

**BCM Highlight – Jamie Rogers**

**Jamie Rogers, Speaker**

**The Columbia Metro Connection Podcast 026**

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**Columbia Metro Baptist Association at** [**CMBA@ColumbiaMetro.org**](mailto:CMBA@ColumbiaMetro.org)

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Chris Reinolds: Welcome to the Columbia Metro Connection podcast where you can go to get valuable, relevant and quality resources for you and your congregation. The Columbia Metro Connection is sponsored and supported by the Columbia Metro Baptist Association and the almost 100 family churches that support the ministry of the CMBA. Host for this week's episode are George Bullard, the Executive Director of the Columbia Metro Baptist Association and I'm Chris Reinolds, Certified Church Consultant and Lead Pastor at Killian Baptist Church. Once again, welcome to the Columbia Metro Connection. As I mentioned in our last podcast, we have a special emphasis for this entire week on the Baptist Collegiate Ministry and the work that God is doing in the lives of college students here in Columbia, South Carolina. We are encouraging those who listen to this podcast to begin to carefully consider the ways in which they might be able to partner with the BCM as they seek to reach the 35,000 students in and around the Columbia Metro area.

In today's podcast, we'll hear from Jamie Rogers as he gives us some practical steps about how the church can get involved in the lives of students. One major emphasis in his talk is how we, the church, can reach the next group of international leaders by simply taking one night a month and having an international student in our home. Let's listen in as Jamie shares his passion about reaching this next generation.

Jamie Rogers: So glad to be able to come before you guys and ladies and I say, hey, I lived five years in Long Island. Everybody's a guy like you guys. It's always you guys. If I say you guys, just know I'm including females and males, all in the same phrase. We've been here since the first of December. We came at the very end of November. When the state convention called us about coming to do collegiate ministry, man, we were satisfied. We were glad to be serving the Lord in New York. In Long Island, New York, less than 3% of the population knows the Lord. And we had seen about 70 people in about five years come to know Jesus and putting their faith in their trust in him. I had seen that many people baptized and who knows how many more had trusted Christ.

And so when the state convention called us about coming to lead collegiate ministry here at USC, we actually told them no three times. And because we had seen so many new believers, there were so many new Christians with us in New York, we felt like we were their spiritual parents. The same way with Paul with Timothy treating him like a son in the faith, these people were our children in the faith. Before we would leave, we had to make sure there was somebody there to be able to take care of them. And so we passed that work on to somebody else.

And then the Lord allowed us to be able to come back and to serve him here at USC, which is a school, I know this is going to make me an enemy immediately with people, but man, it's a school that I loved. I'm a Gamecock fan, grew up a Gamecock fan my whole life. That's my dad's fault. We did that and so now I get to come back and to share the gospel. It's really kind of an ironic thing as well because when I was going to school, I did not go to USC and Columbia because it was too big. God, through some spiritual growth and opportunities in my life, carries me, this kid who lived on a dead end dirt road that was two and a half miles long, carries that guy to New York to do church planting. And then to allow us to come back and to see the campus and to know that, that that campus is not bigger than God.

It literally is a spec on his fingertip, if it's even that big in comparison to the size of God. We do know that God loves college students. We know that God loves the world because he's brought college students and he's put them in a campus and on a campus for us to reach. In just a few minutes I'm going to come, I'm going to bring three friends of mine, three guys who have become friends of mine and I just want you to be able to hear their heart for how they're also reaching college students. But one of the things we wanted to do, if I could just kind of be honest with you, I'm a guy, I'm not very funny. I'm not going to be funny and I just want to share my passion and my heart with you guys. I think that'll come through today. Not only with me but with my friends who are going to be here.

We tried to organize today and just to tell you why you're here today, you came for shrimp and grits, I know. And Kenny from North Trenholm, one of my pastoral friends over here, he said, man, he said you're just the gravy now. We've already had our bellies full, no pressure on you.

When I got to USC, the BCM had really almost ... It really was dead for all intents and purposes. I know Lee Clant, my boss was there last semester and they were running in the teens. For this semester, while we've been there, we haven't even done anything. I keep telling our students, we haven't done anything yet guys.

