

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

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## **How Kindness Transformed a City, Evangelism Methods**

Church pioneer's "Outward Focused Evangelism" has transformed Cincinnati, while a church plant is planned for Tampa based on innovative *Outflow* concepts

**Tampa, FL** — "Small things done with great love will change the world," says author Steve Sjogren, the pioneer of modern outreach-focused church movement who founded "Servant Evangelism" ([ServantEvangelism.com](http://ServantEvangelism.com)), a ministry dedicated to showing Christians how simple acts of kindness can transform the world.



When Sjogren planted Vineyard Community Church twenty years ago with only 30 members, Cincinnati was ranked "the third most unfriendly city in America." Sjogren's church vowed to change the trend, motivating his church to take kindness to the streets, offering passersby cold cans of Coca-Cola on hot days, sharing their faith if the opportunity arose. Conversations sparked, and Sjogren and his church continued to perform acts of kindness, from coffee shops to grocery store cashiers. Evangelism became everyday life.

Twenty years and twelve million people later, Cincinnati has transformed, Vineyard Community Church has grown to 7,500 members, while "Servant Evangelism" has mobilized churches and ministries across the country, changing evangelism forever.

Sjogren has teamed up with Dave Ping, a well-respected outreach trainer and Executive Director of Equipping Ministries International, to write *Outflow* (Group Publishing), sharing stories of everyday people sharing their faith and impacting their communities.

"*Outflow* has been impacting churches around the country," says Sjogren. Community transformation is what's inspired Sjogren and his wife, Janie, to make plans to relocate to the east side of Tampa, Florida to launch Coastland Tampa ([CoastLandTampa.com](http://CoastLandTampa.com)), a church community developed on the concepts in *Outflow* that launched in early 2008.

"Tampa has experienced significant spiritual growth in the last two years, and we felt God calling us to be a part of this community transformation," Sjogren says. "Coastland Tampa will be a church modeled on the principles of *Outflow*—encouraging people to live a life of generosity and practical love everyday."

Sjogren and his wife have been involved in over 50 church plants, spanning 30 years. The couple's re-entry into full-time ministry is a miracle in itself, over 10 years after Sjogren's near death experience in 1997, where he died twice during routine surgery. Sjogren chronicled his near-death experience in 2006's *The Day I Died*.

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**About Steve Sjogren:**

Steve Sjogren is the pioneer of the modern outward-focused church movement—beginning over 20 years ago when he planted a small church in Cincinnati. Recognized today as Vineyard Community Church, it has grown from 30 to more than 6,000 weekly

attendees and has been responsible for birthing over 22 congregations in the greater Cincinnati area. Sjogren heads up [ServeCoach.com](http://ServeCoach.com), a professional coaching group dedicated to helping leaders become “unstuck” when they come to a plateau in their ministry or career. To date, this innovative service has helped over 1,000 leaders.

Steve is the author or coauthor of such groundbreaking works as *Conspiracy of Kindness*, *101 Ways to Reach Your Community*, *Irresistible Evangelism*, and *The Day I Died*.

**About Dave Ping:**

Dave Ping brings over 20 years of outreach and training experience to his role as Executive Director of Equipping Ministries International ([www.equippingministries.org](http://www.equippingministries.org)). Under his leadership, EMI has taught outward-focused ministry skills to over 100,000 pastors, missionaries and volunteer leaders in 55 countries.

Dave is a highly practical, creative and entertaining conference speaker. He has authored interactive training courses and coauthored such popular books as *Listening for Heaven's Sake*, *Irresistible Evangelism*, and *Quick-to-Listen Leaders*.

**About *Outflow*:**

“*Outflow* is about a richer relationship with God. A relationship like it was intended. Powerful. Intimate. Constant. It’s about a conversation that never ceases—a conversation with God who is constantly filling you up with his love, his power, and his blessings. *Outflow* is about overflowing with God’s love into your friends and family, your community, about leaving a legacy of loving God and his people.” (4-5) *Outflow* features:

- 25 short readings spread over 5 weeks.
- Inspiring stories, reflection questions and practical ideas readers can implement.
- Five-step process to move readers from inward to outward focus.
- Versions of *Outflow* have been designed for whole churches, pastors, small groups, children and youth ministries.

*Outflow: Outward-Focused Living in a Self-Focused World* by Steve Sjogren and Dave Ping. Published by Group Publishing, 236 pages, paperback. ISBN: 978-0764434044, 8.9 x 5.9 x 0.7. \$14.99.

**About [ServantEvangelism.com](http://ServantEvangelism.com):**

[ServantEvangelism.com](http://ServantEvangelism.com) has polls, ideas, articles, forums, a [blog](#) and “Serve Ezine,” creating a community of people who continuously share ideas and believe that “small things done with great love will change the world.”

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## Suggested Questions for Steve Sjogren or Dave Ping, authors of *Outflow*

1. Steve, “Servant Evangelism” was founded in Cincinnati fifteen years ago. Can you tell us the story of how it’s helped transformed the city?
2. Steve, tell us about the CoastLand Tampa church plant based on *Outflow*. How is it progressing? When will it launch?
3. What are some practical ideas for churches doing outreach?
4. Why don’t the “old” evangelism methods work anymore?
5. How does *Outflow* differ from other books and methods on evangelism?
6. Do you think the church model of *Outflow* will expand into churches everywhere? What is the future of church evangelism?
7. How can we reverse society’s trend of inward-focused living to outward-focused living? How will the concepts of *Outflow* change the way people live their lives?
8. Why is it important for every Christian to individually take a personal interest in changing the world?
9. How can we impact family? Friends? Community? The world?
10. How can *Outflow* impact churches? Small groups? Pastors? Youth and children ministries?
11. What is the Judas factor?
12. What are the “four levels of the spiritual fountain?”
13. What are some of the most common fears people have about sharing their faith?
14. What “society rules” do we have to break to share our faith?
15. How can Christians reverse some of the negative stereotypes they’re faced with?
16. Steve, can you tell us about your near-death experience in *The Day I Died*?

**For an interview with Steve Sjogren and Dave Ping, contact Ben Laurro at Pure Publicity at [Ben@purepublicity.com](mailto:Ben@purepublicity.com) or 818.753.4056**

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