

February 2016

Missions

A woman with a colorful headwrap and a baby on her back. The woman is looking off to the side with a thoughtful expression. The baby is looking towards the camera. The background is a soft, out-of-focus outdoor setting.

Tanzania

The Island of Peace

**Business as
Mission**

**50 Years
in Bolivia**



Thinking It Through

KEITH R. KEYSER

The Frontline of Missionary Work

Considering the daunting prospect of reaching this world with the Gospel, one might well be tempted to despair. How can the Church possibly evangelize and teach more than 7 billion people, especially when Christians so often fail to be holy in their own lives? Does not their weakness preclude the possibility of successfully carrying out Christ's Great Commission? Individuals considering service on the foreign field, as well as missionary-supporting churches, must remember that the Lord prefaced His parting instructions to the apostles with these words: "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth."¹ The capacity to carry out this seemingly impossible task stems from the risen Lord's ability to do what He promises—"I will build My church," He affirmed.² History shows that He has done this by providentially going ahead of His people to mercifully prepare their hearers for the Gospel.

Mercy for condemned Gentiles

When Joshua's spies made contact with Rahab the prostitute, a citizen of the doomed Canaanite city, Jericho, she assured them that her people were well aware of what Jehovah had done to Egypt. This fear of God's wrath motivated her to ask for salvation from the fate that awaited her hometown.³ Her family and she were delivered from destruction, obtaining instead a new life of citizenship among God's chosen people Israel; for Rahab, the added benefit of inclusion in Boaz's, David's, and Christ's ancestral lines accompanied this salvation.⁴

Fast-forward approximately 1,430 years to Caesarea Maritima in Israel; the scene is the home of a prominent Roman army officer named Cornelius. Peter finds that this Gentile soldier and his friends are interested in the revelation of the true God through His Son. As he preaches the Gospel, they repent and believe on the Savior—a momentous conversion that is evidenced by the coming of the Holy Spirit upon them. Days earlier God had already prepared them through a vision telling them to send for this fisherman-turned-apostle who would explain the Good News to them.⁵ As a result, the Church receives incontrovertible proof of the reality of their spiritual

composition as one body composed of Jew and Gentile.⁶

Sometime later Paul began having similar divine appointments in Europe. A nocturnal vision sent him to evangelize a Jewish ladies' prayer meeting held by the Philippian riverside.⁷ This led to the conversion of a businesswoman named Lydia; subsequently, a medium who was enslaved both physically and spiritually was dramatically liberated in Christ's name. Afterward, the local jail warden was converted in spectacular fashion after an earthquake nullified the bonds and bars, but Paul and Silas and their fellow inmates refused to flee.⁸ Later in Acts, the apostle had other experiences that manifested the Holy Spirit's prior work in individuals—as in the case of some of John the Baptist's followers.⁹

The Lord striving with sinners

These incidents demonstrate the Lord's habit of mercifully working in people's lives before believers even encounter them. This is a boon to witnessing to those who are considered hard to evangelize. The Spirit is already working through the witness of creation and human conscience to prepare people for hearing the Word of Truth.¹⁰ Whether one takes the Good News to unreached areas or to parts of the world that seem gospel-hardened and fiercely secular, the knowledge that God is currently working there is immensely empowering.

Believers do not have to "do it all"; they merely need to present themselves for the Lord's usage. 1 Corinthians reminds us who really does the work: "For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called: But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; And base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are: That no flesh should glory in His presence. But of Him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption: That, according as it is written, 'He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord.'"¹¹ ■

¹Matt. 28:18; ²Matt. 16:18; ³Josh. 2; ⁴Josh. 6:22–25; Ruth 4:17–21; Matt. 1:5; ⁵Acts 10; ⁶Eph. 2:11–22; 3:1–7; ⁷Acts 16:6–15; ⁸Acts 16:16–40; ⁹Acts 19:1–8; ¹⁰Rom. 1–2; ¹¹1 Cor. 1:26–31.

Vol. 45, No. 2. Christian Missions in Many Lands (ISSN 0744-4052) is published eleven times a year by Christian Missions in Many Lands, Inc., Belmar, New Jersey. Periodical postage paid at Belmar, New Jersey, and additional mailing offices. POSTMASTER: Send United States address changes to Christian Missions in Many Lands, Inc., PO Box 13, Spring Lake, NJ 07762. Send Canadian address changes to MSC Canada, 101 Amber Street, Suite 16, Markham, Ontario L3R 3B2. MSC Canada publication agreement Number 40026478. All correspondence, including address changes, gifts for missionary work, and for expenses should be sent by Canadian readers to MSC Canada, 101 Amber Street, Suite 16, Markham, Ontario L3R 3B2 and by United States readers to Christian Missions in Many Lands, Inc., PO Box 13, Spring Lake, NJ 07762. Copyright © CMML. All rights reserved.