We've seen our numbers grow, praise the Lord for that. This semester we've seen four students putting their faith and their trust in Jesus and we celebrate that. Three of those four have been baptized. We're still kind of discipling one of those other students to try to encourage him to follow the Lord. The neat thing, and you'll hear Billy Judge talk about this from Shandon, one of the things we've been trying to do is to get our BCM out of our building. Our students hang around our building all day long. Rob, you've seen them in there. You're in there every Wednesday. It drives me crazy because I'm like, guys, man, our campus is your missions field. You're never going to be on this big of a missions field again. Yet you're inside of a building where most of the students who are in here know the Lord. We're trying to get them engaged and get them out on our campus.

Well, the neat thing is, is finally this week, one of our small groups that we call family groups, actually met Monday, just last night. They met at a coffee shop on campus and they said, man, they had a girl come up and ask them and get engaged about the Lord. And they're sharing their faith with her. And I'm like, see, this is ... One of our students said, man, our campus really doesn't know the Lord. And I'm like, guys, I've been telling you this for three months now. We identified that one of our students who's on our leadership team has been sharing her faith with another student. That student came to church with her this past Sunday and actually brought a guy with her. She's not even a believer and so we've seen our numbers grow this semester just through being engaged and getting engaged with the campus.

Last Tuesday night, we have our big large group worship gatherings on Tuesday nights and we had 65 students this past week. I called Billy, I was like, man, dude, you're not going to believe it. It's just so much fun to celebrate and to see what God already is doing and to know what he's going to continue to do. The churches that are going to be up here, the groups are going to be up here this morning or with me, I guess it's not morning now, it's lunch. But the guys who are going to be up here with me, if you were to put all their numbers together, if you put all of our numbers together, you're going to see it, there are going to be about a thousand students represented between them and another church that's not going to be participating with us today.

And so you think, man, there are a thousand students who are engaged with churches and with ministries already. Well, that sounds great until you remember there are 35,000 students at the University of South Carolina right now, both graduate and undergraduate students. There are 34,000 more to reach and so you'll hear more of their heart for that as well. But the reason why we got you guys together is because we need you involved. We are not here today just to inform you. We're here today to get you engaged with what God is doing. I'm going to give you a handout that's going to have everything on it that I'm about to tell you right here of ways to get your church engaged with what's happening with collegiate ministry. Not only with what's happening in collegiate ministry but so that you can get your church involved in collegiate ministry because by being involved in collegiate ministry you really can transform the world.

Raj is going to be here in just a second as well and he'll tell you more about the international need, but I want to talk about a couple of initiatives that we are trying to create and to start even right now because we need your churches involved guys. We need the churches of the Columbia Metro Association involved in what we feel like God is leading us to do, because if you aren't involved, there are going to be thousands of college students, some of them international students who are going to go back to the 10/40 window and they are never going to hear the gospel because churches are staying inside of your walls. God did not call us to do that. God has given us a great commission. Jesus gave us a great commission and the first word of that is the word that you're familiar with where Jesus says, “Go.”

He's called us to go into all the world. We haven't done that faithfully. Thank goodness we have a God who actually pursues sinners, who pursues lost people. He pursues lost students, and because the church hasn’t gone, God says, you know what I'm going to do? I'm going to bring them to you. I just think God has entrusted these students to us to be able to say, man, God has brought them here. It's up to us to share. I just want to walk you through six ways that your church can be engaged in collegiate ministry, in particular with Baptist Collegiate Ministry. You're going to hear from two churches this morning. You're going to hear from another ministry that you guys can be involved in, but we want you to hear about what's going on so that you guys can get engaged as well.

