

Riverside Current

News From Riverside Alliance Church, Akron, OH

Sept/Oct
2016

Swarms of living creatures will live wherever the river flows. There will be large numbers of fish, because this water flows there and makes the salt water fresh; so where the river flows everything will live.
– Ezekiel 47:9

Earlier this year, our newsletter focused on God's call on our church body to dive deeper as individuals and collectively in our relationship with Him. Last time, we talked about what it looks like to be a people who are committed to growing stronger together. Ezekiel's river experience gives us insight to one more aspect of what being people of the River looks like today for each of us, for our families, and for our church: Flowing intentionally to a lost world. If we are going to be people who are serious about being who God wants us to be, we cannot just focus on ourselves (diving deeper) and our church (growing stronger). We must also be focused on and intentional about reaching into the darkness that is around us with the light of Christ. So what does it look like when we take that call to heart?

We Are Active – Notice that in Ezekiel's experience, flowing water is necessary to bring life to everything it touches. That is true for us as well. It takes action. It takes movement. It takes life to bring life. Have you ever seen a healthy underwater ecosystem thriving in a puddle of stagnant water? Of course not – because it takes living water to cause life to come. So it is with you and me – we must be actively bringing the living water of Jesus if we want to see our families, neighborhoods, workplaces, schools, church, and communities transformed for Jesus. We cannot be stagnant ourselves and expect life at the same time!

We Are Flowing – When a river flows, it does not decide its own path – it goes where the current leads it. So it must be with us. If we are going to effectively reach others, we have to get out of our own way. We cannot decide for ourselves where and to whom we are going to flow – our own preferences, thoughts, experiences, and dreams will cause very little change in peoples' lives. The only thing that makes a lasting difference is if we are so connected to the flow of what the Spirit of God is doing that we flow everywhere He leads.

We Are Alive – If your heart is to bring the life of Christ to others (and I truly pray that it is!), then it is vital that you yourself are alive in Christ! And to be alive means that there is continual evidence of a transforming power at work in your life that is not your own, but is the work of the Master as He creates you into His wonderful masterpiece! The greatest way you can show others the life that is available to them in Jesus is by showing them the difference He has already made in you!

The call that Jesus gives to the Samaritan woman he meets at the well in John chapter 4 is the same call that we must take to heart and is the call that we must intentionally carry to those who so desperately need the life He offers: "Whoever drinks the water I give them will never thirst. Indeed, the water I give them will become in them a spring of water welling up to eternal life."

Flowing With You In His Strength,

Pastor Jim Souza

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Elders Corner by Mike Demchak

Many of us participated in Dr. Ron Walborn's series *Personal Spiritual Transformation* during the Sunday school hour this summer. Personally the series increased my desire to fully experience Christ's presence and power in my life. I have been reading *All for Jesus* by Robert Niklaus, John Sawin, and Samuel Stoesz. It is the story of how God stirred the heart of A.B. Simpson to move believers to Spirit filled living with an evangelistic concern for people without God or hope.

The following is a description of how A. B. Simpson searched for answers when going through some inner struggles during the early parts of his ministry. The search drew him one morning in 1874 to an old musty book he discovered in his library, W.E. Boardman's *The Higher Christian Life*. As he poured over the book he saw the Lord Jesus in a new light, a living and all-sufficient presence. "He who had justified us was waiting to sanctify us." Simpson testified, "to enter into our spirit and substitute His strength, His holiness, His joy, His love, His faith, His power, for all our worthlessness, helplessness and nothingness, and make it an actual living fact." Throwing himself at the feet of that glorious Master, A. B. Simpson claimed the promise, "I will dwell in you and walk in you" (see Corinthians 6:16) During the next forty plus years Simpson would repeatedly refer back to that moment of surrender to Christ as his Sanctifier, the One who alone could make him holy.

Therefore I couldn't resist, I have been reading W. E. Boardman's *The Higher Christian Life*, the book that aided Simpson in his journey to personal spiritual formation.

The following is a compelling excerpt from that book. "There are three stages of experience in the life of every Christian: conviction, submission, and sanctification. There are also three corresponding ways in which the Holy Spirit develops the divine life of the soul: danger, duty and delight.

A sense of danger first startles the unbeliever from spiritual sleep and compels him to "flee from the wrath to come" (Luke 3:7)

A sense of duty next arises up in him to submit his thoughts and actions to God. And last, a sense of delight in the Lord and His ways becomes the dominant motive in the heart and life, perfecting obedience in love.

