

# Unfinished

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## Alluring beauty

Reaching the heart of the French through art · page 4

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**Our vision:** The Cross of Christ within arm's reach of everyone in the world;

**Our mission:** To facilitate obedience to the Great Commission by the Body of Christ;

**Our strategy:** To create self-reproducing, indigenous, discipling Christian communities by mobilizing cross-cultural witnesses for Christ in partnership with nationals.

## Join us in The Mission

**When you partner with The Mission Society, not only do you join us in The Mission to offer Christ to the world, but you join us in embracing our core values.**

### INCARNATION

The Mission Society seeks to minister to others by following the example of Jesus, who fully entered the human experience. In our cross-cultural ministry, we are committed to learning the local language, living among the people, ministering in culturally appropriate ways, demonstrating love for God and neighbor, and disciple-making among the nations.

### INTEGRITY

The Mission Society desires to reflect the holiness of God in all we do. Personally and corporately we endeavor to make the character of Christ manifest in our lives and our ministry.

### PASSION

We are not complacent about the One who matters supremely or the work God has given us to do; nor is our ministry prompted simply by duty, or even obedience. Our life together and our ministry are marked and motivated by passion for God and God's mission. We are passionate about Jesus, our mission, and all those involved in the journey with us.

### PEOPLE

The Mission Society believes that people are of primary value. Because people matter to God, people matter to us. Our cross-cultural workers, staff, donors, volunteers, prayer partners, and those we seek to reach are of greatest worth to us. Because "relationships" and not "formulas" are our method, The Mission Society exudes an entrepreneurial culture where every member is encouraged to discern and pursue God's unique direction for his or her ministry.

### PARTNERSHIP

Since it is the Kingdom of God that we are called to express and extend throughout the world, our ministry is about more than ourselves and our organization. We believe that working together enhances our witness and strengthens our ability to make disciples of all nations. The Mission Society therefore pursues partnership in ministry endeavors – with churches, nationals, Christian organizations, and individuals.

### PRAYER

It is only through the power and presence of the Spirit of Christ that we can live up to the high and holy intentions embodied in these values. We acknowledge our absolute dependence on God and seek both His guidance and His strength each day. Therefore, The Mission Society is a praying community.

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# Back from the brink

Oh, the things that get clearer when death gets nearer!

Have you ever noticed that you learn things at least twice (for me, often it's many more than twice) before those lessons "stick" and really become part of you? First you learn something intellectually when you become aware. Then you learn it at the heart level when it becomes "real" to you and deeply affects your life in an ongoing way.

For years I knew about Jesus intellectually, but it wasn't until a crisis in my life that I came to know Him as my Lord and Savior and understood that He desired that all of humankind would come to know Him in the same way. For years I knew that there was an urgency in God's desire that all know Him, but it wasn't until I became a pastor and sat at the bedside of one who was dying that I really understood the urgency. (It is terrible to watch someone die who does not know the Lord.) For years I knew that offering the world Christ was a team effort that is supposed to involve all of God's people, but it wasn't until I stared death in the face that I really understood the importance and worldwide nature of the team.

## Dying

This past April, I was diagnosed with colon cancer. It was found during a colonoscopy that was part of a routine physical. On April 23 I went into the

hospital for a laparoscopy procedure to remove 10 inches of my colon. The cancer was contained and had not spread. Three days later for unknown reasons, my colon perforated, sending poison throughout my abdomen. My kidneys began to fail; my heart became erratic; my breathing required assistance, and my temperature spiked. My systems were shutting down. I was dying.

I was rushed into surgery where doctors removed the perforated section of my colon and then started me on a

*"It wasn't until I stared death in the face that I really understood the importance of this truth."*

massive regimen of antibiotics. After surgery I was moved to intensive care and monitored closely.

My condition did not improve. In fact it continued to worsen. At one point my wife, Sue, was told that if things did not begin to improve in the next two hours, she would have some very difficult decisions to make. People had been praying for me all along, but now the community of faith swung into high gear. A board member spoke beyond my almost lifeless body and, through the words of an old spiritual ("I Ain't Got

Time To Die"), reminded my spirit to get to work fighting, because God still had much for me to do. Members of our missionary community who were home for a planning retreat gathered around me, anointed me with oil, and prayed intensely for me. The intensive care unit suddenly became like the center of a revival meeting.

## Worldwide Christian family

The word went out to friends, family, colleagues at home and abroad, and the national churches around the world with whom we are privileged to work to pray fervently for my healing. At one point prayer was going on in all the time zones in the world with the exception of the Mid-Atlantic. Slowly but surely, my condition began to improve. I remained in intensive care for two weeks and then was transferred to a regular floor. On June 23, two months after my initial surgery, I was discharged. I still had a long recovery ahead, but I was alive.

## Living

It took a team seeking God's will to heal me. God did it, but He chose to work through the hands of the medical team, those who anointed me, those who spoke to my spirit, and all those who prayed. What would have happened if one of the

team whom God had called together had been “too busy,” “too tired,” or for whatever reason chose not to answer the call. I firmly believe I would not be here.

As you read this issue of *Unfinished* about the ministries in Europe, please think not only about the missionaries but also about the rest of the team – those who pray, those who support, those who help in countless ways to make these ministries possible. If you are one of these unsung heroes who are part of bringing eternal life to others, we thank you! If you have not been involved, it’s not too late.

Oh, by the way, I returned to the office on August 1. I am still weak, but I am on the road to recovery. Praise be to God! ✝

***The Rev. Dr. Philip R. Granger, The Mission Society president and CEO, is an elder in the North Indiana Annual Conference of The United Methodist Church.***



## We'll help you give more effectively

Many individuals wish to give more to the Lord's work than they are able to give from "cash flow."

They often find that with the opportunity to give "net worth" gifts, they can accomplish their giving goals and objectives.

Our staff is skilled in assisting individuals like you, and has developed a free guide to help you as you seek answers and explore options in developing your giving lifestyle.

"I would like to give more. But with the cost of living today, I find it impossible to increase my giving."

There is no cost or obligation; we simply wish to assist you.

### THE MISSION SOCIETY

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# Home by another way

Reaching the heart of the French through art

It was the French philosopher, Blaise Pascal who said there is a “God-shaped vacuum in every heart.” Of course, that was about 400 years ago. The modern French heart, we think, seems to know of no vacuum for something beyond itself.

*Au contraire*, reports Brian Beise, who grew up on the mission field in Paris. Many French are seeking, and they are finding their home in God, but through a different way than the established “church.”

The first time I thought I might love France was only weeks after our parents moved us there, away from our home in Missouri. On a summer day they brought us to Notre Dame, a stone’s throw from the heart of Paris.

Inside the cathedral the pale stone floors and pillars reminded me of the French sky. The ceiling, arched and flanked with stained glass, looked to me like the ocean. Small wooden chairs sat in rows down the center, facing the bowls of incense and candle-lamps, around which a crowd of people clad with hoody sweatshirts, backpacks, fanny-packs, and cameras moved, pointing, answering phone calls, snapping pictures quickly, as if it were illegal. I took a chair in the back row and joined the few who sat still to stare and to listen to the small, adult-sounding choir rehearsing somewhere.

I was 14 and home-schooled. I loved Edgar Allan Poe, Batman: the Animated Series, The Chronicles of Narnia, and old Universal horror movies – anything with a gothic or romantic flourish.

I had never been to Jerusalem or to Rome. Now – surrounded by stone, wax, and color-stained light – I knew I’d never been so near my religious heritage. My senses were overloaded. I felt the chill of history gather in my stomach. It quickened my imagination and reverence knowing that there were such things built for worship.

This experience started a love affair between myself and Paris. As I look back on it, it also becomes useful in describing the climate of Christianity in France, and the power art still holds to form and reform the people in that wonderful, heartbreaking place.



