



**“Correct Me If I'm Wrong”**  
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**Research in the Lausanne Movement**  
*by Stephanie Kraft*

The vision of the Lausanne Movement is "The gospel for every person, an evangelical church for every people, Christ-like leaders for every church, and Kingdom impact in every sphere of society." The movement was born in July 1974 at the conclusion of the first International Congress on World Evangelization, convened with assistance from the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association and held in Lausanne, Switzerland. Members of the movement continue to "seek to be faithful stewards of God's calling to connect influencers and ideas for global mission...desiring to serve the global church with a spirit of humility, friendship, prayer, study, partnership, and hope." Billy Graham calls this "the spirit of Lausanne".

The aim of the movement now, as then, is to facilitate global collaboration in making Christ known to all people. It connects influencers in two types of networks: regional and issue networks. Currently there are thirty-six issue networks, each of which is facilitated by a Network Catalyst.

Two of these networks specifically focus on research. One is the "Study of Global Christianity" with Todd Johnson (of the Center for the Study of Global Christianity at Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary) and Molly Wall (of Operation World) serving as co-catalysts. The other is "Church Research" whose catalytic leadership is transitioning from Peter Brierley (of Brierley Consultancy) to Larry Kraft (of OC International).

Every decade or so the Lausanne Movement sponsors a Younger Leaders Gathering (YLG) to identify evangelical leaders under the age of forty who are already impacting their country or region. The gatherings connect participants with other global leaders to build up the next generation of influencers. The 2016 YLG was a remarkable event. It took place in Jakarta, Indonesia and brought together nearly a thousand young leaders from 160 countries with two hundred mentors and catalysts to serve them.

Both research networks were ably represented. Molly Wall and Jason Mandryk led basic and advanced sessions for the Study of Global Christianity Network, and Peter Brierley and Larry Kraft led basic and advanced sessions on Church Research. A number of the younger leaders signed up for continued interaction.

In addition to network meetings, each young leader participated in a "connect group" of six or seven individuals where they had the opportunity to "connect, pray, and discern together God's leading of their generation for his global mission." Mentors helped the young leaders look at their lives and see where God had been at work.

It was an excellent opportunity to encourage many younger leaders, some of whom had never been exposed to the use of information for strategic ministry decision-making and prayer, to meet and spend time with experienced information workers. It was also a tremendous time for some of us seasoned researchers to become exposed to the excellent work already being done by some of these green shoots. What a privilege it was to learn and grow together!



*This was the group of young leaders that met with me. None are formally involved with information ministries, but perhaps our days together will have inspired them to value sound information for prayer and decision making.*

## A Mission Information Worker's Conference

by Chris Maynard

In August in Arlington, Texas, USA eighty people gathered for a Mission Information Workers Conference. It was a four-way collaboration between the Harvest Information System, Community of Mission Information Workers, The Seed Company and SIL.



Jonathan Kern and all his colleagues at the Seed Company made us feel very welcome in their excellent office facility and each morning we joined with them in their regular time of prayer. Chris Deckert kept us strictly to time. Jim Haney made sure that everyone had good chances to connect, making it easy for people to gather around topics of interest during mealtimes.

We were given updates from each of the HIS registrars who manage the Harvest Information System registries.

Chris Armas gave us the keynote talk, drawing on his experience starting "Code for the Kingdom". But he didn't just come to give his talk and leave. He stayed throughout the conference to listen and learn himself. (He several times described himself as a "half-timer". I think that was a reference to the book called "Halftime" by Bob Buford. That looks like a good book to give to any successful person in secular work that you think might make a good mission information worker.)

TED-style talks worked well to keep presentations sharp and to the point while leaving time for discussion. We also had workshops and issue groups. If you were at the conference, write us a note about something you learned that might be of interest to some of the hundreds of information workers that couldn't be there.

Speaking of who wasn't there, it is interesting to note some major groups that were missing. Given the sponsors of the conference, there was a strong focus on People Groups and Languages. But Christian relief and development organisations didn't seem to be represented at all. Surely they use information as much as the rest of us! And given the location, it is no surprise that most of the participants were U.S. Citizens. These factors did not detract from the conference, but they may point to directions that we could develop in future.

For those of you who were not able to be there for whatever reason, here is a link to videos and slides from the conference:

<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/0B4SJAKyFpIPHSF9SaEVHLWN1ZHc?usp=sharing>

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*We continue here our feature "Letters to Young Researchers." We hope these letters will give younger information workers encouragement that they are not alone. There are some ways in which mission information workers (researchers, librarians, creators of maps and directories, etc.) may not feel like missionaries in other streams of service (preaching, evangelism, church planting). The purpose of this feature is to create a sense of partnership over the generations... mentoring... camaraderie between those who have, and those who yet will, serve Jesus in this way.*

### Letter to Young Researchers

by Steve McCord

**Your Passion** – Do you enjoy learning new ideas and finding new information? Are you one of those who always asks why or how come? Is there a desire to discover new concepts and make connections no one else sees? You probably have the research bug. God may have gifted you to plumb the depths of His riches in the world around you.

