

NORTH AMERICAN MISSION

DIRECTOR REPORT

REV. NICK MUNDIS

It has been an interesting couple of years—COVID, social unrest in North America, and now Russia invading Ukraine. We have felt challenged, angry, frustrated, fearful, and a little off-balance during this time. There has been an overall sense of cultural angst and divisiveness. It can be exhausting!

There is a place of hope and light amid

our world's brokenness and darkness. Are we connecting people to Jesus, His Community, and His Mission? This is what they need—this is what our CLB congregations in North America have been called to deliver.

There is great pressure on the North American Church to abandon our primary calling, which is to make disciples where

God has placed us! We do this with the full message of the incarnation of Jesus—we deliver grace and truth. In North American Mission (NAM) we seek to support congregational vitality that equips our congregations to make disciples of Jesus.

ADVANCEMENT

Forge Ahead

We completed our first NAM annual funding initiative in October. We had generous donors who paid for the displays as well as our matching funds. Our goal was \$100,000 and the final amount raised was \$161,601. This initiative has two primary goals: 1) build awareness / momentum for CLB mission in North America, and 2) raise needed funds to perform the mission.

NAM Multiplication Fund

The creation of the Multiplication Fund will allow us to have a defined location to allocate general planting funds. This is a key aspect to be a CLB culture that desires to support an overall church planting strategy while at the same time supporting specific planting projects. The growth of this fund will provide a sustainable source of planting allotments into the future.

VITALITY & REVITALIZATION

Revitalization

Our NAM team continues to meet with many churches and pastors on an individual basis as needs arrive. These interactions range from quick engagements assisting with a specific issue to prolonged interactions that include onsite visits which could include assessments, etc. During this transition time in the CLB Office of the President I have also been more actively engaged with pastoral transitions than I had been in the past.

There is a cohort of pastors who have engaged in a Church Revitalization Certification program. The pastors are using this process in their own congregations, but there is an expectation that this group will also be using their knowledge and training in the revitalization of additional CLB congregations.

The need for a team of interim pastors is a present reality and will more than likely be an ongoing necessity. We have had a few pastors serve in this way in the past and it was of great benefit to the receiving congregations. The plan will be to provide training for this important role. One aspect that will need to be processed is that most CLB interim pastors have historically served for approximately three months, but most interim needs would be most effective if served by a pastor for a minimum of six months.

It is also becoming apparent that a number of our current congregations may need to consider pastoring options that will not be the traditional full-time pastor. This could range from bi-vocational pastors, to elder-led congregations, to specially trained and supported “equipping pastors.” This last option would look something like a multi-point parish model.



“Disciple-Making Congregation”

This process is being refined as it is being implemented in pilot congregations. The goal is for this to be done in 25 congregations in the next five years. To accomplish this, we will need to train additional facilitators.

- This is a congregational “self-discovery” process facilitated by NAM.
- Lead and lag goals will be used for tangible movement.
- It is a clarifying process to get everyone on the same page.
- Congregations will proceed through a facilitated transformational process as they shape and implement their congregation’s specific biblical plan for disciple-making and community engagement.
- This will also be a deliberate commitment toward “multi-generational” ministry and leadership based on the unique congregational make-up.
- CLB-created, as well as external, resources and tools will be used to equip and unify the team/congregation in this process.
- Some congregations will have the internal congregational resources to facilitate this process on their own.



BC22 Day of Equipping - June 2022

There will be two tracks:

Greg Finke – Joining Jesus on His Mission: How to Be an Everyday Missionary

Jesus made disciples through doing life together. They shared meals, thoughts, sorrows, joys, their stories, and everything else. During our time with Greg, you will receive a framework to:

- Craft a simple plan for how you personally will join Jesus on his mission in your various “neighborhoods” and help your family and friends do the same.
- Create a simple structure for ongoing support and accountability for members as we Join Jesus on His Mission.

Jonathan McKee – Parenting Generation Screen: Guiding Your Kids to be Wise in a Digital World.

This is our youth worker training track and is about helping our teens become smarter than their smartphone.

Elevate Youth Convention – July 2022

(Pictured on facing page)

Brandon Pangman serves as the EYC coordinator. In our conversations regarding this first post-COVID convention we have been hopeful, but also realistic regarding registration numbers. We have been planning as best we can. Considering our current context, Brandon was hoping for 400 attendees and at this time that looks attainable.

CLB Forge

The framework for the CLB Forge is in place. It is slowly growing in usage. One of the major areas of expansion in the past few months is in the area of registrations for Elevate Youth Convention. The Forge podcast continues to grow with now over 100 episodes. We are planning to expand our CLB podcast options as well as integrate disciple-making cohorts with various cohort facilitators. With Christa Jahr’s resignation, we will be needing to create a Forge administration plan.

COLLABORATION AREAS

Lutheran Brethren Seminary

There is need for a unified plan and communication process as we balance the theological and ministry development needs of our seminary students and our denominational need for pastors, missionaries, and planters. We face the tension of the extended time nature of a quality seminary education and the immediate ministry needs of the CLB. Another component of this collaboration is the transition or “hand off” from the seminary to NAM parish/planting ministry.

Young Adult Ministry

We currently have a group of people involved in processing the effectiveness, sustainability, and interest in various options. We want to form a Young Adult CLB ministry that emphasizes disciple making. Key components would be community life, theology, and engaging in mission together. This would likely involve LBS, NAM, and other key developers within the CLB.

Regional Chairmen and CLBC President Meetings

We are meeting monthly with the primary goals of consistent communication and regional ministry development. These meetings have been beneficial for sharing resources and processing issues together. In general, we are looking to grow in unity of ministry while at the same time continuing our regional individuality based on each region’s specific needs.

Rev. Nick Mundis serves the Church of the Lutheran Brethren as Director of North American Mission.