Photo by Jim Beise

When the French revolted in the 18th century, they forever tore down their monarchy, and the Church was brought down with it. Notre Dame, along with many other religious sites, was defaced, symbolizing the rise of the republic and the realization of the rights of man. Many statues were beheaded. The cathedral itself was dedicated first to the Cult of Reason and then the Cult of the Supreme Being, which recognized a generic, passive deity, abstracted from Christian tradition. The idea of conformity, of being subservient to any power, became completely taboo in this new France.

### The new France

During my time in Paris I knew couples with children and warm, stable homes, though they remained unmarried. This decision came neither from a fear of commitment nor a cynicism toward lasting romance. They simply refused to seek governmental and religious affirmation for their relationship. For them, legalizing a romance would cheapen it.

Christianity is hardly debated by Parisians. It is not the topic of their films, their music, or their novels. In

France, Christianity is a thing of the past, a thing fundamentally opposite to all-important individualism.

This individualism is a key factor separating France from other mission contexts. In many places modern Christianity is radically different from local traditions. The French believe preaching the Gospel is – and has historically been – absurd. “We know,” they might say,

Christianity is hardly debated by Parisians. It is not the topic of their films, their music or their novels. In France, Christianity is a thing of the past, a thing fundamentally opposite to all-important individualism.

“we’ve been there, and we’ve evolved.” In France faith is not radical; it is absolutely passé, irrelevant.

How then, is the French context different from the North American? Though France and America have in common a rich history of Christianity, calling oneself a Christian in the latter is still popular and often useful. The basic moralities of Christendom are still upheld, at least

in theory, by many. A large demographic in France calls themselves non-believing Catholics. No pretending there.

Moreover, Christianity has become part of the cliché American image. Christianity and Americanism are understandably linked in the French mind. By contrast, the French value (theoretically and rhetorically, at least) individuality, realism, and pessimism. Of course the massive Muslim immigration cannot be overlooked. The ratio of Christian to Muslim in France is startling. Some studies suggest that at this rate, even the non-believing Catholics will soon be outnumbered.

It’s easy to see the potential irony of modern American missionaries visiting Notre Dame, a relic of the old world, commemorative of the power the Catholic Church once held over the French. Talking to a Frenchman about Christianity is comparable to a foreigner visiting a Civil War battlefield and then trying to talk the locals back into slave labor. It is a crass connection to make. For the French, submitting to the laws and leanings of the Church would be a massive regression.



Design by Jeff Plowman

### LaFonderie: a place of fellowship

This clumsy sketch of the spiritual landscape of France hopefully gives an idea of the context in which my father founded La Fonderie, a place that invites anyone in love with the arts into fellowship.

Although art was once typically indigenous, it has become a global experience. Manga [Japanese] comics cover the desks of American youth, while Japanese kids learn English by watching *Lost* and *Heroes* on DVD. Any painter, poet, sculptor, musician, and writer can make his art available to anyone connected to the internet. The art of any subculture is globally exposed now more than ever.

There are laws in France restricting how many American films are imported, which is an attempt to keep all of Europe from becoming a stage for popular American art. Still the best and the worst art of every nation sits in cyberspace, ready for download. If art is the center of culture, then we truly are becoming one global culture.

Intellectually, the French have digested Christian theology and reject it as truth. The Western formula for

churches is generally ineffective in France, because it looks either like the institution they threw down centuries ago, or like typical American pop culture, which they earnestly try to reject. (They love McDonald's, some of our films and lots of our music, though they wish they didn't.) However, the arts remain an avenue to the French mind. Parisians, who represent

Talking to a Frenchman about Christianity is comparable to a foreigner visiting a Civil War battlefield and then trying to talk the locals back into slave labor. It is a crass connection to make. For the French, submitting to the laws and leanings of the Church would be a massive regression.

the heart of the country, love the experience, creation, and discussion of art. Human creativity is by definition an expression of individuality. It is unbound by law or regulation. Through the arts, emotions and ideas can still be communicated in something close to pure form.

**LaFonderie** is a gathering place for Parisian artists. There are Bible studies and worship nights; exhibitions and concerts. Presently, a core of about 100 people frequent LaFonderie to create, to celebrate, to discuss, and to explore.

My father's ideas are well suited to the context of mission in France. Paris does not have an active church every few blocks, nor is there a Christian market for art. It's no wonder there are many who love Jesus but who fail to connect their art to their lifestyle, their lifestyle to a church, or their church to their art. Dad set out to build a community made up largely of that fringe group, which would one day be a church not strictly for artists. His small, characteristically urban organization seeks to gather artists and those with creative professions.

Much of his on-the-clock time is spent with individual artists or small groups, discussing their craft with them, talking about projects and imagining presentations. Anyone who pours himself into a creative endeavor knows how lonely art can be. If someone asks what you do and you say, "I paint," they'll sometimes respond that they'd love to see something sometime. They don't usually offer their email address, or ask how near your apartment is, or if there might be a time next week they could drop by and have a look. They don't usually ask about your influences, if you feel cranky



Photo by Kelley J. Heneveld

after a week without painting, why you paint at all. Dad leans over the table and asks questions, or leans back with his eyes half-closed, listening comfortably and unrushed to an artist talking about his art. To an artist, that generosity can be compared to a rich man giving cash to a beggar.

In his outline of the goals of La Fonderie, written in French, my father uses a term: *donner de l'audace*. The direct English translation is to give audacity. It would be easy enough to say instead to encourage, but I find myself clinging to the word audacity. It takes a certain audacity to create something with your hands, call it art, and show it to others, asking them to take it seriously. (For example, a Frenchman who writes usually refuses to call himself a writer until he has been printed in some reputable publication.) You assume quite a lot when you call yourself an artist simply because of something inside you, rather than something academically or professionally awarded to you. By that token it takes even greater audacity to believe that the maker of the universe would orchestrate an elaborate sacrifice for your sake – not for generic

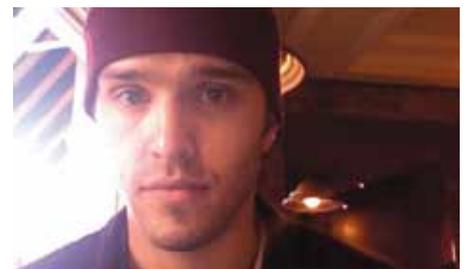
mankind but for you. There is a similarity, then, between the courage of an artist and the audacity of a Christian. Both require a willingness to admit there is something especially valuable about you.

When asked about his work in France, my father makes it clear that he does not aspire to “use the arts” to reach France. Nor is the goal to “reclaim the arts for the Lord.” This fellowship is not strictly for believers, nor is it only for seekers. La Fonderie gathers people together to create, to celebrate, to discuss, and to explore. There are Bible studies and worship nights; there are exhibitions and concerts showcasing art that could be categorized as secular, and other work that would sell as Christian in the United States.

The art of a culture shows how things are, and also how things could be. It illustrates culture, but it also changes it. Like my family in the cathedral, we can walk with the crowd of tourists, dumbfounded, some reverent, others curious. And perhaps in the way we enjoy the world, the peace and faith behind our glee might show through.

The French tore away from the Church in favor of individuality. Perhaps in fel-

lowship with Christians working in the arts, some might begin to consider Christ as an integral part of becoming who they really are – who they would be without fear and the drive towards conformity. Rather than fighting to stay who they are, some might follow the example of Kierkegaard; “Now, with God’s help, I shall become myself.” ☩



*Born in Jackson, Mississippi, Brian attended EABJM, a French Bilingual school in Paris. The oldest of four Beise children (see next page), he is currently working toward a bachelor’s degree in creative writing at the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga, where he lives with his wife and kitten.*



“For a Christian, redeemed by the work of Christ and living within the norms of Scripture and under the leadership of the Holy Spirit, the Lordship of Christ should include an interest in the arts. A Christian should use these arts to the glory of God – not just as tracts, but as things of beauty to the praise of God. And art work can be a doxology in itself.”  
– Francis Schaeffer

Photo by Kelley J. Heneveld

# God speaks French

Introducing your Mission Society team in France

**France** *Opened field in 1994*



## Jim and Angela Beise

Jim and Angela lead La Fonderie, reaching into the world of the arts with a message of hope and grace, to value, inspire, encourage and embolden Christians working in artistic and creative professions. They have also

served in a local church in discipleship, music, and worship ministries, and in mentoring emerging leaders. Jim and Angela have four children: Brian, Melissa, Rachel, and Michael.



