

Pastors Ride Wave Conference to Healthy Churches

Improving church life from the inside out. That's what's motivating pastors of small to mid-sized churches across America to attend the Wave Conference 2012, which kicks off Wednesday in Virginia Beach.

"What I care about is helping pastors build healthy churches," says Steve Kelly, senior pastor of Wave Church, which has grown by leaps and bounds over the past decade.

"Each year, people say they come back from the Wave Conference with a heart to serve. That certainly impacts pastors when their people take that attitude."

The Wave Conference is like a training ground where pastors bring their staff, volunteers and supporters to capture a broader vision of how a healthy church operates and addresses challenges. They learn all the "ins" and "outs" of how a church needs to evolve to grow and adapt to the needs of its local community.

To supercharge this training ground for shaping a well-rounded ministry, Wave Conference organizers have brought in world-class ministers and gifted worship leaders for the big event.

This week's speakers include **T.D. Jakes**, senior pastor of The Potter's House in Dallas, **Wayne Alcorn**, president of Australian Christian Churches, and Virginia Beach-based church leader **Steve Kelly**. Dove Award-winning songstress **Kari Jobe** will be the featured worship leader.

"We're scratching where the body of Christ is itching," says Kelly.

“As a champion of the local church, we try to stay in touch with what is happening in the body of Christ and to cultivate a life-giving environment where God can stretch people.”

With a show-and-tell approach, Wave Conference aims to send people back to their own churches empowered, challenged and equipped.

The scope of this conference, which includes training courses on church business, multimedia, music, children ministry, women’s ministry, men’s ministry, youth ministry and community outreach, also helps re-engage and re-energize pastors, especially those who feel isolated or out of sync with their family, staff or congregation.

“You don’t have to sacrifice your marriage and family to do good ministry,” says Kelly.

In a special session, pastors will be taught this year how to conduct ministry together with their spouses.

Wave Conference breaks the mold, providing a new model of a **healthy church**, according to Kelly.

An outgrowth of the annual, three-day conference is the Wave Network, a growing group of pastors who support each other around the world with **prayer**, fellowship and collaboration.

The Wave Network is open to any pastor, no matter the location, to connect with like-minded kingdom builders year-round.

Wave Church’s senior pastor is quick to encourage church leaders who are besieged by misunderstandings, slander, idle talk, false accusations, discouraging words, disloyalty, manipulation, personal agendas or the remnants of others’ impurity.

“Don’t curse the darkness,” says Kelly, encouraging church leaders to shine the light of Christ from within themselves.

“Light a candle.”