A Canadian magazine of Christian mission

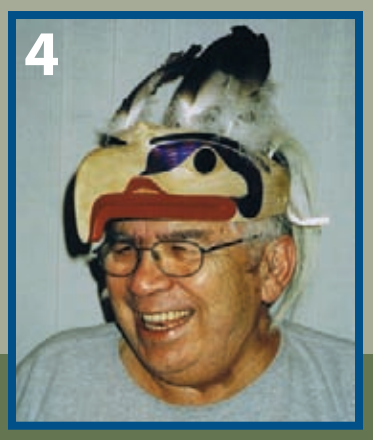


Ministry to Dalits



Quilt of belonging

Up the coast in God's NAIM



Mission Fields

Summer 2007

Steve Bell:
a Christian musician among Muslims







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highlighting the work of Christian mission in Canada and overseas

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A JOYFUL RETURN TO CHINESE ROOTS

By Don MacLeod

Ningbo is the capital of Zhejiang province. Wide boulevards, modern skyscrapers, even a transplanted University of Nottingham, mark this innovative and prosperous city on China's central coast. Ningbo was where my father was born.

It was the city to which my grandfather came in 1897, as a raw missionary recruit whose first language was Gaelic. Ningbo's British consulate was where he married an American, four years later. Two decades afterward, it was to Ningbo he returned in the final hours of his unsuccessful fight with cholera. He was buried in Ningbo Foreign Cemetery.

All of this was swirling through my mind as we were driven to the Century Three-Self Church. There, in a hospitality room with red damask tapestry, my wife and I – and a friend who had grown up with me in China – were greeted with great ceremony. Church representatives were even gracious about my fractured and fragmentary language, neglected since my Chinese childhood some 50 years ago.



The author's grandparents, Kenneth and Katherine MacLeod.
Top: Don MacLeod and his wife in the church his grandfather built in 1905, with the leaders of the current congregation. Right: A recent photo of one of the sights MacLeod remembers from his childhood in 1936.

I showed pictures of my grandparents' wedding day; another of my grandfather and his evangelists; still others of my father and his three sisters as children.

Then I produced faded photos of the home my grandfather had built for his fiancée in 1900. There was a collective gasp of recognition and delight. Each photo was studied and discussed.

They were particularly attracted to a view down a narrow defile to a house. Why such excitement? They replied with great emotion: "We will take you there. It's still the same house. Nothing has changed."

A feast at one of Ningbo's finest restaurants delayed our visit. Eventually, we were whisked down a motorway to Ninghai. A trip that took my grandparents 14 hours, and which finally cost my grandfather his life while en route on a sampan, was made in 40 minutes.

We stopped by at another thriving church which had once been a mission outstation; and in 10 minutes, we were deposited at a narrow and ancient laneway. Climbing a steep ascent, we were finally beckoned to turn left.

And then it happened. Clutching the photo, I saw the identical view before me: a narrow defile leading over the wall to a modest Western-style home. Two storeys high, only the latticework on the upper balcony altered – ancient photographs suddenly came alive. Our party soon summoned all the neighbours;



photos were passed around, hurried trips to scanners and photocopying shops were made.

The smaller homes around the compound - where single missionaries, Bible women and pastors had lived – are now occupied by squatters. The government has recently returned our family home to the church, and the first floor is the church's social centre. Upstairs are apartments housing two elders without family.

There were apologies for the state of housekeeping, as our guides showed us my father's bedroom. On the balcony, with ancient photos for comparison, the silhouette of distant hills remained unchanged.

In modern China, where everything is being torn down to make room for the new, it was an astonishing discovery.

A pastor with us said: "We are a church that has lost its history. Our records were all destroyed. We don't know who brought Christianity to us or how and when our church started. Write something about your grandfather, have it translated, and send it to us. We want to learn more about our roots."

By now a crowd had gathered, noisy chatter everywhere, fingers pointing at us and the photos, questions addressed to me in Chinese that I could barely understand. We were summoned to the church, 100 metres away. It was built in 1905 by my grandfather; in 1980, it reopened, and has been extended front and back. The elders gathered, and at the communion table, we held an impromptu service.



My childhood friend and I mustered all the Chinese choruses we could remember, and the crowd that had gathered joined in, singing along with us, the words binding us together in a common faith.

After that, I started the old gospel song: 'Coming home, Lord, I'm coming home.'

As we sang in Chinese, a great wave of emotion swept over us. One of the older men said to me: "You have indeed come home."

Today in Ninghai, we were told, there are 20,000 believers in a population of 60,000. In addition to several services in the mother church, there are other places of worship.

Frequent conversions and baptisms are the norm; sharing one's faith is a joyful response to the spiritual emptiness created by China's prosperity and disillusionment with the past. Worshipping with Christians in three provinces, we witnessed Jesus-centred preaching and transformed lives.

Not that every province is as promising as Zhejiang. In my parents' old mission station in Shandong, where we spent a weekend, the entire missionary compound of 25 or more buildings – a vocational institute, a Bible school, a chapel, a theological seminary, missionary residences, student dormitories, an orphanage – was completely destroyed in 1946/7. Only the hospital remains as a mute witness to the missionary presence.

Elsewhere, many Chinese medical institutions are belatedly, but now proudly, acknowledging their Christian origins.

Even in south Shandong, the church I was taken to as a youngster on Sunday mornings, has hundreds of believers filling the building. The choir, which my mother once led, sings old traditional hymns that have gone out of style in North America.

Indeed, one young believer turned to me and said, "We hear that many of your churches are almost empty in Canada. We need to come and re-evangelize your country as missionaries, returning the favour 100 years ago you did for us." Perhaps he's on to something.

Don MacLeod is research professor of church history at Tyndale Theological Seminary, Toronto.



Participants in the Global Diaspora Missiology Consultation, held mid-November at Taylor University College and Seminary in Edmonton, discussed the impact of global migration on the future of global missions as well as new missions strategies to be utilized by diaspora followers of Jesus Christ.

The event drew missiologists, theologians and leaders of diaspora groups such as Chinese, Japanese, Vietnamese, Jewish, South Asian, Korean, Brazilian, Hispanic, Nepalese, West African, East African, Russian, Arab and Filipino. The event was sponsored by the Filipino International Network, and endorsed by the Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization. *– Lorajoy Dimangondayao*

INDIA'S DALITS: SUFFERING AND SOLIDARITY



By Nathan Smith

We sat, taking in the day.

Bama was sniffling after finishing a short bout of tears, one of many that evening. It was 9 pm and we were sitting in the Good Shepherd Ministry office in the middle of a Bombay slum, just around the corner from a school which also housed the local church.

Bama had been conducting an ongoing outreach into this slum. She had begun by building one hut, then another; no one had told her to stop. She had transformed vacant lots into a school for slum children. The third classroom had just been completed the day before.



Above: The wreckage of a Dalit school in Bombay. Top: Nathan Smith with Dalit children in a Hyderabad school.

There was one problem: every small, tattered home the local people built happened to be on property that wasn't theirs. Technically, this school shouldn't have been built. But the authorities had never bothered Bama; so, with her indomitable courage, she had pressed on to build a third classroom.

This morning, we had just finished a magnificent Indian curry after a long session of cleaning and furnishing the new classroom. Then a knock came on our door.

Words were spoken very quickly and frankly in Hindi, and in a short period the Indians in the room were rushing out the door with Bama leading the way. The municipality had come with a big truck, policeman and about 15 men – to destroy the new classroom.

I later learned this is normal practice, as many slums shoot up overnight – and sometimes they are required to tear down their dwellings for safety, health and many other reasons – which will all go away with a simple bribe. Our policy is to refuse this course of action and to proceed under the law.

If Bama had just offered a bribe to these men, we would be outfitting the classroom with paint, posters and other teaching implements. Instead, we Westerners hid, so as to keep from complicating things further – and Bama, along with her volunteers, some local believers and most of the surrounding community, watched as their new classroom was torn to the ground. Brick after brick was laid bare, while we prayed from the office many unanswered prayers.

Finally, when we they were finished and had driven away, we moved out into the open to observe the wreckage, where just a couple of hours before stood our classroom. We cleaned up all the rubble, so they wouldn't come back.

They had waited until right after the classroom was finished to commence their destruction – to teach Bama a lesson, I suppose. The lesson being that you don't build unless you provide the right people with a bribe. In fact, the policeman standing and watching over the proceedings asked Bama, why she hadn't made "peace" with them earlier.

For a woman who has been walking with the Lord for most of her life, and serving for 20 years in slum ministry, this was more than just a building. Every step forward seemed to send her two steps back. Her godly action of creating, instructing and giving hope was being reversed by greed, anger and tyranny.

What did Bama have at the end of the day? She had broken walls, a broken bank account and a broken heart. What the men had come to destroy, though, only served to build something else: the walls of the kingdom Jesus commissioned all of us to proclaim to all the world. Each brick which came down that day only served to continue building solidarity with the people Bama had been called to.

What she had was worth more than that classroom cost, more than the bribe she would not pay, more than the entire building itself. She had gained solidarity with a suffering people – which would forever alter the destiny of her ministry there.

That night, Bama sat in her chair and cried – while the local Christians from the slum surrounded her and hugged her. She had entered into their world of tyranny and suffering in a whole new way, and more than ever she was one of them. What a victory for the kingdom. Suffering formed solidarity between her and the community.

Bama is going to rebuild the classroom, and fully intends to persist – no matter what the authorities do. She's a rock-solid woman for Jesus, who really loves these people.

Nathan Smith is a Canadian serving in India with Discipleship Without Walls.



NAME: Dave & Louise Sinclair-Peters
LOCATION: Chonburi, Thailand
Haling from Williams Lake, B.C., Dave and Louise are working with MBMS International



A local lady named Khun Ellie, who runs a coffee shop, told us she has been praying for her one month old grandbaby, who was severely beaten by her nanny. She didn't know whether the child would live or die.

She said: "Today I prayed to your God but I don't know if I did it right." Hearing her cry for help, we told her we were all praying at church for her grandbaby's healing.

We asked if it would be alright if some Christians came and helped her pray to God tonight. "Yes, please come!" she said.

That night, after our church service, about 15 believers from The Life Centre (TLC) walked down to the coffee shop together.

As we sat in front of her large Chinese shrine – filled with incense, food and idols – pastor Burathat explained to Khun Elle how much God loves her and her family. Local monks had told her that this evil had happened because the baby had sinned in his past life. These words left Khun Elle without hope.

