

National Urban Ministry Conference

Conference History

- 1990 Dallas. No info on 1990.
- 1991 Dallas, Charles Landreth helped to coordinate.
- 1992 Memphis, Harold Shank, coordinator. The conference at this time was called the (3rd) National Conference for Ministries to the Poor and Homeless. This was the first meeting of inner city ministry directors to discuss the conference and develop a networking of support and ideas.
- 1993 Houston, Charlie Middlebrook. Theme: "Unless The Lord Watch Over The City . . . Psalm 127:1."
- 1994 Birmingham, Ron Pittman, chairman. Effort was made in the directors meeting to begin a National Urban Ministry Steering Committee designed to allow those serving in urban ministry to lead the direction and themes of the conference. Larry James was appointed chairman. The goal was to develop a conference theme around how church planting ministries and support services ministries could work more closely together. The National Steering Committee was finally realized in a meeting at the close of the 1995 conference and ideas drawn from the committee were implemented in the 1996 conference. Although the National Steering Committee had grown to function well, the theme of the conference had not returned to the goal laid out in the 1994 meeting.
- 1995 Dallas, Larry James, chairman. Theme: "Heavenly Treasure and City Streets." The Conference Steering Committee met on Saturday following the conference, and Frank Lott was selected as chairman.
- 1996 Chicago, Frank Lott, chairman. Inner city ministry directors met in Little Rock to plan the conference. Theme: "Building Bridges Over Troubled Waters." First year to have a combined Saturday session focused on racial reconciliation with apologies made between a black and white brother. The Conference Steering Committee met, theme, date changed, and Anthony Wood selected as chairman.
- 1997 Memphis, Anthony Wood, chairman. Theme: "Jesus Lifted Me" with texts taken from the Gospel of Luke. This was the first year to have two non-white (Black and Hispanic) evening keynotes and a daytime class track exclusively devoted to Hispanic ministry. The combined Saturday session was devoted to "The Church's Response to Welfare Change," Harold Shank facilitator.
- 1998 Memphis, Harold Shank and Evertt Huffard chairmen, Highland St.
- 1999 Nashville, Todd Flowers chairman, Hermitage Church
- 2000 Impact Houston, Ron Sellers chairman
- 2001 Atlanta, Alfred Donald and Geoff Geisman chairmen, North Atlanta Church
- 2002 Tulsa, Frank Lott chairman, Contact Church
- 2003 Little Rock, Keith Lape chairman, River City Ministry
- 2004 New York, Jared Looney chairman, Bronx Fellowship
- 2005 Memphis, Anthony Wood chairman, MUM—cancelled

Reasons for canceling Urban Ministry Conference 2005 and not continuing UMC.

1. By October 1, 2005, little to no response had been experienced by Memphis planners to gain an indication as to which ministries planned to attend.

2. It became clear that the next generation of urban ministers chose not to take ownership of UMC and their vote came in the form of non-attendance or choosing not to lead an upcoming UMC. Many indicated that they attended CCDA and/or other similar conferences, or used internet to supply research, new ideas, and encouragement.
3. In consultation with those who had chaired/led previous UMCs, the decision to let UMC cease was unanimous. It was agreed that UMC had run its course having served its purpose well for 15 years (1990-2004). Decision makers, besides those in Memphis, were those long associated with UMC, like, Houston Impact, Contact in Tulsa, I believe Nashville, and possibly others I have forgotten.¹

Submitted by Anthony Wood, Evangelist at River City Ministry in North Little Rock

¹ Wood, Anthony, Email: "Urban Ministry Conference History," Revised 11/12/2009.