FRONT COVER: ©iStockPhoto.com/renplett BACK COVER: ©iStockPhoto.com/MLiberra

Return to Bolivia

Ministries Thriving 50 Years Later

BY WES STEFFEN

Welcome to Bolivia

The sun was just rising over the peaks of the Andean mountain range as the plane descended in elevation to 13,400 feet for the wheels to touch the La Paz, Bolivia, airport runway. Some extra deep breaths were inhaled to help acclimatize to the high elevation. At immigration Mary Anna gave the gentleman our passports. His first words were, "Good Morning. I had a classmate whose last name was Steffen, his first name was Marcos."

Goosebumps ran down our spines as Mary Anna replied, "He is our youngest son!"

"Welcome back to Bolivia! How is Mark doing?"

What a welcome 20 years after our last trip! The Christians, the smiles, the tears, the flowers and the memories that flooded into our experience at the airport were only the beginning. Thank you, Lord, for your confirmation and blessing on our return to Bolivia.

Strategies—the kernel of God's calling

When we arrived in La Paz in 1966 with a group of missionaries from International Teams we had four basic strategies:

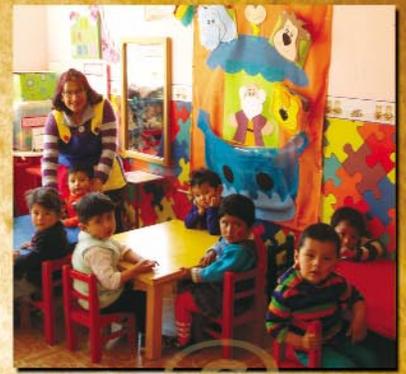
1. To have a central location from which the Gospel would disseminate following natural communication channels to various geographic, cultural, educational, language and societal levels.
2. A team working together complementing, reinforcing gifts and capacities to have greater impact and accomplish more with lasting results as well as experiencing mutual growth.
3. Develop a solid biblical base by making disciples, teaching for biblical understanding and planting local assemblies.
4. Stimulate and encourage local gifts, capabilities and initiative; develop leadership and those who would be able to teach others.

Plan in action

Knocking on doors, we began to contact individuals who were in need of a relationship with God through Jesus Christ. From this, we saw the

From top: Wes Steffen giving keynote address at the assembly's 50th anniversary; Present elders and wives; Elena Michel shares her testimony, recounting God's faithfulness; A few former elders: Willy Torrico, Wes Steffen and Carlos Ross; The choir praising God for His goodness.





development of several ministries including: the opening of Centro Bíblico; the beginning of the first assembly in La Paz; the development of “Seminario Bíblico Evangélico” (Evangelical Bible Seminary); the planting and growth of assemblies in Trinidad, Oruro and Reyes as well as various areas of La Paz; and supporting evangelical outreach and strengthening of God’s people in La Paz, the rural area and throughout Bolivia through the Bible teaching of Centro Bíblico and Emmaus courses.

Look what the Lord is doing!

Fifty years ago we were privileged to work, along with many others, in this part of God’s vineyard. We had the opportunity to plant a few little plants in His garden. Many others have watered—given of their resources, prayed, and labored—and God has given the increase. What an abundance of fruit!

The local assembly

We returned to La Paz to participate in the 50th anniversary of the assembly that started in our living room. Back then, seven International Team members along with William (Bill) Cotton, a missionary from England, worshipped the risen Lord, in English, for a couple of weeks. We were then joined by some new converts who also wanted to thank the Lord for the salvation they had received. Our meetings switched to Spanish and that beginning is now a vibrant assembly with multiple activities. They teach the Word, fellowship among believers, worship, break bread and pray.

Enthusiasm is evidenced in the group of elders, the married couple’s fellowship, the young people’s meetings and activities, the children in the Sunday school, and the choir. They now meet in the building they constructed in the 1990s on land purchased in the 1970s. This provides a permanent testimony in the neighborhood.

A childcare center operates in the building 10 months per year with an effective outreach to 50 children from ages two to six. In a recent governmental evaluation, the childcare center ranked fifth in the city. What an opportunity to plant the seed

of the Word in these young hearts and in their families.

