



Evangelical Missiological Society - South Central Regional Conference 2021

Abstract Booklet

Saturday March 6, 2021

Institutional abbreviations:

DIU - Dallas International University

DTS - Dallas Theological Seminary

8:50 Sign on to Zoom [links marked in aqua] & make sure your computer sound works. Chat with others using the chat box.

9:00 Opening (Michael Ortiz, EMS South Central VP)

9:15-10:00 Plenary #1

[Room #1] – Duane Elmer duane.elmer7@gmail.com

BIOGRAPHY: Duane H. Elmer began his higher education at Moody Bible Institute and did his B.A., M.A. and Ph. D. degrees at Michigan State University in the area of Education and Cross-Cultural Communication. He also completed a second M. A. in New Testament at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School. He and his wife served as missionaries in South Africa, and their two sons were born on the field in Zimbabwe. He pastored for five years in the USA but for most of his career has been involved in higher education. He is retired from Trinity International University where he was G. W. Aldeen Professor of International Studies and distinguished professor of Educational Studies, Ph.D. program. Prior to Trinity he was the Price-LeBar Professor of Educational Ministries at Wheaton College and Graduate School.

Duane has traveled and taught in over 75 countries for mission agencies, NGO's and theological schools, but has also been a trainer for several Fortune 500 corporations. Most of his work is related to cultural adjustment, interpersonal relationships, cross-cultural conflict and educational development. His book, *Cross-Cultural Conflict: Building Relationships for Effective Ministry* (InterVarsity Press, IVP) is widely used as a textbook in several countries. He co-edited *With An Eye on the Future: Development and Mission in the 21st Century* and wrote *Cross-Cultural Connections in 2002*. Most recently he has written the book, *Cross-Cultural Servanthood* published by IVP.

10:15-10:50 Parallel Session #1

[Room #1] – Brian Bain (DTS) bbain@dts.edu

Integrity as the Key to Effective Communication in Any Context

BIOGRAPHY: Dr. Brian Bain (DIS, Fuller Theological Seminary) serves as Assistant Professor of Missiology and Intercultural Ministries at Dallas Theological Seminary. Brian spent eight years working with the North East Africa Theological Seminary in South Sudan.

ABSTRACT: Communication theory states that the actual words we speak represent only a small portion of the broader message communicated. Even so, most evangelism training and exhortation almost fully focuses on the words shared by the evangelist and little else. This paper will focus on not one, but four critical components of communication and how attention to each is necessary in communication, particularly the gospel. The first and foundational component is the actual life of the communicator and the message it represents. The second component is the means by which the communication takes place. The third component is the actual content of the message. Finally, the audience or recipient of the message must be considered.

When these four components operate in harmony, there is great integrity of communication. This integrity greatly improves the effectiveness of any attempted communication of the gospel or any other message.

[Room #2] – Katie Hoogerheide Frost (SIL/DIU) katie_frost@diu.edu

Meaning in the Psalms: What we've been ____-ing

BIOGRAPHY: With experience in both ethnoarts and linguistics/translation, Katie Hoogerheide Frost (M.M., M.A., M.A.) is particularly interested in how these disciplines intersect in biblical Hebrew poetry. She currently serves on faculty at Dallas International University and as an arts consultant with SIL International.

ABSTRACT: Whenever we engage in word-based communication, meaning comes not only through the words themselves (e.g., word forms and word order) but also through how they are presented (e.g., overall structure and aesthetic features). In the case of the Psalms, many renditions are faithful to the word-level meaning but, without attention to the presentational elements of the original Hebrew, have essentially failed to capture the heart of the text.

What can we do to encourage impactful presentations of the Psalms? Come enrich your own understanding of these intricate poems as we explore three components of language structure that can help guide you—as well as teachers, pastors, artists, and translators in a variety of contexts around the world—communicate the meaning of the Psalms far more effectively.

[Room #3] – Wayne Dye (DIU) wayne_dye@diu.edu

"Ask of Me": Ways To Appeal to Felt Needs That Lead to Spiritual Depth

BIOGRAPHIES:

Sally Dye (MA, Fuller theological Seminary) is a recently retired SIL Scripture Engagement consultant and DIU instructor.

