending an IBC church to improve his English, even though he is an atheist. After a few years of getting more and more involved in the church, hearing the gospel preached and taught and seeing it lived out in the lives of church members, he returns to China to bring the gospel to his family and others in his home country.

It is the story of a Ugandan Ph.D. student who is disciplined in an IBC church. Upon returning to his home country, he shares the gospel and disciples students in the state university where he teaches. It is the story of an Ethiopian student who, while being disciplined in an IBC church, begins to share Christ with a national who is asking questions about Christianity through an online chat room. The time comes when God touches her heart, and the girl is ready to commit her life to Christ. The student helps her to step across the line of faith. Their relationship begins to develop since they live in nearby cities, and they are married a few years later.



It is the story of a military member who comes to know Christ through the witness of an IBC church, is disciplined in another IBC church, develops into a church leader in a third IBC church, and becomes an IBC church planter and leader. It is the story of a military member whose life and family and career were almost wrecked before an IBC church member gives the man Christian encouragement. He is later reassigned and comes to hear and respond to the gospel in another IBC church and is now being disciplined. His life and family and career have all been rescued. The IBC is the story of countless military members who were disciplined in IBC churches and leave those churches to serve the Lord in all parts of the world as Christian teachers, counselors, doctors, lawyers, businessmen and women, pastors, missionaries, and other professionals.

It is the story of a man who struggles with alcohol and the law, who hits rock bottom before finally coming to hear the gospel in an IBC church. His life and family are changed, and he is now preparing to serve the Lord as a ministry intern in the same IBC church. The IBC is the story of two Christian singles that meet in an IBC singles' group, are married, and now serve the Lord in an IBC church plant. It is the story of a Dutch Indonesian girl whose life is touched with the gospel in an IBC church. She is disciplined in an IBC church and now is a vibrant witness to everyone she encounters and an inspiration to fellow disciples. It is the story of an Iraqi soldier who fought in the first Iraqi war. Later, he comes to Germany and becomes a part of an IBC church whose pastor is a retired U.S. soldier who fought in the same conflict on the opposing side. The two discover they are brothers in a family that goes far deeper than racial, national, political, and cultural barriers.

It is the story of a refugee from an oppressive Muslim country who found Christ in an IBC church and who is currently reaching numerous refugees like him, sharing the love and hope of Christ. It is the story of a German scientist who finds Christ when he visits an IBC church because his wife insists he go with her to evangelistic meetings. His intellectual and moral barriers melt as he observes the difference Christ makes in people's lives. He commits his life to Christ and serves for many years as a church leader in the same church.

The stories that make up the IBC story are so numerous that only eternity will reveal the greatness of our God who continues to write the stories on the tablets of human hearts as His Story is told and lived out in the lives of people.

The IBC is many things. We are organized, but we are more than an organization. We have a structure, but the structure is like the trellis that holds a vine of delicious fruit. We are people and churches deeply committed to Christ and His mission in the world. Every person's story is an expression of the power of the gospel. Every church's story is being written locally and globally as people from around the world come and go.

It is an honor to belong to a family of churches whose vision is to become a movement of global-minded churches that are reproducing healthy disciples, leaders, and congregations. It is a joy to serve with a family whose core values are fellowship and partnership, church planting and healthy churches, unity and diversity. Who is the IBC? [You](#) and I are the IBC. 

Global Church for a Global World

Seeing God at Work in the International Church



This April, more than 200 people met in Dubai at the Global Church for a Global World (GCGW) conference, the largest gathering of international church leaders in the world. These leaders represented international churches in more than 40 countries and multiple church networks including the International Baptist Convention, Missional International Church Network, Fellowship of European International Churches, and more. While this was a departure from the IBC's usual spring Ministry Leadership Conferences, it gave us a unique opportunity to see what God is doing through international churches in Muslim and Communist countries and in cultures quite different than what most of our churches experience.

We also enjoyed hearing key speakers Ed Teo from Hong Kong, C.B. Samuel from India, and Leighton Ford from the U.S. who challenged participants to expand their thinking of how to approach ministry on the global stage. We saw God at work in amazing ways, and it was a reminder that despite being in a Muslim country where we had to take a number of precautions to run such a conference, God is still at work!

We ended our time there with a trip out to the desert to go dune bashing, which was an incredible blast!

There will not be another GCGW for at least five years. In the meantime, I believe the memories and relationships formed at this year's conference will bear fruit in more ways than we can imagine!

