

Plenary and Workshop Synopses

Plenary sessions by keynote speaker Christian Quartier:

Sitting at the table of differences, Staying at the table and growing – Foundations for building bridges.

We live today in what seems to be a very divisive atmosphere and culture world-wide. In society, and unfortunately also within the Church and missions, we know how to make enemies. Whether it's political views, cultural or racial backgrounds, theological beliefs, generational challenges, values, etc.

We live in an increasingly inter-cultural and globalized world where more and more, people seem to be divided. And when confronted with differences, flee to their respective corners, surrounded by people who either agree with them or look like them. Conflicts and misunderstandings abound not only in our teams, but also on social media and even in our families.

In our plenary sessions, we aim to look what differences mean to us and at some foundations to be able to sit at the table of differences, stay at the table, build bridges whenever it is possible and grow as a person. We will then dig into five things that are required if you want to stay in the space of difference and build bridges.

2-day track workshops:

Mihai Lundell: Building bridges amongst diverse and multi-cultural teams

In this two-day track we will look at the complexities of working on diverse and multi-cultural teams. On day one we will examine various cultural concepts as related to family, time, relationships, conflict, leadership, gender roles, and meetings (to name only a few). Participants will be asked to do some inner-reflection to see how their culture has impacted how they approach the aforementioned concepts, and then through case studies, will be challenged to look at various situations that have occurred on multi-cultural teams through a different cultural lens. After having closely dissected the intricacies of diverse and multi-cultural teams, on day two we will focus on best practices and strategies for helping our people build the bridge to work more effectively on their diverse teams. Day two will be practical and particularly interactive, as we share insights, best practices, strategies and resources for helping our people thrive in the midst of diversity.

Gary W.: Handling conflict from a Christian perspective – the bridge of peace

In this 2-day interactive workshop we will discover what the Bible teaches about conflicts. On day one we will dive into a Theology of Conflict. Does God have a purpose in allowing conflict? If so, what is His purpose? We will also look at God's concept of peace and peacemaking. On day two we will explore the Biblical guidelines for handling interpersonal conflicts – forgiveness, repentance, rebuilding broken trust, and reconciliation.

Evi Rodemann: Building bridges across generations

The Bible speaks clearly about the blessing of generations and the responsibility of the older generations passing faith to the next one. What are the implications of this? How can we collaborate across generations and build God's Kingdom together? In this two-day track we will look at younger and older generations learning from and benefit one another. On day one we will look at the younger generations and their dreams and needs, exploring what the implications are for engaging effectively with them. On day two we will discuss issues around intergenerational teams and leadership plus how to take concrete steps forward in our various ministries. Both days will be engaging and interactive as we seek to learn from best practices and be challenged not to accept the status quo. We cannot risk losing the younger generations for the sake of God's Kingdom.

Shoulder to Shoulder Team: Building Strong Bridges between Singles and Families

A Fresh Theological Paradigm of Marriage, Singleness & Spiritual Family. On day one Dr. Barry Danylak will provide a biblical-theological foundation for building effective bridges between singles and marrieds with or without children. Our session will focus on the core theological motif of offspring as it develops through the redemptive storyline of Scripture and provides the key for seeing everyone as mutual siblings within God's spiritual family. In recognizing each person's completeness in Christ we establish the foundation for building bridges of understanding with each other. On day two we will help you consider how to encourage workers to live out a spiritual family ethic that is foundational for cross-cultural ministry. Our focus will be on how we practically live as sacred siblings and reach the lost through transformative spiritual family. Join Suzy Grumelot, co-author of *Sacred Siblings: Valuing One Another for the Great Commission* as we unpack key areas mission teams and organizations need to examine as we live out authentic spiritual family and leverage each member in cross-cultural ministry. This session will build on the core theology discussed the day before, and be story-rich, and research-driven, with feedback and best practices from the front lines. Yes, it is possible to bring your own reusable water bottle and fill it with water from the tap. If you are not comfortable with this, there are plenty of supermarkets in the area where you can buy bottled water to fill your own reusable water bottle.