Wayne Dye (MA, University of Michigan; PhD, Fuller Theological Seminary) is a senior faculty member at Dallas International University. He recently retired from SIL after serving as an international level consultant for more than 40 years.

Danielle Zachariah is an ethnoarts consultant, focusing on Bible translation and community development.

ABSTRACT: Unhealthy syncretism that leads to a dual allegiance is an ongoing problem for Christian communities around the world. While many factors contribute to this issue, one key component is an evangelism and discipleship process that sidelines felt needs. Throughout the Bible, though, we see God giving people's felt needs a central role in drawing them to Himself. This presentation presents a nuanced view of felt needs that takes into account more recent criticisms of the topic, while also providing insight into cross-culturally common types of felt needs and how to draw out a particular individual's or community's most pressing felt needs. The presentation concludes with methodology for how to point people to the "True Provider."

[Room #4] – Stephanie Shewey (DTS) steph.shewey@gmail.com

COVID-19 and Burnout

BIOGRAPHY: Stephanie Shewey is a student at Dallas Theological Seminary, graduating with her Masters in Cross-Cultural Ministries in Spring 2021. She and her family plan to be missionaries in the Philippines as soon as the opportunity arises, and once the country reopens for travel.

ABSTRACT: A unique, relevant and current issue regarding ministry burnout, is how people are experiencing stress throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. Of the six ministry workers interviewed for this article, half dealt with some negative experiences following the lockdowns each country had to undergo in an attempt to prevent further spreading of COVID-19. The other half actually benefitted from the shelter-in-place ordinances. All utilized technology to continue their ministries in unprecedented ways, and for some, this actually helped expand their ministry beyond their previous reaches and thrive under the circumstances. Depending on each individual's ministry, and the resources available to them, their experiences differed in the way COVID-19 affected their work, life, and ministry. Whether we are experiencing negative or positive effects from the pandemic, we can learn from the ministry workers' experiences that were shared in these interviews: take the focus off of ourselves, keep it on the Lord, and work through our circumstances knowing that God is in control.

11:00-11:35 Parallel Session #2

[Room #1] – James Alongi (DTS) jpalongi@gmail.com

Principles of Cross-Cultural Communication: Evangelism, Habits, and Activism

BIOGRAPHY: James is a student at Dallas Theological Seminary, graduating in Spring 2021 with a ThM in Intercultural Studies and New Testament Studies.

ABSTRACT: In this paper, written for Dr. Brian Bain's Intercultural Communication course at Dallas Theological Seminary, it is noted that both conscious habits and activism are preceded by principles in any effective communication enterprise. Therefore, while principles always have limited effectiveness, they are necessary to start a work, and they may be renewed as that work progresses. The following principles progress from the need for self-denial while still engaging in effective thinking, through the tension between verbal and non-verbal communication, toward a fuller understanding of the relationship between incarnational ministry and the missio dei. The last three principles highlight the tangible need for the gospel in all cultures, and attempt to synthesize principles, habits, and activism under the rubric that preaching the gospel to ourselves is the only way to maintain the tension between verbal and non-verbal communication without breaking it. This habit, motivated by principles learned from the gospel, always results in activism, so that our verbal and non-verbal communication are complementary. Furthermore, each principle

contains implications for cross-cultural communication.

[Room #2] – John Muthodi (Texas Baptists) dewindusk@live.com

Effective Methods of Communications in Church Planting in Rural India

BIOGRAPHY: John Murthodi is a graduate of Dallas theological seminary with a Master of Theology (OT) and Master of Arts in Leadership and an M.A. (Political Science).

ABSTRACT: There are several successful church planting movements that are developed all over the world in the past 30-40 years. Few of the church planting movements (CPM) have helped in identifying the demographics of Unreached people groups (UPG) and few of the CPM focused on Indigenization and contextualization. With the changing times, India has become one of the toughest places to follow Jesus. Several recent studies on persecution rank India (10) among the toughest places to follow Jesus.

