

November, 2016
Newsletter

FaithLife Ministries

"Equipping Church Leaders Globally for 15 Years"



Is the Church in America Declining?

One of the statistics we often read or hear about is that the church in America is declining. But I do not agree. I actually think that the church is growing in America right now.

How can the church in America be growing you might ask? It all depends upon how you define "the Church." You see, the Bible describes "the Church" as the body of believers who follow Jesus. According to recent **George Barna** research on the state of the church in America in 2016, that would represent only about 7% of the population. As Pastor **Kyle Idleman** wrote in his book **"Not a Fan,"** many Christians in America are merely fans of Jesus but are not followers. In other words, many Americans say they are Christians but make little attempt to actually read the Bible, attend worship, or follow Jesus' teachings or Biblical principles. Consequently, the true church in America is made up of only those Christians who actually adhere to the Scriptures and follow Jesus in their lives.



We now live in an American culture where Christianity and faith in Jesus is being challenged every day. Many Americans who were simply church goers have stopped attending church, resulting in the decline in church attendance that we see. But they were never true disciples of Jesus to begin with. However, the ones who follow Jesus are still doing so and as a result the "true church" may well be growing. This is because our culture is causing American Christians to have to decide whether they truly believe in Jesus and will follow him. And from what I read and see around our nation, I believe that many of them are and so the true church is actually growing, although slowly!



We also know from history that the church actually thrives and grows during times of persecution. I believe that in America today we are experiencing one of those times. So while the church may appear to be in decline because of sagging attendance, I believe it is likely to be growing as former church goers become Christ followers!

Let us all take comfort in Jesus' words in **Matthew 16:18** when He said to Peter, **"And I tell you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it."**

Barna

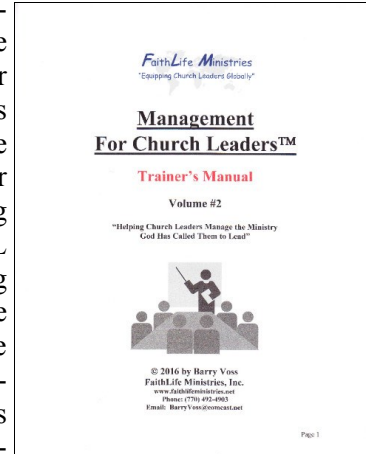
Estonia MCL Training Conference October 16 - 18, Tallin

Barry & Roger Shaw traveled to **Tallin, Estonia** to train 23 pastors and church leaders with the Estonian Lutheran Church on **October 17th & 18th**. This was our first ever training in Estonia and there was wonderful participation and engagement in our training. There were also some great questions and interaction over the material. One of the attendees, Pastor Urmas Kari-leet, is starting up a class on leadership and management next month at the seminary where we taught and plans to use much of our training in his course material. We thank God and praise Him alone for that! There was also interest in our MCL #2 training and they may invite us back in the future to do that training. Barry also was invited to preach at **Nomme Rahu Lutheran Church** and shared a message on the **Power of Faith** based on **1 Corinthians 1:19-26** and his own personal testimony.



New MCL #2 Trainer Manual!

Our new **Management for Church Leaders Volume #2** Trainer's Manual is now finished. It is currently available and was distributed to all of our global trainers in September. It has the same format as our MCL #1 Trainer's Manual and is to be used to teach our MCL #2 training manual. The MCL Volume #2 training manual continues the training from Volume #1 and contains similar but different topics surrounding leadership, people management and resource management. This new trainers manual is being made available to our global trainer network for use at their discretion.



First Ever MCL Training in South Sudan!

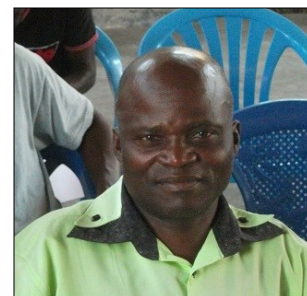
God continues to amaze me on the ways that He works. One of our MCL Trainers from Uganda was planning to take our MCL training to South Sudan in December.



But the violence there forced him to postpone his training until next year. At the same time, a pastor from **South Sudan** named **Pastor Jacob Chol** contacted us through our website and asked for our MCL training material. I sent him our MCL Training

Book and he emailed me that he has already started teaching our material in his nation to 81 pastors and leaders in the city of **Mingkaman**! He also recently became one of our global MCL trainers! Praise the Lord!

A Training Testimony



I received the following testimony from Pastor Josiah Ndifuna (photo) about the impact of our MCL training from his recent training in Iganga, Uganda:

"One of the pastors, called Martin, just called me today and told me that after he was taught on managing people and managing conflict he has now reconciled with the leaders who had quit working with him. Also, he called other believers who had left that he now knows what to do. Some have come back and they are happy too. I am happy for this restoration in the body of Christ!"

