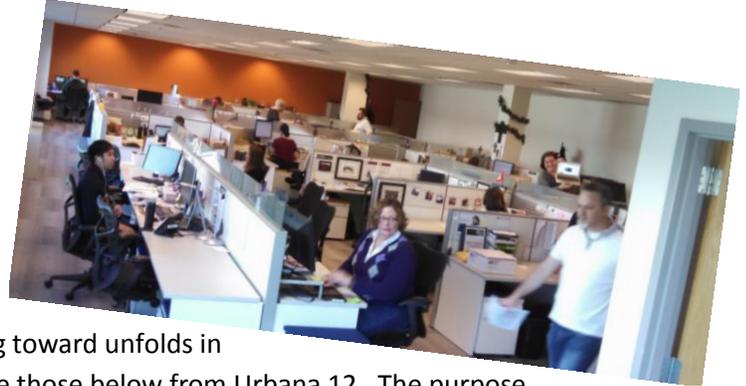


**The Scenes of Urbana 15 are Changing**

Currently, the work of Urbana is taking place in locations like the Missions Department here at the National Service Center (pictured) where energy is rising and hours are extending as the Urbana team makes final preparations for the conference.



**Twenty days** from now the “work of Urbana” will look much different as all that we have been working toward unfolds in downtown St. Louis and expresses itself in scenes like those below from Urbana 12. The purpose of our work will be realized as participants are engaged by God through scripture, worship, prayer and the stories of those who have given their whole lives for God’s global mission.



Please be praying for us in these final days of preparation. Here are a few specific things for you to focus on:

- Pray for stamina and focus for the entire Urbana Operations team. I continue to be grateful for this committed and capable group. They have worked hard for many months and we need to finish well between now and January 1 – it’s true, our work doesn’t stop when the conference starts!
- We will celebrate communion at Urbana 15 on the evening of December 30. We are changing the method of serving communion (stations rather than passing plates) and this has caused some “late in the game” planning challenges. Pray that these pieces would come together in these final weeks.
- As you might imagine, recent world events heighten security concerns at an event like Urbana. Providing for appropriate levels of security is one of the responsibilities that sits on my plate. It has occupied much of my thinking the past weeks. Pray for wisdom and good decision making for all involved in this area and, ultimately, for God’s protection of Urbana 15 for the sake of his purposes.

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It has been a very challenging season on the home front – especially for Sherry. We have known that her mom was showing some signs of dementia for quite some time. These past 2-3 months she has rapidly descended into what is, almost certainly, Alzheimer’s (tests are currently ongoing). As I write, Sherry is returning home from Fresno where she has spent the week caring for her mom and dad, trying to reorganize their world and

establishing in-home care for them. I'm sure many of you have been through this and you know that the practical demands of this time are significant. They are made even more so for us by living 2,000 miles away from her parents. We are grateful for Sherry's brother who is still in California and has been very involved in this caring process. The quality of relationship that he and Sherry have is a true blessing in a time like this. Beyond the practical, the emotional weight of "losing" a parent is very significant and Sherry is feeling the weight of that as well. Caring for Jean and Tony (Sherry's parents) will be an active concern for us for the foreseeable future. Please pray that God would provide the wisdom, comfort and resources necessary for this season.

*"Behold, the virgin shall be with child and shall bear a son, and they shall call his name Immanuel, which translated means, "God with us." Matthew 1:23*

It is a good time to be reminded of the truth of "Immanuel" – our hope in ministry, in life and in life to come. May your hope be renewed as you celebrate the truth of this season!

We are grateful for you.

Rob

