FROM WHERE I'M SITTING

Posted on February 16, 2016 by Eddie

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Category: Church: UK

Every two or three years, the UK Evangelical mission community gets together at the Global Connections' Conference. This is an opportunity for people involved in mission agencies, churches and training institutions to get together to think, pray and consider what God is saying.

The GC conference tends to do things rather differently to other meetings. The aim is not to pack the programme with big name speakers, who will draw in the crowds, which means that the conference doesn't get the profile of other events. Rather, the aim is to have speakers with experience in mission and a viewpoint that will help people to think. There is time built in to process and think through the presentations and to explore issues that are of concern to the conference delegates.

Perhaps most importantly, the Global Connections' Conference can lead to results. The Code of Best Conduct for Church to Church Partnerships which sets out guidelines for churches in the UK who want to work in partnerships with churches in the majority world, is a direct result of the last GC conference.

This year's conference is a little different:

> *We are used to hearing mission leaders, typically European and American men in their fifties describing what the most important issues in mission are. But is this the full story? At the GC Conference in May 2016, we will have the opportunity to listen to a variety of voices; under thirties, women in mission, missionaries from the majority world and leaders of international networks sharing from their perspective on mission today. In a diverse world, it is important that we listen to a range of opinions to really understand what is going on. This conference is a start in that process and we hope will be challenging and inspirational.*
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> *Our Bible reflections will be given by Steve Timmis from Crowded House, and there will also be times of worship, prayer and reflection led by Luke Hamlyn.*
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> *Contributors include: Adam Lowe (WEC), Chris Kidd (All Saints Didben), Harvey Kwiyani (Missio Africanus), Â Israel Oluwole Olofinjana (Centre for Missionaries from the Majority World), Lesley Cheesman (AgapÃ©), Lucho Sanchez (Latin Link), Mark Oxbrow who will be bringing videos of leaders from around the world (Faith2Share), Philipa Kalungi (OMF), Ruth Wall (former All Nations), Sarah Brighton (Hope UK).*
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> *The programme will include plenary sessions led by the various groups above, opportunity for discussion and workshops as well as times of prayers and reflection to listen to what God might be saying to us.*

I have to admit that I don't enjoy conferences. I'm not a natural networker and talking to strangers at meal times and over coffee is something I find stressful. I can fully understand that people might not want to come to an event like this.

However, if you have an interest in world mission and want a glimpse into what the future might look like, this is undoubtedly the best opportunity you will come across to explore it. Mind you, it may not be a comfortable few days!