Next year we are planning two Ministry Leadership Conferences with one in Dubrovnik, Croatia, 13-17 March, and one in Brasilia, Brazil, 23-26 March. We hope that more leaders than ever will

participate including pastoral couples as well as many other leaders from our churches. We are making scholarships available so that as many people as possible can participate. 

David Fresch

Empowering Leaders Strategy Director



Dubai is site of GCGW 2019.



Dune bashing in the desert concludes the conference.

Photos by Judith Lynn Maxwell

EuroVenture 2019

Different Ages, Different Nations, Same God



by Natasha Karimu, Samantha Karimu, and Kendra van Gorp IBC, Eindhoven, The Netherlands

EuroVenture 2019 in Grindelwald, Switzerland, was a great experience! We had a small group, just four people, from IBC Eindhoven, The Netherlands, and we were blessed to travel together with our sister church from Antwerp, Belgium. We arrived Saturday late in the afternoon to a camp full with more than 280 campers and sponsors from all over the world.

Our week at camp was filled with well-planned activities including: team-building games, sports, devotions, various workshops, energetic worship sessions, and thought-provoking messages. There was also free time to go hiking in the beautiful Swiss mountains, explore Grindelwald, or do various adventurous sports.

We met teens from all around the world with very different personalities and cultures, but we all had one thing in common ... our desire to learn more about Jesus. Different ages, different nations, same God. We were able to pray for and encourage one another and make some amazing friendships at EuroVenture.

The theme for the week was from 1 John 1:7: “Walk in the light as He is in the light,” with messages from this year’s speaker, Justin Wevers from the U.S. Every evening he shared from the Bible and connected well with us. He went really deep into it, yet it was easy to follow. During the service he would provide us with the material needed for the next morning’s devotions.

Wednesday night was incredible. Justin challenged each person to leave the darkness for God’s light. We had a time of powerful worship and self-reflection as the sponsors made themselves available for those who wanted to talk or be prayed with.

We were able to learn a lot, have tons of fun, and grow in our relationship with God. We believe many life-changing decisions or steps in that direction were taken at EuroVenture 2019. We hope and pray that more teens and sponsors will join us in 2020. 🌍



Photos by Judith Lynn Maxwell



What I liked most about Euroventure ...

- The mountains, community, teachings, and worship.
- I really enjoyed getting closer to God and also getting to put more of my trust in Him.
- I loved how open everyone was. It was really easy to share perspectives of God's Word.
- The people here were friendly and nice and the sermon and worship sessions were fantastic. – *Bamnan Sebu*
- Worship at Euromania and meeting new people. – *Nathania Chimamiwa*
- Worshipping God with like-minded, amazing Christians.
- Euromania! So many fun games and the worship is amazing! Having fellowship with others your age is a wonderful gift.
- Best thing about Euroventure is the community from around the world coming together to worship Jesus. – *Seb V.*

Men's Conference

God of the Heights and the Depths is Theme

Join us for the 2020 IBC Men's Conference, 17-20 January, in Lenk, Switzerland. We will limit attendance to 200 so register now. The early bird conference fee is 190€ and includes accommodation,

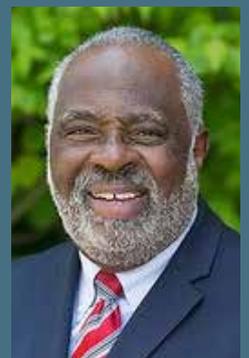


meals, and conference fee but NOT skiing. Early bird registration ends 1 December. After that, registration is 210€.

Evening worship speaker will be Robert Smith from Birmingham, Alabama (U.S.) The theme for his talks will be "God of the Heights and the Depths." Daily seminars on various topics will also be offered, as well as a special program after the evening worship time for youth from 10 years old.

Don't miss this opportunity for fun, fellowship, challenge, and spiritual refreshment with other men from your church and around the IBC.

For more information and registration, go to the IBC website at www.ibc-churches.org/events.



Smith

We Value ... A Series on Our Core Values

Editor's Note: Our core values show who we are and what motivates us. This is the third of a three-part series on our core values, written by leaders of the convention.