A sister, Marisol, who is a medical doctor, has a consulting office at the facility to serve the neighborhood’s needs.

The young people recently participated in a door-to-door program to extend the impact of an assembly child evangelism outreach. Several of the children are now teenagers and with their spiritual growth are teaching the younger ones. Faviana, one of the sisters of the assembly, is the coordinator for all of the child evangelism work in La Paz. At Santiago and Mary’s home, the kitchen is filled with the littlest ones, the living room with the next older group and the teens meet in an open area near the bedrooms. Kids all over the place!

There are now a dozen local assemblies in various parts of the city.

Centro Bíblico

We also attended the 50th anniversary of Centro Bíblico and the 47th year celebration of Seminario Bíblico Evangélico. God has blessed the ministries that developed from this kernel of His calling that began in a small office with a reception area shared by a dentist. This historical blessing has been written about in several articles published in *Missions* from its beginnings to its



growth and outreach.¹ Now at the “golden anniversary,” God’s faithfulness is proclaimed and experienced. Centro Bíblico, a beacon of multiple ministries of discipleship and theological education solidly teaches the “whole counsel of God” to all who want to study in depth.

Just a few feet off the main avenue of the center of La Paz, the property’s central location is ideal for its accessibility. The

Top (L-R): La Paz, Bolivia, nestles in a valley at 12,000 feet overlooked by Mount Illimani; Assembly-run childcare center. **Middle:** Centro Bíblico celebrates 50 years.

¹ “Bolivian Bible School.” *Missions*, March 1969. “Outreach in Bolivia.” *Missions*, September 1974. “Centro Bíblico Celebrates Silver Anniversary.” *Missions*, May 1991.



original property, purchased in 1972, and the adjacent one, in 1987, have provided space for Centro Bíblico and many other Christian ministries.

Since the early 1990s Centro Bíblico has been financially self-sustaining. We praise God for His goodness and blessing. New construction plans are in process as the facilities are small and not efficient for the location and development of the ministries. The old 1800s two-story structures of meter-thick adobe walls need to be replaced. The Bolivian Evangelical Bible Seminary Association board of directors is looking to the Lord for His provision in this next big step of capital investment.

Emmaus Correspondence School courses

From Centro Bíblico the Emmaus Correspondence School courses have been distributed to the whole country. There were only eight courses in Spanish in 1966. Now there are 45 titles and new courses are even being written in La Paz. Three other distribution and grading locations in Bolivia are coordinated from Centro Bíblico. Over the years 203,200 courses have been distributed, and 64,160 have been completed and graded. Countless people have testified of blessings in their lives as they have studied God's Word in their homes.



Seminary classes

Since the 1968 pilot plan, 3,900 students have studied the Word of God at Centro Bíblico. Literally hundreds of local churches have been impacted by these Bible students who love the believers to whom they minister. The seminary is directed, administered, run and taught by Bolivian Christians. Jurgen Schultz (*Missionary Prayer Handbook* Day 22) is one of the teachers.

Currently 42 subjects are taught each year. Accredited by the Bolivian Department of Education, 14 subjects are required for certification in each of the evangelism, pastoral and teaching levels.

Since 2001 Eliseo Zúñiga has skillfully directed Centro Bíblico. He was saved as a high school student. He grew spiritually by studying Emmaus courses, attending the seminary, and participating in the activities of the new church. The opportunities to share the Word of God in open-air meetings and later in the church helped develop communication skills. While a university student, he accompanied Wes on his first "missionary journey" to Cobija where God opened his vision for his life work. He and his wife, Nelly, were commended in 1974 to the new assembly in Oruro and the extension of the Emmaus courses. His leadership skills prepared him for his work as teacher, preacher, writer, director of the Centro Bíblico seminary, Emmaus course coordinator, and representative of Bolivian assemblies nationally and internationally.

Seed—harvest—more seed

Seed was sown and disciples were produced; these disciples sowed more seed and more disciples were raised up. People we saw come to the Lord have been scattered in multiple places in Bolivia (Santa Cruz, Cochabamba, Potosi, and Oruro, just to name a few) and in other countries (Argentina, United States and Israel). What a blessing to see the development of Christian character and testimony, to see families love the Lord and serve Him.

Personal response—awe

There is gratitude in our hearts, thanksgiving on our lips, all the glory and praise is for Him!