## Mike and Valerie Smith

Having served previously as missionaries in France, Russia, and Mexico, Mike and Valerie now serve as “tentmakers” in Brittany, France. They own and operate a B&B business that provides a portion of their support and gives them

opportunities to build relationships among the people of Brittany. The manor is also used for missionary and pastoral care – mostly for French pastors needing a place to rest, but also for American missionaries. The Smiths also support outreaches organized by France Mission and a local church in Pontivy (Central Brittany) specifically designed to reach Central Brittany where most communities do not have a single church or small group. Mike and Valerie are parents to Nathan, Jason, and Nathalie.

**POPULATION:** 64,057,790

**LANGUAGE:** French

**RELIGIOUS GROUPS:** Roman Catholic 51%, Protestant 3%, Jewish 1%, Muslim 5%-10%, atheist 31% (note: only 10% of people who identified themselves as Christians attend church regularly)

**MISSION SOCIETY TEAM MINISTRIES:** arts ministry, counseling ministry, discipleship, retreat center for local and international pastors



## Andrew & Margaret Howell

The Howells have been part of The Mission Society team to France for the past eight years after having previously served in the Democratic Republic of Congo. They are involved with the French counterpart to Focus on the Family and

lead small groups, conferences, seminars, family camps, and are involved in building a house church in the suburbs of Paris. Andrew is an elder in the Florida Annual Conference of The United Methodist Church. Andrew and Margaret have four children: Kimberly, Andrea, Nathan, and Jason.

# Unorthodox missions

In “post-Christian” Europe, well known for its long resistance to Christianity, your Mission Society missionaries communicate the love and message of Christ through some very creative ministries.

## Hungary *Opened field in 2001*



### Dave and Beth Greenawalt

Dave, Beth, and their children work alongside the Hungarian national church in Budapest doing evangelism through cell-group development. Teen outreach groups, horse camps, and a weekly English club are some of ways they are reaching

out. Dave co-pastors a congregation in Budapest and is working toward the goal of a new church plant. Beth home-schools their children, works to develop their horse outreach ministry, and recently started serving as a coach/director for other homeschool moms. The Greenawalts have five children: Matt, Jon, Rosemarie, Nate, and Abby.

**POPULATION:** 9,930,915

**LANGUAGE:** Hungarian 93.6%, other or unspecified 6.4% (2001 census)

**RELIGIOUS GROUPS:** Roman Catholic 51.9%, Calvinist 15.9%, Lutheran 3%, Greek Catholic 2.6%, other Christian 1%, other or unspecified 11.1%, unaffiliated 14.5% (2001 census)

**MINISTRIES:** church planting, equine ministry, pastoral ministry, TESL, youth ministry

## Ukraine *Opened field in 1999*



### W.D. (Day) and Neva Wysong

The Wysongs have been in Kiev since 1999. Before moving to Ukraine they spent two years serving in Russia. Day serves as the headmaster of Kiev Christian Academy (KCA). Neva teaches at the Academy and coaches girls’

basketball. Day also serves as chairman of the board for Safe Haven International, a ministry to orphanage graduates. Neva was one of the developers of the Life Skills Training Manual, which is being used widely by training educators in Ukraine and Russia. Their four children, Kayla, Kasen, Kerah, and Nicholas, attend KCA.

**POPULATION:** 45,994,287

**LANGUAGE:** Ukrainian (official) 67%, Russian 24%, other 9%

**RELIGIOUS GROUPS:** Ukrainian Orthodox – Kyiv Patriarchate 50.4%, Ukrainian Orthodox – Moscow Patriarchate 26.1%, Ukrainian Greek Catholic 8%, Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox 7.2%, Roman Catholic 2.2%, Protestant 2.2%, Jewish 0.6%, other 3.2%

**MINISTRIES:** orphanage ministry, teaching

## Russia *Opened field in 1993*



### Chris and Sue Champion

Chris and Sue are doing an ESL ministry among Russian teens and adults as a way of developing relationships and offering them Christ. They open their apartment for a home hospitality ministry to these young people and use teaching

as a way to provide a valuable service and to build friendships. Sue is building a theatre/dance ministry group for these teens and hopes to use this to present Christian plays that will introduce and bring these young people to faith. Their daughter, Elisabeth, attends the Bolshoi Ballet Academy and has had many opportunities to share her faith with the students there. The Champions are also involved in a local Russian United Methodist Church, and Chris is teaching English to seminary students at the Methodist seminary in Moscow. The Champions also have two sons – Aaron and Nathan – who live in America.



### Charlie and Miki Chastain

Since 2001, the Chastains have been serving in St. Petersburg, Russia on short-term mission trips working with handicapped orphans and street children. Given the history of abuse and neglect among these children, and the very low rate of their

success as adults, the Chastains’ ministry with them is predominantly relational. The Chastains will relocate to the St. Petersburg area, where they plan to build and strengthen relationships with both the orphaned children of the area and the staff and volunteers who are currently working there. The Chastains also hope to be active members of their community, both as advocates for the orphaned children and as a family strengthened and supported in the grace of God. Charlie and Miki are parents to daughter, Isabel.

**POPULATION:** 140,702,094

**LANGUAGE:** Russian and many minority languages

**RELIGIOUS GROUPS:** Russian Orthodox 15-20%, Muslim 10-15%, other Christian 2% *note:* estimates are of practicing worshippers; Russia has large populations of non-practicing believers and non-believers, a legacy of over seven decades of Soviet rule

**MISSION SOCIETY TEAM MINISTRIES:** arts ministry, children’s ministry, discipleship, orphanage ministry, pastoral ministry

## Equine ministry helps Hungary's at-risk kids

In 2005, missionaries Dave and Beth Greenawalt began to develop a foundational program using horses and teaching English as the basis for outreach and forming relationships. Building on the critical role horses have played in Hungarian history and culture, the outreach program particularly targets at-risk children and teens.

With the help of short-term volunteers and Hungarian co-workers, summer camps and a follow-up apprenticeship program emphasize the development of responsibility and character in a positive atmosphere. The summer

camp also includes daily devotions and personal testimonies.

Of the nearly 10 million Hungarian residents, about 25% note "unspecified" or "unaffiliated" as their religion. Just over 50% are Catholic, and the remainder of the population is divided between Protestant denominations. Many children and teens do not have a Christian witness in their lives and turn to abusive behavior when looking for direction. The Greenawalts have seen kids' lives enriched by the experiences they have had at camp and the relationships they have built through the years. †



## You have a role in this generation

Like France, the United States is becoming increasingly post-Christian. How can you reach someone who doesn't even like Christians? Here's one idea.

Talk to people. Some days I feel as hip and trendy as a yellow banana hairclip. Living in Alaska doesn't help – the sense of distance can easily translate into disconnect – but following Jesus requires an awareness of not only our surroundings but also our world. So how do you stay connected when we're literally living a thousand plus miles away?

Relationship. Talk to people. Anyone. Everyone. Ask questions. Lots. Listen carefully to the answers. Open up your life to strangers, visitors, and friends of friends. Turn on the television; surf the web. You don't need to become a full-blown couch potato or mouse potato to be aware. Oh yeah, and buy a subscription to the *New Yorker*.