We encouraged her that the Bible says God has a special plan and good purpose for her grandbaby's life. Baby MJ is unique, and his life is precious to God.

Then we asked Khun Elle if we could pray for her. We gently laid our hands on her and prayed Thai style – out loud and all at the same time.



The next day, the workers and family at the coffee shop greeted us warmly and gave us the good news: Baby MJ was much improved. A few days later, Khun Elle ran to hug us and tell us that her grandbaby was going home from the hospital.

She said, "I would like to come to church this Sunday to thank God and everyone for praying for my grandbaby."

The day after that, Khun Elle came to TLC just as she promised. She stood up in front of everyone and thanked Jesus Christ for the miracle of healing she and her family experienced.

She said, "When I prayed to God, he answered me. None of my gods helped me. I believe in Jesus and I want to become a member of this church now."

Khun Elle wasn't the only Grandma whose heart was being touched by God that Sunday. Taay, a young girl in our kids' choir, also came to church with her grandma for the first time.

As soon as Khun Yai heard the message of Christ's love, promise of forgiveness and hope of eternal life, she wanted to surrender her life to Christ in front of the whole church. Praise the Lord!

UP THE COAST IN GOD'S NAIM

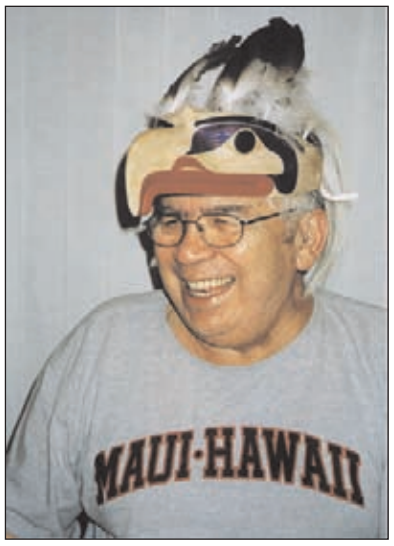
By Garry Wickett

The laptop beside *Solitude*'s helm displayed a portion of Queen Charlotte Sound, with the ship and its trajectory clearly visible.

Outside, the rain limited visibility; but the weather forecast told us we had a one-day window of opportunity to cross from the Port McNeil/Port Hardy area to remote Rivers Inlet.

I was crewing for Brian Crumback, a 20-year veteran of North American Indigenous Mission (NAIM). The organization specializes in reaching out to First Nations reserves with the gospel message.

From 1954 to 1961 I had worked for the hospital at Bella Bella, skippering the medical outreach boat. Brian knew that my knowledge of Rivers Inlet, where he had not gone before, would be helpful. For the past three years, NAIM's 50-foot boat, *Solitude*, has enabled him to poke into tiny remote places with some flexibility. This mid-March trip signalled the start of the yearly mission cycle.



Rivers Inlet resident 'Boss' Bolton. Top: NAIM skipper Brian Crumback

Rivers Inlet is home to a band of under 100 people at Owuikinuv (pronounced something like 'Oh WAH keen oh'), where Brian had one contact. He was anxious to meet the people, and hoped to open some doors for ministry.

'Boss' Bolton was eagerly awaiting Brian's arrival, as he has known him for a number of years. Boss comes from further up the coast, and speaks Tsimshian – unlike the Rivers Inlet people. Because Brian has learned some Tsimshian, the visit was a treat for Boss.

At the house, Rose Johnson treated us to a wonderful salmon feast – and we sat around talking, sharing stories and admiring Rose's beautiful button blankets.

Brian offered to hold a hymn-sing/service Sunday evening, broadcast to all the homes on their ever-present VHF radios. These are on all the time, with people chatting, asking favours, or – as happened as we visited – warning everyone to "get all the kids in, there's a cougar walking down the street!"

But God's sense of humour was evident. Another, more personal, invitation and introduction to the villagers occurred because Rose and Boss collect the garbage weekly – and this was garbage day.

With me driving the truck and Boss accompanying, we stopped at each house; Brian met everyone in the village, collecting their garbage and inviting them to the service.

At 11 that evening, we headed back to the boat – where an excited resident warned us the wind was rising, and the village pier was unprotected. In a blinding snowstorm, we sought shelter further down the inlet – anchoring in a small cove.

Travelling down Darby Channel, past the derelict fish cannery at Namu, we reached Bella Bella the next day.

When I was skippering the William H. Pierce here in the 50s and 60s, these places were bustling with commercial fish boats; today, more sports fishers fly in to try their luck.

At Bella Bella, Brian had a few contacts – but he was hoping to extend his circle. As we tied up, a young man he had befriended in Prince Rupert bounded over to greet him, and invited us for supper – this time a tender moose roast.

The next day, I went to visit a friend I knew 'way back when.' She grew up in the area. After completing her nursing course she came back to work in Bella Bella, and has retired after 40 years of working in the hospital. She and her husband, now seniors, were going to an elders' luncheon – so they invited us along.

The great traditional feast was held in a newly-built seniors' centre. We were served three different salmon dishes, clam 'burgers,' crab, halibut, cod and seaweed, rice and potatoes – with *oolichan* grease, a rare delicacy.

The feast was a great time for Brian to meet people. I had brought along some 55 year old pictures of Bella Bella children, and people were pleased to see these old shots. Brian was grateful to visit with long-time friends, too. Some of these contacts go back 40 years.

The weatherman cut short our stay, as a storm was forecast. We beat the weather up to Klemtu, through another stretch of open water. We cleared the decks of snow and arrived in late afternoon sleet.



Again, as we tied up, Brian's friends greeted us warmly, and came on board for conversation. Brian had lived in Klemtu, so is well known there. His Tsimshian – and his unerring ability to recall names, as well as people's relationships – have done much to win a hearing for the gospel.

Klemtu has some 400 people, with 50 employed in commercial salmon farming. The band leaders spoke just like the CEOs of any successful commercial operation, dealing with issues of the trade.

One evening, we held a hymn-sing/service – and Brian asked me to give my testimony. I felt people warming to me as I spoke of the Lord's goodness.

In the mornings, we went to the local coffee shop to sit and talk, mostly with village elders. One tourist-wise elder, who shows people through the newly-constructed longhouse, greeted me with his hand raised, a twinkle in his eye, and the greeting, "How!"

So ended my part of the journey. Brian planned to find someone to travel with him on to Prince Rupert, where his wife would join him. Safe travel, Brian, and God be with you.



NAME: Trever & Joan Godard
LOCATION: Guadalajara, Mexico
Originally from Saskatoon, Trever and Joan provide leadership for a team called the Matthew Group.



Wisdom calls aloud in the street, she raises her voice in the public squares; at the head of the noisy streets she cries out, in the gateways of the city she makes her speech: How long will you simple ones love your simple ways? How long will mockers delight in mockery and fools hate knowledge? If you had responded to my rebuke, I would have poured out my heart to you and made my thoughts known to you. Proverbs 1:20-23



In January, the Matthew Team led a program called HADTME (a Spanish acronym for Making Disciples in Mexico). Together with six young adults (four Mexicans, one Colombian and one Canadian), we have been studying and practicing Jesus' model of discipleship. We have been growing in love, compassion, wisdom and obedience.

Yesterday was a challenging day. We accompanied five women from our MB churches to a state-run hospital where they discipled us through their ministry of mercy. These women know how to embrace, intercede for, love, comfort and speak encouragement to those in very desperate need.

For most of our young adults, this was the first time they had stood at the bedside of the dying, or had been confronted with the sights and smells of a less than sterile environment. But all of us were strengthened by our sisters of love – who, week after week, for the past 12 years have given themselves to God for his service.

From the hospital, we headed to the main square. Our assignments were to hear wisdom raise her voice in the public square, or act as a disciple of Jesus in the noisy streets. Some invited the poor to share their lunch; others gave words of encouragement and hope to the lonely. Trever and I chatted with a 77 year old shoe shiner – who slowly, meticulously polished Trever's shoes so that our conversation could last a little longer!

There, in the centre of the city square, we heard wisdom speak through an elderly shoe shiner. We had the sense that wisdom had poured out her heart and made her thoughts known to him.

He spoke of people having lost their way in life, of people's dissatisfaction with what they have and a greed having taken hold of so many hearts. He was emphatic about God being our meaning, satisfaction and wisdom for life.

Most of us who know and live that truth may not see that as profound wisdom. But think of it: what would our world's public squares, noisy streets, city gateways be like if people found their meaning, satisfaction and wisdom in God?

Would our streets be filled with the poor, lonely, destitute and dying? Would not God's wisdom guide us in taking care of each other's needs?

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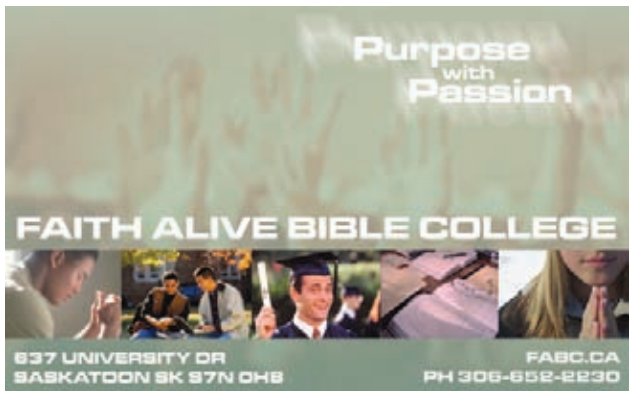
– Dr. David Pierce, Dean



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On the open road with God



Jake Froese – also known as Preacher Man – challenges trucker stereotypes.

At a truck stop in Calgary, Froese looked back over his life, a journey taking him from the pastorate, through depression and nervous breakdown, to a rediscovered purpose behind the wheel of a truck.

As a pastor in various Alberta Mennonite churches for 16 years, Froese pressured himself to succeed. "I needed to be really good at [work], but along came situations that weren't going to show immediate results. These heightened my anxiety."

Along with the demands of leadership, further education and hospital crisis work served to heighten expectations he had of himself. This "led to losing my energy, it put more pressure on me."

In 1995, when his job as an interim conference minister ended, Froese had also reached the end of his endurance.

"I was burnt out and had a nervous breakdown. My body just quit."

After two months on disability, Froese couldn't handle sitting at home. "Nothing but trucks came into my mind . . . Either I was going to get in front and be killed by one, or I was going to drive it. I just knew I needed that open road."