The present administration has started to impose several tough laws of anti-conversion making it more difficult for new believers to follow Jesus and discourage the church planting movement in rural India. One of the successful CPM strategy in South Asian (Indian) context has been the Local church movement. These days it has become very difficult to even start a Bible study group or a prayer group in your own place in rural India because of community objection or imposing of strict laws of anti-conversion. To plant a church in rural India one must acquire no objection clearance from the local community leaders, the village heads and the administration.

The case study will discuss several socio-political and cultural objections in church planting which can be overcome through proper methods of communication in rural India. Finally, the paper will bring out a successful method of communication in church planting without compromising God's mission in rural India.

[Room #3] – Timothy Hatcher (DIU) tim_hatcher@diu.edu

Avoiding Monolingual Missteps in Multilingual Contexts: Applying Translanguaging Methodologies for Ministry Effectiveness

BIOGRAPHY: Timothy Hatcher (PhD, Assemblies of God Theological Seminary) teaches courses in Scripture engagement and missiology at Dallas International University and serves as a Scripture Engagement Consultant for SIL International.

ABSTRACT: Multilingual host communities function very differently sociolinguistically from many monolingual sending societies due to differences in the way they conceptualize language. Missions agencies often propose monolingual modes of communication in contexts where people live every other aspect of their lives multilingually. Many multilinguals prefer a blended language approach to life that reflects their hybridized identities; one term for this is translanguaging. To neglect multilingual identities diminishes comprehension of gospel communications and is often interpreted as a lack of respect. Translanguaging, a concept from multilingual education, offers easy-to-implement approaches to empower host communities to leverage multilingualism for greater engagement with Scripture and greater ministry impact.

[Room #4] – Rebekah Querfeld (DTS) rzimmerman888@gmail.com

Ministry to the Minotaur: The Need for Focused Communication Training to Reach Online Communities

BIOGRAPHY: Rebekah Querfeld is a student at Dallas Theological Seminary studying in the Master of Theology program. She is currently on the administrative team at a Classical Christian school called Coram Deo Academy where she works with teenagers to help them grow in wisdom and stature before God and people.

ABSTRACT: Humans are social beings, but the internet has changed the way they communicate. With the rise of online community-building platforms such as dating sites, blogs, chat rooms, and social media, the church is faced with new ministry fields. One of these thriving online communities is the Massively Multi-Player Online Role Playing Game. In these games, individuals from around the globe gather together to achieve a goal, but in doing so develop real relationships with people they may have never met face-to-face. While the complex worlds in these games are easily accessible, few Christians engage them for the sake of Christ's kingdom, often arguing that relationships cannot be genuine if all communication goes through a screen.

Online Communities are here to stay, and discipleship within them requires new communication methods, but are seminaries training leaders to use them? Do ministry training programs prepare Christian leaders to disciple others using primarily online communication? This paper seeks to examine the potential for future online ministry in platforms such as MMORPGs and to highlight the need for theological education which trains leaders in communication methods designed for these new mission fields.

1:10-1:45 Parallel Session #3

[Room #1] – Mark Harlan (DIU) Mark_Harlan@diu.edu

Correctly Communicating the Role of Ishmael in the Plan of God

BIOGRAPHY: Mark Harlan is a graduate of the U.S. Air Force Academy, holds a Master of Theology from Dallas Theological Seminary and a PhD from Fuller School of Intercultural Studies. He currently directs the Abraham Center at Dallas International University where he teaches Islamic studies.

ABSTRACT: Muslims see Ishmael as the progenitor of the Arab peoples, view themselves as his spiritual progeny, and esteem him as the exemplar of submission to God. In contrast, Christians typically view him as the tragic result of Abraham's impatient faith, a cursed "wild donkey of a man" and a source of enduring conflict between Arabs and Israel. These contrasting perspectives impact attitudes, relations and communication between Muslims and Christians. An accurate understanding of Ishmael's role in God's plan in scripture can enhance communication of the gospel to Arab and Muslim peoples. Prominent points in that plan include:

- Gen. 16:12 is not a curse upon Ishmael, but a promise of blessing.
- While Ishmael is not the agent of covenant fulfillment, he is a partaker of its blessings (Gen. 17).
- His descendants will be the first nations to come to Jerusalem to offer their wealth in worship in the millennium (Isa. 60; Isa. 42:10-11; Psa. 72), a prophecy whose initial fulfillment occurred at the birth of Christ.
- The magi (Matt. 2) were Ishmaelite Arabs, not Persians.
- Paul did not go to Arabia to reflect, but to launch his first mission to gentiles.
- While mission to Jews had theological priority before gentiles (Rom 1:16), among gentiles, Ishmaelites had priority.
- Other important implications for mission follow.