Then wake up to the cold reality that you're part of the plan. You have a role in this generation, not only receiving the baton of faith but passing it on to the next generation. You have a role in preserving the earth, protecting the poor, defending the exploited. We need you. In particular, we need you to be aware, learn, grow – spiritually, relationally, culturally – because we can't do it without you.

– Margaret Feinberg, author and speaker

Excerpted from *UnChristian: What a new generation really thinks about Christianity and why it matters*, by David Kinman and Gabe Lyons



*Photo courtesy of Holy Trinity Brompton, London*

Holy Trinity Brompton (HTB), in Knightsbridge, London, is home to the “Alpha Course,” which is successfully geared for postmodern believers in a postindustrial economy. Above, Nicky Gumbel, developer of this wildly popular introduction to Christianity, speaks at an Alpha Course at HTB, where he is the vicar.

By Philip Jenkins, author of *The Next Christendom*

# Europe's Christian comeback

For all we hear about its being overcome by Islam, Europe remains a stronger Christian fortress than people realize.

The West is awash with fear of the Islamization of Europe. The rise of Islam, many warn, could transform the continent into "Eurabia," a term popularized by Harvard historian Niall Ferguson and other pundits. "A youthful Muslim society to the south and east of the Mediterranean is poised to colonize – the term is not too strong – a senescent Europe," Ferguson has predicted. Such grim prophecies may sell books, but they ignore reality. For all we hear about Islam, Europe remains a stronger Christian fortress than people realize. What's more, it is showing little sign of giving ground to Islam or any other faith for that matter.

To be fair, the trend is counterintuitive. Europe has long been a malarial swamp for any traditional or orthodox faith. Compared with the rest of the world, religious adherence in Europe is painfully weak. And it is easy to find evidence of the decay. Any traveler to the continent has seen Christianity's abandoned and secularized churches, many now transformed into little more than museums. But this does not mean that European Christianity is nearing extinction. Rather, among the ruins of faith, European Christianity is adapting to a world in which its convinced adherents represent a small but vigorous minority.



Photo by Jim Beise

In fact, the rapid decline in the continent's church attendance over the past 40 years may have done Europe a favor. It has freed churches of trying to operate as national entities that attempt to serve all members of society. Today, no church stands a realistic chance of incorporating everyone. Smaller, more focused bodies, however, can be more passionate, enthusiastic, and rigorously committed to personal holiness. To use a scientific analogy, when a star collapses, it becomes a white dwarf – smaller in size than it once was, but burning much more intensely. Across Europe, white-dwarf faith communities are growing within the remnants of the old mass church.

Perhaps nowhere is this more true than within European Catholicism, where new religious currents have become a potent force. Examples include movements such as the Focolare, the Emmanuel Community, and the Neocatechumenate Way, all of which are committed to a re-evangelization of Europe. These movements use charismatic styles of worship and devotion that would seem more at home in an American Pentecostal church, but at the same time

they are thoroughly Catholic. Though most of these movements originated in Spain and Italy, they have subsequently spread throughout Europe and across the Catholic world. Their influence over the younger clergy and lay leaders who will shape the church in the next generation is surprisingly strong.

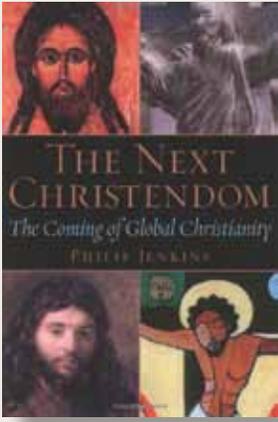
Similar trends are at work within the Protestant churches of Northern and Western Europe. The most active sections

**To use a scientific analogy, when a star collapses, it becomes a white dwarf – smaller in size than it once was, but burning much more intensely. Across Europe, white dwarf faith communities are growing within the remnants of the old mass church.**

of the Church of England today are the evangelical and charismatic parishes that have, in effect, become megachurches in their own right. These parishes have been incredibly successful at reaching out to a secular society that no longer knows much of anything about the Christian faith. Holy Trinity Brompton, a megapar-

ish in Knightsbridge, London, that is now one of Britain's largest churches, is home to the amazingly popular "Alpha Course," a means of recruiting potential converts through systems of informal networking aimed chiefly at young adults and professionals. As with the Catholic movements, the course works because it makes no assumptions about any prior knowledge: Everyone is assumed to be a new recruit in need of basic teaching. Nor does the recruitment technique assume that people live or work in traditional settings of family or employment. The Alpha Course is successfully geared for postmodern believers in a postindustrial economy.

Alongside these older Christian communities are hugely energetic immigrant congregations. On a typical Sunday, half of all churchgoers in London are African or Afro-Caribbean. Of Britain's 10 largest megachurches, four are pastored by Africans. Paris has 250 ethnic Protestant churches, most of them black African. Similar trends are found in Germany. Booming Christian churches in Africa and Asia now focus much of their evangelical attention on Europe. Nigerian and Congolese ministers have



## A landmark work expanded

by Philip Jenkins

The first edition of *The Next Christendom* has been hailed as a landmark in our understanding of modern Christianity. In this new and substantially expanded second edition, Jenkins continues to illuminate the remarkable expansion of Christianity in the global South – in Africa, Asia, and Latin America – as well as the clash between Islam and Christianity since September 11. Among the major topics covered are the growing schism between Northern and Southern churches over issues of gender and sexuality, immigrant and ethnic churches in North America, and a special section on the split within the Anglican Communion. The first in a three-book trilogy on the changes besetting modern Christianity, this award-winning book will be welcomed by all of those who have come to recognize Philip Jenkins as one of our leading commentators on religion and world affairs.

– from Amazon.com

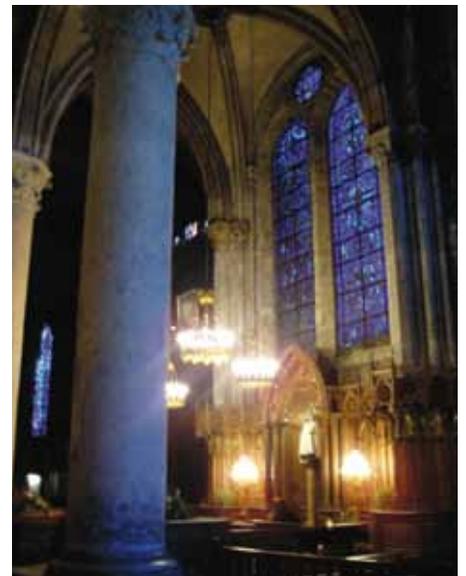
been especially successful, but none more so than the Ukraine-based ministry of Nigerian evangelist Sunday Adelaja. He has opened more than 300 churches in 30 countries in the last 12 years and now claims 30,000 (mainly white) followers.

Ironically, after centuries of rebelling against religious authority, the coming of Islam is also reviving political issues most thought extinct in Europe, including debates about the limits of freedom of speech, freedom of religion, and the right to proselytize. And in all these areas, controversies that originate in a Muslim context inexorably expand or limit the rights of Christians, too. If Muslim preachers who denounce gays must be silenced, then so must charismatic Christians. At the same time, any laws that limit blasphemous assaults on the image of Mohammed must take account of the sensibilities of those who venerate Jesus.

The result has been a rediscovery of the continent's Christian roots, even among those who have long disregarded it, and a renewed sense of European cultural Christianity. Jürgen Habermas, a veteran leftist German philosopher stunned his admirers not long ago by

proclaiming, "Christianity, and nothing else, is the ultimate foundation of liberty, conscience, human rights, and democracy, the benchmarks of Western civilization. To this day, we have no other options [than Christianity]. We continue to nourish ourselves from this source. Everything else is postmodern chatter." Europe may be confronting the dilemmas of a truly multifaith society, but with Christianity poised for a comeback, it is hardly on the verge of becoming an Islamic colony. †

*Philip Jenkins is distinguished professor of history and religious studies at Penn State University and author of God's Continent: Christianity, Islam, and Europe's Religious Crisis (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007). This article was reproduced with permission from Foreign Policy [www.foreignpolicy.com](http://www.foreignpolicy.com). Copyright 2008, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace.*



Any traveler to the continent has seen Christianity's abandoned and secularized churches, many now transformed into little more than museums. But this does not mean that European Christianity is nearing extinction.