He had gotten a chauffeur's licence at age 18, so he knew what the driving life could offer. Yanke, a company based in Saskatoon, took him on.

"The first five years or so was therapy," he said. "I wasn't interested in a ministry. I just needed to get away from people. In the last five years, I've been reflecting more and thinking about ministry".

Other truckers began calling him 'Preacher Man,' and initiating discussions about faith.

"Guys would ask, 'You're a preacher?' I didn't hide my story, and you wouldn't believe the conversations I would have. If they want to call me Preacher Man, I need to honour that. It may be their only connection to God. People are looking for models, someone or something to believe in. It's part of the universal spiritual search."

Although the road is long, Froese is thankful to still be on it. He spoke highly of the support he receives from family, the church and the Yanke company. But it is clear that, through it all, his unshakeable companion has been his Lord.

"God didn't abandon me," he said.

– story and photo by Donita Wiebe-Neufeld
– courtesy of Canadian Mennonit

Frontiers

Christians are becoming more effective among Muslims.

Some 500 people from 46 nationalities gathered in Southeast Asia recently, to discuss the practices which are seeing communities of Christ followers established among Muslims.

Also participating were 78 organizations, representing ministry among 149 Muslim peoples. This was a historic event.

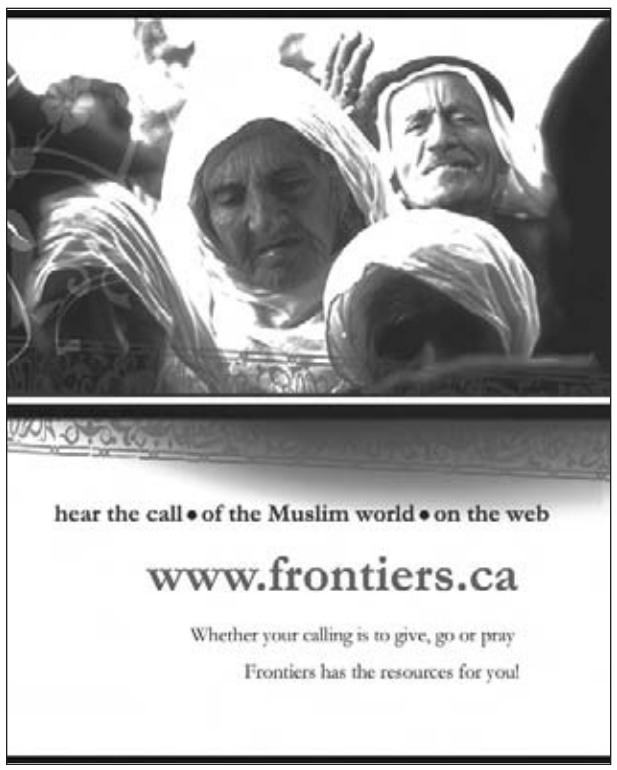
It was refreshing to observe how Frontiers' efforts among Muslims fit into the global picture the Master is shaping; and it was encouraging to see how much progress has been made in reaching Muslims – who remain the largest block of unreached peoples in the world.

A scholar who was present at this conference recalled a similar historic event in 1978, when organizations were asking the question: "How do we take the gospel to Muslims?"

At this conference, however, the question had changed. Now we are asking: "How do we become more effective at establishing communities of Christ followers?"

God is empowering Christ's church to see his will accomplished, as Muslims find faith and joy in following Jesus – and are being formed into worshipping bodies around the globe!

Frontiers is excited, and challenged to trumpet the call for more believers to follow Jesus in bringing his love to Muslim people. To get involved, or simply to learn more, visit www.frontiers.ca.



Prairie

In 1922, Prairie began. Much has changed in the past 84 years, but the mission has remained clear. Having sent more than 14,000 alumni to 110 countries, and occupying a campus which spans more than 100 acres, Prairie now attracts students from more than 20 countries.

Prairie is comprised of three separate colleges: Prairie Bible College; Prairie College of Applied Arts & Technology; and Prairie School of Mission Aviation.

Prairie Bible College is Canada's oldest Bible college, and focuses primarily on ministry preparation. It offers accredited four-year Bachelor of Arts degrees in a variety of areas, including: Ministry; Theology; Intercultural Studies; and Performing Arts & Worship. Also offered are two-year Associate of Arts degrees, and one-year certificates.

In September 2006, Prairie opened the first college in Canada deliberately created to offer two-year vocational programs in conjunction with Christian higher education.

Beginning with programs in health care and education, Prairie College of Applied Arts & Technology will allow students to graduate with a two-year Associate of Arts (which contains courses in Bible and theology), as well as earn a provincially recognized diploma in their chosen vocational field. The new college will train students for a profession, as well as for roles in the international mission of the church.

Prairie Bible College has offered quality training in the area of mission aviation for many years. In a recent audit, Transport Canada indicated that our students score higher on their flight tests and written scores than students at other Transport Canada licensed facilities across the nation.

Our desire is to continue to offer excellent mission aviation training. To ensure this, the program will now be offered through the newly created Prairie School of Mission Aviation.

To find out more about Prairie and these new developments, contact www.prairie.edu or 1-800-661-2425.



Global Recordings Network

Telling the story of Jesus in 10,000 tongues . . .

The vision of reaching every language with the gospel began in 1939, when Joy Ridderhof, a missionary in Honduras, recorded her first message in Spanish. From this simple beginning the vision grew to encompass non-readers and unreached language groups.

Our mission, Global Recordings Network, has presented gospel messages in more than 5,600 different languages. National churches, evangelists and missionaries have used our materials around the world to reach oral societies with the gospel.

The 10K Challenge is a vision to see the gospel of Jesus Christ available in 10,000 languages in this generation. In order to reach this goal, we need to record Bible stories in another 4,400 languages to bring the total to the 10,000 mark.

With your help, we can make this vision a reality. Contact our office to receive the 10K Challenge kit.

Call toll free 1-877-574-1994;
or email: ca@globalrecordings.net.

Global Recordings Network
Canada
Unit 6, 120 Lancing Drive
Hamilton, ON L8W 3A1
905-574-8220 1-877-574-1994
Email: ca@globalrecordings.net
www.globalrecordings.net/ca

Perspectives

Designed for current and prospective missionaries, pastors, leaders and the whole body of Christ, the *Perspectives on the World Christian Movement* course is a distillation of the best insights and methods from the past 200 years of Protestant mission effort.

Its strength is that it builds on the insights of many, rather than starting from scratch. Many missionaries and leaders lament: "If I had only had this class earlier, it would have changed my whole ministry!"

Spread over 15 weeks, with a different speaker for each session, students wrestle with developing a more biblical worldview, seeing God's work in history, and becoming like the "men of Issachar, who understood the times and knew what Israel should do." (1 Chronicles 12:32)

This course is not just about knowledge, but about life-change. It is a challenging, exciting course for those who want to fully engage in God's *big* purposes in the world – whether here in Canada, or at the ends of the earth.

If that excites you, then come with an open heart – to meet a bigger God than you ever dreamed of, and rediscover your purpose in light of his eternal purpose.

Perspectives is offered across Canada. Make this your year! Contact: outreach.ca/perspectives; perspectives@cwmbc.org; or 604-937-0992.

See ad on front cover

Peace River Bible Institute

Our desire is to help you grow in your relationship with God and others. As we walk and learn together, we want to encourage you, challenge you and disciple you in your faith.

Our hope rests in you living within the freedom Jesus gives, becoming successful in life – understanding who you are in Christ – and discovering the joy of discipling.

To accomplish our vision, we offer you quality academics; activities which will stimulate you; relationships with fellow students who will challenge you; and staff and faculty who long to care for you.

Our vision is based on Jesus' command to make disciples (Matthew 28:18), a spiritual journey which leads to a changed life that impacts others (Ephesians 4:11-16).

Our understanding is that everyone is called to minister (to disciple) in the church of Jesus Christ – which requires equipping. We train all who come, using scripture "for teaching, reproof, correction and training in righteousness" (2 Timothy 2:16).

The preparation for becoming a disciple-maker is not always a comfortable journey – but is necessary for a life of faith, wisdom and love.

It is an exercise not for the faint of heart! Are you up for the challenge?

See ad on front cover

Please support the ministries in this magazine as they make this publication possible

Urban Missionaries

Does the expression 'soul winning' sound bizarre? Old fashioned? Irrelevant?

Jesus called it 'reaping,' didn't he? Does the concept sound attractive? Is reaping reserved for just the 'lucky' few? Is there anything more significant than being a reaper?

Does it seem as though nobody wants to be reaped? What if the reaping were a win-win situation? Do the reapers need to get innovative? If the harvesting strategy were a winner, would that make a difference? It's all about miracles, right?

What if God wanted you to be a reaper? Would you be available? How come there are so many not-yet-harvested people? Why are their numbers rapidly increasing in Canada?

Are you, perhaps, busy teaching others to reap? But if you're not reaping, what is it you're teaching others? And who is out there 'catching the fish'?

Our *Outreach Insights* presents a successful harvesting strategy which creates a win-win experience.

FREE BOOK OFFER

Is God calling you to be a missionary within CANADA?



OUTREACH INSIGHTS may help you decide. Outreach Insights, published by the Urban Missionaries' Association of Canada, is 413 pages of practical and theological insights on how missionaries can successfully preach the Good News in urban residential communities.
To request a free copy contact

« urbanmissions@interbaun.com »

Gateway: Training for Cross-Cultural Service

Do you know someone looking for missionary training? Look no further. Each year, a select group of students enters this unique eight-month training program; and each year, these students discover how they can make a difference wherever God leads them.

For four months, Gateway students live in Langley B.C., alongside experienced missionary instructors who mentor and guide them as they prepare for service.

Gateway students then travel to any one of hundreds of locations overseas, where they get first-hand missionary experience. Upon returning, there is time for evaluating what God has taught – and how he is leading towards the next step in life.

Over 10 years of ministry, Gateway students have come from 11 countries, and have served in 28 countries through eight mission agencies. Gateway staff have a combined total of 400 years of missionary service in 11 countries.

Our motto: Get there, stay there, be effective.

GATEWAY
Training for Cross Cultural Service
All we do is train missionaries
604-530-4283
gatewaytraining.org

Northern Canada Evangelical Mission

For centuries, the outdoor skills of Canada's First Peoples were devoted to survival. Today, winter skills are also displayed in forms of recreation – among them the unique creative art of snow carving.

(You can watch an award winning snow carver at work in our new video – see offer below.)