[Room #2] – Sahr Mbriwa (Baylor University) Sahr_Mbriwa@baylor.edu

Weeping with Job: The Wisdom of Lament in Missional Integrity

BIOGRAPHY: Sahr Mbriwa (D.Min., Missio Seminary) is the Chaplain at the Baylor University Louise Herrington School of Nursing. He also teaches on spiritual formation and discipleship.

ABSTRACT: Much of the missiological challenges facing the church today are rooted in issues of integrity, e.g. pastoral scandals, toxic leadership cultures, congregational splits. In the current postmodern era, church failures have been widely broadcast, and at the very least called into question the credibility of the gospel. Unsurprisingly, a lack of integrity in the church tends to yield disillusionment and skepticism in response to its message and mission. While integrity has long been essential to missiology and ecclesiology, there has been a scholarly resurgence in the last few decades on integrity in the life of the church. This article contributes to that corpus by exploring the relationship between lament and missional integrity. That is, the role of lament to shape and substantiate the voice and witness of the people of God, particularly in times of trouble. Building on Claus Westermann's insights on the book of Job, the author argues that lament is not simply an exercise in practical theology, but also a commentary on our allegiances and affections.

[Room #3] – Julie Shoemaker (DTS) juliegshoe@gmail.com

The Importance of Face to Face Ministry in a Virtual World

BIOGRAPHY: Julie Shoemaker is studying at Dallas Theological Seminary, pursuing a Master of Theology degree with a concentration in Bible Exposition.

ABSTRACT: This paper argues for the necessity of continued face to face ministry and the benefit it brings. The Covid-19 pandemic has brought new challenges to missions activity in that in-person ministry has been decreased or altogether cancelled. What were formerly little used mediums of communication, such as video technology and other online platforms, are now acting as the primary means of communication. As such, this paper uses the apostles' ministry activity in the New Testament to show the emphasis they put on face to face ministry as a medium of communication. This provides a basis for understanding the importance of not turning entirely to the convenience of virtual platforms but also continuing to make the effort to engage in face to face ministry for mutual encouragement and support.

[Room #4] – Sunny Hong (SIL International) eunsun_hong@yahoo.com

Communicating the Book of Ruth Through the Honor and Shame Perspective

BIOGRAPHY: Sunny Hong (PhD, Biola University) has served with Wycliffe & SIL since 1994. She currently serves as a senior anthropologist consultant at SIL International and an adjunct professor at Dallas International University. Her areas of research are multicultural issues, diaspora issues, and Bible and culture.

ABSTRACT: Stories in the Bible give a glimpse of how the honor and shame perspective played a significant role in people's lives because it was a vital part of their culture. One of the most enlightening of these stories is the book of Ruth.

1:55-2:30 Parallel Session #4

[Room #1] – James Alongi (DTS) jpalongi@gmail.com

Unreached People Groups: Re-Routing the Conversation

BIOGRAPHY: Collaborative effort by the leaders of Student Missions Fellowship at Dallas Theological Seminary. The main contributors are James Alongi and Andrew Feng, with input from others.

ABSTRACT: The terminology used to describe unreached people groups is varied, with each term having particular advantages and drawbacks. The idea of unreached people groups itself communicates that there are groups the church has not yet reached, but does not reflect the fact that many people groups in the world are “reached” by other cultural and religious influences. The missio dei recalls the Father’s sending of the Son into the world to fulfill a universal cultural role in dying as a man. A term that reflects this content might be more effective in mobilizing Christians for missions, rather than a term that reflects the distance between our cultures and the failure of the church to send missionaries. New terminology could also reflect the real spiritual problem that the group has rather than a socio-geographical problem. Using the analogy of re-routing the conversation, new communication principles can be discussed that take into account the everyday critical decisions that must be made by para-church mobilizers, churches, families, and individuals. In this way mobilization, training, and funding of those with access to the gospel can be improved so that they can fulfill the missio dei and take the gospel to those without access.