As we remember our month in Bolivia, we are filled with amazement. Like David, we sit before the Lord and say, "Who am I, Lord God, and what is my family, that you have brought me this far? There is no one like you, Lord, and there is no God but you." (1 Chronicles 17:16 & 20)

Top (L-R): Child Evangelism chorus singing at the assembly's 50th celebration; Some seminary leaders and teachers with Wes Steffen; Mateo Cruz, one of Wes Steffen's Greek students, now teaching Greek in a Cochabamba seminary; Carlos and Shirley Vargas (MPH Day 23) with Wes Steffen—Shirley shared many years developing Centro Bíblico and the seminary.
Middle: Some of the 45 Emmaus courses now offered.

Meet the Steffens...



Wes and Mary Anna Steffen, commended in 1965 by assemblies in Atlantic, Iowa, and Newport News, Virginia, worked in La Paz, Bolivia, from 1966 to 1986. Wes returned to La Paz on multiple trips through the mid-90s. Due to their children's educational needs, aging parent care and Wes's decreasing eyesight, they sold their home in La Paz in 1996. Considering his long-term eyesight condition, Wes trained as a massage therapist and developed a thriving business in Wheaton, Illinois, where they currently live and minister.

Mary Anna was diagnosed with an aggressive cancer in November 2013 and has received 14 chemotherapy and 27 radiation treatments. Wes had a stent placed in a severely restricted heart artery in April 2015. The Lord continues to shower His grace and care upon them and blessed them with a return trip to La Paz in July 2015. Of the two eternal aspects of life on this earth, the Word of God and people, Wes and Mary Anna had the joy of working with both for more than 50 years.

Recently, while sharing news and history of the Lord's blessings with a current missionary in La Paz, Faith Hurst commented, "Wes, you left your fingerprints all over the place." ■

Wes and Mary Anna Steffen are in fellowship at College Church in Wheaton, Illinois. They faithfully served the Lord in Bolivia for many years.

CHRISTIAN
Missions
IN MANY LANDS INC.

MSC 

June 3-10, 2016



Missionary Orientation Program

Helping prepare those considering missions to be effective on the mission field.

Greenwood Hills Camp & Conference Center • Fayetteville, PA

MOP provides essential training for cross-cultural life and ministry to anyone called to serve God around the world.

For more information, including seminar topics and registration forms, speak to your assembly elders or contact CMML or MSC.

CMML
www.CMML.us
732-449-8880

MSC
www.MSCCanada.org
905-947-0468

May We Introduce

“J”

Serving in Special Areas

The Lord saved me when I was about eight years old. As far back as I can remember, I was blessed to hear God’s Word from my parents. However, it was not until sitting alone quietly one winter evening, considering my soul, that the Lord impressed on me the weight of my sin and the desperation of my spiritual condition. He convicted me that I knew the Gospel well enough to recite it to someone else, but that I had never asked His forgiveness. I knew clearly that “the wages of sin is death” and that if I were to die that night I would go to hell because the Lord Jesus was not yet my Savior. Immediately, I went to my bedroom and simply cried out to Him for forgiveness. He heard me and made me His child.

From that moment He gave me a thirst for His Word. For several years I reasoned with the Lord to see if I could live partially for Him and partially for my own interests. Exceedingly patient, He allowed my life to produce such distasteful fruit that humbled me and drew me back

to the cross. Hearing His call to follow Him with abandon, I settled that I would be His and His only. I was baptized shortly after at age 13. Earth’s joys gradually grew dim and I began to find joy in His presence, working alongside His people. The Lord started opening simple opportunities to serve Him in my home assembly. There, and over many summers at a few Bible camps, He fed a growing desire to be part of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ transforming hearts from knowing *about* God to truly knowing Him. Through personal time in His Word and teaching from many brothers and

sisters in Christ, I began to see that the only reasonable response to my own salvation was to share it with others.

In 2006, the Lord opened the way for me to spend the summer helping a missionary couple in Ireland with evangelism in long-unreached neighborhoods. The Lord used that trip to bring into clarity for the first time that I was to be “separated to the Gospel of God” as a missionary. In 2010 I visited my sister who had moved to Colombia. Since my university

summer break was longer, I extended my stay to help some missionaries. The Lord brought me into contact with a young family there whom I could help and serve alongside in the assemblies. Each year, as He opened the door to return, He confirmed to take steps toward full-time work in an overseas field. My church elders, family and friends began to pray as well. The Lord brought me to the point that it was a step of joyful obedience as in Acts 20:24. “But none of these things move me; nor do I count my life dear to myself, so

“But none of these things move me; nor do I count my life dear to myself, so that I may finish my race with joy, and the ministry which I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify to the gospel of the grace of God.”

