

AUC Ministerial Association Group Discussion Guide



Resourcing Your Evangelism Cycle

Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptising them
In the name of the father, and of the son and of the Holy Spirit, and
teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I
am with you always to the very end of the age – Matthew 28:19-20

“A great work of reform is demanded, and it is only through the
grace of Christ that the work of restoration, physical, mental, and
spiritual, can be accomplished. Christ's method alone will give true
success in reaching the people. The Saviour mingled with men as
one who desired their good. He showed His sympathy for them,
ministered to their needs, and won their confidence. Then He
bade them, “Follow Me.” There is need of coming close to the
people by personal effort. If less time were given to sermonizing,
and more time were spent in personal ministry, greater results would
be seen. The poor are to be relieved, the sick cared for, the
sorrowing and the bereaved comforted, the ignorant instructed,
the inexperienced counseled. We are to weep with those that
weep, and rejoice with those that rejoice. Accompanied by the
power of persuasion, the power of prayer, the power of the love of
God, this work will not, cannot, be without fruit.”

-Ellen White Ministry of Healing 143

**Many have no faith in God and have lost confidence in man. But they
appreciate acts of sympathy and helpfulness. As they see one with no
inducement for earthly praise or compensation coming to their homes,
ministering to the sick, feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, comforting the
sad, and tenderly pointing all to Him. As they see this, their hearts are touched.
Gratitude springs up, faith is kindled. They see that God cares for them, and as
His Word is opened they are prepared to listen.
Medical Ministry p. 247**

In large cities there are certain classes that cannot be reached by public
meetings. These must be searched out as the shepherd searches for his
lost sheep. Diligent personal effort must be put forth in their behalf Ellen
White, *Evangelism* 433

**For the Son of Man came to seek and save
that which was lost Luke 19:10**

Evangelism is based on feeling God's heart for lost people.

Steps Toward Instilling Evangelistic Values

1. Pray for it
2. Lead it
3. Teach it
4. Illustrate it
5. Study and discuss it
6. Disciple it – Need to be involved in direct discipling of others
7. Inspire it
8. Personalize it – People need to see the issue on a personal level, see how evangelizing will affect the people they care about.
9. Fund it
10. Schedule it – Scheduling rooms and time slots for outreach – oriented prayer times, training, seminars, strategy sessions, team meetings, outreach events, even seeker services. Going on trips to attend effective churches and ministries, or attend vision lifting conferences and workshops.
11. Measure it – If you can't measure it, you can't manage it!
12. Reinforce it – reinforce the good things that are happening
13. Celebrate it

Left to their natural drift, churches will become inward focused. We will end up spending most of our energy and resources on maintenance rather than being missional and thinking outwardly.

An outward focus requires a high level of intentionality.

Evangelism is a Process not an Event

- Evangelism is a process of sowing, cultivating and harvesting.
- Evangelism is not complete until the converted are multiplying
- 'Connecting people to the harvest does more for evangelism than all the training events in the world' *Bob Logan*

Steve Sjogren gives the following list of words that describe how the process of evangelism has changed in our culture. Where once people had some biblical literacy, were less consumer driven and had some regard for God's authority things have changed. With it an effective approach to evangelism.

Monologue... ...Dialogue
Compelling Proof... ...Compelling Story
Presentations... ...Conversations
Words... ...Images
Our Language... ...Their Language
Us/Them... ... Fellow Travellers
Fishing from the bank... ...Swimming with the fish
Believe to belong... ...Belong before believing
Event driven... ...Context driven
Come and see... ...Go and be
Scripted... ...Spontaneous
Winning... ...Nudging
Gospel presentations... ...Gospel experiences
(Sjogren, Ping and Pollock - *Irresistible Evangelism*, 55)