Healthy Churches: Four Pillars of Health



by Barry Cole
Strengthening Churches
Strategy Director and
Pastor, Aviano Baptist
Church, Italy

We've been focusing on our IBC core values here in the last several issues of *Highlights*. One of those core values is healthy churches. When I was in the U.S. Air Force, they used to refer to health in four distinct categories – they called them pillars – spiritual, physical, mental, and social. Looking at health like this gave us all some way to evaluate just how healthy we were. It seems to me those same four pillars can be applied to church health, too.

Of course, the first pillar of church health is spiritual. Jesus' mission was spiritual (to seek and save that which was lost); so is the mission of His church (go and make disciples). Of the four pillars, this may be hardest to gauge. But the question we need to ask as church leaders is, "Are we worshiping in spirit and truth?" I'm talking about more than music or clapping or raising hands. Is there a real sense that everything we do as a community is an offering of worship to the Lord? John Piper said, "Missions work exists because genuine worship doesn't." In a spiritually healthy church, people are actively engaging in their own discipleship, and they're excited about making other disciples. As a result, people are regularly getting saved through your ministry. There are times at our church in Aviano, Italy, when "holy hand grenades" are going off in our ministries. And there are other times that...it's not like that. Spiritual health, I think, is when there are more "holy hand grenade" times than not.

The second pillar is physical health. The church is called "the body of Christ" in 1 Corinthians 12:27, and I love that comparison. In a healthy body, everything works and grows together. In physically healthy churches, there is a clear sense of where God is leading the ministry. Everyone is committed to that purpose. People are excited about the ministry. Regular attenders and members are routinely inviting people, and new people are regularly coming. Two summers ago, we grew cucumbers in our garden for the first time. We had six plants (we had no idea how productive they were). Five of the plants were healthy. They produced so many cucumbers that even though we ate them every day we still couldn't keep up. One of the plants was not healthy; it didn't grow and it produced nothing at all. When the church is physically healthy, she is growing – physically and spiritually.



photo by Dimitris Vetsikas from Pixabay

The third pillar is mental health. I'm not talking about mental health in the psychological sense. We all know that Christianity doesn't require we check our brains at the door. While we may know that, mentally healthy churches act like it's true. Mentally healthy churches have a hunger and thirst for God's Word. In a mentally healthy church, it's okay if your sermon goes a little long on Sunday – the people want to learn the Word and how to apply it. The environment is one that says "Come, let us reason together" so people aren't afraid to admit they don't know everything, to ask questions, and to seek the answers together.

The last pillar is social health. Socially healthy churches are ones where real, genuine fellowship happens. Genuine fellowship is not measured by the number of crockpots you routinely see around your church. Hebrews 10:24-25 tells us what real fellowship looks like. That level of fellowship requires an atmosphere of real care and concern for one another. It results in trust and a willingness to open up to one another – to share life together. Another sign of a socially healthy church is one that is actively connecting with her community. Instead of simply hoping "they" will come to "us," socially healthy churches are "going out into the hedges and highways and compelling them to come" (Luke 14:23).

The Strengthening Churches Core Strategy exists to help churches in the IBC become stronger and healthier. If you would like to talk about some of the tools we have available to help your church do that, don't hesitate to reach out to us at strengthening@ibc-churches.org.

Church Planting: Three Reasons Why

We envision a movement of global-minded churches that are reproducing healthy disciples, leaders, and congregations. Reproducing disciples, leaders, and congregations go hand-in-hand. Reproducing disciples should lead to the formation of new churches and planting new churches should lead to making new disciples.

Our vision includes helping churches keep their focus on making and multiplying disciples. We see churches being equipped to teach and train their members to be lifelong, loving, and loyal followers of Christ who are actively sharing their faith.

Our vision includes being a catalyst for strategic church planting. We see churches praying for, contributing to, and supporting an ever-increasing number of church plants to reach people with the gospel, blessing the communities and churches where they are located.

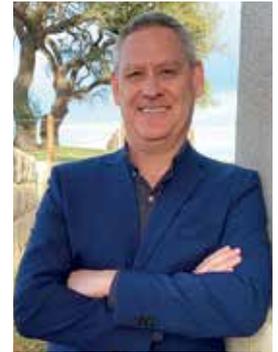
WE VALUE CHURCH PLANTING BECAUSE...

1. *God grows His church by adding those who are saved.* Paul wrote to the Corinthians, “I planted the seed, Apollos watered it, but God has been making it grow” (1 Corinthians 3:6). Paul makes it clear that we each play our part in the gospel, but it is God who saves. In the book of Acts, while describing the fellowship of believers, Luke informs us “the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved” (Acts 2:47). God adds to the body, His church, those whom He saves.