Acts 20:24

that I may finish my race with joy, and the ministry which I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify to the gospel of the grace of God.”

While I was in Colombia for three months earlier last year, the Lord brought to my attention an evangelistic work in a special area. I returned to finish the year teaching music at a Christian elementary school, packed up my house, and with the blessing and commendation of my home church, and with loving parents who are also committing me to the Lord, prepared to leave for this field. ■



MISSION

PROCLAMATION or DEMONSTRATION? Business as Mission and Other Platforms

BY PHIL BARNES

Have you ever read a report from a worker, or perhaps one of the “May We Introduce” or “Lines from the Front” items in *Missions*, and thought, is that really mission work? Are they really missionaries?

Some roles CMML, MSC and our other sister organizations worldwide fill are to stay current in a rapidly changing world, to consider changes thrust upon Christian missions by global realities and to assist workers and the Lord’s people who support them to discover sustainable, effective ways to accomplish the mission to which we are called.

We see new trends in missions in many regions of the world that are in the greatest need of the Gospel. Two prominent trends are teaching English as a Second Language (ESL) and Business as Mission (BAM). Some workers also take “secular” employment on the field. These and other developments often raise questions as to whether these workers are “real missionaries” and how much time they actually spend proclaiming the Gospel. These are important questions—indeed, questions all believers should ask themselves.

This article discusses some ways that accomplishing God’s mission is changing and adjustments we will all need to make to our traditional ideas of what a “missionary” looks like in a world that is very different than just a decade ago.

Historic “platforms”

As pioneer mission workers began reaching people for the Lord, they soon understood that the bondage of animism and the fear of spirits were Satan’s strongholds that needed to be broken for the Gospel to fully take root in the lives of those who were turning to Christ.

Most illnesses and injuries were interpreted as the activity of the ancestral spirits, either because the spirits were displeased with those people, or because someone had bewitched or cursed them. The only option they knew was to trust in witch doctors to break the curse or to tell them how to appease the spirits. This worldview is still prevalent.

As those pioneers worked to turn these new believers away from these beliefs and practices, it became necessary to provide an alternative for those who were sick and dying. Medical mission was born, which gave relief to the sick while avoiding the dark world of evil spirits.

Of course, the availability and success of modern medicine also drew many sick unbelievers for treatment as well, and now there was a great opportunity to demonstrate the Gospel by meeting their felt need for physical healing, while explaining their greatest need of spiritual healing and proclaiming the remedy for their sin. The demonstration of the Gospel accompanied by the proclamation of the Gospel was, and continues to be, a powerful combination that the Lord has used to bring many to faith—a method the Lord Jesus Himself modeled, and one employed by the early Church. Demonstration and proclamation.

It also became apparent very early on that, unless believers could read the Bible for themselves, they would never develop spiritual leadership and Bible teachers who personally understood the Scripture and the foundations of their beliefs. The pioneers began to teach and soon mission schools sprung up. Again, many unbelievers also flocked to these schools, where they heard the Good News while learning academic subjects from believers in a Christian environment. Demonstration and proclamation.

Platforms in developed nations

Meanwhile, back in the developed world, Christians started children’s clubs for the kids on the streets, which included

activities such as handcrafts and sports, and provided an environment in which they could be mentored by Christian leaders and hear the message of salvation through Jesus Christ.

Similarly, camps were built throughout North America, at which kids could learn how to tie knots and build fires, to swim and paddle canoes. These created an environment in which Christian counselors could befriend campers and demonstrate over a week or two what a follower of Jesus Christ looked like. They also had many opportunities in that context to share how to come to faith in Christ. Demonstration and proclamation.

These four examples—hospitals and schools in developing nations and kids’ clubs and camps in the West—are widely accepted these days as not only legitimate, but advantageous platforms for sharing the Gospel, both by demonstration and proclamation.

The dangers of platforms

Although these four platforms are not now held in suspicion by most Christians, it is sometimes suggested that healing, feeding or teaching people who are headed to a lost eternity is a waste of precious time, energy and resources, and that “pure proclamation” of the Gospel is the approved method. This view is born from a legitimate concern that the demonstration of the Gospel has often overshadowed proclamation



to the point where the message of salvation by grace alone, through faith in Christ alone, is no longer clearly shared. This position is well supported by the fact that many inner-city missions, camps, youth clubs, hospitals, universities and organizations with Christian roots have lost the proclamation of the Gospel altogether. It seems that once proclamation of the Gospel disappears, soon the demonstration of the Gospel becomes nothing more than humanitarian good works. This is a valid concern.

