

COMMISSIONED

THE ART OF LIVING OUT THE
WORDS, WAYS, & MISSION OF JESUS

8.1 Partnering in the Mission of Jesus

Dreaming God-Sized Dreams

*Jill Carmichael, City Impact and A1:8 Director
National Community Church*

Hey NCCers, this is Jill and I love getting to be part of Commissioned as we study the Words, Ways, and Mission of Jesus. You are now jumping into Partnering in the Mission of Jesus and I get to share about Dreaming God Size Dreams.

If you have been at NCC any length of time you know we talk about Dreaming a lot. It has become part of our naming and branding and something we value and seek to grow. However, there is a difference between your average dream and a God Sized Dream.

I want to talk about how a missional community should be casting prophetic vision. Let's take some time and dig into that and share some stories.

"We are to be signs of God's tomorrow when the kingdom shall be fully displayed in the world today. Therefore, the concerns that are on God's heart for tomorrow- justice, righteousness ... care for the poor- those things should be our concern in the world of today. We are to be signs of God's tomorrow in the world today..." Glasser, *Announcing the Kingdom*

With a commitment to what should be, an understanding of what is, and a dream for what could be. The missional church is grounded in the past, exists in the margins of the present, and orients itself towards the future. Its position is both tenuous and flexible. At its heart a missional church is prophetic, offering hope - a life line thrown from the future. It is only through the ability to respond to the present with a lens towards the future, that Scripture is understood, "Your Kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven." The Kingdom of God is both now and future, both here and there, and the church is called to prophesy a future reality into the problems of today.

I want to make sure you heard that, a dream for what could be. Kingdom solutions for earthly problems and injustice only come from God sized dreams. The church is called to prophesy a future reality into the problems of today, dreaming up innovative solutions that result in flourishing communities.

We look around our city and the world and often all we see are injustices and problems that seem so huge how can there even be solutions or attainable solutions. We see war, racial injustices, homelessness, trafficking, gun violence, and so on. At a time when things seem more divisive than ever the only option is God Sized Dreams.

You might be thinking ok sounds nice but how do I even do that, where do I even start. Well first I want to share some stories of God Sized Dreams.

One of our partners at NCC is DC127. DC127 is based on James 1:27, stating, “Pure and genuine religion in the sight of God the Father means caring for the orphans and widows in their distress and refusing to let the world corrupt you.”

DC127 was started because The District Church here in DC was concerned about the foster care system. There are so many children needing foster care or at risk of foster care and not enough families to care for them. So they started with a prayer meeting in May of 2013 where over 400 people representing 19 churches showed up. They showed up to seek a God solution and they prayed. Together a dream was identified. What if there is a day when there are more families waiting to host children in need of foster care then there are children in the foster care system.

To this date [DC127](#) is a leading organization in the city partnering with DC govt, nonprofits, and churches all working together to support families in crisis and prevent children from entering the foster care system as well as raise up new foster and adoptive parents.

It started with hearts breaking for what breaks God’s heart, that led to prayer, that led to a God sized dream, that led to a lot of hard work, which all resulted in more families flourishing in our city.

Another example is Homes Not Borders. In 2015/2016 when the Syrian refugee crisis was at its height and we began seeing more and more refugees coming to the US and resettling in our community. A small group of NCCers came together and asked what can we do? How do we show the love of Christ? A dream that was born was to strive to make sure every Refugee Family that comes to our city feels welcomed. Through many more meetings and asking what the gaps are we found that setting up apartments was very much needed. Setting up an apartment for a family lifted a financial burden of making sure families had all they needed to get a good start but it was also a way to create a welcoming home. Adding stuffed animals to children’s beds, creating welcome posters, setting up art. Our volunteers were able to create a warm and welcoming home. Volunteers continued this work until a dedicated team formed [Homes Not](#)

[Borders](#) in April of 2019 where the organization is now providing set up for almost all of the families resettling in the DMV area. Continuing to be inspired by that original God Sized Dream of welcoming every refugee family to our community.

I would love to share next about Kicheko and Mango Tree School. NCC has always been involved globally working to create mutual partnerships where we can learn from each other. A team first went to Mango Tree School in DR Congo 11 years ago. Pastor Jeremiah was just beginning his own God Sized Dream of a school. Pastor Jeremiah had established a church and an orphanage and was dreaming of a school to give children an education and opportunities. Mango Tree School opened in 2013 and continues to this day to provide quality education to its students. One of the NCCers who went on the team, Sarah, felt her passions coming alive as she began to dream about her passion for social impact, designing jewelry, relationships in DR Congo and education. Fast forward to 2022 and Sarah has developed a beautiful and profitable jewelry business where portions of profits go to education scholarships at Mango Tree School and beyond.

There are so many stories I could tell and you will even hear a few more like DC Dream Center in an upcoming podcast.

What are you dreaming about? What is God sparking in your heart or breaking your heart for? Is it business as missions, is it to create, is it to rally people around a cause? It is the job of the missional church to be a prophetic voice in our world and speak of Kingdom solutions. When we say “Your Kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.” That means God Sized Dreams coming with solutions to the problems of our world today. When you think of what makes a flourishing city and you look around, what are the gaps? Where is God calling you to step in?

When we talk about missions at NCC we share Acts 1:8 which we paraphrase as, “Ordinary people empowered by the Spirit, doing what Jesus did, together wherever they are.”

All of those stories are ordinary people, who have sought the presence of God and are empowered by the Spirit, doing what Jesus did- seeking Kingdom Solutions, together, wherever God has placed them. I think the together part is also important. None of those stories are 1 person on their own saving the world. They all created a collective, a community, came together as the body with a God Sized Dream to realize what a piece of Heaven on Earth could look like.