In each stage there is power which accumulates as the believer progresses; the second absorbs the first and the third the second. The sense of danger seems to be lost when the sense of duty becomes strong, and the sense of duty seems in its turn to be lost when the grace of God transforms it into delight". The question remains for each of us, where are we in our personal spiritual formation journey, living under a sense of danger" duty? Or delight?



CCO/ College Ministry

New year, new semester, same vision, pressing on in 2016.

We recently just welcomed about 250 new students from all around the world to the University of Akron last week. It has been incredible to begin to build relationships with them, hear their stories and share ours. In the next few weeks we will be leading a Fall Getaway Trip for many of these students and talking about Identity. For many this will be the first time that they interact with Americans and hear about what many of us believe. Would you consider partnering with us in prayer, that everything would go smoothly, that God would draw the right people to the trip, and that His word would not return void! We recently set the goal for 100 students to go with us, however we have passed that, so lets now pray for 200.

As the semester gets going we are seeking to continue with the same vision, to reach the lost, teach the Bible, disciple students, create Christian community, and plug students into local churches. My prayer and desire for this semester is that we will see more students' lives transformed for the glory of God!

If you are interested in getting involved in the ministry, or would like to receive updates on what God is doing on campus, please email me and let me know.

Hunter Goon

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Youth!

Where has the summer gone? It seems like yesterday that we were trying to get ready for the life trip. Life 2016 was a great experience. A shout out to all those who went. A special thanks to all those who attended the annual Labor Day badminton/capture the flag night. No big injuries, so its all good. As we look forward to the fall, there are some dates to be thinking about. September 18th is the back to church day, and we want to encourage all youth to invite a friend and be a part that day. Also coming in October is a afternoon of serving. More details to come. Thank you for your prayers and support.

Riverside Worship

Spoken Word by Isaac Wimberley (from "Forever" by Kari Jobe)

*To view the video, go to https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MHQPuok_LnY

If there are words for Him, then I don't have them. You see my brain has not yet reached the point where it could form a thought that could adequately describe the greatness of my God. And my lungs have not yet developed the ability to release a breath with enough to agility to breathe out the greatness of His love. And my voice, you see my voice is so inhibited, restrained by human limits, that it's hard to even send the praise up. You see if there are words for Him, I don't have them. My God, His grace is remarkable, mercies are innumerable, strength is impenetrable. He is honorable, accountable, favorable. He's unsearchable yet knowable. Indefinable yet approachable. Indescribable yet personal. He is beyond comprehension. Further than imagination, constant through generations, King of every nation. But if there are words for Him, then I don't have them. You see my words are few. In trying to capture the one true God using my vocabulary would never do. But I use words as an expression, an expression of worship to a Savior. A Savior who is both worthy and deserving of my praise, so I use words. My heart extols the Lord, blesses His name forever. He has won my heart, captured my mind, and has bound them both together. He has defeated me in my rebellion, conquered me in my sin. He has welcomed me into His presence, completely inviting me in. He has made Himself the object of my sight, flooding me with mercies in the morning, drowning me with grace in the night. But if there are words for Him, then I don't have them. But what I do have is good news. For my God knew that manmade words would never do, the words are just tools that we use to point to the truth. So He sent His Son Jesus Christ as The Word, living proof. He is the image of the invisible God, the first born of all creation. For by Him all things were created, giving nothingness formation. And by His words He sustains, in the power of His name. For He is before all things, and over all things He reigns, Holy is His name. So praise Him for His life. The way he persevered in strife, the humble Son of God becoming the perfect sacrifice. Praise Him for His death. That He willingly stood in our place, that He lovingly endured the grave, that He battled our enemy and on the third day rose in Victory! He is everything that was promised, praised as the risen King, lift your voice and sing. For one day He will return for us and we will finally be united with our Savior for eternity, eternity. So it's not just words that I proclaim, for my words point to The Word, and The Word has a name. Hope has a name. Joy has a name. Peace has a name. Love has a name. And that name is Jesus Christ - praise His name FOREVER!



