

State Sunday School Director's Association Annual May Meeting
Albuquerque, New Mexico
May 11-13, 2005

Wednesday, May 11, 2005

8:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m. Session #1

38 in attendance.

8:30 a.m. Welcome from Dayton King

8:45 a.m. Worship, Devotion and Prayer - Sandy Coelho - Jude 20 & following:
Continue to learn to trust God; learn how to pray; Fall in love with Jesus all over again;
Remember what it is like to be forgiven; & Be part of the search and rescue team to share
the gospel.

9:00 a.m. Review Agenda – approve and/or add - Motion was made to accept the
agenda as printed. Marie . Second - Randy. Passe

9:15 a.m. Welcome New Members - Bob Dickerson, Illinois; Tom Belew,
California; Marion Grenleck, Dakota; Greg Belk, SBT; David Frasure, Ohio.

Sandy asked that each person review the SSSDA Directory and make any changes.

9:45 a.m. Report of Church Planting Task Force - Belinda Jolley, facilitator;
Richard Nations, Rob Lee, Bruce Morison, Keith Wilkinson, Dennis Parrott. There
seems to be no 1 model for church planting education development. Church planters
speak a different language and we must learn that language in order to communicate
correctly.

Richard Nations presented a Review of Contemporary Church Planting Models in the 21st
Century.

Comments:

1. You have to initiate the fellowship with church planters.

Show up at their basic training meetings.

2. Need to ask them to help us with recommendations relating to curriculum.

3. Keily stated they need to pick and choose curriculum based on the people group that is
being reached.

4. Sandy suggested that chart showing the various curriculum choices.

5. Richard suggested that LifeWay develop an administrator's guide for church planters to choose curriculum.

6. Marion stated this discussion hits home. People he is trying to reach are not fitting into any of the curriculum models that are currently available.

7. Bruce is putting together a piece on how to evaluate any curriculum.

8. Clyde wanted to know what languages were available.

9. Tim asked if the idea that was surfaced at a meeting in Boston between LifeWay and NAMB had ever been done?

10. Richard stated one of the church planters in his area stated there is value in getting new starts into dated curriculum as soon as possible.

11. Rob stated there needs to be a discussion concerning developing intentional relationships with church planting groups and disciple groups.

12. John Adams suggested that someone in the group needs to build an intake form to understand what is being said and being asked.

13. Jim Harvey stated that a method needs to be developed to teach people how to develop their own curriculum.

14. Tom Belew stated that ethnic groups are grouping many of the models together. California has a graduation from church planting to church development.

15. Sandy - give this back to Belinda's group and meet before Thursday and give back to the meeting the top three things that need to be addressed.

10:30 a.m. Discussion about Lifeway relationship and talking about items/concerns we would like to share at the afternoon session with Lifeway Leadership

11:45 a.m.-1:00 p.m. Lunch hosted by New Mexico

1:00 p.m. – 4:30 p.m. Session #2

1:00 p.m. Introductions and review of afternoon's agenda

Guests:

John Kramp, Vice President, Church Resources Division

David Francis, Director of Sunday School, Lifeway Church Resources

1:15 p.m. Worship, Devotion and Prayer - John Kramp - Daniel 5:17 & following; 4:28; James 4:6 - God has said go ahead and puff yourself up and I will oppose you. - Pride: it is destructive in relation to relationships; individual pride gets manifested throughout an organization; God has a strong opinion about pride.

1:45 p.m. Discussion with Lifeway Leadership

Discussion about our future relationship:

Sandy asked how things are changing at LifeWay? What relationship will LifeWay have with SSSDA?

John spoke about LifeWay's organization: The intent is to have a high priority of partnering with state leaders.

Sandy asked if the church consultants are still active and in the field?

John stated they are still in the field. Their responsibilities are to work with the largest churches. There are others who work through the phones. There is an idea to allow church consultants to connect with state offices. John views this work to be complimentary to the work of state offices. They do not want to do duplicate work.

Richard Nations asked if the church consultants could contact the state offices to identify themselves.

John said they would add that to the job description.

Belinda asked if the church consultants could keep the state offices informed of anything that come into contact with a church that needs to be passed along.

David stated that the idea of a church consultant not communicate with state offices was many times smoke. David asked if they could have some time to work out a system without creating a formal process that would create more work for everyone.

John stated he would like to see a free and open exchange of ideas and information between LifeWay and states - going both ways.

Bob suggested that if the church consultants could let the state offices know about events.

Terry asked if the states could invite the consultants to state sponsored events. The answer was yes.

Tim mentioned the relationship they have with Doug Merritt.