Other workshops:

Jonathan Ward: How to help people restore/refresh their relationship with God.

Spiritual dryness is a problem in ministry when givers keep giving but lose touch with the Giver. This results in a lack of connection to God, to self and to others, and opens the door to isolation, inauthenticity, burnout and moral failure. How can we encourage Christian workers to attend to the need for spiritual formation and disciplines in their lives? What resources are available? This workshop will look at a variety of spiritual practices and habits that can help cultivate and enhance a Christian worker's relationship with the Giver.

Sarah Hay: HR and Member Care – what should the bridge between organisation and individual look like?

What's the difference between HR and member care? Who should take responsibility for our people? How do we achieve balance between organisational goals and the care and wellbeing of our people? How do we ensure that our organisations are not toxic? In this workshop we will unpack the differences, boundaries and overlaps between HR and member care and explore how we can ensure that people are not overlooked or left to fall through the gaps.

Jonathan Ward: How to help people restore/refresh their relationship with God.

Too busy, so little time and an endless lists of urgent to does... does that sound familiar?! It certainly does to me! Building bridges to all sorts of people in our places of service we sometimes fall short of keeping up the maintenance of our personal bridges. I would like to create a breathing space during our workshop time for us to;

- determine where we are right now,
- to discover how little changes can have a great impact,
- to learn from Jesus and from one another how to stay connected.

Rafael Năstase: How to help missionaries build bridges to their family

Being a missionary, leaving your country, your church, your friends, your parents and living in another culture, where possibly your own children do not identify with the culture of either parent, is a challenge. What do you do when you yourself reach an age where you realize the helplessness of the parents who raised you, and the unspoken need they pass on to you as you go to the mission field. So quickly the child sitting in the back seat is taking driving lessons and has needs of his own. What do you do when you seem to be torn between God's call to go and make disciples and care for elderly parents and the needs of children whether they are teenagers or adults? In this workshop we will share such needs and try together to find or build the bridges that will help us reach our family, elderly parents and/or adult kids.

Maria Techow: Building bridges to TCK's and their parents

For both children and adults an international move is a major life event. Secure and healthy relationships are important for children to thrive in the process. They need to feel a sense of coherence in their lives so that they can understand and manage the challenges they face. If the children do not thrive while growing up abroad, it affects the whole family. As parents, there are special considerations and tasks associated with living abroad with children. This workshop will focus on how we in Member Care and as professionals can support the parents in this very important task of understanding their children and helping them to thrive as TCKs with all the resources and challenges of growing up as a TCK. And furthermore how to help the parents support the TCKs in integrating into their passport country.

Amrei Wehmeyer & Charley Warner: “Help! I’m overwhelmed!” – Member care for those who are overwhelmed

During our workshop we’ll discuss practical ideas to getting past being overwhelmed in life and ministry such as: identifying being overwhelmed, setting and maintaining appropriate boundaries, and helping others in similar situations.

Scott Shaum: Navigating sacrificial service without losing ourselves

To abide in Christ means to abide with him in all aspects of his life. Jesus came to lay his life down for others. He walked in communion with his Father by the Spirit. He never lost sight of his belovedness; never was overwhelmed by the clamoring needs; never lost his identity in his work. This care work we do can have a splintering effect upon us. And it can have a strengthening, deepening, truing effect upon us. As Jesus matures us, we can more deeply join him in his work around us, offering more of ourselves to others, while not losing ourselves in the work. John exhorts us to imitatio Christi – imitate Christ (1 John 2:6). How might we walk the tension of receiving others pains yet remain strengthened and deepened at the same time?

Q&A on Member Care

Led by board members of Member Care Europe, chaired by Michelle Krauss. Do you have a burning question about member care? Perhaps you want to set up a member care structure within your team but don’t know where to start? Do you want to develop some member care resources but would love to ask what other people use? Are you facing a new member care challenge and would like some advice? This workshop is for anyone who has a member care question and is seeking some advice. Whether you are new to member care or been serving for years, it’s always good to keep learning and asking questions. No question is too simple!