

COFFEE, CREAM, AND

Jesus

.....
BREAKING THROUGH BARRIERS ONE CUP
OF COFFEE AT A TIME

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LEAD WOMEN ON MISSION: Use
with meeting plan on pages 14-15
in Women on Mission Leader
(Summer 2022).
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THIS MONTH, VISIT
WMU.COM/BLOGS
for an update on the work
and current praises and
prayer requests.
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As summer transitions into fall in Pittsburgh, colorful foliage lines the riverfront trails along the major waterways. The loyal residents there love their city. Many of them never step outside its boundaries. They want you to love their city, too, and share their passion for team sports, pierogi hoagies, and lots of french fries.

The city sees other kinds of change happening too. As the years pass, the city's gloomy skyline continues to transform as vibrant tech start-ups and major company offices slowly replace blue-collar businesses. The rich religious history of the city is not immune to change either. Many think it is fading into the past.

In spite of Pittsburgh's alluring charm, the Steel City is recognized as being the second most irreligious city in the US. Though the neighborhoods are friendly, many of the residents are skeptical of the church or have been hurt by the church or its members. Building deep, true trust is a challenge for missionaries like David Domalski, who serves as a journeyman with the North American Mission Board (NAMB). But even though Pittsburghers are not quick to accept the gospel, they are often willing to listen, and David is willing to talk. Just give him a cup of coffee and a little time, and his conversation will turn into "Jesus talk."

THE GENSEND EFFECT

David blends in well with the locals—especially the college students since he himself is a recent college graduate. Before dedicating his career to full-time missions work with NAMB, David visited Pittsburgh multiple times on short-term mission trips. His last mission trip there was through a six-week program called GenSend.

GENSEND IS AN IMMERSIVE SHORT-TERM MISSIONS EXPERIENCE FOR STUDENTS ON SCHOOL BREAK LOOKING TO FIND THEIR PLACE IN GOD'S STORY.

GenSend is designed to teach students how to have missional impact. David spent two summers learning to live on mission, and he brought that back with him to his college town. Department stores, restaurants, and his campus became missions fields.

"Intentionally sharing my faith has changed the way I see the world and see people," he said.



NAMB missionary David Domalski

One college freshman with whom David became friends was awakened to the joy of the Lord. In tears, David's new friend called one morning to request they meet to talk about God. His friend's circumstances were crumbling, and he was broken by the guilt of his sin. Something had to change. David pointed him toward the lifeline of Jesus, and he grabbed hold.

David's passion for evangelism is best seen when he's engaging in one-on-one, faith-based conversations. "I know witnessing is more than literal words when sharing your faith, but I believe that to truly share good news with people, verbally sharing the gospel is pertinent," he said. He has learned through experience that sharing the gospel becomes easier and more enjoyable with each repetition. Now it is something he genuinely seeks.

David's experience with GenSend solidified his desire to move to Pittsburgh. In summer 2020, God answered his prayer to move into the Oakland neighborhood where he had served. With 80,000 college students living in the same neighborhood close to the University of Pittsburgh, the setting was perfect. He came alongside Zakk Roberts and Chris Richards, who were planting Steel City Church, and in June 2022 he became the church's college ministry coordinator.



Volunteers pack meals provided through a monthly food bank.

A FORMULA THAT WORKS

Being in his mid-20s has its ministry advantages.

“I have the freedom to spend nights connecting with people and building relationships,” David said.

“Thankfully, my job also allows me the freedom to meet some people for coffee or lunch throughout the week.”

On weekends and weeknights, David can be found on the soccer field or basketball court, where he initiates witnessing opportunities. He knows building relationships is crucial and has learned how to do this well. He is quick to point out, however, that God wants to maintain a relationship with him first before He wants his work. This is the driving formula from which David operates. If it is the other way around, he feels it becomes unbalanced. Galatians 1:10 keeps his mission in perspective: “Am I now trying to win the approval of human beings, or of God? Or am I trying to please people? If I were still trying to please people, I would not be a servant of Christ.”

PROJECTS WITH PURPOSE

Coffee, ice cream, deli sandwiches—David has used them all as an impetus to change lives. When a new church plant needed to advertise, the only business that would allow a tent to be set up on the property was an ice cream shop. Not only did word get out about the new church, but “sundaes” took on a whole new meaning for the ice cream shop employees.

