



Episode 001: Leading a Short Term Missions Trip for Adults Show Notes

Lyall Mix is the Associate Pastor at West London Alliance church where he has served for the past 18 years. Before that he had spent seven years in Alberta in two Alliance churches (Red Deer and Stettler). He is married to his wife Julie and they have three grown children. He has been privileged to be able to fulfill his ministry dream of leading short term mission trips to various countries around the world. He enjoys traveling, all kinds of sports and relaxing on his deck in the summer.

How did you become passionate about short term missions?

- Grew up in the Christian & Missionary Alliance (C&MA), a denomination with a distinctly missional flavour?
- Attended Friday night Missions Nights at Canadian Bible College
- Despite being passionate about missions, he didn't feel a call to full-time overseas ministry
- Worked in full time ministry for 16 years before leading his first trip

How do you pick your Short Term Missions trip destination and activities?

- The C&MA refers to their global missions strategy as the Four 'S' Venture
 - Asian Spice
 - Silk Road
 - Desert Sand
 - Caribbean Sun
- Decisions driven by the desire to partner with missionaries connected to his church and their long-term work
- Considers how long a missionary has been on the field – hosting a short term team is overwhelming to a missionary who is also new to their field

- Looks at the missionary's need and the skills of the short term team
- Looks at timing that suits both the field and the team
- Seeking discernment through prayer – Lyall is already praying about the destination of his next trip in 2017!

Lyall's Short Term Missions Trips

2006 – Led first team to Serbia

2008 - Serbia – kids and youth camps

2011 – Poland – VBS and construction

2013 –Cambodia - English as a Second Language (ESL) camps

2015 – Bahamas – construction, HIV camp, soup kitchen, VBS program with Haitians

What is the interaction between long-term missions and short-term missions?

- Long-term and short term missions can exist separate from one another, but they have the potential to enhance one another and further the success of the long-term strategy

How do you pick the members of your teams?

- Hosts an informational meeting – When? Where? Why? Who? What? Cost?
- Gives an application to everyone and asks God to choose the team
- Always considers how many people the hosting missionary can accommodate

What attitudes or characteristics do you look for in your team members?

- Excitement & Ownership of the trip
- Humility
- Submission to God & authority
- Flexibility

“The process of preparing for an STM is really the encouragement of great Christian community.”

How do you prepare your team for the trip?

- Starts prepping the team 6-10 months in advance
- Team building is key to a successful trip
- Sharing testimonies is invaluable for team unity
- Praying for one another, for the field, for the people

“If you don’t have unity on your team, you’re in trouble.”

What do you do to prepare as the leader?

- A lot of prayer – asking God for wisdom, for strength and for the ability to lead
- Physical preparation – time changes and long days are physically taxing
- Short Term Leader Training through SEND International of Canada

“You need to be in a good spiritual zone to lead an STM.”

How do you debrief your team?

- Debriefing is a non-negotiable – it must be done
- Your team is ‘messed-up’ after a short term trip reconciling their North American lives with their new experiences
 - Starts with a short debrief questionnaire on the field
 - Hosts a debrief meeting back in Canada – be sure to get it on the team’s calendar before you even leave on the short term trip
 - Evaluation of the trip by every participant

How do you evaluate whether or not your trip was successful?

“A short term mission trip is successful when the participants begin to talk about the changes God is making in their lives because of the trip.”

If our listeners want to learn more, how can they contact you?

Contact Lyall: lyall@wlachurch.org