There has been a change in philosophy in relationship to the church consultants.

Gary said he has a problem of needing help with curriculum for the medium and smaller churches.

David said the reality is rarely. The individual consultant could assist between LifeWay assignments.

Dennis asked what the job description of church consultants?

John stated the consultants are to seek how large churches can be resourced by LifeWay.

Keith asked what the future looked like from John's perspective?

John stated they are trying to get the foundation laid and rebuild relationships. Intensified focus on Bible Study is a goal for three years.

Bob asked if LifeWay could market their resources at non SBC events?

John stated they do want to get out and tell their story.

Steve asked if LifeWay VBS materials could be in non LifeWay bookstores?

John said they can get it but they do not get a discount for it.

Bob Dickerson asked if LifeWay is looking at web site selling of materials?

John said they are looking at that option. John said there is a crisis concerning Christian Bookstores. Christian material selling in Wal Mart's, etc. are having an effect on sales through CBS. Many CB stores are closing.

Sandy asked David to explain the Associational Smaller Church Growth Plan.

It was developed out of work done in Mississippi.

Jim Harvey asked if there was a need for LifeWay to roll out products and programs to directors?

John indicated that there is a need.

Bob D. asked what ethnic materials and training events are being planned?

John stated there is an individual, Jess Fairbanks, assigned with the responsibility of identifying people who can lead Hispanic training sessions. When LifeWay International grants rights for material to be translated, LifeWay retains the right to get a copy of the translated material and to produce it as needed.

Steve S. asked what can SSSDA do to help LifeWay get information to directors?

John indicated that a system could be set up. One problem is that LifeWay does not know what exactly directors need to see and hear.

3:30 p.m. Report of the Field Service Task Force - Bob Mayfield

PRELIMINARY MATTERS

We began our work under the following **Observations/Assumptions** related at the last May Meeting:

- Our interpretation of this committee's duties in the past has been to assist Association members in filling unapproved LifeWay Field Service Requests by partnering other members with those who have the needs for training.
- There were no needs expressed or requested from Association members for the committee to work on filling.
- Our assumption is that this is due in large degree to the members low expectations of LifeWay filling Field Service Requests, and thus not requesting as much field service that goes unfilled.
 - We do not believe that that means there are no needs for others to assist members with Field Service, but since they do not expect LW to fill the requests, they do not turn them in – leading to fewer unfilled requests.
 - We recognize that the changes in LifeWay, over the last three to five years especially, in provision of field service has had an impact on the member conventions:
 - ✓ Move to Multiplier Training as opposed to providing LW Staff
 - ✓ Regional Training events for convention teams eliminating possibility of other LW support for events within the conventions
 - ✓ Move to direct local association and church approach to training events
 - ✓ Uncertain quality of LLM training ability

Task- from the May Meeting we were given the following task:

To provide the kind of proactive direct role of assisting Association members with field service, we need to plan for several things:

1. Increased financial base for organization to assist with training expense needs when appropriate. May require increasing dues (incrementally over a period of time), or some other means of raising support.
2. Creation of a workgroup to investigate how best to set up this kind of new structure, and to research all the possible details of its implementation, bringing a recommendation to the Association next May.
3. Eventually, an ongoing committee that is structured to work all year to assist Association members with field service requests.
4. Probably, moving the SSSDA back to a two meeting per year schedule, holding our own "December" meeting. (The timing of the December meeting was always important for picking up dropped LifeWay requests, which will still be an issue; and just the importance of two meetings helping to build community, partnership and fellowship among members.)

REPORT

Defining a New Reality

Since our meeting in May when we were formed as a workgroup to research a FS process to recommend to the fellowship, some significant things have taken place at LifeWay (i.e.- SSDF Officers meeting with Draper, Kramp & Francis; and December meeting with state leadership). We asked the question: How does that effect our work?

Our Discussion:

Perception of the Officer meeting with LifeWay leadership was positive – they seemed open to our communication of concerns, seemed to understand the “bad blood” context of past relationships, the door was left open to further work with the group in regard to future relationship re-building.

Perception of December meeting as very positive and basically hopeful, however it is very early in knowing exactly what the new attitude will bring or the new day will look like.