We must, however, not only accept that there are dangers associated with this “demonstration only” model but also with the “proclamation only” model. Satan doesn’t care which side of the horse we fall, as long as he unseats us. One danger is found in use of the word “platform” because it suggests that it has no value except as a place from which to proclaim the message. The miracles Peter performed in Acts accompanied the proclamation of the Gospel, but they were not merely a trick to get the crowd’s attention for the real message: they were in themselves a gospel demonstration of how God’s power can, and will, put right the devastation that sin and the forces of hell have unleashed on His creation. Similarly, when a Christian doctor gives up a lucrative practice and a comfortable lifestyle to live and work in very difficult conditions and saves a mother and baby in a life-threatening childbirth or removes a burst appendix, God is glorified in spiritual realms and Satan is defeated. A person created in God’s image, and for whom Christ died, has had the horrible effects of the curse reversed in his or her body because God moved in a doctor’s heart to sacrificially follow His call to Africa, and this is God’s grace being dispensed into that patient’s life. We must also be careful that the clear gospel message is shared with patients, but this “platform” is in itself much more than just a platform for the “real message”: it is an essential part of the message. It is the demonstration of the Gospel.

Creative access

In this “platforms” discussion, it is vital to consider that there are few places in the world that will welcome a worker who wishes to live there solely to proclaim the Gospel.

And so, in many regions of the world we see new platforms added to those previously mentioned. Two prominent ones are teaching English as a Second Language (ESL) and Business as Mission (BAM). These provide legitimate reasons for workers to be in countries to which the Lord has called them, the key word being “legitimate.” There have been workers who took or created work simply as a way to stay in a country, what some have called “job-faking.” There may be a place for this, but others have gone into countries and taken or created meaningful employment which has multiple benefits. First, “job-taking” legitimizes their presence and gives them credibility with those they are trying to reach. Instead of being seen as “that person who doesn’t do any work or have a job but somehow has much more money than we do,” they are viewed as hard-working contributors to the community. Second, as we see changes in the support base back home, they are able to partially fund their service for the Lord, as Paul regularly did, so as

to not be a burden on the Lord’s people. This is a welcomed trend to those who seek to emulate a New Testament model of missions, and yet there are some who insist that “real missionaries” only live by faith and should not earn money. Third, secular employment creates a very natural environment for making contact with many people and developing genuine relationships in which Christ may be shared. In many closed countries and cultures this can be much more effective than trying to begin a relationship by proclaiming the Gospel.

Some workers, called to engage in legitimate work while they reach people with the Gospel, possess entrepreneurial and managerial skills. This opens the possibility of starting a “business as mission” venture. “Job-making” often opens even more possibilities than “job-taking” because many countries which will not allow people to come in and take a national’s job will welcome them to come in and create employment.

BAM also makes a legitimate contribution to the community and is a general demonstration of the Gospel by meeting the need for employment and by sustaining homes and families. It also is a specific demonstration of the Gospel as these businesses operate in countries where corruption is the norm, working conditions are poor, and workers are not treated with justice and dignity. The ethos by which these businesses operate displays God’s justice, goodness and grace and shines as lights in the sinister world of business and politics that is typically the norm in these countries.

Strategic thinking for challenging environments

In many cases, as businesses grow, the mission worker becomes respected by the workers, communities and even government, who witness a daily demonstration of a better way to live and operate. Some businesses in strict Muslim countries have reached a level of acceptance that has enabled them to put gospel texts around the workplace and hold daily devotions for workers at which the Gospel is preached. Some have not been able to be that open but have been able to share Christ informally and personally in the workplace.

I have heard people deliberate whether or not it would be safe enough to visit Paris in light of the recent attacks. It is good to remember that where many BAM workers operate is in the heart of Muslim countries and cultures. We must be careful not to suggest they should proclaim the Gospel more and demonstrate it less. It is very easy as a Christian to get kicked out of these countries, or to get thrown in jail, or even killed. And it is even easier to just stay home. But it is a very difficult challenge to find a way to effectively stay for a long

period, to build trust and relationships over time, to be able to consistently demonstrate the Gospel, and then to seek opportunities in that context to share the clear gospel message. Business as Mission, provides one way to do just that.