Like a carving, we all are created – and God gives us our purpose: "to do good works." (Ephesians 2:10)

In 1946, our first missionaries banded together with a common purpose – to bring the Good News to Canada's First Peoples, largely neglected by the evangelical church and unaware of Christ's offer of salvation. Sixty years later the work "prepared . . . for us to do" continues.

Have you considered the work the Lord has for you? NCEM has short- and long-term opportunities.

For more info, contact: Box 3030, Prince Albert, SK S6V 7V4; phone 306-764-3388; email ncem@ncem.ca or visit our website, www.ncem.ca.

REACHING CANADA'S FIRST PEOPLES
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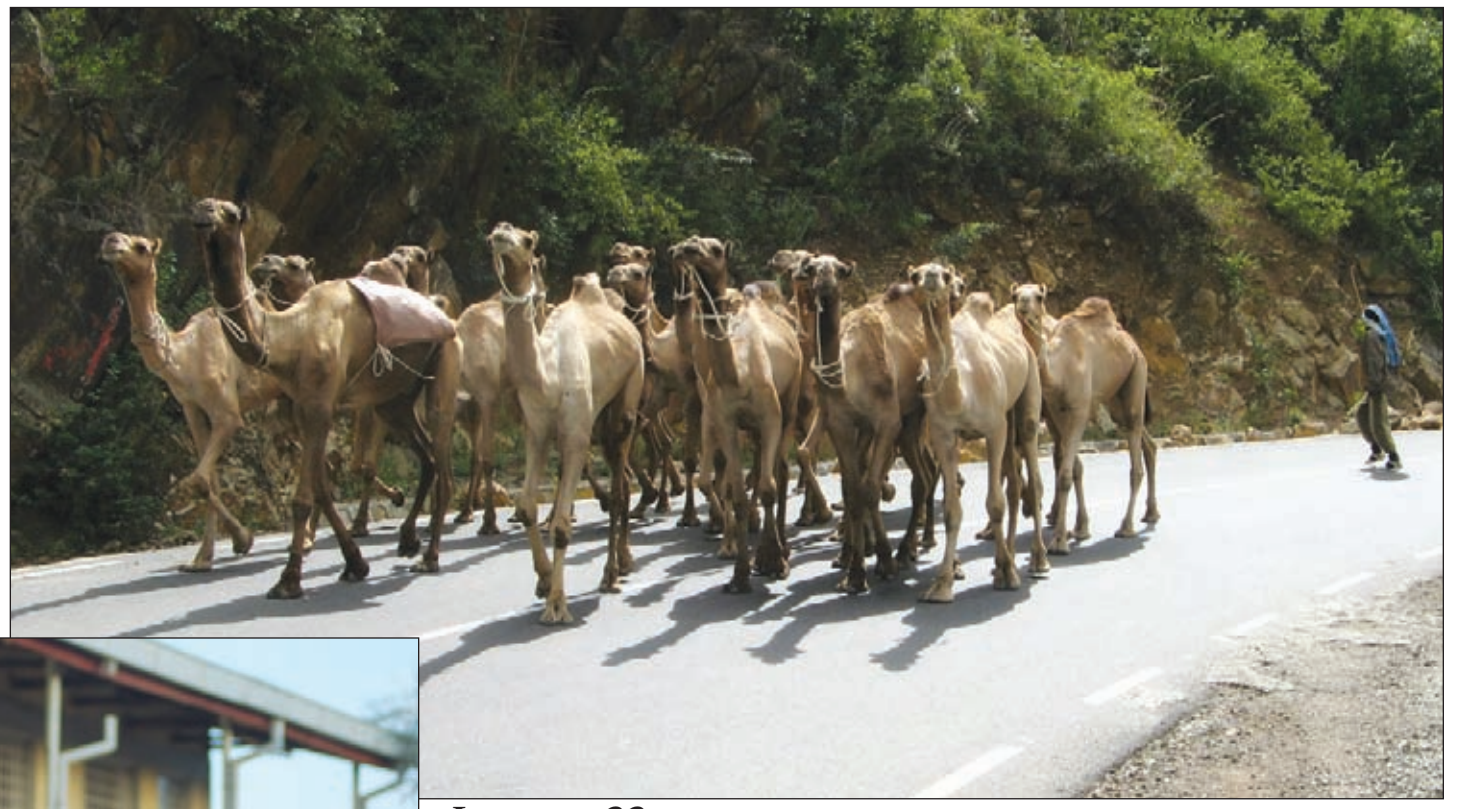
STEVE BELL IN ETHIOPIA:

A CHRISTIAN MUSICIAN AMONG MUSLIMS





Earlier this year, Juno-winning Winnipeg musician Steve Bell and his wife Nanci traveled to Ethiopia to make a documentary in conjunction with the Canadian Food Grains Bank. Following are some excerpts from his weblog.

January 21

This blogging thing didn't turn out like I thought it would. I thought I would spend an hour or so each night of the Ethiopia trip blogging and leaving pictures for all to see as our journey progressed. What I didn't count on was the long, arduous travel days; the lack of any processing time; inaccessibility to the internet; and a general inability to focus the soul, after so many images and experiences came rushing at us like headlights in a snowstorm.

There is an African story of some Western travelers who followed native guides on a particularly dramatic journey. At one point, the guides sat down and refused to move on. Upon questioning, they explained the reason they had stopped was that they had to give time for their souls to catch up to their bodies.

A good bit of our trip has felt like our bodies were dragging our reluctant souls along at an unfortunate pace – much like a hurried mother drags a crying child down a sidewalk, when her child just wants to stop to pet a puppy.

I think our souls are still back in the Ethiopian highlands somewhere – gasping in awe at a stunning view, or teasing some kids, or marveling while some five year old herder coerces 50 or so dog-skinny goats up a mountainside. And it just may take some time for our souls to even want to return to these bodies.



January 22

Ethiopia was Christianized in the 4th century, when a young man named Frumentius found himself shipwrecked on Ethiopian shores while on the way to India.

Frumentius was taken to the Ethiopian palace of King Ella Amida – eventually finding favour with the king, as his personal secretary. Frumentius was granted freedom to share his faith, and started several informal Christian communities in the northern region of Aksum.

Eventually, the young man returned to Egypt, and requested that the Egyptian Orthodox bishop Athanasius send a bishop to Ethiopia to establish the church there. Athanasius, in turn, ordained Frumentius – and sent him back to Ethiopia, where he worked tirelessly as the first bishop of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church. Frumentius is remembered fondly as *Abuna Salama,* or Bishop of Peace.

But Ethiopia has deeper memory than that. Legend remembers the Queen of Sheba as an Ethiopian monarch who travelled to Palestine to meet King Solomon. She was impregnated by Solomon – and upon return to Ethiopia, gave birth to Solomon's son Menelik.



At age 20, Menelik returned to meet his father – and, according to tradition, asked Solomon for a replica of the Ark of the Covenant to take back to Ethiopia. Solomon granted his son his wish; but Menelik had other designs, and somehow managed to swap the copy for the original – and brought the actual Ark to Ethiopia, where it remains under guard to this day. So, Ethiopia has deep Jewish roots as well.

Emperors have eagerly boasted Solomonic lineage – including Haile Selassie, who claimed to be the 225th direct descendent of King Solomon, son of David.

Anyway . . . back to our trip. We woke Sunday morning and had a leisurely breakfast in the hotel before walking the gorgeous grounds for a couple of hours. These were originally the grounds of Haile Selassie's palace. There were several wedding celebrations with exuberant dancing and singing, spread out over the compound among the exotic trees, grasses and flowers. According to the doorman, there can be as many as 60 weddings a day here.

At a local believer's house, we met with Heather Plett of the Foodgrains Bank, and were given an orientation to the country. It was also a good time to relax and get acquainted.

Heather read from Isaiah 58 – which I've heard hundreds of times, I'm sure. But here, in the poorest country of the world, there was a weighty press to the words:

"Why does your worship seem vacant? Why do I seem to not be listening? This is the fast (worship) I'm interested in – that you share your food with the hungry, invite the homeless poor into your homes, put clothes on the shivering ill-clad. Do this, and your lives will glow in the darkness; your shadowed lives will be bathed in sunlight. You'll be a well-watered garden, a gurgling spring that never runs dry" (my paraphrase).

January 28

Camels! I wasn't expecting camels!

The herder stopped to talk to us while his camels continued to run down the mountainside. He was hoping we'd help him out with a few *bir* (Ethiopian dollars); but none of us thought to exchange for modest denominations of money – so we convinced him to accept a few cookies instead.

Once he accepted the cookies, he was suddenly startled to see his camels trotting gingerly a kilometre or two down the road, and he bolted off in a panic.

One of the highlights of the whole trip was the thousands of gorgeous children everywhere, who waved and smiled eagerly at us. To stop the vehicle even for a few minutes was to get swamped by kids – all wanting their pictures taken.

Some would ask for a *bir* or two; but most asked for a pen. "Pen sir? I go to school. I have exams. Pen please." We must have heard that a thousand times. The kids loved to tell us (in English) their names – and Nanci asked some to write their names in her journal. For some reason, I find this very moving.

"My name is Tew! My name is Kasu! My name is Mitu! My name is . . . I am here! I exist! I am not one of 70 million, I am Deribe! Don't forget me." I can imagine it delights God to hear someone proudly say their name. And I can hear God respond fondly: "Yes indeed. You are Abebe. I remember you well."

The poverty here is astounding. Most Ethiopians are farmers. Most farm families are surviving on the harvest of a meagre acre or two of land. Here in the highlands, there is not much possibility of irrigation – and so survival is dependent on the good will of nature.

The last few years have had good rains, and so we didn't get a sense of current destitution; but it is not hard to understand how perennially vulnerable these folks are. With the population density such as it is, and the need for building materials and firewood, the mountains have already been stripped of trees – and the resulting erosion is evident everywhere.

The population of Ethiopia is expected to double in the next 20 years – and I can't help but shudder at the inevitable catastrophe that lies ahead in the not-too-distant future.

Thatched huts and extended-family hamlets are everywhere. Most of the country lives with absolutely no modern conveniences, in the home or in the field. Cooking is done on open fires; water is hauled or harvested; and fields are cultivated by the simplest, labour-intensive means. Ethiopians work very, very hard.

February 3

We rose early in the morning, so we could get to the Afar region before noon. For several hours, the journey continued much the same as it had the day before – except that we left the main road, and began to travel into what felt increasingly remote.

