

NSAC Missions Month - Week 1 January 10, 2021 Pastor Dave Sattler

Title: “On the MOVE: God Works In and Through People on the Move”

Sources: Bible Gateway; “*Beyond Hospitality: Migration, Multiculturalism, and the Church*” edited by Charles A Cook (2020), “*Scatter: Go Therefore and Take Your Job With You*” by Andrew Scott (2016), “*God and the Pandemic*” by N.T. Wright (2020), “*(Invisible) There Is No Them. Only Us.*” by U2 (2014).

Introduction to Missions Month 2021

- Hello, everyone! My name is Dave Sattler and I am one of the pastors here at North Shore Alliance Church.
- <Slide> “On the Move” is our theme for NSAC Missions Month 2021.
- ILL — Now, the idea of being “On the Move” is difficult to fathom these days.
 - When the vast majority of us have been ‘land-locked’ in our houses these past ten months!
 - I haven’t flown anywhere in over a year.
 - I’ve rarely driven over a bridge!
 - Personally I’ve had to pride myself on things like achieving 10,000 steps per day between December 24th and 26th without leaving my property!
 - Yes, God can and does speak to us in our homes — when we’re doing laps in our basement to try and stay fit!
 - And, hopefully we are learning to still hear from God when we tune in to church online from our homes!
- <Slide> When we look back, it seems **God does some of His deepest work in and through people “On The Move” ...**
- When God’s people fell into captivity in Egypt (Exodus 1:11), when they were hauled off to exile in Babylon (Daniel 1:2), and even when the early Christians were flushed out of Jerusalem (Acts 8:1-4), God did some incredible work in and through them.
- In the coming weeks, we’ll examine more closely these stories of how God has moved in, and around, the great people-migrations of history.
- <Slide> ILL — Our nation and our city are prime destinations ...
 - For the displaced peoples of our world.
 - Today 22% of Canada’s population was born elsewhere. [And this stat is quickly rising.] In a 2017 census, 47% of Vancouver residents reported they were “foreign-born.” — Cook, p.x.
- The past 5 years NSAC has been able to sponsor more than 30 refugees, most of whom are connected to our North Shore Iranian Church.
- Yet, there is still resistance. I’ve faced it in our foyer. ‘Why would we bring Them’ [Muslims] into Canada?!’ Fear of, discomfort with, the ‘Other.’
- ILL — In 2014, my favourite band, U2, released a song ...
 - “(Invisible) There Is No Them. Only Us.”

- Here's a line from it, Q: "I'm more than you know. A body in a soul. You don't see me but you will. I am not invisible." — U2
- <Slide> ILL — A not-so-sub-plot of 2020 was the mass global exposure ...
- Of the still deep dark divides of humanity when it comes to race, age, gender, power, & socio-economics. Just to name a few. Prejudice toward the 'Other.'
- APP — And I have to say: Any form of Christianity that fosters an 'Us Versus Them' mentality when it comes to any of these profiles is a not Christianity.
- Whenever the Christian Church confuses the mission of Jesus with assimilation to an oppressive monoculture worldview or aggressive nationalistic agenda, we get it badly wrong.
- For Christ-followers, our identity, our primary citizenship, is in heaven, in Christ. In the Christian Story, we do not belong exclusively to this world.
- And, this world, or any part of it, does not belong exclusively to any one particular group of us.
- As one author puts it, Q: "For change to occur, people who do not self-identify as impoverished or immigrants need to see these people not as 'Other,' but as like 'Us.'" — Beth Stovell in Cook, p.31.
- In this global pandemic, the plight of the invisible, the 'Other,' the marginalized, our planet's most vulnerable, has only worsened.
- <Slide> APP — In his very recent book, *God and the Pandemic*, N.T. Wright implores the church, Q: "... faithful [Christ-followers] will be the answer, not to the question Why [the pandemic]? But to the question What? What needs to be done here? Who is most at risk? How can we help? Who shall we send?" — Wright, p.34-35.
- This Missions Month I am praying that God will continue to ...
- Grow in us, NSAC, a vision for, and a real ministry to people new to Canada.
- God is already bringing people our way! New to our city, seeking asylum, desperately hoping to find refuge — a home right here, on the North Shore.
- <Slide> One could argue that God's greatest act, coming to earth in the person of Jesus, God the Son, the **Incarnation**, is God crossing every cultural barrier imaginable.
- John 1:14 says, Q: "The Word became flesh and made His dwelling among us. [Because of the incarnation] we [all humanity] have seen His glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth."
- Mission. It's in God's DNA. God **goes**. And so ought we.
- <Slide> Today we begin with the story of my new friend, Ahmad.
- We filmed an interview this past week; it's a powerful story of a refugee who sees the light of Jesus.