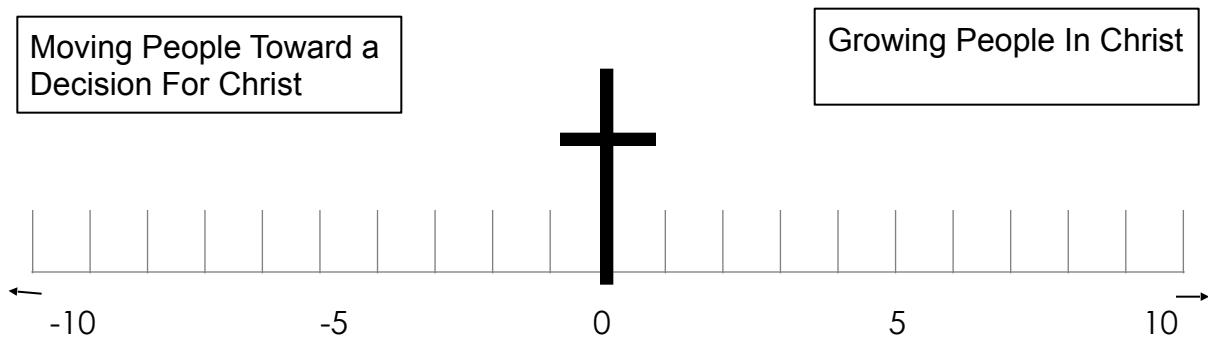
Elements for building a contagious church

1. Leaders fully committed to the church's evangelistic mission
2. Willingness to try fresh approaches
3. Participation of the entire church body
4. Alignment of the ministries to the church's evangelistic mission
5. Strategic co-ordination of all outreach activities
6. Sustained effort
7. Unswerving devotion to Christ and His message
8. Commitment to prayer and the role of the Holy Spirit

Thinking Through the Evangelism Continuum

(we've done lots of work on this already, however here's a quick refresher)

Often the concept of evangelism is pictured in very confined terms. Evangelism is simply seen as the public event, door knocking or follow up of contacts from a media campaign. While these can be vital parts of the evangelism process, which we need to resource and promote, to meet the changing challenges of our city we need to think outside the box. Too often church members abdicate their responsibility for living evangelistic lifestyles and see evangelism as something for the 'professionals'. An expanded definition of evangelism would see our current picture as part of an evangelistic continuum.



Left or Right of the Cross

Every person in Sydney is either left or right of the cross. Right of the cross people are those who have given their lives to Christ and are growing in discipleship. It is only as people grow right of the cross that they begin to share God's heart for lost people and then make sharing their faith an essential part of their lives. Too often we have moved people along the process for baptism but have neglected to continue growing people on the right hand side so that they in turn reach more people.

On the left of the cross are people who are at various points in their spiritual development. Someone at -1 or -2 has a basic understanding of the Bible, gives God and the Bible authority to some extent and has at least some interest in spiritual things. On the right side of the cross our evangelism attracts people who may have made a decision for Christ but who become Adventists as part of their continued spiritual growth.

Our challenge is reaching people left of -2. This will include community based ministries, intentional friendship building, service evangelism along with other creative ways of mingling with people, winning confidence and meeting needs. Too often a dichotomy is made between friendship/ service evangelism and public evangelism. In fact, both forms of evangelism are complementary as part of a process. As people move from -5 toward -2 they will reach a place where our traditional approaches will meet what they need to move the new few steps.

The challenge is in creating a process. Often we see churches doing a great job of evangelism in a -7, -6 environment but not having the steps in place to move these people to accept Christ. Or we see congregations doing very well at -2, -1 evangelism but not doing what it takes to keep growing people right of the cross and consequently we lose many people who we should be growing to reach more lost people.

By taking on a process driven approach to evangelism every person and church institution can see where they fit on the scale. Our challenge comes in facilitating a process as opposed to running an event.

Evangelism grows out of Discipleship.

Most people in our society are driven by the consumer worldview. Consumerism tells us that time = money, that 'I' am the most important and that you should keep your options open as a better version is coming.

Consumerism works against relationships and in so doing works against evangelism. In consumerism people don't have time to share or to grow.

An important part of lifting the outward focus of your congregation is addressing consumerism as part of your congregation's discipleship plan. Strategies like Home Grown and Steps to Discipleship can be useful for addressing some of the factors that can choke evangelism.

If you would like to talk through your congregation's discipleship plan and see what resources the conference has to help with his contact Brendan at the office.