Board of Directors Annual Meeting Report

The **FaithLife Ministries** Board of Directors met on **Saturday, November 5th** to review our activities and



accomplishments for 2016, assess our financial status, and approve our strategic plan and budget for 2017. The highlights of our accomplishments for 2016 were reaching 8

new nations with our MCL training, seeing our Global Trainer Network teach our material to over 6,300 pastors and church leaders in 22 nations, and adding 8 new MCL Trainers this year! Our plans for 2017 include reaching 10 more new nations, training 5,000 more pastors & church leaders, and adding 6 new MCL Trainers. Please pray for God's provision and guidance for what He purposes for us!

5 MCL Trainers Added To Global Network!



FaithLife Ministries recently added 5 new MCL (**Management for Church Leaders**) trainers to our global trainer network. These new trainers are:

1. **Pastor Joshua Nguyen - Vietnam**
2. **Pastor Hamid Iqbal - Pakistan**
3. **Pastor Jacob Chol - South Sudan**
4. **Pastor Samuel Simba - Tanzania**
5. **Pastor Suveni Rubaduka - Dem. Rep. of Congo**

These new trainers all reviewed our course material and passed the qualified trainer exam. This brings our total number of network trainers to 57! We thank God for the pastors who have committed to teaching our Management for Church Leaders material to others in their nations!



The FaithLife Team!

I recently posted a blog on our website about the importance of building teams. Some of you may think that FaithLife Ministries is just Kim and I. But it is more than just us. We have been working the past few years to build an international team of **Management for Church Leaders™ (MCL)** trainers. We call it our MCL Global Trainer Network. Currently there are 57 MCL Trainers in our network from 29 nations, and we are planning to add more trainers to expand our global coverage. The photo above shows Barry with our many MCL Trainers from East Africa.



Our global network of trainers have done an incredible job of teaching our MCL material around the world. This year they have trained over 6,000 pastors and leaders in 22 nations! They are truly the backbone of this ministry and the primary driver of our growth and success.

I want to briefly mention a few of them who have contributed greatly this year to that effort. They include **Gordon Onyango** from **Kenya**, who has conducted 9 conferences and trained 499 leaders; **James Ochwo** from **Uganda**, who has conducted 5 conferences and trained 556 leaders; **Jasper Goka** from **Ghana**, who has conducted 4 conferences and trained 402 leaders; **Rajendra Sundas** from **Nepal**, who has conducted 5 conferences and trained 285 leaders; **Sikander Chand** from **India**, who has conducted 6 conferences and trained 244 leaders; and **Baboka Martin** from **Ivory Coast**, who has conducted conferences for us in 2 new nations - **Gabon** and the **Congo** - and trained 180 leaders.

We are so thankful to God for all of our MCL Trainers and the training they are doing on our behalf. They are our FaithLife team and we appreciate them so much!

To see a complete list of our MCL Trainers, please visit our website at **www.faithlifeministries.net**.

Our 2017 Schedule

<u>Dates</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Purpose/Host</u>
Jan 19-20	San Jose, Costa Rica	MCL Training - <i>Pastor Josue Ballesteros, Church of God</i>
Jun or July	LaFox, IL	FLM Ministry Update - <i>Lord of Life Lutheran Church</i>
Aug 21-23	Thies, Senegal	MCL Training - <i>Bill Norling, World Harvest Ministries</i>
Sep 18-20	Kherson, Ukraine	MCL Training - <i>Pastor Valentin Siniy, Pioneer Bible Translators</i>
Nov 4	Cumming, GA	FLM Board of Directors Meeting
TBD	Chiang Mai, Thailand	MCL Training - <i>Pastor Rick Sriwong, All Christian Church</i>
TBD	Managua, Nicaragua	MCL Training - <i>Pastor Efrain Hernandez, Church of God</i>

Prayer Requests

- For healing of **Pastor James Ochwo**, our MCL Training Coordinator for **Uganda**, who is struggling with nerve problems in his arms.
- Pray for **Pastor Samuel Sudar-sanam**, one of our MCL Trainers in **India**, and all pastors in India facing increasing government attempts to close their churches down.
- Pray for all of our MCL global trainers who are facing financial difficulties in their ministries, churches, and families.
- Pray for our annual end of year fundraising appeal and that God would provide for the financial needs of this ministry for 2017.
- Thanksgiving to God for providing us with an option for medical coverage we can afford after our insurance was dropped by Humana due to Obamacare related issues in Georgia.



FaithLife Ministries Releases New Video!



We have developed a new ministry video designed to encourage viewers to inquire further about our **Management for Church Leaders™** training. This new video is posted on our website and provides an overview of our ministry and the global need for this kind of training. It also explains what the material contains and how it is taught. There are also testimonies from a few of our participants and global trainers.

To watch this new video, please visit our website home page at www.faithlifeministries.net!

Are You Looking to Make an End of the Year Donation?



We know that many of you may be considering making an end of the year donation to be able to take advantage of the income tax credit for charitable donations in 2016. If you are looking for a cause to donate to, we would certainly appreciate any donations you could make to this ministry. But your gift must be sent prior to De-

cember 31st. To make a donation, please mail a check made payable to **FaithLife Ministries** to the address to the right. Your donations will help us train more pastors in 2017 that need our training. Thank you and may God bless you!

Thank you for your prayers & support!

Barry & Kim

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