

Opening Plenary Session—Thursday, November 17, 2016—7:00pm-8:30pm (1.0 CEU)

Joy Fagan

""Social Work and Kingdom Impact: Embracing the Fruitful Tensions""

Abstract: The profound impact of social services on the fabric of our community cannot be over stated. Social Work is a profession of helps—a profession dedicated to people, especially those coming out of difficult circumstances. The profession of social work, therefore, is an invaluable vessel for Kingdom purposes, specifically the deep gospel implications that compel authentic Christ followers to help the most vulnerable in our society, today's "widow and orphan" (James 1:27).

The primary vessel God chooses to use, however, is not a profession or a social service. His primary vessel is His people, both individually and corporately, acting in faith, hope and love for His greater purposes. There are faith communities today that have chosen the primary vessel, the church of which Christ is the Head, at the exclusion of all other entities. Without a doubt, there are tensions that develop when a person of faith enters into a broader and more intense community engagement that seeks to embrace the redemptive work of Christ applied to multiple spheres. The title above is an intentional assertion that the Social Work profession is a viable and valuable contributor to Kingdom purposes, and the subtitle recognizes the challenging tensions that can emerge from the implementation of this assertion. May we explore and wrestle with these tensions together, in a fruitful manner, as we position ourselves to be authentic, comprehensively wise and profoundly effective vessels for His Kingdom purposes. "Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven."

Outline: *Topics to be addressed and timeline within the presentation.*

- Introduction of topic and "Big Idea" of presentation – 5 minutes
- Journey to Safe Harbor – 10 minutes
- Infrastructure and Holistic Emphasis of Safe Harbor – 10 minutes
- Fruitful tensions encountered – 10 minutes
- Challenges of "the parentheses" – 10 minutes
- Wrap-up/Conclusion – 5 minutes
- Q & A – 5 minutes

Key: Weave in the story of Safe Harbor and specific, practical examples from Safe Harbor throughout.

Dr. Fagan will also explore the social work code of ethics and the organized social work profession with the organized and organic efforts of Safe Harbor.

Learning Objectives: *As a result of this presentation participants will be able to:*

- Describe the value of Social Work practices for kingdom purposes

- Summarize tensions between the organic work of authentic Christ followers and the organized efforts of the Social Work profession
- Outline the necessary components to anchor our souls, guard and guide our hearts, and fortify our thought patterns while in the "trenches"
- Present strategies to partner more substantively with the organized local church

Primary Audience: Social workers and related professionals; social work students; human services professionals; clergy

Content Level: Basic/Intermediate

Number of Continuing Education Contact Hours: 1.0

Bio Information: Dr. Joy Fagan, Ed.D, is Founder and President of SiFi Ministry, Inc. and the Safe Harbor House. She stepped down from her career as a professor of Biblical and Ministry Studies in 2013, and now focuses her attention on creating pathways for women coming out of trauma and substance abuse at Safe Harbor. Joy also has been speaking and teaching in a variety of contexts on topics such as gender identity, human trafficking, women's ministry, spiritual formation and various biblical topics. She has a passion for teaching and equipping women to be all that they can be for all that Christ is. She is involved with the Clark County Jail chaplaincy in Springfield, OH, helps provide leadership for education, worship and women's Bible studies at her church, and serves on the board of reference for Women at Risk International.

A 2005 graduate of Southern Seminary with a doctoral degree in Educational Leadership and Church Ministry, Joy resides in Springfield, OH. She previously earned her Masters of Religious Education at Grand Rapids Seminary.

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