



On Mission 2019

*The State of the Global Gospel:
Present and Future Trends*

**Manuel Böhm - WEA Peace and Reconciliation Network
Church as a Community Mediation Centre**

Imagine the Gospel becomes relevant to people that search for support when they're in need, when they're lonely, when they're hurt, or when they are clueless about their problems of marriage, of family, or when they have issues with their neighbors or even when their community faces challenges. Imagine these people, they would see through the local church body, how the Gospel relates to them and their matters. My name is Manuel Bohm and I work for the Peace & Reconciliation Network of the World Evangelical Alliance. We are establishing a global network for the Church to equip it and to share knowledge and experts in order to bring peace and healing to individuals and communities. We do this by promoting Jesus as the Prince of Peace. And we're taking His life as a model for our peace endeavors. We appear and we believe, that peace-building is a crucial component for the future of the Church and missions.

My topic is, The Church as The Community Mediation Center- to breakdown peace through the local context. If you look at the mission of God, the Missio Dei, and His heart for the world, we can come to holistic model of peace. If you look at the Hebrew "Shalom" -in the Hebrew understanding addresses a state of wholeness, of completeness, and harmony, and fulfillment. This includes four layers -the material, economical and physical level, a social layer, an intellectual one, and a spiritual layer. If we are now looking at reconciliation, we find how Jesus put relationship in a trifold structure of love. He said, "Love the Lord, Your God with all your heart, and all your soul, and with all your mind." And He also said, "Love your neighbor, as yourself." So, these three dimensions have to be taken into account when it comes to reconciliation. So, in a broad understanding this reconciliation can also be expanded to a global community and creation.

Robert Strider in his book, "Mission as a Ministry of Reconciliation" says, "Reconciliation as a paradigm of mission does not replace the other paradigms. But it can bring them into a closer connection with one another within the larger frame of God's intentions for the world and that is the Missio Dei, and we, his peer -and we agree with him, that this will guide the missionary thinking for the coming decades. So what is this Church Mediation? What is the Community Mediation Center? It basically is a church that lives as a reconciled community of people who have made peace with God, with themselves, and with their fellow human beings. So, in principle, a church promotes a culture of peace, conflicts are named, and they are solved and they are even transformed into a creative power. It's also church that understands itself as

"Ecclesia" - called out of the world to take responsibility for the world. And thus, and foremost, it is there for the people of the local community. The purpose of their existence is to be the light of the world and the salt of the Earth. She will always care about how the people are doing around her, to disquieted society, unforgiveness, conflict among her neighbors. These are all her own issues; this is her mission. And that is why the Church is active in the service of reconciliation. And as a "sent" community, the CMC aims to equip its staff for the ministry of reconciliation.

And for this, God has given the Church the five-fold ministry - the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and the teachers. These God-sent ministers will identify the many-fold gifts of Christians and guide the saints to practical services. and I say CMC, the community will train its members to do what they're called to do. And this is the same as she offers then reconciliation services to the community in which it exists. This will be personal care of individuals in search of maybe, a healthy identity, the marriage or family, chaplaincy or therapy. But maybe also it reaches over to social institutes, the industry, and even beyond. So, the local situation and the potential of the community will determine the projects.

So, what are the steps now towards reconciliation? If we take a look at those, we see the Church as a Community Mediation Center enables four steps for the community, and in the community. First, the Church joins the wounded and Christ with them. It helps also to name the wounds and express the hurt, and maybe even help to express the truth in love. And because God is involved, forgiveness would be enabled in the activities of the CMC and that also means the CMC reaches beyond other approaches that exclude the Christian faith. The next step, when healing follow forgiveness, it's building a common future. Now hands can truly be joined to collaborate. So how do we establish such a Community Center? It's a process of five steps. It's about the localization of your church in a particular community. It's about to analyze the potential of the church and the context of the community. It's about finding vision and project-planning. It's about taking action and evaluate.

So, in that phase of Involvement, it's about the phase of localization. The church finds and names its territory and its community. So basically, the social sphere, in which it feels God called them. So, in the Analysis, it's about the CMC wants to be an offer to that concrete community. So therefore, the Church wants to position itself and therefore it needs to know its own potential, what gifts, what skills, what competencies does this church have and what can she use in her own in her own service of reconciliation. So then secondly, that CMC needs to do a Potential Analysis or a Context Analysis. It needs to know what the local need is. Only if you know the local need, you can formulate the adequate offers to that to cover those needs.

As an example, if you want to help the sick, you need to have a look for them, you need to find them, and you need to determine what is their sickness about? In the Vision and Planning, it's about, now the church knows what the need is in their community, they know their potential, and they can form a concrete vision and a concrete concept, and if then the local community recognizes that their situation is within that con. they will ultimately perceive that offer well. And then from Vision, the ideas and projects will grow so, and they will result in a concrete activity or maybe various activities from that church as a Community Mediation Center. And finally, it's advisable to evaluate the process. The success of what has been done. And maybe in addition,

you can use voices of the community that the church serves, because that will make the people even more perceptive of those offers.

So, by now, you should have recognized that evangelization or consequently, evangelism is peace-making. It's an integrative process in which the Gospel is presented, it is practiced and preached. So, what can you do in your role? You can equip the church to be or become a Community Center. If you belong to the Church, you can equip the saints through the apostles in your church, the prophets, the evangelists, pastors and the teachers. You can practice holistic evangelism. You can serve the city and in parallel, you can spread the hope. You can also collaborate with the mission agencies and receive their expertise. If you're in the mission's field, you can support the local church through your expertise from missionaries back to the home church. You can collaborate with the home church. You can make mission not a 1-way street where only finances go out and missionaries are send out, you can make it a mutual learning experience. And if you belong to an agency, you can also collaborate.

Train the church how to do Christian Community development work, how to do context analysis. And you can also integrate holistic evangelism into your approaches. You can bring the experts and the resources to the table. And if you belong to an academy, you can educate holistically. You can start the discussions. You can collaborate with the church. You can boil down the insights of research. You can bring the experts and concepts to the church. So again, the Church as a Mediation Center, to wrap it up, this church knows about holistic peace. It knows about reconciliation in three dimensions about God, yourself, and the neighbor. And this church practices to join the wounded; to name the issues; to practice forgiveness; to build a common future; and you can be a part of that, you can equip the church to become such a CMC through your role. And you're invited to collaborate for peace and reconciliation. And I'm very thankful that you watched and I'm looking forward for your questions. I'm looking forward that you contact me. Do not hesitate. Be blessed for what you're doing.