- The apologies and public recognition of a problem in relationship was a very good step toward improving our working relationship.
- The inclusion of state leadership at that meeting to try to build a new way of relating and working was a positive first step.
- The openness of the discussions, that remained mainly very positive, was encouraging.
- It will take a significant time frame for LW to make adjustments to their processes of working in a more inclusive way with state leadership.
- There remains a need to return Sunday School to flagship status, and the kind of visibility it deserves and needs.
- There has been, and may still be, a situation of much greater attention in Field Service to larger materials “markets” in disparity to the needs of smaller and less financially productive “markets”. More FSR’s are promised and granted where there is larger income streams than where work is small and less financially productive. A measure of disparity is understandable due to larger constituencies, but increased attention to the strategies of smaller conventions is still needed.
- There remains some struggle in working with LW in regard to FS, especially the regionally based training events, and in general, since there seems to be a lack of a clear decision maker on such requests.
- There seems to remain the need for a new structure that supports real and significant change in relationship to the states, a major overhaul producing front line decision makers about assistance. The network specialists do not have any decision making authority and need to represent/advocate more for the needs of the states, rather than predominantly representing LW. And, there needs to be program area decision makers that do not have send everything “up line” to another person.
- There is confusion concerning the purpose of the workgroup created at the December meeting. Most of us thought their purpose was to plan the format of the next December meeting. But, it seems, the purpose has become much broader and includes working on relationship issues between LW and the states. This creates a sense of duplication of efforts with this workgroup that we had not predicted.

- Overall, we have had over the years a very unilateral partnership with LW basically in control and inviting us to work with them on their terms. What we need to work to create is a much more bilateral partnership where the needs of states are more highly regarded, and there is more support from LW to meet the needs and requests of the states.
- This is complicated by the reality that LW has divested itself of most of their practitioner trainers, and now has very few real trainer specialists on staff. And, the LMM system does not provide the consistent quality of training leadership that is needed in most states. This will inhibit LW's ability to respond to FS in the ways that are needed in the field.
- LW must include cultural adaptation to their training of LMM's to work in the variety of contexts that exist in our states
- LW must move more quickly to make assignments of specific people to requests they approve so that states can make advance contact with them to inform them of culture, context and purpose of the event

What do we perceive to be the purpose of SSDF Field Service to be in the next couple of years?

- We need to be more proactive in our approach to assisting one another with Field Service needs. Including – working a year in advance instead of the current year catch-up we have used.
- Need to more effectively utilize existing levels/streams of assistance
 - o Existing state to state partnerships
 - o Associations that already exist (TeamWest, Mid-West, etc.)
 - o Existing and developing Affinities between states/groups
 - o LifeWay Field Service
- Approach our FSR's to LW as an invitation to be involved with us as one of our partners in ministry training
- Management of the paperwork and process by SSSDF FS Committee is a concern since this could become very burdensome to handle, and must be addressed
- Our May Meetings will need to become more proactive in addressing the Field Service needs of the entire group, spending more significant time assisting each other on a broader scale, and using excess requests from larger states as a way to negotiate for additional service to smaller states

CONCLUSIONS:

- We, as an association, have to press on in the matter of meeting Field Service for one another no matter what LifeWay does concerning this need.
- We, as states, have to make a more aggressive and collective statement about who our partners are, and to dispel the assumption that LifeWay is the only source of meeting these needs.

RECOMMENDED ACTION PLAN:

1. With the 2006 Field Service Requests we suggest each state submit all needs for field service to LifeWay in an attempt to clarify a broader state strategies. View these requests as invitations for stronger multi-lateral partnerships.

2. We invite each state director to provide the State Sunday School Director Association, through the Field Service Chairman, up to three field service events for 2006 that will most likely not be filled by LifeWay. These events could however be serviced by natural partnerships. We would suggest that these requests also be submitted through LifeWay Field Service.
3. Natural partnerships may include: LifeWay to state, state to state partnership, SSSDA members, entrepreneurial groups, etc.

The future goal would be for this process to involve each state director making duplicate copies of their S.S. FSR's to LifeWay, sending duplicates to the chairman of the SSSDA Field Service Committee. This collection of requests to be brought to the May Meeting for discussion, collaboration and negotiation.

Respectfully Submitted by Lynne Nickel, Chairman Bob Mayfield, Tim Holcombs, Sandy Coelho and Daniel Edmonds

We suggest that Keith Wilkinson be added to this group representing the Central Region and that this group then serve as the SSDF Field Service Committee.,

4:15 p.m. Issues Workgroup topics and group assignments

National Ministry Network Summit to be held in December 6-8 in Nashville. Part of the meeting will be at LifeWay an part at FBC Nashville. There will be a meeting in July at Ridgecrest to plan the NMN Summit.

An issue that surfaced was "Were are the people with Sunday School passion?"

Keith suggested that the discussion groups come up with issues that need to be brought up for the future. Groups presented ideas for later discussion.