One of the things we're asking people to do this summer, we're going to ask churches to come in and to get involved with us and to prayer walk our campus. Every Monday, I fast and pray over our campus. The reason I do that is because there's a story where Jesus has his disciples, he sent his disciples out. You remember they come into contact with this man who is demon possessed. They could not cast that demon out. Jesus comes and immediately, the demon is gone. His disciples say, “Lord, why couldn't we cast that demon out?” Jesus makes this statement, he says, “That kind only comes out through prayer and fasting.” I'm convinced after being on the missions field in New York and now being on the missions field at University of South Carolina, you're going to hear, I'm going to ask some of the guys this question this morning as to why it's so difficult to see college students come to know the Lord as their savior. Why it's so difficult to share the Gospel with college students.

Well, it is a difficult task and one of the reasons is because many college students just aren't looking for the Lord Jesus. They don't need him. Their lives are pretty good, right? They think, man, I don't need Jesus. My life is going along pretty good. I'm making pretty good grades. I'm in good health. Why do I need Jesus? I'm going before the Lord interceding on behalf of the students on my campus every Monday. Well, not just Monday, but every Monday prayer and fasting through prayer and fasting and saying, God, would you bring students to yourself because we believe that he's doing that.

We're going to get you guys involved this summer and you're going to hear more about some dates and opportunities because we want WMU groups. I can say this right, as a former pastor. I love WMU, but I'm also tired of WMU only talking about missions and only talking about what happens on the missions field. We want to get WMU groups involved actually in being involved in the missions work itself by coming to pray for a missions field that's right in their backyard, in the middle of the city that all of our churches surround right here in Columbia. We're going to be doing prayer walking, and that's one way that your church can be involved right here this summer with BCM. By the way, you don't have to wait until the summer. If you want to come to the Baptist Collegiate Ministry building I've got the address on the sheet that we're going to hand you today. Please make sure you get that. You're welcome to come to our building anytime. We will send you out on our campus and say, man, go and pray and share the gospel with students because they'll talk to you, they'll talk to you. That's one way.

Number two, every Thursday at our building, at 12 o'clock, we host international students and we partner with other international student ministries that host this meal every Thursday. It happens right in our building. Right in your building guys. Your building is the Baptist Collegiate Ministry building. Every Thursday there are over a hundred international students. If you come to the meeting, you will look around the room and just by looking at skin tone and skin colors, you can find out that about 99% of the students who come into our building, every Thursday, of the over a hundred students, just about every one of them guys are from what we call this 10/40 missions window.

This all important 10/40 window, where were most of the world's population lives there. It's those countries where it's illegal or it's dangerous for Christian missionaries to go into. God has brought these students to us. One of the things you're going to hear from Raj today is that it's good for us to host this meal, but if there aren't any church members who are there to engage and to build relationships with these students, then we've wasted our time. Because the way these students are going to come to know the Lord is through these relationships that are built around that luncheon to say, man, could we invite you to our house? This past week, well just Sunday, we had 17 total international students in our home for Easter, this past Sunday. We shared the gospel right there under our car port with these international students.

One of those students Raj, you and I are going to have to follow up with. This guy named Wendell from China and he knew an awful lot about the Easter story. I've got to find out from him like how he knows so much. I'm anxious to kind of follow up that conversation, but we're looking for church members to come and engage international students. If you've ever been to our building, you know that parking is at a premium. What we've done is we've actually partnered with Domino's who is right beside us. We're asking volunteers, we’re asking pastors, we're asking church members. Pastors, we're asking you to take this to your churches, tell your churches about this, and to get your church members to our building on Thursdays just to sit down and eat lunch. The lunch is provided so it's free. It might cost them a little bit of parking if they can even find paid parking on the street.

But we're just asking your church members to come and to partner with us to have a meal with an international student so hopefully they'll build a partnership with them. Kenny, I saw your Facebook post this week as well. I think you had two Chinese students at your house for Easter this past weekend. We're looking guys, we need more. You're going to hear Raj's heart about this as well. That's one way. Every Thursday, every Thursday, no excuse. Guys, no excuse in us not loving those international students who God brings in our building every Thursday.