The spectacular relief of mountains and valleys continued to astonish us. At one point we stopped to view one of the few lakes we could see – but quickly were engaged by a family who lived by the roadside.

There was something uniquely lovely about these folks and our short encounter – trying to communicate, laughing at our mutual clumsiness, taking pictures, sharing names, et cetera – is still one of my favourite parts of the trip.



One of the disappointments of being foreign, and wealthily so, is the inevitable divide or barrier that such a chasm creates. I often feel sad that with most roadside encounters, interest in us is largely material.

And who can blame them? These are some of the poorest people in the world. But deep imbalances of wealth make it almost impossible to be genuinely interested in each other as people – and that, perhaps, is the greatest poverty of all.



With this family, however, there seemed to be something genuinely mutual and joyful about just hanging out on the road for the half hour or so we stayed. For those few minutes I was quite conscious of being, well . . . happy. And I honestly think they felt the same.

The Afar people live nomadically in villages of dismantlable grass huts – basically large upside-down baskets covered in grass.

They boast they can pack up a whole village in less than a day, to move to a new region. Moves are precipitated by depletion of foraging for livestock, or by outbreaks of malaria.

Recently, however, their traditional way of life has been threatened by climate change. It was already a hostile environment, with droughts typically coming every 15 – 20 years. Now the droughts come every five to eight years, making the land incapable of sustaining its inhabitants. For the Afar people to survive, they need to take up the challenge of agriculture, something relatively new to them.

Later that evening, in a desert village, the community gathered to share with us some of their traditional dance and song. This was extremely moving, on so many levels. It was hard to believe that we were so privileged to witness such things.

I sang as well. It was the first time any of them had experienced 'Western' music. I'm not sure how much they liked it, but evidently they found me somewhat interesting. At one point, an elder stuffed a small amount of money in my shirt pocket. Apparently this was a symbol of approval.

I found out later there was some stress about me being a Christian among Muslims. I was unaware of the underlying tension – but fortunately, I didn't say anything alienating. In the end, it was a mutual encounter which we all enjoyed immeasurably.

After darkness settled, we sat out under the stars on grass mats. One woman roasted and ground coffee for us – a traditional ceremony we have enjoyed many times during our trip – as we debriefed the day, before turning in for the night. Our sleeping quarters was a hut which we affectionately referred to as the Hilton.

At about four in the morning, Nanci and I were both awake listening to the animal sounds, both familiar and unfamiliar. We walked out into the night air, and stood for some time under the still gaze of heaven's stars.

I felt strangely like a ghost briefly privileged to witness something ancient and deeply good. I half expected to see Abraham standing beside us, unaware of our presence, in humble awe, silently receiving God's favour. It was a holy moment. We stayed out to greet the dawn.



The Canadian Foodgrains Bank will be releasing both a film and a music video based on Steve Bell's trip. Bell will also be collaborating with the group on a project called End Hunger Fast.

foodgrainsbank.ca

MUSICIANARIES

Music plays a big part in some Christians' approach to mission.

Chilliwack native and self-styled 'musicianary' **Rob Berg** has spent the past two decades using his music as a means of evangelism in more than 20 countries. He has released several CDs.



Rob Berg

"Through the Holy Spirit," he declares, "I want to provide an atmosphere where people . . . of various walks of life, are drawn near to Christ, challenged, and encouraged to find true meaning in a life yielded to him."

sealionrob.com



Sam Rowland

Sam Rowland, who considers himself a 'postmodern evangelist,' has recorded six albums. Working with Youth for Christ, he has ministered in Asia, Africa, Europe and elsewhere.

He describes his more recent songs as "wider [and] deeper," adding: "I have discovered that life is both much richer and more wonderful – but also much messier than I initially anticipated."

samrowland.org



Grace Wiebe

Active in missions for more than 25 years, **Grace Wiebe** now focuses on inspiring musicians to use their gifts for spreading the gospel – especially "in order to see indigenous peoples becoming total-life, whole-hearted worshippers of Jesus Christ."

As founder and facilitator of Ethnic Worship & Arts, she makes a variety of resources available.

disciplethenations.org

NightShift Street Ministries

All cities have areas of obvious social need. In Surrey, a large and growing B.C. municipality outside of Vancouver, the most troubled section is Whalley.

Throughout the Greater Vancouver area, Whalley has a reputation for social needs – rundown housing, panhandlers, sex workers and homelessness.

Various agencies, however, are cooperating as never before; and the mayor and the police department are partnering with them.

There is a concerted effort to implement a multi-disciplinary approach to the social needs of the area – which includes a key role for organizations such as NightShift Street Ministries.

NightShift was formed in 2004. It has grown under the leadership of MaryAnne Connor, who left a successful real estate, marketing and interior design company in Vancouver to head this ministry.

"NightShift is so much more than soup," she says. "For three years, every night, we [have coordinated] 15 or so volunteers, that come from five or six different Surrey churches; 100 – 150 people are served nightly, 365 days of the year."

Esther Toth is one of many people whose lives are being transformed by volunteering. She says: "I watched my husband change and grow as he became more involved with [NightShift's] ministry, while I sat safely at home.

"It took a leap of faith to realize that God uses us in our brokenness, to minister to the broken. I finally accepted that I don't need to be 'all fixed,' or perfect, for God to use me. There is great freedom knowing that God loves me and uses me just as I am."

Whalley-area Staff Sergeant Barry Hickman, a 35-year RCMP veteran, oversees all of City Centre's policing operations. He comments: "We're all one big team, spiritually connecting people." Nightshift, he says, is "doing a great work.

"I'M HELPING TO END HOMELESSNESS AND CRIME FOR JUST 99¢ A DAY!"



"For a dollar a day – less than the cost of a cup of coffee – you can partner with NightShift to help make a difference. We donate printing where we can, but on a personal level we felt it was important to help NightShift to go out and work in the trenches. We have always believed if we all do our part, we can only imagine what a difference we can make in our community"

Susan Thomas
Owner/Operator of Printfastic

Will you join us and other faithful supporters by becoming a HOPE Builder to help women, men and children on the street who can't help themselves?

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ONE-TIME OR ANNUAL GIFT: ☐ I authorize NightShift Street Ministries to withdraw a donation of $_____ ☐ One-Time ☐ Annually on the ☐ 1st or ☐ 16th day of_____(month)

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Covenant Keepers, Canada

Countering the divorce culture . . .

We'd had quite a bad marriage for more than 15 years, when my husband left. God led me to Covenant Keepers, as I began standing in faith for reconciliation – getting to know God and myself.

I will never regret the time I have spent standing; it has, in some ways, been the best time – although the hardest of my life.

When my husband left, I had church members and close family tell me: "Maybe you [two] just weren't meant to be."

It was hard – but when it was hardest, God never left me – and he always gave me comfort when I turned to him.

This past Christmas eve, my husband wrapped himself in a box – and gave himself back to his family for Christmas!

After all the hugs and tears, my young daughter said to me: "Mommy, it's just like our pastor said at church this morning. He told us that the best present in the world was wrapped in skin. Daddy's our present in skin, just like baby Jesus." My husband moved back home on Christmas Eve.

Others didn't quite understand my standing for our marriage – and didn't give us much of a chance. They put time limits on things, and wondered how much I should put up with.

I stood firm on the message I was getting from God: to love my husband unconditionally, and let the Lord do the rest. Praise God for the changes he's made in our lives!

In a culture where divorce is epidemic, this story sounds like a fairy tale. But it really happened – and it's not an isolated account. Every day, people are confronted with a separation or divorce they never asked for. They're told to give up, move on. But there is an alternative; we can *counter the divorce culture.*

Covenant Keepers Canada

An Alternative To Divorce



Are you looking for help with your marital problems? Do you lack the cooperation of your spouse? We're here to help you. You may still be together, separated or already divorced. Support is available through: Covenant Groups, newsletters, print and audio resources, conferences and prayer support.

Our mission is two-fold... First, we want to facilitate spiritual growth, maturity and victory in the lives of individuals hoping for healing of their marriages. Second, we teach how broken relationships can be restored through application of Biblical principles.

Covenant Keepers Canada
604/850-5527 ckcanada@telus.net
PO Box 2156, Abbotsford BC V2T 3X8
www.covenantkeepersinc.org

Christian Aid Mission

The Lord has a special concern for the poor, and that concern is reflected in one indigenous Christian ministry which helps out the poorest people in the Philippines.

In Manila's Tondo dump area, some of the Philippines' poorest people live in rows of hovels. The dump area has been called Smoky Mountain – because of the huge, perpetually smoking heap of garbage which used to cover the area. Until recently, almost everyone in the Tondo area survived by scavenging garbage.

Smoky Mountain Ministries (SMM) was started in 1984 by Nemuel and Ruth Palma – Filipino missionaries who worked with a church near the dump site.

"We decided to penetrate 'Smoky,' and felt compassion on the children," explains Ruth Palma. "Many of them could not afford early schooling. Yet it was becoming more apparent that before any child could be accepted in a public school, he or she must have already learned basic counting, writing and reading."

The Palmas started a Vacation Bible School in the dump, using a small tent. Parents of local children also became interested – so Nemuel started a Bible study for them, while Ruth handled the children. The work so flourished that the children and parents prayed for a bigger place to hold the Bible classes.



An SMM missionary teaches needy children about the Bible.

This was answered through some gifts which praying Christians in North America sent through Christian Aid. A small wooden shed was put up in one corner of the dump, and was named Lighthouse Nursery and Kindergarten School. The building is also used as a worship hall for Tondo Dump Ministry Church, which Nemuel pastors.

Since that small beginning, more than 500 souls have been brought to the Lord's feet through SMM. More than 200 children are given daily nourishment through SMM's feeding program.

But the Palmas have had to pay a price for the privilege and joy of bringing the gospel to the garbage dump dwellers. "Our health deteriorated, and my children became asthmatics," says Ruth. "Both my husband and I now have weak lungs, as a result of being exposed daily to smoke from the dumps."

Despite the hardship and challenges, when asked what she thinks of the place, Ruth Palma replies without hesitation: "This is like heaven, because this is where God is."

With your prayers and financial support to undergird them, the Palmas and their co-workers will continue to build God's kingdom in the Tondo dump.

SMM is one of more than 60 indigenous ministries in 50 countries which Christian Aid Mission assists. In many countries of the world, Christians are few, poor or persecuted – sometimes all three. Even so, indigenous missionaries within those countries are called by God to reach out to those around them with the gospel – and they do so faithfully.