6:00 p.m. Dinner Fellowship, "El Pinto"

Thursday, May 12, 2005

8:30 a.m.—11:45 a.m. Session #3

8:30 a.m. Worship, Devotion and Prayer - David Francis - 2 Corinthians 11:24 & following. Our work with churches may be difficult at times. But God can guide us through all difficult times to do what He wants us to do.

8:45 a.m. Lifeway Updates - David Francis -

David's accountabilities:

1. Make the program of Sunday School important

2. Increase curriculum sales

3. David has a volunteer organization at LifeWay through cross functional teams.

Belinda asked about language groups. David stated the Flake's Formula book will be a downloadable format and is in spanish. Go to LifeWay.com/sundayschoolkickoff.

Richard asked if the catalogue been reprinted with people of color?

The catalogue has been reprinted but the DVD has not been recut.

Jim H asked if the on-line VBS enrollment program could be used for Sunday School enrollment. Also connection.com has a good assimilation program.

David said he made a note to check it out.

Sandy asked about getting a copy of the SS material in the SS office of state conventions.

David said his understanding was that Jill in Network Partners office was trying to clean up the database and correct shiping problems. The rule is language products come only once a year.

David stated that field service requests need to go directly to Donna Gandy's office and not through the network specialists.

Tim asked when a field service requests comes in does anyone filter the request before it gets to the individuals that fill the field service requests.

David and John responded that is not currently happening.

David questioned if the past model of field service the best way to help churches. The answer from the group was it is A way but not the only way.

LifeWay is developing on-line training.

Keith asked what the timing for 2006 kickoff.

David said he started thinking about it this week. He wants to hear ideas from SSSDA members.

11:00 a.m. Report and Recommendations of the Officers - Bob Mayfield:

RECOMMENDATION #1

The officer's would like to recommend that the Association keep the same officer's for a second term so that they can begin working on a strategy of rotating officers and committee members. This would give the Association more stability and continuity in regards to the on-going work that is taking place with the different work groups and the officers. The officer's would also do a thorough review of our current constitution and make a report and recommendations at the 2006 May Meeting.

RECOMMENDATION #2

The officers would also like to recommend that the hosting of May meetings be offered to association members. Currently, it has been a tradition that the out-going president hosts the next annual meeting, but we are not tied to this practice and would like to be able have the flexibility of allowing other members the chance to host our annual meeting.

Daniel would like more consideration given to allowing additionally the vice-presidents to serve more than one year.

Recommendation 1 passed.

The recommendation would not affect the 2006 meeting location. It was also recommended that a two, three, or four year out location be set. Jimmy invited the meeting to Alaska for 2007

Recommendation 2 passed.

Treasurer's Report/Technology report

Mark Langly presented John Miller with a retirement plaque.

Issues Workgroup Discussion Time - Keith Wilkinson gave instructions concerning the Friday morning discussion groups. Two categories: Resources: How can we identify already existing resources; How can we collaborate together to produce resources; How can we develop associational resources; Ethnic resources. Networking: How can we better network.

Tim Holcomb asked to speak to the group. He distributed notes from a Tennessee Religious Educator meeting when Harry Piland was the guest speaker. Tim also announced Ken Marler will be the new State Sunday School Director for Tennessee.

12 noon FREE AFTERNOON AND EVENING

Friday, May 13, 2005

8:30 a.m. – 10:00 a.m. Session #4

8:30 a.m. Worship, Devotion and Prayer - Sandy - Colossians 3 - Fruits of the spirit.

Sandy is going to send Dr. Draper and to John Kramp and David Frances to thank them for the opportunity to work together.

Discussion was held concerning location of the 2007 meeting. It was pointed out that Mark Langley has done some preliminary work for hosting the meeting in Montana. The officers will study the request.

Tim Holcomb announced a hamburger super at his house on Saturday prior to the convention. Let Tim know if you are coming.

Sandy announced the 2006 meeting will be in Braintree, Mass. at the Sheraton. Sandy will be sending information out in the months to come. The dates are May . There will be family activities so it will be important for you to let Sandy know if spouses and family members are coming.

8:45 a.m. Issues Workgroup Reports and Recommendations - Keith Wilkinson -The categories to be discussed are: Networking, Resource Development, & Identifying existing resources within the association.

10:00 a.m. Miscellaneous Business

Resource development will take up the work of church planting workgroup.

Have the field service workgroup meet in Nashville in December to discuss the future of the workgroup. They need to continue to work on state to state partnerships. Belinda suggested that the field service requests be funneled through the regional vice-presidents.

Meeting was closed in prayer.

10:30 a.m. – 12 noon Meetings of Workgroups/ officers, etc.

12:00 noon Adjourn