Galatians 6:9

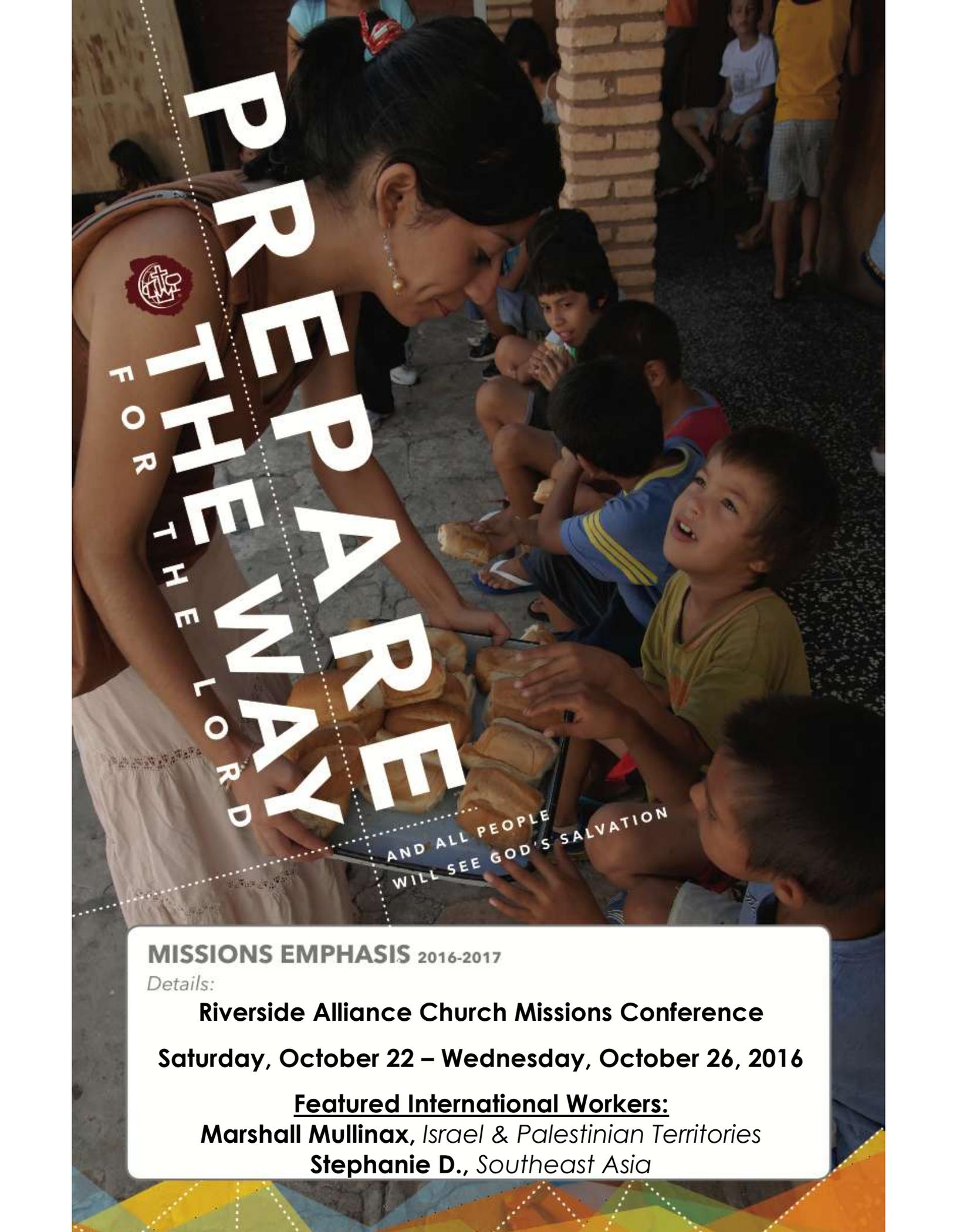
"So let's not get tired of doing what is good. At just the right time we will reap a harvest of blessing if we don't give up."

ReFresh Conference

Please see Dawn Souza to sign up before September 15th. This is a free women's event at CrossPoint Alliance Church in Fairlawn from 10 am – 2 pm on Saturday 9/24. You must be registered to attend! We will be leaving the church at 9:30 am if you would like to carpool.

Save the Date

Saturday, December 10th will be our annual Christmas brunch!



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AND ALL PEOPLE
WILL SEE GOD'S SALVATION

MISSIONS EMPHASIS 2016-2017

Details:

Riverside Alliance Church Missions Conference

Saturday, October 22 – Wednesday, October 26, 2016

Featured International Workers:

Marshall Mullinax, Israel & Palestinian Territories

Stephanie D., Southeast Asia