[Room #2] – Douglas Buhrer (DTS) Douglas.buhrer@gmail.com

How Collaboration Serves as a Means to Bring About a Shared Vision of Gospel Impact in the City

BIOGRAPHY: Douglas Buhrer graduates from Dallas Theological Seminary in May 2021. He has served both cross-culturally and internationally. His varied ministries included Mormon ministry, Atheist ministry, Muslim Ministry, church planting, discipleship, and youth ministry.

ABSTRACT: God clearly cares for cities since it contains his image bearers and the people therein shape the world around them. However, right now in many places around the world, believers and churches are operating as if they are the only ones in a region.

What if all the believers and churches in an urban region reached into their areas of influence and worked together to make a difference in the city? The result of this collaborative effort is that each individual’s or team’s strengths are built upon so that together, the product is better. In the case of believers, this would mean the impact and presence of the gospel in the city is increased.

Instead of trying to recreate multiple ministries in every pocket of an urban environment, believers could focus on their gifts and local areas which would then allow for collaboration across the region for Gospel change. It is logical then that believers can make the greatest impact not by duplicating existing ministries but instead partnering with other believers and churches across their urban community.

This paper explores the cruciality of urban ministry, what collaboration is, and how the gospel should be centered in an urban environment which can make a huge difference. Collaboration is that means of impact.

[Room #3] – Glenn Machlan (YWAM/SIL) gamachlan@gmail.com

Miscommunicating the Gospel

BIOGRAPHY: Glenn Machlan (YWAM, SIL) has worked on a Bible translation project in the Philippines and is currently editing Bible translation helps to especially aid mother-tongue translators.

ABSTRACT: As Peter's conduct was not in step with the gospel when Paul opposed him to his face (Gal. 2:11-14), so we may miscommunicate the gospel through our actions as well as our words. This may be unintentional on our part and is often due to biases that come from our culture, our personality, our innate bent toward legalism, or, as in Peter's case, a fear of others. These miscommunications may appear in the way we do church, in what we preach, in how we translate scripture, in what we say or don't say, and in how we live our lives. This presentation will seek to make us aware of the ways that we may miscommunicate the gospel, as well as how to better guard against any distortions of the gospel, always mindful that God can redeem us when we fail. After all, Peter's failure was included in scripture as an example to avoid, but also as the springboard for Paul to make clear the truth of the gospel (Gal. 2:15-21).

[Room #4] – John Clayton (Covenant Presbyterian Church) jclayton@cpcfs.org

Thirst: How Thirst Communicates Our Need for God's Provision

BIOGRAPHY: Dr. John Clayton (PhD, Columbia International University; DMin, New Geneva Theological Seminary) is the Senior Minister of Covenant Presbyterian Church in Fort Smith. His book *The Curious Conversion of Thomas Chalmers* will be published in April 2021.

ABSTRACT: Thirst is an urge in response to an internal prompting, communicating the need for specific provision. Within the human brain, the lamina terminalis determines the necessary fluid levels in the body and sends the signal of thirst. Thirst is quenched through the intake of God's natural provision of water. Thirst may also be understood metaphorically. The psalmist describes a thirst only satisfied in God (Ps. 63:1), and Jesus teaches that those who thirst for righteousness will be blessed (Matt. 5:6), even describing himself as the one who quenches such thirst (John 7:37). Physical and spiritual thirst stand alongside one another in the example of Israel's thirst in the wilderness of Sin and God's miraculous provision with water from a rock (Ex. 17:1-7), which the Apostle Paul metaphorically interprets as analogous to God's redemptive provision in Christ (1 Cor. 10:4). Therefore, thirst communicates the need for God's natural provision of water as well as the need for his spiritual provision in Christ.

2:45-3:15 Plenary #2

[Room #1] - Duane Elmer duane.elmer7@gmail.com