Missionaries will look different in the coming years from the traditional stereotype. They may travel back and forth between the field and home more often; they may move from place to place or through different countries. They may take jobs or make jobs, they may teach English, work with special needs children, teach farming methods or furniture building, or create

an internet café in a village that has never had online access. The perfect combination of demonstration and proclamation will look different in every situation and will be achieved in the life of the worker who is attentive to God's call, the Holy Spirit's leading, the needs of the people they serve and the realities of the environment in which they work. May they also hear our voices of encouragement and know that the Lord's people are supporting them in their ventures for Christ. ■

Phil Barnes, MSC Canada Executive Director

Business as Mission in Action

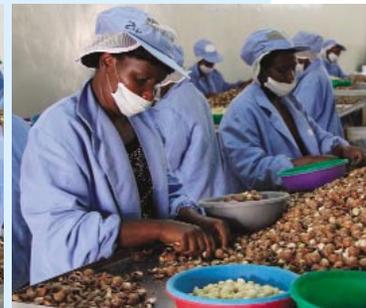
Allan & Caulene Bussard based in Slovakia

The Bussards (*Missionary Prayer Handbook* Day 17) have developed many businesses in several countries including quick lube centers, fair trade macadamia operations in Kenya, and fair trade specialty coffee operations in Ethiopia, and other ventures.

The Oil Partner quick lube shops provide structured, team-based work in a Christian environment ideal for those coming out of rehab and recovering from addictions. Workers are paired with Christian mentors who help them outside the work environment with life skills and who share Christ with them through that mentoring relationship.



The macadamia operations in Africa counteract the exploitation of growers by corporations, while providing employment in a Christian environment through the processing, roasting and packing operations. They operate one factory in Nairobi and a second near Mombasa, which together employ approximately 550 women from low-income neighborhoods. This operation provides half of all the nuts used in Subway's white chocolate macadamia nut cookies.



Coffee is obtained in partnership with growers in Africa through fair trade practices, and green coffee beans are shipped to Slovakia where employment is created in custom roasting and packaging high-end specialty coffee, which is used in fine restaurants and cafés.



TANZANIA

The Island of Peace

BY PHILIP C. PARSONS

Tanzania has been termed an “island of peace” nestled among troubled bordering nations. More than one million refugees have fled neighboring countries but now call Tanzania home. Tanganyika and Zanzibar, whose British rule ended in 1961 and 1963 respectively, united in 1964 to become what is known today as this United Republic of Tanzania. This poor east African country’s average daily income per capita is less than \$1.50. Livelihood is dependent upon an agriculturally based subsistence where cotton and coffee are commodities providing income for a population of almost 55 million people. Nearly 45 percent of the population are children 15 years and younger, providing ample opportunities for ministry to children. The spread of AIDS has orphaned more than a million children.

Islam, which predates Christianity in Tanzania, is the second major religious group (38 percent of the population). From childhood, millions have been hardened to the Good News about the crucifixion and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ. Although Christians make up the largest religious group (45 percent of population), church attendance is remarkably low. Contributing to this phenomenon is a lack of biblical knowledge. Tanzanian Church leadership holds the conviction that as Christians are discipled it will help shape the next generation to positively impact the country.