2. *The task of evangelism is complete only when people are brought into the fold of the church.* In His parable of the great banquet, Jesus said, “Then the master told his servant, ‘Go out to the roads and country lanes and compel them to come in, so that my house will be full’” (Luke 14:23). The invitation is not enough; Jesus wants his house full. When Jesus shared the parables of the lost sheep and the lost coin, He spoke of the “rejoicing in heaven” over the one lost sheep that was brought home and the lost coin that was found (Luke 15:1-10). Evangelism is not really complete until the born-again believer is brought into the local body of Christ.

3. *The Great Commission implicitly includes church planting (teaching, baptizing, discipling all nations).* Then Jesus came to them and said, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. 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 28:18-20). Carrying out the Great Commission requires evangelism. It also requires baptizing those God saves and teaching those God saves. Baptizing and teaching happen in the context of the body. Accomplishing the Great Commission requires new churches and necessitates the birth of new churches.

We believe that every church should be involved in some way in helping to start new congregations. The book of Acts demonstrates that new churches are the normal and necessary result of reproducing disciples. We value church planting and desire to expand our reach to strategic places around the world where the gospel is needed, all for the glory of Jesus Christ.



by Darryl Evetts
Multiplying Churches
Strategy Director



photo by Rommel Diaz from Pixabay

Calahonda, Spain

CALAHONDA INTERNATIONAL Baptist Church (CIBC) hosted its first ever Oasis Bible Camp for youth 1-5 July. The staff, including a team from Scotland and CIBC members, worked with children from the Costa del Sol, providing a dynamic week-long program with a theme of the work of the Holy Spirit. With songs, games, crafts, and snacks, the program was a huge hit with the children. The program attracted so much attention that it was featured in a local newspaper article.



Tom Trotter

Naples, Italy

On 30 June, Il Faro International Baptist Church celebrated its 30th anniversary. These photos capture a few of the high-

lights of the day including former pastors of the church being there (bottom left).



Darmstadt, Germany

THE CHURCH IS PLANTED – It is Time to Move to the Next Level

In September 2011 Bob and Carol Marsh arrived to start the work of planting an IBC church in Darmstadt, Germany. Now, almost 8 years later, Converge International Fellowship (CIF) has been truly planted, and it is time for the founding pastor and his wife to move on to a new mission field and for the church to continue to grow to become a church-planting church.

On 11 August 2019, with a mixture of sadness and excitement, CIF said goodbye

to the Marshes, thankful for the work that they have done over eight years to plant the church on solid ground. As a church we are excited to see what God has in store for us as we grow as a body and for Bob as he starts his new job as Europe/Mediterranean Regional Impact Team Leader for Converge Worldwide and the vision to plant an international church in Szczecin, Poland, ably supported as always by Carol.

Stewart Maxwell



Stavanger, Norway

PARTNERING WITH WORKPLACE DISCIPLESHIP INITIATIVE

North Sea Baptist Church is an international church body in Stavanger, Norway. Like all international churches it has a percentage of expats and military people who have a limited time within our midst. And so, we seek both to build up the body of Christ corporately and also enable those who move through to be equipped for God's further call upon their lives.

At the 2018 IBC Annual Meeting in Madrid, I had the pleasure of meeting Darren Ho and hearing his vision of the Workplace Discipleship Initiative. WDI is a transformational experience designed by Missional Impact, and it had two aspects of its aim that fitted our needs: seek-

ing the Lord collectively to transform and multiply us. Ho, along with Jim Lapinski, came for a week to Stavanger to coach the first generation of disciple-makers. This 1:1 coaching focused on leadership, vision, disciplines, and outcomes.

This "Residency Week" approach, with one-hour meetings five times during the week, simulates "doing life" together, as you would with your families, friends, and colleagues at work. The purpose is to really understand our role, leadership situation, workplace, and life context to better help in clarifying the vision God has for us and in our work.

After our residency week, the six of us split into two triads which then met over 12 weeks, continuing the learning and

helping each other grow in our individual Kingdom vision, disciplines, and outcomes.