## Rules of engagement

Whether you're entering a new country or a new neighborhood, these principles apply.

Recently I was on a flight returning to Atlanta from Brazil, where we had just completed two weeks of training with our new missionary appointees. Most of them were on the same flight. I was seated right across from the flight attendant, who was in the small seat three feet away and facing me. It seemed natural to strike up a conversation. During takeoff, she and I had a nice chat about our jobs, and about missions and church. Then we hit 10,000 feet, and she was off to her duties and I to sleep.

Nine hours later as we began our descent, she returned. She commented on what a lovely group we had. She had met some of our missionaries during the flight and mentioned several specifically—the 14-year old boy, the couple headed to Ecuador, and others. Then she said something I found very interesting, “Your group has been so pleasant to work with,” she said. “Unfortunately that isn’t usually the case with mission groups. Most flight attendants are not believers, and they do talk about the behavior.”

I was a little taken aback by this comment. I’ve reflected on it since. What was the difference? Is it just because our group consisted of nice people and other groups don’t? Perhaps other groups have just not been aware what was being communicated by their behavior.

I couldn’t help but wonder if the training we had just received contributed to the difference.

### Not “targeted.” Loved.

This is the second year we have held our missionary training in Brazil with participants from Brazil and other countries joining our group from the United States. Being trained in cross-



Why does the witness of people like missionaries Mark and Leslie Benton make such a lasting impression?

cultural ministry while living in a cross-cultural setting adds another dimension to the experience. New missionaries are able to immediately practice principles they are being taught.

In missionary training, we emphasize the importance of understanding the

culture and forming relationships. This importance far outweighs the projects or agendas we might be tempted to go in with. Our missionaries are taught to look constantly for ways God has marked the culture. In other words, they are taught to enter a country as learners, not as solvers. We want them to focus on the people more than on the task.

At one point our vice president for missionary education, Darrell Whiteman, was sharing about the importance of entering a culture as a learner. Paola, one of the young women from northeastern Brazil, responded. She spoke of a recent visit by Mark and Leslie Benton. The Bentons are new Mission Society missionaries currently developing support to serve in the Northeast of Brazil. They attended our training last year and made a pre-field visit to Brazil a few months ago. Paola said, “When the Bentons came to visit, I thought I knew what to expect. They would have lots of ideas about their ministry, and they would probably bring money or things for us. But they didn’t offer us anything. Instead, they were genuinely interested in learning about our culture in the Northeast. They really wanted to know us, not just do things for us. It was such a blessing!”

When Paola first started speaking, I



was nervous, but by the time she finished, I could not have been happier. I thought, “That’s why we train missionaries!” The Bentons understood that relationship is primary. In any of our dealings, if we only show love for people in order that we can witness to them, they will sense that. They become “targets” of ministry. But if we show love simply because a person is a child of God, he or she will sense that as well.

Perhaps that is what happened at 35,000 feet as this flight attendant friend served our new missionaries. They were not so focused on what they were going to do or what they had just done that they lost track of how they interacted with the people God had in front of them. That’s something we all need to remember, be it in Brazil, on a plane, or in our own neighborhoods and workplaces! †

*After 10 years on the mission field in Central Asia, **Jim Ramsay** now serves as The Mission Society’s senior director of field ministry.*

In July, The Mission Society hosted a training event for missionaries from several nations (including the United States, Brazil, Mexico, and Cuba) in Teresopolis and Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. The 15-day event covered topics such as mission team dynamics, marriage and family dynamics in mission, relational evangelism, discipleship, spiritual warfare, small group ministry, cross-cultural challenges, world religions, and mission and the church.

## The great role

Suggestions for becoming a learner

In order to learn to listen, here are some suggestions: Try to learn ... to live in the present a part of the time every day. Sometimes say to yourself: “Now. What is happening now? This friend is talking; I am quiet. There is endless time. I hear it, every word.” Then suddenly you begin to hear, not only what people are saying, but what they are trying to say, and you sense the whole truth about them. ... Then watch your self-assertiveness. And give it up. ... Sometimes people cannot listen, because they think that unless they are talking, they are socially of no account. ... No. We should all know this: that listening, not talking, is the gifted and great role, and the imaginative role. And the true listener is much more beloved, magnetic than the talker, and he is more effective and learns more and does more good. †

– From *Tell Me More: On the Fine Art of Listening*, by Brenda Ueland



Churches in Orissa like this one have been abandoned during the outbreak of violence.

Photo by Frank Decker

## Churches and orphanage ransacked; Christians burned alive in India

A call for prayer for the persecuted Church in Orissa

Christians in India's state of Orissa are being persecuted and killed. On August 27, The Mission Society received a message from former board member, the Rev. Naik, a native of India's eastern state of Orissa. "Just this morning," he wrote, "I spoke with family members there. Things have been getting worse by the hour. Militant Hindu mobs are going out by the thousands to Christian homes, looting, burning, and killing. Christians have fled into the mountains. About 14 miles from where my mother lives, six Christians have been hacked to death, and families are too afraid to retrieve the bodies. Ten homes belonging to my relatives have been burned down."

Naik continued, "Although there is a small police presence here and there, they have been turning a blind eye toward the situation. Even if the police wanted to get to the scene they could not, because boulders have been placed across the roads, making barriers. The entire

situation is one of chaos, confusion, and lawlessness. The pro-Hindu government has remained silent in all of this."

This round of killings reportedly began when a Hindu leader in the Kandamal district, where Christian missionaries have been active for years, was gunned down by a Maoist terrorist. "The Hindus have blamed the Christians for the death of their leader, which has led to the eruption of violence against the Christians," explained Naik.

At the time of this writing, Hindu mobs damaged more than a dozen churches and attacked Christian homes and an orphanage this week. Buses and vehicles have been torched; homes and churches have been ransacked; a nun was burned alive and a priest was badly burned. A young teacher and worship leader, who had been a student of Naik, was also doused with gasoline and burned alive on his motorcycle as he was headed home after visiting churches.

Peter and Ester Pereira are Mission Society missionaries to their homeland of India and South Asia International Directors with the International Leadership Institute (ILI), a partnering ministry with The Mission Society. They report, "One of our ILI team members from the Kurdha District tried to distribute pamphlets for an upcoming ILI regional conference but was beaten and drenched in diesel fuel to be set on fire. By the grace of God, the match did not strike. They attempted seven times to light the match before the police finally came to the ILI team member's rescue. He is now recovering in the hospital."

### History of violence

Outbreaks of violence against Christians have a history in Orissa. In 1999, Australian missionary Graham Staines was burned to death in his car, along with his two young sons (ages 9 and 7).



Orissa, a state located on the east coast of India, is the ninth largest state by area and the eleventh largest by population. It is reported to have a long history of Hindu-Christian clashes.

And in December 2007, “thousands of Christians were beaten, and traumatized, had their houses and churches burnt, and were driven away from their homes. ... Hundreds still live in jungles to this day out of fear for their lives,” reports FIACONA, a blog dedicated to highlighting the issue of Christian persecution in India.

“In the midst of this, we praise the Lord for His glory and honor,” writes Naik. “Somehow He’s going to use this tragedy to show forth His triumph and His victory. ‘The blood of the martyrs is the seed of the church.’”

Thank you for sharing this news report with your church and small groups. If you or your congregation would like to help rebuild churches and orphanages in Orissa, make your check payable to The Mission Society and indicate fund #0625. Thank you for praying for the people and government officials of Orissa. ✝



“Our Brazilian leaders realize that it’s urgent that the Brazilian church begins to see itself as a sending church,” notes João Carlos Lopez, president of the Council of Bishops of the Brazilian Methodist Church.