Christian Aid helps them out in several vital ways.

Firstly, we are their voice in Canada. Through our publications, such as *Mission Gateway* magazine and *Prayerline*, we raise awareness of these groups among Canadian Christians; we encourage them to support ministries with their intercessory prayers, donations and short-term mission visits.

Through our 'Sponsor an Indigenous Missionary' program, we make it possible for every Christian or church in Canada to sponsor their own national missionary worker on the foreign field. We also arrange for indigenous missionaries to speak at churches and conferences in Canada, when they travel here.

Via our website, www.christianaid.ca, and through regular Field Reports, we keep Canadians up-to-date on the ministries. As Christians donate to support indigenous mission projects, Christian Aid sends their support to where it is most needed.

Intrigued? Check out our website for more information, or contact us at: 1-800-871-0882

Menno Travel

Doing our part to make a difference . . .

Menno Travel, now a Raptim Company, is the world's leading travel supplier for church and humanitarian organizations worldwide. Since 1947, we have helped missionaries take Jesus' love into the world. Our purpose is still to get you where God wants you to go, for the best value possible.

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Travel CUTS

An invitation: Travel CUTS actively engages in 'Travel with purpose.' Born out of the student travel movements of the 1960s and 1970s, Travel CUTS is steeped in the history and knowledge of decades of global outreach by Canadian youth and students – operating work, study and volunteer programs.

Now it is our pleasure to offer our services to everyone who wants to experience the world first hand and make a difference.

Jeffrey Woznow, business development manager for Travel CUTS, and an active elder in the United Church of Canada, is pleased to introduce our products, services and people to the Christian mission community.

Jeffrey recently organized the travel for and accompanied a group to the World Youth Day in Germany. Our dedicated group departments have arranged travel for a number of mission groups from all over Canada and the United States.

Travel CUTS is fully registered with relevant travel legislation across Canada.



Earth Trek Unlimited

We are Canada's premier missionary travel agency, and have just celebrated our 10th anniversary. We have helped thousands get to the mission field quickly, safely and cost effectively.

How can you be assured of the most economical and accurate planning? How can you know the agent understands your organization's special travel needs?

Our first-hand experience in mission work assures you of a high standard of service. When clients tell us they have been waiting a long time to find a travel agent who truly understands their needs, we know our philosophy is providing advantages for mission and relief organizations.

Our own work – within Asia, Africa, Europe, South America and the Middle East – convinced us that Christian organizations should not be hindered by expensive travel. We formed Earth Trek Unlimited Inc. in 1997, with a promise which defines our philosophy: We will thoroughly research every one of your journeys, and provide discounted tickets and the most economical route.

We know travel – and we know missions.



Greater Europe Mission

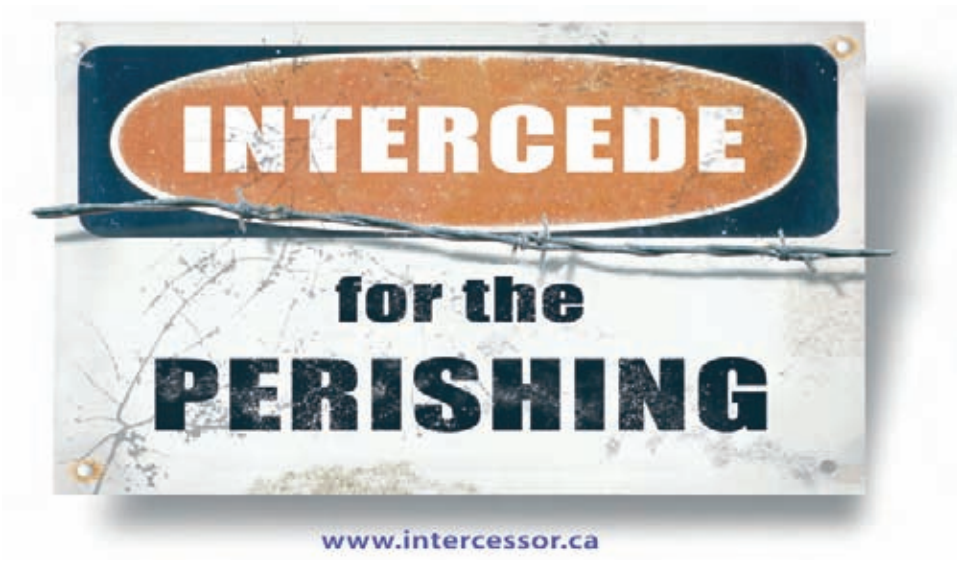
"You can take a picture of a starving child in the third world, but you can't capture a famished heart in Europe," a British pastor said.



"Focused on the needs in places like Indonesia, I didn't see Europe as a mission field until I experienced it firsthand.

"God revealed Europeans' hungry hearts when I spent a year teaching in northeastern France.

"Among the 1,700 students, I didn't know a single Christian. In fact, there were only about eight church-attending Christians in the city of 10,000."



Europe now encompasses 25 countries, and more than 750 million people. In most countries, less than one percent are evangelical Christians.

Greater Europe Mission is committed to assist the peoples of Europe in building up the body of Christ, so that every person in greater Europe is within reach of a witnessing fellowship.

If you would like to join us – in partnership with national churches and organizations – contact us online, or at 1-866-241-3579.

Canadian Foodgrains Bank

Canadian Foodgrains Bank has a lofty vision: they want to end hunger. They like to imagine a world where everyone has enough to eat.

The organization, which is owned by 13 church-based member agencies, is working hard to attain that vision.

Since 1983, they've shipped more than 981,500 metric tons of food and seed all over the world.

They've responded to food and nutrition emergencies, supported the efforts of communities to meet their own food needs, influenced changes in public policies and engaged Canadians in global change.

At the Canadian Foodgrains Bank, they believe ending hunger is about more than giving people food. It's about making connections and building relationships.

"When we look into the faces of those in need, and learn to treat them as Christ taught us to treat our neighbours," says Jim Cornelius, executive director, "they become more than just statistics. They become our brothers and sisters."

Singer/songwriter Steve Bell recently travelled to Ethiopia to visit some of the projects supported by the Foodgrains Bank.

Bell states: "We can no longer live as if the world is divided between 'us' and 'them.' How we live and use our resources directly corresponds to our understanding of the gospel. God is a unity. That is why, when we act in unity with others, the world can see that 'we are Christians by our love.'"

Since he returned to Canada, Steve Bell has been partnering with the Foodgrains Bank in the development of a new program called End Hunger Fast.

Bell observes: "It's not just about ending hunger 'quickly.' We want to invite people to consider the spiritual discipline of fasting as a way of connecting with those who are hungry."

Look for a September launch of End Hunger Fast. Think about what you can do to help end hunger.



TWU – Global Learning Connections

First year online at Trinity Western . . .

Recent high school grads or mature learners can conveniently earn a certificate online, for their first year of studies at Trinity Western University.

Now entering its second year, FOCUS (Freshman Online Certificate – University Studies) is designed for missionary young people, stay-at-home moms, graduating homeschoolers, entrepreneurs and others who initially would like the flexibility of studying online.

"This is a fully accredited and transferable year of study," says Simon Gibson, program advisor.

"Our current students have really enjoyed the experience, and they've appreciated the sense of community we've incorporated into the FOCUS program."

Gibson says students work together in a 'cohort,' and get to know each other – in spite of living in a variety of geographically separated locations.

"FOCUS also features the services of a faculty learning coach, he notes.

The coach "is there to help students, should they become bogged down with an assignment – or need help organizing and writing a paper, for example."

The program requires a commitment of approximately 25 to 30 hours per week, which may allow students to work part-time.

"We have a couple of students who have done very well in the program while working full-time – although we wouldn't recommend it," Gibson says.

Courses available in FOCUS have been carefully selected to provide an introductory overview of first-year university.

Unlike conventional on-campus offerings, however, they are condensed to seven weeks, in pairs, for maximum focus and concentration. FOCUS courses are primarily taught by regular university faculty, most of whom have earned doctorates.

"Homeschoolers, in particular, will like FOCUS," Gibson says. "Students will find the program to be a nice transition from life at home to conventional university study."

FOCUS courses are all taught from a Christian worldview; and students are frequently challenged to consider so-called secular issues with a Christian perspective.

"I'm enrolling students for September," Gibson notes.

He can be contacted toll free at 1-866-402-1897, extension 3899; or by email, at: simon.gibson@twu.ca. The website for FOCUS is www.focusyear.com.



Program advisor Simon Gibson





Start your degree without leaving home. Study at home, study at the office, study in a distant land. Supported by a learning coach and your peers, you'll complete a full year of accredited and transferable university credits with about 25 – 30 hours of study per week.

Space is limited, so register early to avoid disappointment. Visit our site at **www.focusyear.com** for registration and course information.

TRINITY WESTERN UNIVERSITY Global Learning Connections

Simon Gibson, PhD, Program Advisor · TOLL-FREE 1.866.402.1897 (ext. 3899) · E-MAIL simon.gibson@twu.ca

QUILT OF BELONGING



Left: The Mi'gmaq block of the Quilt of Belonging. Top right: the Benin block. Lower right: the Filipino block. Bottom: Project originator Esther Bryan.

The Quilt of Belonging consists of more than 260 squares of fabric, each just under one foot square. Each piece represents one of the 71 First Nations and 192 immigrant nationalities which comprise Canada's population.

Crafted by hand, by hundreds of volunteers, the Quilt is the brainchild of Esther Bryan. Born in France into a missionary family, she spent her formative years among various cultures. She has worked as an artist and musician for three decades.

The Quilt project began in 1998. The work was finished by 2005, and the huge tapestry has since toured several provinces. The project's website gives detailed accounts of the history of each people group represented in the quilt. Following are some excerpts.

Mi'gmaq

The Mi'gmaq are believed to be the first natives ever encountered by Vikings, known to have reached the eastern shores of Canada around 1000 AD. The Mi'gmaq were original members of the Wabanaki Confederacy. They ranged from southern Gaspé Peninsula through the Maritime Provinces, up into Newfoundland and down into Maine.

A nomadic people, the Mi'gmaq used wigwams that were easily moved as they travelled to hunt, trap, fish and harvest wild berries. They also made distinctive birchbark canoes and toboggans. Now a commonly used English word, 'toboggan' comes from the Mi'gmaq word *taba'gan*.

The Mi'gmaq were among the first aboriginal peoples to trade with the European explorers and settlers. During the wars in the mid-1700s they sided with the French against the British and their Iroquois allies.

