

Recap – Spokane Fatherhood Conference, Jan. 20, 2018

By David Wallace

Here is a brief review of the Spokane Fatherhood Initiative conference. We had a great time. It is important that leaders in (their church) become aware of and acquainted with the resources available in Spokane in addressing the issues of fatherlessness, adoption and healthy lives for those now excluded. There were 29 exhibitors who introduced themselves to the conference. We will continue to share, inform and challenge our faith-based community with the conviction that a church on fire changes a community and a nation.

David Murrow, author of "Why Men Hate Going to Church," generated great buzz in pointing out that church services and programs are geared more toward middle-aged women. The fastest growing churches are those that focus on involving men in the Gospel. He pointed out that while men have little interest in attending churches that emphasize women's interests, women have no problem attending churches that focus on men and their interests. Look for exciting follow-up to the conference.

Erin Jones shared that it is more important on how you finish, rather than how you start. She is a great example of the success of adoption. Abandoned at birth, her birth certificate listed father as "A Negro man," (60 years old) and mother as "A Norwegian woman" (20 years old) in Northern Minnesota in 1971. Her idealistic young parents, committed to adopting unwanted children (Erin and a young brother, also black). Realizing that their family was not accepted by their community, Erin's parents went to the Netherlands as teachers in a private school attended by children of European royalty, ambassadors and high government leaders, and business executives. In that atmosphere she pursued excellence and excelled in a desire to be a "world changer." She too is an educator touching young lives.

Ryan Brown, UGM Youth Outreach Director, told of dynamic efforts of involving college students in ministry with homeless youth. His testimony of moving from a dysfunctional family to an out-of-control childhood into young adulthood involving drugs, alcohol, sexual misconduct including producing children almost abandoned was a stirring example of the Lord not giving up on Ryan. He found life, and is living "life abundantly" in and for an intact family with his children and in the lives of young adults and forgotten youth in Spokane.