## Brazilian Methodists moving into missions

By Dick McClain

In 2006, The Mission Society entered into process of mission development with The Methodist Church of Brazil. It began when the Brazilian church asked if The Mission Society could help it become a mission-sending church. The collaborative process was launched when a team from The Mission Society consulted with Brazilian leaders regarding sending structures and strategies. That consultation was followed by the first Global Mission and Evangelism Conference (GMEC) in August, 2006, at IMFORM, the missionary training school of Brazil’s 1st Region, located in Teresopolis.

The second and third GMEC’s were held in May, 2007, in the Northern and 6th (Curitiba) regions. The impact of these events was illustrated when a group of 30+ pastors from the 6th region participated in their first-ever short-term mission trip to Paraguay the following year.

In July, 2007, the collaborative relationship was accelerated when The Mission Society for the first time conducted its annual new missionary orientation and training in Brazil. In July, 2008, the second such training was held again in Brazil, this time including not only 29 North Americans and 14 Brazilians, but also two Cuban and one Mexican participants (*see page 17*). In August, 2008, the process of offering Global Mission and Evangelism Conferences to each of Brazilian Methodists eight regions was continued when conferences were conducted for the 2nd and the Amazon Missionary regions in Porto Velho and Porto Alegre, August 28 – September 5, 2008. Approximately 220 pastors (representing all but two of those in the Amazon Region and 63% of the 2nd region’s pastors) and leaders participated. To date, more than 400 Brazilian Methodist leaders have participated in the five missions mobilization conferences held.

Commenting on the most recent events, João Carlos Lopez, president of the Brazilian church’s College of Bishops (and a Mission Society board member) said, “Our Brazilian leaders realize that it’s urgent that the Brazilian church begins to see itself as a sending church, and that we see we have the resources to engage the world and not just our nation. The dependency patterns of the past need to give way to a new era of interdependence.”

The collaboration with the church in Brazil reflects and celebrates the shift of the “center of gravity” of world Christianity from the west/north to the “global south,” combined with the tremendous growth of the missionary efforts of the global south churches. ✝

# Mission Society “MK” program takes a step forward

Former “missionary kid” offers an inside look at this nomadic life

*By Hannah Duggins*

The Mission Society family presently includes 136 “missionary kids” (MKs) under the age of 21. Some go to international schools with other MKs. Some are homeschooled. Some go to local schools. Some speak several languages, while others speak only English.

Characteristics common to all MKs are their cross-cultural and highly mobile lives, both of which present benefits and challenges.

MKs spend their developmental years surrounded by more than one culture. Consequently, most MKs have a large worldview. As their host culture becomes more and more part of them, however, MKs face the challenge that comes with living cross-culturally – namely, that of never really feeling “at home” in any culture. While they do get to experience “the best of both worlds” in some sense, during their childhood they never fully experience either one.

MKs are also highly mobile. They move around a lot. Even MKs whose parents have served in the same country for years experience high mobility because of homeland ministry

(furlough) and the almost constant fluctuations inherent to the expatriate community. As a result, MKs get to see a lot of the world. They get to meet a lot of interesting people. At the same time, though, the high mobility of their family and of those around them makes it that much more challenging for MKs to grow roots anywhere.

In August 2008, The Mission Society hired two part-time staff members to more fully develop a care ministry specifically for The Mission Society’s MK community. Vicki Decker and Shawn Ramsay (both mothers of MKs) have begun to build relationships with our MKs through correspondence, field visits, and regional gatherings of missionaries. They will be

a resource to parents and MKs as they live on the field and transition to life in the States. Vicki and Shawn also will seek ways to keep MKs connected to one another in order that they can encourage each other as they all seek to deal with the challenges and celebrate the joys that accompany the auspicious title of “Missionary Kid.” †



Hannah Duggins, a former missionary kid, grew up in Central Asia. This summer, she interned with The Mission Society, helping to more fully establish our ministry to MKs. Hannah is a senior at Houghton College in Western New York, where she is studying classical guitar and theology.

**The Mission Society** has developed a **monthly e-newsletter** to help keep you, our ministry partners, better updated on the goings-on about God’s work in the world through The Mission Society. **It’s free.** To begin receiving yours, just check the appropriate box and complete and return the response card accompanying this issue, or visit us online to **[www.themissionsociety.org](http://www.themissionsociety.org)**.



## Re-thinking stewardship

What every Christian should know about handling the “family’s resources”

From time to time, I am asked what I do at The Mission Society. I answer that our department seeks to “minister to, pray for, mobilize, and motivate followers of Christ toward more active participation in the Great Commission and greater generosity to God’s work.”

Personally, I like to think of myself as working for the Lord as an “Eternal Investment Advisor” for His people. I try to help those who give generously from a glad heart to be able to “maximize returns” on their investments in God’s Kingdom. After all, we will all be held accountable for how we steward the resources God has entrusted to us.

Learning to manage God’s resources well is one of the most important things we can do in our Christian lives. In the book, *Pagan Christianity?: Exploring the Roots of Our Church Practices*, authors Frank Viola and George Barna speak of Christian stewardship in a startling way – a way that goes far beyond tithing. We are, they say, in a sense “portfolio managers” for the Kingdom of God:

*“As we have seen, handling God’s resources is not something to be taken lightly. ... Being part of a family includes protecting the family’s resources. It is no different with the family of God. The tangible resources of God’s Kingdom have been placed at our disposal. We have the privilege of investing those resources – not just our money, but our time, possessions, ideas, relationships, skills, spiritual gifts, and so forth – to produce positive results for the Kingdom.”*

*The progress of God’s work depends to some extent upon how we utilize the ample resources that He has entrusted to us. You are, in effect, a portfolio manager for the Kingdom of God.”*

*“Is investing three percent of your total household income – that’s the average devoted by Americans to religious activity of any type – sufficient to advance His work? Can you justify giving money to an organization to take care of the needs of the poor as your only*



*“Like every investor, you will be seduced by opportunities that are likely to produce good outcomes as well as by other opportunities that will squander resources.”*

*involvement in the lives of the impoverished? Like every investor, you will be seduced by opportunities that are likely to produce good outcomes as well as by other opportunities that will squander resources. Every choice you make has eternal consequences. How you choose to allocate the Kingdom’s resources will affect the lives of many people. ... God has given you a checkbook and told you to invest it in whatever ways will bring the best outcomes for His glory and purposes.”*

*– excerpted from Pagan Christianity?*

Nearly six years ago, I made a major decision that turned out to be one of the best in my life. After a three-month period of meeting with President Phil Granger and others, I decided to join The Mission Society. For me, it had “passed the due-diligence test,” so to speak. Not only is it concerned with meeting people’s felt needs, but it is even more interested in helping people understand that their truest, deepest need is for personal relationship with Jesus Christ. After all, as Christ’s followers, can we justify financially partnering with an organization that cares only for the physical needs of the poor without also addressing their spiritual needs? Can we help dig wells, providing clean drinking water without sharing the “Living Water”? Can we help provide microloans, helping to make possible small businesses to sustain families, without sharing with them about their true provider, Jesus? Offering Christ by caring for body, mind, and spirit, is what The Mission Society is all about. My investment of my life in this ministry, I decided, would be one that would offer “maximum Kingdom results.”

Since joining The Mission Society, I have met some of the finest Christians I have ever known. People who give to The Mission Society are not interested in having their name on a pew or over the door of a building; they are interested in the bottom line – reaching the world for Christ. ☩

**Dennis E. Brown** is The Mission Society’s vice president for advancement.



# You had me at hello

Your church not reaching out? The problem might be easily diagnosable.

A good friend of mine and of missions passed on to glory recently. The Rev. James Hord served as a missionary with World Gospel Mission in Honduras. Later, he served as a missionary evangelist preaching in camp meetings and missions conferences all across the United States. I can attribute much of my continuing involvement in missions as a layman to Jim's personal influence on my life.