When the British won they unsuccessfully attempted to convert the Mi'gmaq to farming in the 1760s. Unable to reconcile to a sedentary lifestyle of farming many Mi'gmaq became involved in the forestry and transportation industries.

Today the Mi'gmaq population in the Maritimes is more than 15,000 strong. There are also a number of Mi'gmaq communities in Quebec and Newfoundland. Many modern-day Mi'gmaq work in traditional salmon fishing

Benin

Benin is a small, ancient land with one of the most interesting attractions in all of western Africa: fishing villages built on stilts over the water, accessible only by dugout canoe.

A country with a vibrant cultural history, its diverse population represents over 40 ethnic groups, the main four being Fon, Adja, Yoruba and Bariba. Although each group has its own centuries-old traditions, French colonial rule and subsequent ties with France have had an impact on all aspects of cultural life.



French is the official language, although most people speak their native tongues as well.

Benin is considered to be the birthplace of voodoo, a belief that human and spirit worlds are interconnected, where the spirit of all things is worshiped.

Beninese have been coming to Canada since 1976, mainly for economic reasons and many belong to various organizations such as the Amicale des Étudiants Béninois de Montréal composed of 140 Beninese students.

Philippines

The Philippines is a Southeast Asian nation consisting of more than 7,000 islands that form part of the Malay Archipelago.

The people of the Philippines are collectively known as Filipinos and there are about 12 major ethnolinguistic groups in the country. Over 80 different languages are spoken in the Philippines.



The ethnic diversity of the society creates a richly blended culture in which individual groups celebrate their own traditions of art, music and dance.

For centuries the country has been a landing site for peoples from other Pacific Ocean islands who brought with them various skills, which Filipinos enthusiastically embraced.



Filipinos have been coming to Canada as professionals and trades people, for economic and political reasons, since 1946. The majority have settled in Ontario, and today there are more than 200,000 Filipinos living there and 3,000-plus Filipino Associations. For many homesick Filipinos, these associations have become their pseudo-families, and places where they can both enjoy and promote their culture.

The Quilt of Belonging will be on display June 29 – September 27 at the Glenbow Museum in Calgary. Info: InvitationProject.ca

Awana Clubs Canada

Let's take a moment to think about children and eternity.

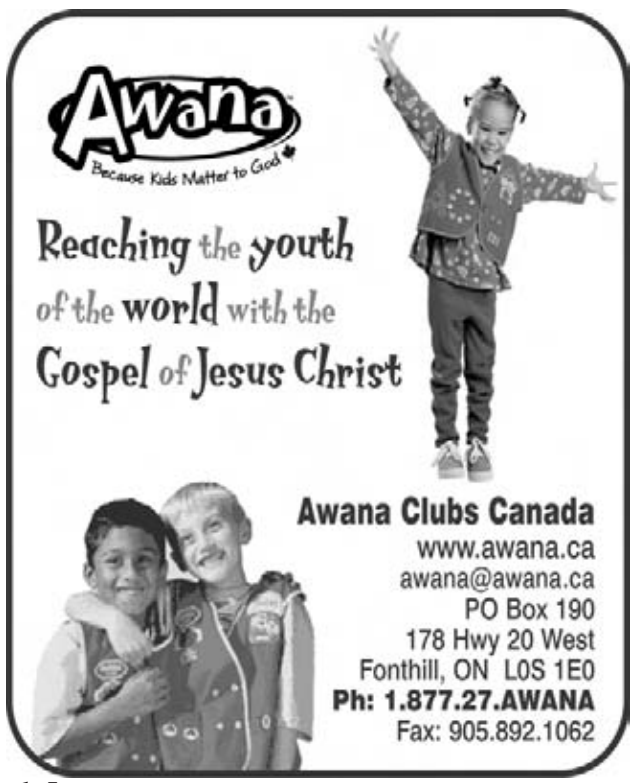
Childhood is a time of discovery. A time to learn who they are, and to begin experiencing the adventure of life. As children's workers, our task is to help children find the treasure of eternity God has placed in their hearts.

In a society where many argue that truth is always relative, there is much ground to be regained. We need leaders to stand in the gap for kids who are surrounded by failing families and non-biblical worldviews, so these kids can become what God made them to be.

We need to think of children and young people as more than just future leaders, or bridges to parents. We must enable them to be what God created them to be – today.

We need children's workers who have a vital and growing relationship with Jesus Christ – having their minds transformed through worship, prayer and study of God's word. Finally we need leaders who will then guide others into that same relationship.

Our hope must be that all children and youth will come to know, love and serve the Lord Jesus Christ.



Friendship Groups Canada

Jesus is a friend to the weak and the weary, to the lonely and the poor; Jesus is a friend to all. Does your church emulate this friendship?

Friendship Groups Canada is an interdenominational Christian ministry which embraces people with cognitive challenges – enabling them and the church of Christ to experience the fullness of God's love.

FGC believes everyone is created in God's image, and that redemption is a gift from God – not dependent upon any level of human intellect.

FGC's mission is to encourage and support individuals, churches or organizations who desire to reach out in their community and share God's love with those with intellectual disabilities, through training and program resources.

Currently, there are 155 Friendship groups across Canada, with more than 15 denominations offering the Friendship program and sharing God's love with more than 2,700 intellectually disabled friends.

We invite you to consider the ministry.

FRIENDSHIP GROUPS CANADA

(Operational Name of Friendship Charities)

Embracing people with cognitive challenges; enabling them and the church of Christ to experience the fullness of God's love.

Visit us at: **www.friendshipgroupscanada.org**
Email us at: **info@friendshipgroupscanada.org**

P.O. Box 27009 Kitchener, ON N2E 3K2
Phone: 1-519-742-9807 | Toll free: 1-888-649-5555

Eurovangelism / Euroaid

The popularity of the Alpha Course is growing in Eastern Europe.

In early 1996, Eurovangelism was given the mandate from Holy Trinity Brompton in London, England, to promote the Alpha program in Eastern Europe. Today, Alpha is operating in 13 of those countries, and in 10 different languages.

Starting in Poland, Eurovangelism introduced Alpha to Romania, then Hungary, then down through the Balkan area and into Albania.

Alpha began to grow – and the growth has not stopped. Thousands of people are attending courses throughout Eastern Europe every week.

Currently there are some 700 courses running at any one time in the region – plus many follow-up courses, using 'Life Worth Living' materials.

Eurovangelism Canada has been encouraging churches in Canada to come alongside churches in Eastern Europe, to partner in their efforts.

Alpha is radically changing lives in Eastern Europe – and you can be a part of it!

Please contact: Rev. Brian Lise at 1-866-630-6301 or brian@eurovangelism.ca.



Soundscape Productions

As a musician and composer, I have been privileged to serve people in need – and to interface with interesting personalities.

My business has been blessed with the resources to be an instrument for the kingdom, and to play a part in facilitating people's journey and their work.

It is said that where there is a will, there is a way. This is especially true for a mission-based musical project called Mercy Train. Jamie Prokop, son of Lighthouse great Skip Prokop, fronts this band.

Skip has informed me that CDs will be given away – some to Prison Fellowship Canada (and U.S.). This way, God's word is being placed directly into the hands of those needing and wanting to hear – and music is the medium!

Please contact Skip directly at rhsprokop@amtelecom.net or www.mercytrain.com if you would like a copy.

Perhaps your ministry can also be furthered with a musical or spoken word product of your own!



To advertise in upcoming editions of Mission Fields call: 1-888-899-3777 or email: advertising@CanadianChristianity.com

Into All The World

In a world of uncertainty, people search constantly for a sense of peace and security. They don't realize Jesus is the only answer. How can they know, if no one tells them?

Established in 1981, Into All The World is a mission-enabling society, connecting Christian Canadians with Christians overseas. Our main focus is reaching the '10-40 window' region with the gospel of Jesus. Locally, we teach churches about mission work, and provide humanitarian aid and the gospel to 15 overseas nations.

Our projects range from caring for street kids, orphans and widows to helping with schools and prisons. Locally, we provide opportunities for volunteers to serve as area representatives, administrative support personnel and both short-term and long-term missionaries.

Our passion is to take Jesus to all nations – by enabling Christians to be his feet, his hands and his voice. Contact 519-763-6147 or iatw.ca. Request our pamphlet: '101 Ways to be Involved in Missions.'



M2/W2 Association

In our Circles of Support and Accountability (CoSA) program, we work with the most serious sex offenders returning to our communities – known as 'warrant expiry' prisoners, who remain in jail until the last day of their sentence.

We developed CoSA as a volunteer recruitment program. The program is followed by training, workshops and security clearances.

In the Fraser Valley, we deliver this program in conjunction with Catholic Charities, and have five active circles operating. All have proven to be very successful.

One of the CoSA clients reports he has been able to remain crime-free for two years now, in our community. With the help of his CoSA friends, he has stable housing; and he has developed community support beyond his CoSA group.

He is able to live comfortably within the financial resources available to him. He is currently living a life he claims is the most satisfying that he has ever experienced.



Manna Ministries International

Reaping the harvest . . .

Manna's philosophy is to evangelize, train and equip individuals from all nations, to give meaningful leadership to their own people.

Through our ministries, many isolated villages – often beyond road access – have heard the gospel; consequently, many churches have been planted. In recent years, many unreached tribal communities have been contacted and reached with the gospel.

Churches are planted among these believers – through which literacy, health care and medical clinics are established.

Combined with our holistic approach, entire communities often benefit. These benefits include fresh water wells, famine relief, orphanages, medical clinics and other meaningful contributions – which have helped extend life and raise the standard of living. Staff teams circulate throughout our churches, teaching health care, midwifery and agriculture.

Short term teams (two weeks or longer) continue to provide helpful contributions to the total ministry in every country.

Join a team! Visit mmimission.org for more information.



ACTS Seminaries of TWU

Compelled by love . . .

Our motive for mission can be as important as our method. Wrong motives can spell trouble for the witness of the church down the line.

The apostle Paul, whom most missionaries take as their model for mission, revealed his motives in his letters to churches and individuals. At one point he confided, "Christ's love compels us" (2 Corinthians 5:14).

Paul understood the death and resurrection of Jesus to be historical events which brought great benefits to all of humanity.

He believed that one of the purposes of Jesus' death was that all people would live for him "who died for them and was raised again" (2 Corinthians 5:15). His motivation for mission was the compulsion of Christ's love.

