

What is a Mission ConneXion Citywide Event?

A Mission ConneXion citywide event is a two-day conference that brings together church leaders, mission organizations and lay people for the purpose of learning, networking, and discovering opportunities to serve together. Imagine such an event in your city!

Mission ConneXion Northwest, held annually in the Portland, Oregon metro area, is the signature event of Mission ConneXion whose *vision* since 2001 has been to see “God’s people effectively mobilized in mission” and whose *mission* is to “connect local churches and individuals to mission, so that increasing numbers of believers are actively serving in areas of the world’s greatest (gospel) need and opportunity.”

The two-day conference has three elements: Plenary or General Sessions; Workshops; and Mission Agency Exhibits based on the various ways people learn and/or where they are in their journey utilizing their individual skills, gifts, and calling to fulfill the Great Commission.

- Plenary Sessions are led by world-class speakers with first-hand experience of being used in fulfilling Jesus’ command to go into all the world with the gospel as given in Matthew 28:18-20.
- Workshops are arranged by tracks covering topics related to helping people interact over how they can be used to fulfill the Lord’s call on their lives and led by speakers with first-hand experience in cross-cultural setting both here and abroad.
- Mission Agency Exhibits are arranged in a trade show setting where attendees can pick up materials, talk with leaders of specific organizations who are working in places of the world or doing work an attendee is interested in learning more about.

Our experience shows that work towards a citywide event like Mission ConneXion Northwest begins two years in advance. The key for the success of any citywide event is the commitment of the local church in any given area. Influential local churches and individuals create the initial momentum to explore whether a city is ready for such an undertaking. Prayer among like-minded leaders who sense an urgency in mobilizing area churches is the most important element of building a solid foundation. Sustained prayer enables a team to resolve when it is ready to make the investment of time, talent, and treasure.

If you are feeling led to hold a citywide event in your area, first ask: “What are the felt-needs of the local churches related to their missions-mobilizing capacity?” The goal should not be to simply create a large event, but rather to build a program and strategy over how those needs can be met through a citywide event. To begin the two-year process, a planning team made up of church and mission leader volunteers is formed, which will be responsible for shaping the actual event, including developing the timeline; budget; and recruiting the volunteers; organizations and presenters needed for Plenary, Exhibitor and Workshop sessions.

What Makes a Citywide Mission ConneXion Event Distinctive?

1. The event is as much about strengthening and equipping the Church as it is about mobilizing workers for missions.
2. A commitment to prayer by leaders in the area is essential to the ongoing continuance of the effort.
3. The event is hosted by Bible-believing churches in the region who commit to sharing time, talent, and treasure for the event.
4. A planning team is made up of a diverse group of volunteer church and mission leaders, representative of the area.
5. The leadership and planning team has a teachable spirit and is willing to partner with, and receive coaching from, the Mission ConneXion Portland team.
6. Developing the event entails determining issues that churches in the region face in relation to mission engagement, then creating a program in response.
7. It is a free event, with the necessary funds raised primarily by local partner churches and individuals.

Steps Toward Partnering with Mission ConneXion

1. Exploration Stage:
 - a. What has happened in the past 5 years in terms of collaborative local church engagement? (Perspectives classes, citywide evangelism, other collaborative efforts?)
 - b. Do local church leaders sense a need to do more together to mobilize workers?
 - c. Is there a sense of urgency that the time for working together is closer than in the past?
2. Initiation Stage:
 - a. Who have been the key influencers in the region for previous citywide mission-related efforts? Would these same individuals and churches be interested in being involved with this event?
 - b. What churches have a weekly attendance of 500 or more, and would they likely be involved? What about churches with weekly attendance of 1,000 or more?
 - c. What has been the attendance for collaborative church events in recent years (as mentioned above in 1a)?
3. Engagement Stage:
 - a. Partnering with Mission ConneXion means a commitment to hold 3 annual events over a consecutive 3-year period.
 - b. Are you ready to discuss with Mission ConneXion staff your responses to the 7 “distinctives” in the above section?
 - c. Are you ready to begin the two-year planning process toward a regional, Mission ConneXion event? *If yes, please click [here](#).*