I recall Jim telling of a time when he was visiting a supporting church. At the close of the service, a dear lady came up to him with what looked like an extremely worn journal. After searching through several pages, she pointed to a specific date and said, "Jim, I need you to tell me what was going on this day." He immediately recognized the importance of the date but replied, "Why do you ask?" The lady went on to tell of being awakened early in the morning and having a sense that he was in trouble. She said she woke her husband, and they spent much of the day praying for Jim and his wife, Bobbie.

Jim explained that during that time they were in Costa Rica in language school and, while there, Mt. Arenal, a volcano previously thought to be extinct, erupted without warning. Three small villages were buried, and many people were killed or injured. Students from the language school volunteered to help in the disaster area. While doing so, another eruption occurred, hurling huge boulders down the mountainside. Jim relayed how they had to flee to escape harm.

This incident was before cable news, the internet, text messaging, and all the other means of rapid communication we have at our disposal today. Yet, notice the connectedness this woman had with this missionary couple even though she did not know the specifics of their situation.

1. She was on a first-name basis with the missionaries.
2. She was engaged to the point of recording her prayers for them and others.
3. She was interested enough to follow up.
4. She was personally involved to the extent that God Himself mobilized her to pray.



**The "fuel" that drives our involvement with missionaries is the same fuel that can engage your church in missions.**

## Getting personal

The woman's relationship with the Hord family is an example of the type of personalization we at The Mission Society try to instill in individuals and local churches. We define personalization as:

*The intentional act of a believer to draw ever closer to what God is doing in the world in gathering all peoples to himself to the end that the believer will use his or her gifts, abilities, and resources in God's global cause.*

Personalization is the fuel that drives our involvement with missionaries and mission causes. It follows then that the greater the level of personalization in a congregation, the greater the connection and commitment of the church to reach out to the community and beyond for the sake of Christ.

Personalization, however, is not something that just naturally happens. On occasion I have polled congregations by asking for a show of hands by those who personally know someone engaged in full-time missions. Most often, only a few people respond, and they are generally on the missions team or committee. I have been in several churches where not a single hand was raised. One of our visions for churches is that, when that question is posed, every hand will be lifted.

For that to happen, churches must be very intentional in creating opportunities for members of their congregation to get "up close and personal" with missions. Churches can provide a panoramic view of what God is doing in the world by inviting a variety of missionaries and ministries to their church. They can also ensure that adequate time is made available for the congregation to interface with the invited guests in order to develop relationships.

## Want to develop a mission strategy or plan a mission event in your church?

Mobilizing your church for greater outreach can begin with the Global Outreach Weekend. The Mission Society team is available to come to your church and present the six-hour **Global Outreach Seminar**, as well as to minister during your worship services on Sunday. This seminar is designed to cast a greater vision for outreach and introduce effective means of mobilizing the entire congregation.

In addition, three essential strategies that are taught in the Global Outreach Seminar are now being presented in a more in-depth interactive workshop format in:

### **Developing a Global Outreach Plan**

**October 9, 2008**

*Norcross, GA*

This workshop will provide each participant with the training and tools needed to implement an effective missional structure and strategy that will be a unique fit for your local church.

Cost is \$30 per person.

### **Conducting a Global Impact Celebration**

**October 10-11, 2008**

*Norcross, GA*

This workshop will equip church leaders to plan, promote, and execute an annual high-impact missions celebration event in your local church.

Cost is \$30 per person.

### **Equipping Short-Term Mission Leaders**

**December 5-6, 2008**

*Norcross, GA*

This interactive training will equip leaders to develop and execute an effective short-term missions plan and to train and disciple the members of your short-term mission teams.

Cost is \$30 per person.

For more information and to register online, visit us at [www.themissionsociety.org](http://www.themissionsociety.org) or contact us at 1.800.478.8963 ext. 9046 or [cm@themissionsociety.org](mailto:cm@themissionsociety.org).

### **A proven method for churches**

The primary way we suggest for churches to develop personalization throughout their congregations is through a “Global Impact Celebration” or GIC. This annual event in the life of the church engages people in a much different way than the typical missions meeting or conference. Rather than an event where missions is presented to the congregation, the GIC creates venues for personal interaction. The focus is on building relationships,

On occasion I have polled congregations by asking for a show of hands by those who personally know someone engaged in full-time missions. One of our visions for churches is that, when that question is posed, every hand will be lifted.

instead of just sharing information. There are enough opportunities for relationship-building that everyone in the congregation will have the ability to really come to know one or more missionaries and to gain a greater understanding of what God is doing in the world.

If you are interested in learning more about the Global Impact Celebration, contact the Church Ministry team at 800.478.8963, ext. 9046, or email [cm@themissionsociety.org](mailto:cm@themissionsociety.org). †

**Stan Self** is The Mission Society's senior director of Church Ministry.



# The unmentioned ones

Behind the scenes often means not being seen – until the very end of the reel

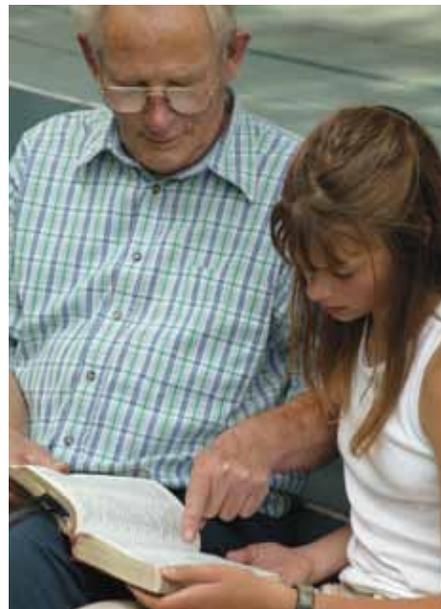
Have you ever watched a movie and sat through the entire list of credits? Unless you were waiting for the crowd to thin out, chances are that you left the theater after the first few actors' names had been displayed on the screen. You probably didn't stay in your seat to find out who was the key grip, nor did you wait around to find out the name of the lead costume designer. After all, these people were not the headliners; they played obscure roles. Their skills gave the film its jaw-dropping special effects and made the actors look their best, but their names remain unrecognized by the average moviegoer.

It seems that this illustration plays out in our churches as well. Often we can have a tendency to recognize the most eloquent preachers, the wealthiest donors, and missionaries serving in the most mysterious countries. We tend to treat these high-profile individuals as if they are the stars of God's Kingdom, forgetting about the behind-the-scenes crew who made these fruitful ministries all possible. Perhaps the Apostle Paul was aware of this tendency, so he deliberately wrote about some of the supporters that helped him to carry out God's mission. Gaius and Epaphroditus are among those he mentioned. Believers such as these are ones who probably told Paul after a difficult day, "Paul, hang in there. God is faithful, and He will see you through." Some worked secular jobs and probably lived beneath their means in order to fund Paul's missionary journeys. Yet others were intercessors who may have

been awakened by the Holy Spirit in the middle of the night to pray for Paul when he faced perils.

## Anne, Helen, and Austin

The Mission Society, like Paul, would not be what it is without the support of



"The meek man ... knows well that the world will never see him as God sees him, and he has stopped caring." – A.W. Tozer

a behind-the-scenes crew – men and women who support us through prayer, encouragement, and donations of time and money. Individuals like Anne Fryga come to mind. Anne regularly prays for the staff members and even calls us on our birthdays. She hand-makes hundreds of cloth dolls which she sends with missionaries to distribute to children

all over the world. I also think of Helen Chamness who, with her husband, helped locate office space and establish The Mission Society in its beginning. Helen often drops by the office to bring brownies and a word of encouragement. Another faithful person is Austin Boggan, a veteran missionary, who continues to lead short-term teams, and has often driven from Alabama to Atlanta just to help us with building projects around the office. These three are just a few of the people whose names you might not recognize, but whose contributions are hugely significant in God's Kingdom.