A Visit with
Harry and Ruth
Johnson

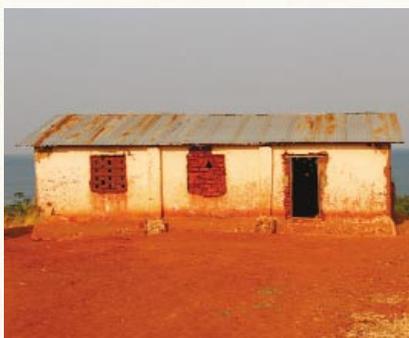


Harry and Ruth Johnson (*Missionary Prayer Handbook* Day 4) work relentlessly to help shape Tanzania’s next generation. Harry, an MK and son of Carl and Eleanor Johnson, began his missionary service following a time of teaching high school in the Burundi highlands. He married Ruth Nelson, also an MK, in 1976 and soon after was commended to the work of the Lord in Africa. By 1979 Harry and Ruth were helping Christian primary schools and conducting Bible studies among 20 assemblies in Burundi. They also had a hand in beginning a school for deaf children. Since 1996 Harry and Ruth have served in Kigoma, a town in western Tanzania, on the eastern shore of Lake Tanganyika and close to the border with Burundi. Yielding to a long-cultivated dream, Harry and son Luke (MPH Day 4) began an ambitious project to build a wooden sailboat to take the Gospel to isolated settlements along the coast of Lake Tanganyika. The dream became a reality in 2011 and by 2012 their sailboat, Wings of the Morning, was carrying the Gospel to remote villages where many had never heard it clearly presented. (Additional information on this ministry may be found in the December 2011 *Missions* magazine online at www.CMML.us/magazine/archive.) Harry and Ruth are actively engaged in assembly Bible studies, literature distribution, and ministries among children. When visiting isolated villages along Lake Tanganyika, they show evangelistic films, distribute gospel literature and provide medical assistance. During our visit, the vessel was in dry dock undergoing badly needed refurbishing. Soon, it will be launched and the Wings of the Morning will once again bring Good News to those living on the shore.



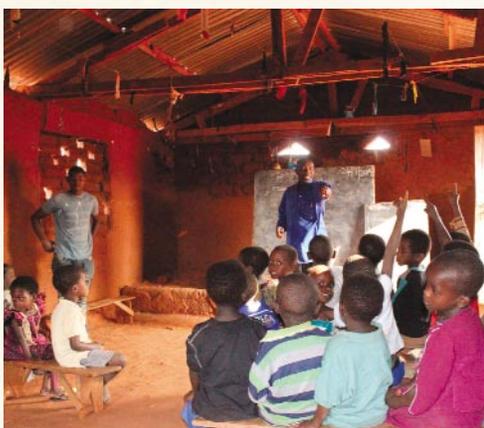
Top: Typical street scene; Mary Parsons with a new friend. **Middle (L-R then down):** Harry and Ruth Johnson; Wings of the Morning; Midweek Bible study; Local assembly building; Kindergarten students.

A Visit with Luke and Gina Johnson and Family



Harry and Ruth are ably assisted in the work by Luke and Gina Johnson. Luke, the second son of Harry and Ruth Johnson, is married to Gina, an MK from Bolivia. She is the daughter of Mark and Carol Mattix (MPH Day 22). They are engaged in ministries that develop and enrich the spiritual lives of nationals in the 20 or more assemblies they work with in and around Kigoma. Commended in 2008, Luke was invited to teach at the Berea Bible College in northern Tanzania. It is a training institute started by assembly missionaries from the UK. This experience helped Luke form a vision to begin a Bible training center in Kigoma. He wanted to provide a quality Bible education for nationals who could not meet the expenses of larger, well-established Bible schools. In March 2014, "Disciples of Jesus," a Bible training center meeting at the assembly, began with the help of two national brothers, Japhet and Peter. Recently, land was purchased with the anticipation that Disciples of Jesus will grow and a building on the property will one day be the training center's new home.

Luke and Gina also help with a kindergarten outreach that was started by Harry and Ruth Johnson. We spent one morning visiting the kindergarten located about 90 minutes from their home. Because it was a Muslim holiday, nearly half of the 60-student class remained at home, but the other half was enthusiastically engaged in learning using repetition and memory as learning strategies. The kindergarten meets in the assembly, a mud brick structure. The classroom featured small wooden benches and a simple well-used blackboard. Later that morning, we surveyed an adjacent property where the leaders hope to erect a new assembly building so the kindergarten can remain where it is. Construction has begun but progress has been slow. Only as funds become available can the project move forward. The handmade mud bricks are strategically stacked to air dry before "firing" the bricks in a kiln. After the walls are built, the structure is covered with galvanized iron sheets giving protection from the sun and rain.



Pray for Tanzania

Developing the recently purchased property for the Bible training center has stalled due to finalizing paperwork. Pray that the local government will work diligently and move the paperwork along. Pray for Harry as he prepares each day for adult Bible studies and for Ruth as she prepares for the women and children ministries. Pray for Gina as she cares for her young family while supporting Luke in the discipleship course and other assembly ministries. Pray for the many local national assemblies. They may be poor but they are keen to see their country come to know the Lord Jesus Christ and live for Him! ■

Philip C. Parsons, CMML Assembly Relations and Missionary Care

Top (L-R then down): Luke and Gina Johnson and family; Assembly building where kindergarten meets; Luke Johnson and fellow teacher preparing for final exam; Luke with Japhet and Peter, national brothers who helped start the discipleship school; Property purchased for eventual building of the new discipleship school facilities; Kindergarten student families.
Bottom: Kindergarten students.