This is what we found after completing our first generation of disciples:

- Being personally invited works! For whatever reason they accepted the invitation it was clear God had already made them 'right and ready.'
- Because WDI is a 15-week initiative in total, it involves a regular time commitment. We learned that we had to say 'no' to something to say 'yes' to this. And yet we found that while this could be a concern, it was not. Once we committed, we were faithful and benefitted greatly from the consistency of fellowship and prayer.
- The 1:1 coaching greatly helped direct, empower, and set God's vision for each of us in our family and work.
- The triads were really a great success and blessing. Keeping it small and intimate aided in allowing honesty, joy, and love to hear God's wisdom in the process.

Most of us came in with no expectations from the program. What most of us thought was our 'mission map' of who we should be missional with turned out to include areas and people we had not considered. God has clearly worked in this process and as we move to the next generation, we are expectant of how God will move because we realize the work He has done in us.

Rebecca van der Brink



Kaiserslautern, Germany

“THE DELIGHT OF A SHEPHERD’S HEART”

Having lived in Germany three times during my childhood as a military brat, it has been the longing of my heart for more than 30 years to return to Germany to serve military families in pastoral ministry. This prayer came to fruition in May as the Lord affirmed through His church the call for me to serve as the senior pastor at Faith Baptist Church in Kaiserslautern. But as you already know, this story is not truly about me. This story is about the faithfulness of Jesus Christ to His church.

In coming to a new place of ministry, there are hidden hopes deep in the heart of a pastor related to the true purpose of the church and its ministries, the love of the people for the Lord and each other, the holiness of the church, the church’s hunger for and obedience to the Word of God, the church’s faithfulness to pray and give and serve, and the faithfulness of individual believers to share the Gospel of Jesus Christ with those who do not know the Lord in order to make disciples of Christ. So, what did I find at Faith Baptist Church?

At Faith, I have found a family of Christians that is biblically faithful. As I began to preach expository, text-driven sermons and to teach expositionally from the Word of God, this congregation came alive. Even though these believers are following Jesus in a cloud of failing post-modernism that denies the authority and over-arching truth of Scripture, these faithful saints of God show forth a resolute devotion and readiness to hear biblical truth and to obey it.

At Faith, I have found a family of Christians that is doctrinally shaped. It is one



photo by Myriam Zilles from Pixabay

thing to say that we believe the Word of God, but it is something quite different to hold to the doctrinal truths of conservative Protestant orthodoxy in the face of a vast, pluralistic marketplace of ideas characterized by relativism. In this Western cultural milieu in which the concept of moral absolutes is often eschewed, I have found this church to be a bastion of saints who desire to define their beliefs based on the doctrines of Scripture both in love and without compromise.

At Faith, I have found a family of Christians that is morally tough. While there is no shortage of people who claim to know the Lord even as they cherish and protect their hidden sins, I have found that the imperfect saints in this church are walking the narrow road of obedience to Christ even as they take steps to live holy lives before the Lord, choosing holiness

over sin and cherishing the favor of God over temporal pleasure.

At Faith, I have found a family of Christians that is intellectually vibrant. There is a hunger here to grow in theology and practice that is evidenced by the number of people taking part in the study on hermeneutics that I am teaching on Wednesday nights this summer. Moreover, our preparations for the fall and spring Bible and discipleship studies for adults are generating great interest as is our Men’s Reading Cohort which will meet once a month to discuss a great book of the Christian faith (Athanasius’ *On the Incarnation* is scheduled for September and men are already buying their books). These believers seek to love the Lord with all of their minds in addition to their hearts.

At Faith, I have found a family of Christians that has a deep and abiding faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. This is of the most importance for if love for the Lord Jesus Christ does not drive all of the aforementioned expressions of our Christianity, then it is a fool’s errand in which we are engaged. But it is not a parade of fools that I lead here at Faith Baptist Church. Rather, we are a gathering of wretched sinners, saved by grace through faith in Jesus Christ, who are serving one another in love that we might fulfill the Great Commission for the glory of God. This glorious reality, this embassy of Christ’s redeemed ambassadors humbly making their light seen in the darkness of the foreign land of this passing world, is truly the delight of this shepherd’s heart.

Garrett Starr



Madrid
SPAIN



Tranne Moon
SPEAKER

IBC WOMEN’S CONFERENCE

Save the Date

24 - 26 APRIL 2020

MORE INFORMATION TO COME:

[HTTPS://IBC-CHURCHES.ORG/BUILDING-CONNECTIONS/WOMEN/](https://ibc-churches.org/building-connections/women/)