It so happens that 'compulsion' is a word that comes up in some discussions of mission activity. When my wife Gwenyth and I were working in India, we sometimes heard expressions in the public media that Christian evangelists were using compulsion – allegedly forcing Hindus to convert to Christianity.

It is an accusation that is frequently made without substantiation. In October 2002, the government of the province of Tamil Nadu passed legislation outlawing "forced conversions."

The decree now requires all conversions from one religion to another to be reported to the district magistrate. "Forcible means" include allurement and even "the threat of divine displeasure." And anybody found guilty of "forcing or inducing people to convert" faces up to three years in jail, or a hefty fine.

Whether or not Christian workers are actually using compulsion is not made clear by such authorities.

Christian leaders in India deny using compulsion in their evangelistic work, and suggest that the accusation is a politically-motivated attempt to prohibit faith conversions of any kind. Indeed, the government of the province of Gujarat moved to do exactly that just last spring.

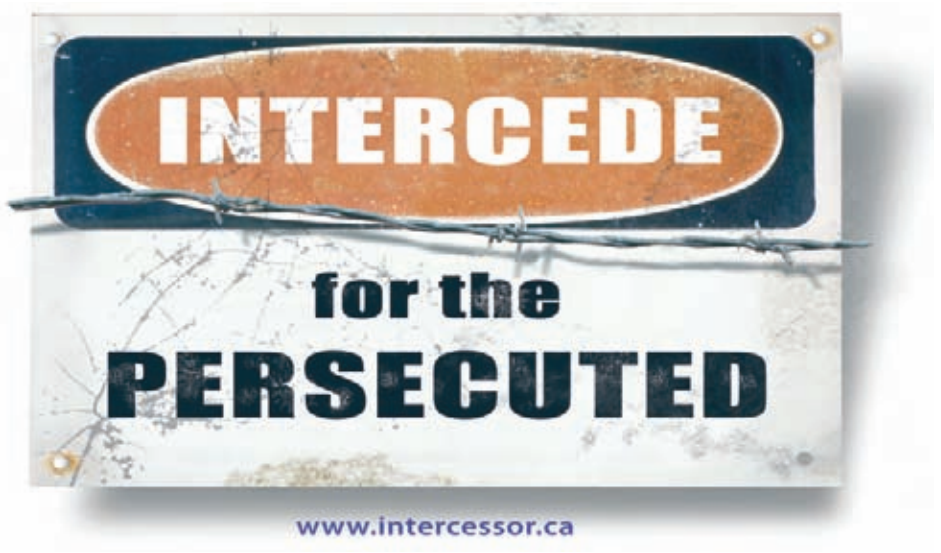
These reports raise major questions about freedom of religion, the caste system and other matters, which Indians are presently debating. As for Christian workers, the controversy gives them a chance once more to check motivation and method.

Whenever Christian workers use compulsion – and I did not see or hear of evidence for this in India – they show a serious misunderstanding of mission.

The only compulsion which we read about in the New Testament is the compulsion of Christ's love. This is a compulsion which safeguards freedom in the witness encounter – because the only true conversion is a free personal response to God and the work of his gentle Holy Spirit on the human heart.

Any attempt to force the response would be out of keeping with the love which motivates mission.

Gordon Nickel,
Assistant professor of Intercultural Studies,
Director of Master of Arts
in Cross-Cultural Ministries Program,
ACTS Seminaries, Langley, B.C.
See ad on back cover



Evangelical Tract Distributors

Help bring the gospel to the world . . .

The printed message of Jesus' love and grace transcends borders and languages, and touches the hearts of people around the world.

Evangelical Tract Distributors, which is an interdenominational ministry, has been sending out literature since 1935, printing gospel tracts in more than 70 different languages.

Our monthly newsletter, *The Evangelist*, contains letters which show how Jesus can use the printed word to carry his message of hope to a lost humanity.

A letter from a woman in Brazil reads:

"My husband and I have used your literature mainly for bedside visitation in hospitals. Recently, we visited a man named Bira who had strayed from the strict morality of his parents and had contracted AIDS. Now he was too weak even to work.

"He had read some of the literature he had received before; and when we came to see him again, he told us he wanted to believe in Jesus. After a few minutes of reading the scriptures to him, Bira committed his life to Jesus Christ.

"Signs of spiritual growth were soon apparent. He prayed daily for his roommate, who died five days later. He wrote a long letter to his family, asking them to forgive him for his sinful lifestyle and telling them that he was a Christian. Pray for him, that he will remain strong for the Lord – until [God] calls him home."

All of our literature is sent out free of charge, through the support of God's people – as they pray and give financially toward this outreach ministry. As many as two million pieces of literature are sent out each month.

To learn more about this work of faith, please contact us at: evangelicaltract.com; support@evangelicaltract.com; or Evangelical Tract Distributors, PO Box 146, Edmonton, AB, Canada, T2J 5G9.

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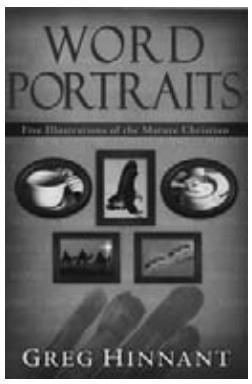
Printing Gospel literature for 72 years.
Equipping Pastors and Missionaries with pamphlets containing a solid salvation message in 70 different languages.





Write to us today and we will send you a copy of Greg Hinnant's latest book entitled, "Word Portraits." Illustrations of the Mature Christian!
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Samaritan's Purse

Help Samaritan's Purse 'Turn on the Tap,' to bring safe drinking water to the developing world.

Samaritan's Purse Canada recently launched this new national initiative. Turn on the Tap is designed to help the more than one billion people – one out of every six on earth – who are trying to survive on contaminated water.

Samaritan's Purse is asking Canadian families to donate the $100 needed to build and install a BioSand Water Filter: a simple, sustainable, easy-to-build household device which can transform polluted water into safe, drinkable water – literally within seconds.

The Christian international relief and development organization has built and installed more than 70,000 of these filters in the past 10 years. They have proven so effective in making polluted water drinkable that Samaritan's Purse plans to build and install 65,000 more in the next three years.

"We are asking Canadian households to help us 'Turn on the Tap' to safe water, by donating the money necessary for us to continue building and installing filters at a much-accelerated pace," said Fred Weiss, executive director of Samaritan's Purse Canada.

When people are forced to drink water from stagnant ditches, ponds, streams and other usually tainted sources, they must fight a near-constant battle against diarrhoeal diseases like dysentery and cholera – which kill at least 1.8 million people a year. Ninety percent of the dying, or more than 1.6 million, are children. That's one child dying *every 20 seconds*. Samaritan's Purse Canada is convinced BioSand Water Filters can play a major role in alleviating this suffering.

The filters feature layers of gravel and fine sand which, along with a biological layer that naturally develops, eliminate disease-causing parasites, bacteria and viruses contained in the water poured into it.

Samaritan's Purse Canada's focus for the BioSand campaign is in Africa, Asia and Latin America.

In Africa, Kenyan farmer Bernard Mzololo says that, since receiving a BioSand filter, "my family isn't sick anymore with stomach problems. Before we had the water filter, they would get diarrhoea and would suffer for a long time."

When coupled with hygiene and sanitation education programs, BioSand Water Filters improve developing-world families' health, so that members can continue to go to school or work. This enables them to escape a vicious cycle of poverty which hampers economic and social development for individuals, communities and entire nations.

To support Samaritan's Purse Canada's Turn on the Tap initiative, please go to www.turnonthetap.ca or call 1-800-663-6500.

See ad on inside front cover.

"The staff and I are all working hard, but it doesn't seem like we're making any progress."

"I don't feel like I have a real handle on the ministry finances."

Leading a ministry can be one of the toughest and loneliest jobs in any organization.

"My staff is frustrated, and I don't know what to do about it."

"Board meetings intimidate me!"

You also often face a delicate balance in addressing the spiritual side of an issue as well as the practical business elements. I would like to help you in your business side of the ministry.

"I know that God is my source…but I feel lonely.

"Where there is no counsel, the people fall;
But in the multitude of counselors there is safety"
Proverbs 11:14

"We need to upgrade the computers and software that the ministry uses."



As a successful Christian entrepreneur and leader in the community who has experienced all the trials and perils of being a lead figure without the trust of a business friend and advisor to help me achieve God's purpose in my life as a businessman, it was lonely and tough being at the top. I have found that ministry is no different. Hence, CB Williams Consulting Group was founded on the purpose to provide motivation, inspiration, exceptional resources, and innovative solutions for ministry leaders, as well as business owners and executives.

As your most Trusted Advisor, together we will tap into our comprehensive network of deep resources and our vast arsenal of ministries strategy, having accumulated the "best practices" of non-profit organizations, small to mid-sized businesses, and very large corporations. Our approach is to offer expert guidance, mentoring, and advice while honouring the office and spiritual authority God has given you.

"The ministry doesn't seem to be growing."

At this time, we are only available on site in BC, but available for phone consultation and evaluation in other provinces. If through our discussions onsite synergy, projects, or strategic planning is required, I will arrange myself as requested by client or call upon our vast network of senior executives and top experts all over the world who are exceptionally skilled in your particular field of need. Call us for your free ministry Health Check.

"We need to upgrade the computers and software that the ministry uses."

1-604-683-8958

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INTELLIGENTLY DESIGNED.

WITH MINISTRY IN MIND.

HAVE YOU EXPERIENCED THAT COMPELLING SENSE GOD PUTS ON OUR HEARTS THAT IT'S TIME TO **FOLLOW HIM** INTO A NEW CHAPTER OF LIFE?





"I am preparing to return to India and join my father in pastoral ministry. I came to ACTS to experience firsthand how multiple evangelical denominations can work together. ACTS is such a friendly environment; people have gone out of their way to make me feel a part of the community. I can't wait to share what I've learned with the churches in India."

DINO SKARIAH, ACTS STUDENT

HE'S INTELLIGENTLY DESIGNED US LIKE THAT. At ACTS, we are passionate about equipping godly leaders for a lifetime of ministry and leadership. We have designed our programs to ground you in theology as well as prepare you vocationally. In fact, every aspect of your studies at ACTS is designed with your unique ministry in mind.

AS YOU EXPLORE WHAT YOUR NEXT CHAPTER HOLDS, we would like to journey with you. We invite you to talk with us about the passion for ministry growing in your heart and mind. Call, email or explore www.acts.twu.ca to find out more about the Master of Arts in Cross-Cultural Ministries or other programs.

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