Number three, one initiative we're trying to really kick off, it's kind of a partnership with this international luncheon, is we are trying to partner every international student at the University of South Carolina and at Benedict College, we are doing our best to try and build a database so that we can get every student who's on our campus that's an international student, in the home of a Christian family in the next year. One of the things we're doing right now, you can go to our website right now, I almost was tempted to say, everybody get out your phone, go to [Carolinabcm.org](https://www.carolinabcm.org/) click on the international tab that's on the top of our page. When you click on that tab, there's going to be a dropdown form that's going to drop down there and there's a link that says "host an international." What we're asking you to do is we're asking you pastors, number one to fill this out yourselves because there's a form that'll be on the website there. You can fill that form out, hit submit, and it comes to us and we're going to build a database.

What we want to do is we want to build a database of as many church families as we can get. Here's what Raj has told me and I hope he says this again a little bit later too, because he's laid the gauntlet down for all of us. Raj has told me, I said, Raj, what happens if we build a database of church members up and we don't have enough students to get to them? He said, Jamie, if you get me a thousand families, I'll get you a thousand students. Guys, there's no reason why. There's no reason why the Columbia Metro Baptist Association can't find enough families in our churches that would be willing to open up their home one night a month. That's what we're asking for. One night a month. We're not talking about just hosting internationals for Thanksgiving and Christmas. We're talking about hosting an international student at your house one night a month.

Every one of us are eating at least one meal at our house every month. I'm not talking about preparing a ribeye dinner because for some of them, a ribeye dinner wouldn't work. They wouldn't like that. But I am saying if you could eat and fix turkey sandwiches at your house, you can host an international student and feed them a meal at your house. I'll let Raj tell you a little bit more about that, but we're asking you to please go back to your churches. Let them know about this ministry that we're trying to start, that we're trying to partner and trying to foster and have them sign up.

This summer, what we're going to do is once we get a database built, we're going to offer a one night training. We're going to offer those a few nights this summer, just in case somebody can't make one night and just tell families how easy it is to host international students at your house. Literally, it's as easy as opening up your doors. The hardest part would be going to the school to pick them up. That's going to be the hardest part because a lot of them don't have cars. Anybody can do this. Widow ladies at your churches can do this. Widowers at your church can do this. Everybody at your church can do this if they have or own an apartment or a home and they're willing to just open up their life.

That's a need right now and we're asking you to please do that. If you say, well, I don't feel comfortable doing that. Have me come to your church, have George come to your church. I know George's schedule is busy as well, but my schedule is busy as well. Have Raj come to your church and just talk about this need. Have Robbie come to your church and we would love to just lay this offer out to your church and make this plea to them and then have them go and sign up on our website.

Number four, the fourth way is we are looking for pastors to mentor students and who just want to come. Hey, let's be honest. A lot of your churches, man, they drain your soul, right? I know the difficulties of being a pastor and dealing with the headaches that some of you guys have to put up with. What better way to encourage your heart and encourage your soul then for me to put a student with you and you just disciple them for a semester. They'll sponge in and they'll soak up everything that you've got to share. I'm mentoring a student right now who's being called to the ministry and it's been such a blessing for me. I told my boss, Ken Owens just yesterday I said, man, this is why you get into college ministry just to be able to pour into these students. We want to involve you guys in just doing mentoring with some of our students.

Every Tuesday night we have our weekly worship night, tonight we're going to have it. It's our last one this semester. We're also looking for church partners to host meals for us. One of the ways we end up getting to the heart of college students is through their stomach and we don't worry about that. We proudly profess that. We're always looking for churches to partner with us in that. That's a way you can be involved.

Then number six is you can actually ... We have a student team that goes around to different churches and performs worship services and does skits and that kind of thing. We have an impact team. You can contact Gus if you would like having our students involved at your church, just to be able to get them there.

Chris Reinolds: Well, thanks so much for that, Jamie. If you're listening in and seeking to get a little bit more information, please be sure to check out today's show notes to find the link to those six ways to get involved with the BCM. Also, if you found this podcast helpful for you and your ministry, share it with others so we can get the word out about what God is doing. Until next time, from all of us at the Columbia Metro Connection, we thank you for listening and urge you to share this podcast with everyone you know. It's the good news about the Good News in the Columbia Metro Baptist Association.