As I continued to ask questions and see connections below the surface, I realized that the research bug bit me. It was through this lens that the desire to use research to strategize, plan, understand and ask new questions began to form in my mind. My journey into research began by accepting a task no one else was interested in but I saw an intriguing challenge to solve a problem and understand new information.

**Background** – My investigative background began as a curious child who asked a lot of questions. However, I got into serious research when asked to be an evaluation team member to conduct a strategic assessment of mission work at a country level. As a team, we interviewed national leaders, church leaders, and missionaries in a mixed methods approach. This research resulted in a refocusing of ministries and a higher level of effectiveness for the field. Over the next 10 years, I led several of these studies in five different countries using a mixed methods approach of employing a combination of surveys and interviews to report observations and make recommendations.

**Research** – There are many ways to do research. The simplest is observational and people-watching. This approach discovers how people flow and interact with each other. Who talks to whom? Who is shunned or embraced? This gives clues to social relationships. Qualitative methods focus on interviewing people and listening to their stories and responses to specific questions. Quantitative research typically focuses on numbers, quantities, and numeric values. How many people like vanilla ice cream? This is a type of quantitative assessment. One of the more interesting methods is mixed methods which combine a qualitative (interviewing people, gaining insights and developing themes) and quantitative (surveys, attitudes scales) approach. It is my preferred method as it gives depth in the qualitative and structure in the quantitative method.

**Analysis** – One of the most interesting aspects in discovering data and research is making application to real world problems. Asking the question “What does this mean?” is a critical aspect of becoming a researcher. In a world with big data and mountains of information available to leaders, key questions pinpoint the meaning of the data to your organization, ministry, or church. Working with church planters to determine the best location for a church, demographic trends and understanding geography is essential. What are the barriers to planting a church in this area? What types of people live in the surrounding neighborhoods? What is the significance for my organization?

**Resources** – The resources for research are growing daily. While libraries are a prime source of information for many, the research tools found on the internet are extremely helpful. There is a caution that I must mention. Much of Christian research is circular which means that sources quote older sources and everyone ends up referencing the same source. I encourage you to use academic sources as much as possible to check your core data. Google scholar, World Catalog, and dissertation abstracts bring the power of the academic into the practical application in missions.

**Research Interests** – Currently, my research interest centers on the movement and transition of people groups into more blended peoples who have a less focused ethnic identity. As globalization and urbanization impact us more, I believe people’s functional identity will become less fixed and more flexible. How is openness toward the gospel impacted as cultural boundaries are challenged by growing technology and the mixing of people groups in urban situations? Keep asking questions!

*Steve McCord served for 26 years in Korea, South Asia and Northern Africa and the Middle East in various assignments and now serves as manager of the IMB’s Analysis Services and GIS team. He thoroughly enjoys mixed methods research which combines quantitative and qualitative approaches. Steve and his team focus on providing analytical support and contextual understanding for IMB leadership*



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## Who's Who in Missions Information

Special Profile: Nelson Jennings

1. [CMIW] **Please tell us about yourself and your family.** [NJ] Both my wife and I are U.S.-Americans of European ancestries. We have three grown daughters, one son-in-law, and three granddaughters.
2. [CMIW] **What is your current ministry?** [NJ] In addition to occasional speaking and writing, I have two main ministry responsibilities:

- Mission Pastor and Consultant with Onnuri Community Church, a megachurch based in Seoul.
- Global Engagement Director with GMI (Global Mapping International). I am responsible for developing GMI's worldwide community of individuals and organizations involved in missions research, as well as for helping GMI network with the many networks with similar goals of fostering missions research.



3. [CMIW] **What are the contributions you have made to world missions that have brought you the greatest satisfaction?**

[NJ]

- We were missionaries in Japan over a 13-year period, during which God changed us significantly and used us to encourage Kingdom impact among a few pockets of Japanese life and people.
- Teaching ministry students in Japan and in the U.S. for 15 years.
- Writing about Christian mission for various audiences, including scholarly and popular Christian.
- Collaborating with Christian leaders around the world through scholarship and ministry formation.

4. [CMIW] **What dreams do you have for your next ten years of ministry?** [NJ] Serve churches and organizations in ways that equip them to collaborate with others in Christian mission.

5. [CMIW] **Is there some way you'd be willing to help the CMIW community?** [NJ] Bring historical and scholarly resources and perspectives into discussions.

### Information from the Word

In Deuteronomy 29:29 Moses said, *"The Lord has secrets known to no one. We are not accountable for them, but we and our children are accountable forever for all that he has revealed to us, so that we may obey all the terms of these instructions."* What has He revealed to us – through the gospel we were given, through the Bible we read, through our research and inquiry? How are we being obedient? How are we equipping those who are younger than we are to obey, since they too are accountable forever for all that He has revealed?

**Final Details:**

- This bulletin is produced by the Community of Mission Information Workers Task Force comprised of Larry Kraft, Stephanie Kraft and Chris Maynard. Please send any suggestions of issues to discuss or any other ideas to "[cmiw@worksmail.net](mailto:cmiw@worksmail.net)".
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