Poverty, hunger, and homelessness are prevalent in the Pittsburgh area, opening the door to a variety of ministries. David assists in a monthly food bank as well as serving a meal every other Sunday before the church service. Providing groceries for those in need and backpacks for the homeless containing ready-to-eat, tear-open pouches are also viable ministries.

Projects for children and youth are not overlooked. The Foster Love Project provides backpacks equipped with clothes, games, and accessories for foster children when they are introduced to their foster family. Children in the community are reached primarily through the neighborhood community center. Basketball serves as David’s gospel inroad to middle school- and high school-age students.

David ministered alone but yearned for collaborators. He said a partner can bring accountability, missional motivation, and peace. And a female ministry partner is particularly helpful when ministering to women. He said God showed His faithfulness by providing a few more team members recently—including his wife, Casey, whom he married in November 2021.

“Casey has been volunteering in many capacities with me since our relationship began,” David said. “She helps connect with mission teams in town and also disciplined a few girls last summer [who] were here on a GenSend summer experience. Casey loves discipleship, so her help often comes in conversations with me on how to effectively set up a culture and environment where people can be held accountable and grow in holiness.”

One of the newer ministries in which David has become involved is Eden’s Farm, which seeks to care for and support survivors of human trafficking. Love and acceptance are paramount in this ministry. Serving people in great need, such as trafficked individuals, causes David to reflect upon his many blessings and intensifies his desire to serve “the least of these.”

He said Proverbs 24:11—“Rescue those being led away to death; hold back those staggering toward slaughter”—encourages him to persevere in his role to share the gospel with everyone, whether they be victims of human trafficking, struggling college students, homeless individuals, hungry children, or hurting adults. David prays what he calls the “scary prayer,” asking to be given divine appointments, to be able to recognize them, and to act upon them. He knows a prayer like that will surely be answered, so he must be ready. Only through the Holy Spirit does he find confidence, wisdom, and success in his witnessing.

“I can’t save people,” David said. “The only way I can ever be successful in a witnessing opportunity is through the Holy Spirit.” The Holy Spirit moves according to His time and purpose. David has seen a person’s surrender be activated in a single moment, but



Every month, a group of pastors meets for a SEND Network training and a time of encouragement.

more often it is through extended conversations and relationship development. Even when he is unable to develop a relationship, David is quick to offer a smile and ask for a name. “Trying to brighten someone’s day is not the ultimate form of witnessing for Jesus, but it is a start,” he said.

Just ask Bill. Bill is a blind man David sees often on the busy sidewalk in his neighborhood. Whenever David passes by, he says hello. Bill shakes David’s hand and feels his arms. Bill then responds, “Hello, King David!”

Developing relationships with others is one thing, but David knows the wisdom of maintaining his own relationships too. That’s why he meets with men in his church who serve as spiritual and personal mentors to him.

BEING FAITHFUL DESPITE CHALLENGES

As with any job, there are challenges. David confesses that one of his primary challenges is maintaining a sense of peace. He struggles with comparison to those in secular jobs and ministry vocations. On busy days stress takes hold, making him feel inadequate. On slower days he may find himself feeling devalued.

Another challenge David encounters is his response to consumerist attitudes, where people have an expectation for the church to supply their needs. He wishes these individuals would recognize the value in serving others. His desire is for them to inquire how they could give of themselves rather than being on the receiving end.

David asked for prayer for the following areas:

- The opportunity to lead an evangelistic Bible study for male college students
- Development of a mentoring program with Christian students throughout their college stay
- A building for his church plant in spite of the challenge of limited property and property that is off-limits to churches
- God’s direction in David’s life for vocational ministry, either as a college ministry staff member, church planter, or a closed-country missionary

“God is the agent behind all successes for His kingdom, and He simply calls me to be faithful,” David said. Let’s be faithful to join David in relentless prayer for the lost in Pittsburgh and in our communities.

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KAREN ALLEN lives in Birmingham, Alabama, and often participates in short-term international mission trips. Read about some of those trips on her website, ewerblessed.com.