## No bright lights

All believers are called to be involved in supporting the work of missions; all of us have a part to play, even if our names are never known. Anne, Helen, and Austin may never have their names in bright lights. Their contributions may never receive the praise they deserve. That's not their motivation; they do their work unto the Lord.

How are you involved in supporting God's mission? Your contribution may be a monthly \$5 donation to support an orphan, or you may regularly intercede for a missionary family. No matter the size of your contribution, know that it is valuable in the sight of the Lord. God always sits through the credits. ✚

*Richard Coleman is The Mission Society's director of mobilization and candidacy.*

# Educators, is God calling you to cross-cultural ministry?

Lesson plans, classroom decorations, new students. Farewell, summer break. School is back in session! Teachers everywhere are hoping to make a positive impact on their students, some of whom will become great leaders. All over the world, teachers are examples and mentors. Educators, is God wanting to use you to communicate Himself to the children or young people in schools in some other part of the world? Will you respond to His call? Check out these teaching opportunities, and give us a call.

### **BOLIVIA**

#### **Teachers, coaches, and school workers**

*Term: 1 – 5 years*

Teachers and other school workers are needed at the Santa Cruz Christian Learning Center (an English-speaking school, grades K-12). Present needs include: high school English teacher; first-grade teacher; sixth-grade teacher; coaches for volleyball, basketball, soccer, and track; boys' physical education teacher for both junior high and high school; elementary school chaplain. For more information, visit [www.scccl.org](http://www.scccl.org).

### **CHINA**

#### **TESL Teachers**

*Term: 1 – 5 years*

Teach English as a Second Language (TESL) classes at local universities in order to build relationships with national Chinese and share Christ. Previous teaching experience not required.

### **GHANA**

#### **Literacy Teacher**

*Term: 1 – 5 years*

Act as a teacher's assistant to missionaries teaching both English and native literacy. Students learn their own "mother-tongue" reading and writing skills while reading the Bible. Education majors and ESL teachers especially encouraged to apply.

### **KAZAKHSTAN**

#### **ESL Teachers**

*Term: 1 – 5 years*

The Kazakhstan team is recruiting several people who are interested in teaching a conversational English program. The qualifications for this area of service include a love for children (elementary through high school), a desire to make an impact for the Kingdom through character/integrity in relationships with students and staff, and a four-year college degree (in any field, not just in education or English).

### **PARAGUAY**

#### **Elementary and High School Teachers**

*Term: 1 – 5 years*

K-12 teachers are needed yearly for a variety of grades and subjects at Asuncion Christian Academy (<http://www.aca.edu.py/index.html>). The school, which primarily serves the children of missionaries and diplomats, uses U.S. textbooks, and all teaching is done in English. The school arranges for resident visas, housing, and a modest salary. Conversational Spanish required - language school included in missionary training.

Subjects include:

High School Social Studies

High School Math

High School Science

Biology, Physical Science, Chemistry, and Physics

Elementary Teacher (K, 1st, 2nd)

ESL/ESOL Teacher

Special Education/Resource Room Teacher

### **PERU**

#### **ESL Teachers**

*Term: 1 – 5 years*

ESL teachers and coordinators are needed to work in a large, highly-acclaimed Methodist school in Huancayo, establishing an ESL program and leading classroom teaching.

### **THAILAND**

*Terms: 1 – 5 years*

ESL Teacher/ Community Worker – workers are needed in a predominantly Buddhist area to teach English, computer skills, and youth ministry. The ministry seeks to share the Gospel with the Thai people and aid in the development of their communities.



Opportunities are available to serve as a teacher's assistant to missionaries teaching children to read in Ghana, West Africa. The Mission Society has other opportunities to teach in unreached areas, but they are not listed here for security reasons. Please inquire about those opportunities if you are interested. To express interest in any of our teaching positions, go online to [www.themissionsociety.org/go/interestform](http://www.themissionsociety.org/go/interestform), and complete and submit the interest form.

For more information, visit [www.themissionsociety.org](http://www.themissionsociety.org) or call 1.800.478.8963, ext. 9036 or 9040.

With the good news of Jesus, The Mission Society missionaries and their families minister in 32 nations around the world. We offer their names here. How we thank you for your prayers for them!

**The Mission Society missionaries:**

Michael Agwanda, Otto Arango, Ari Arfaras, Ed & Linda Baker, Jose & Audrey Banales, Chris and Dora Barbee, Erica Beeles, Jim & Angela Beise, Mark & Leslie Benton, Rose Blank, Liz Boggess, Reid & Lola Buchanan, Margaret Buell, Debra Buenting, Doug & Brooke Burns, Julie Campbell, John & Sandra Carrick, Chris & Sue Champion, Charlie & Miki Chastain, Amantha Claxton, Jennie Clements, Cathy Coburn, David & Carol Cosby, Patrick Cummings, Adam & Jennifer Dalenburg, Tim & Daina Datwyler, Christian & Angelica Dickson, Caren Dilts, John & Colleen Eisenberg, Sue Fuller, Cam & Anne Gongwer, James & Barbara Gray, Dave & Beth Greenawalt, Alicia Grey, Rebecca Griffith, Florencio & Maria Guzman, Charlie & Chris Hanak, John & Katheryn Heinz, Jill

Henderson, Jon & Jeanne Herrin, Neal & Mari Hicks, Ron & Bonnie Hipwell, Ronnie & Angi Hopkins, Andrew & Margaret Howell, Arthur & Mary Alice Ivey, Charles & Becky Jackson, Charlie & Mary Kay Jackson, Andrew & Juliana Jernigan, Trevor Johnston, Jonathan & Amy Killen, Esaho & Beatrice Kipuke, Clay & Deborah Kirkland, Sue Kolljeski, Joetta Lehman, Kristen Matveia, Nicole McCoy, Ash & Audra McEuen, Steve & Shannon Mersinger, Grant Miller, Mike & Claire Mozley, Katie Nash, Doug & Becky Neel, Marshall Neely, Laura Newton, Graham and Sharon Nichols, Steve Nikkel, Ron & Michelle Olson, Donald & Carol Paige, Peter & Esther Pereira, Len & Betsy Phillips, Martin & Tracy Reeves, Leon & Vicki Reich, Louise Reimer, John & Rosalie Rentz, Ben & Jenny Reyes, Ruben

Rodriguez, John & Bess Russell, Michael & Jannike Seward, Kirk & Nicole Sims, Rick & Debra Slingsluff, Amanda Smith, Robert & Linda Spitaleri, Tim Sprunger, Bryan & Beth Tatum, Ron & Belinda Tyler, Bill & Beth Ury, Mark & Johanna Waltz, Tate Welling, Bill & Linda Williams, Larry Williams, Steve & Heather Wilson, Dai & Neva Wysong

In addition to those listed above, 44 missionaries serve in areas where security is an issue for Christian workers. For that reason, they remain unnamed here. Thank you for praying for these dear brothers and sisters, as they face unique challenges.

For more information about The Mission Society missionaries or fields, visit our website at [www.themissionsociety.org](http://www.themissionsociety.org).

## May we pray for you?

Each morning at The Mission Society, we start by praying. We pray for the world. We pray for our missionaries. And we pray for you. Do you have prayer concerns that you would like to share with us? We invite you to do so. Here's how: Write your request on the response card included in this mailing and return it in the envelope provided, or

- Email us at [prayerrequest@themissionsociety.org](mailto:prayerrequest@themissionsociety.org), or
- Call us at 770.446.1381 (ext. PRAY or 7729) and leave your prayer request message, or
- Write us at: Prayer, The Mission Society, 6234 Crooked Creek Road, Norcross, GA 30092

Your shared concerns will be handled with care and prayed for by our staff and visiting missionaries. Thank you for the privilege of joining you in prayer.