The Role of the Conference Office in Evangelism

The role of the conference, in terms of evangelism is:

- Create an environment that lifts the evangelistic temperature in our churches.
- Provide a co-ordination point for regional and city wide approaches that a local church could not take on by itself.
- Foster synergy within our congregations so that evangelistic energy is leveraged to its full potential
- Provide training/resourcing opportunities for evangelism at various points along the evangelism scale.
- Promote and provide evangelistic resources to our congregations
- Help in creating and resourcing the evangelistic process in the local church.

The Role of the Local Church in Evangelism

God calls each church to work in unique environments with particular challenges and opportunities. Each congregation then will need to think through the evangelism process in their context and map out a plan.

- What are the needs in your community?
- What is your church doing to serve the community?
- What are you doing to make a positive presence?
- How are you moving people toward Christ?
- What reaping ideas are you planning?
- How will you grow people beyond their decision to follow Christ?
- How will you promote evangelistic values in your congregation?

The answers to these questions will shape your evangelism strategy.

Shaping Your Plan

To help in shaping your plan you might want to think through the following questions. Some ideas will fit into more than one area. The goal is to have a process in place that moves people along the evangelism continuum.

1. How will your church promote an outward focus in the congregation?

Ideas: Sermons, Small Group/Sabbath School Group Studies, Friendship Evangelism Course, Newsletter Articles, Prayer Groups, Leadership Meetings etc.

2. How will your congregation integrate with and serve the community?

Ideas: StormCo, Skill Development, Food, Lifestyle Management (Parenting, Marriage Enrichment etc)

3. What does your church already do that can be refocused outward and linked into the evangelism process?

Ideas: Pathfinders/Adventurers, Children's Sabbath Schools, Social events, Choirs can all be linked into the evangelistic process.

4. How will your congregation link with contacts made and build friendships that move people along the process?

Ideas: Create environments for building friendships e.g meals, sports events. Invite to social type events, link into other programmes,

5. What reaping points will your congregation use?

Ideas: Evangelistic small groups, Reaping Campaigns like Big Cities 2013, Reaping Sermon Series etc

6. How will your congregation grow people in their relationship with Christ?

Ideas: Discipleship Small Groups, Introducing Spiritual Practices, Spiritual Mentorship Plan, Journaling etc

Reflection

- If you had to put all the programmes your church currently is involved in on this continuum where would they mostly be?
- What ideas do you have for moving people along the continuum?
- What aspects of your ministry could stand in the way of people responding to the Gospel?
- How can you help people build relationships with pre-Christians?
- In what ways are you helping new converts reach their network of friends, relatives and associates?
- Every Christ Follower is to be an Evangelist. What on-going plans does your church have to train people for faith-sharing?
- What is the place of prayer in your evangelistic efforts?
- How can you work with the congregations in your region to best use the energy that is being put in?

God calls for light bearers who will fill the world with the light and peace and joy that come from Christ. God will use humble men, men who will cherish a sense of their weakness...They will reveal that Christ dwells in the heart, imparting purity to the whole being. Ellen G White, Evangelism, p629

Your duty cannot be shifted upon another. No one but yourself can do your work. If you withhold your light, someone must be left in darkness through your neglect
Ellen White

Useful Books

Dickson, John. *Promoting The Gospel*, Blue Bottle, 2005.

Frost, Michael and Alan Hirsh, *The Faith of Leap*, Baker Books, 2011

Gladden, Ron. *The 7 Habits of Ineffective Churches*, AdventSource 2004

Haffner, Karl. *Out of the Hot Tub, into the World*, Pacific Press, 2002

Hirsch, Alan and Lance Ford, *Right Here, Right Now*, Baker Books, 2011

McManus, Erwin. *An Unstoppable Force*, Group, 2001

Mittelberg, Mark, et.al., *Becoming a Contagious Christian (Participants Guide)*, 1995

Paulien, Jon. *Present Truth in the Real World*, Pacific Press, 1993

Pearce, David. *Personal Evangelism*, Signs Publishing, 1997

Sjogren, Steve. Ping, Dave and Pollock, Doug. - *Irresistible Evangelism*
Group 2004

White, Ellen. *Christian Service*, Pacific Press.

White, Ellen. *Evangelism*, Pacific Press