

September 2011

CHRISTIAN
Missions
IN MANY LANDS INC.



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Thinking It Through

T.J. MARINELLO

Faithful

As the Apostle Paul neared the end of his life, he wrote a final letter with a very personal touch to it, a letter to Timothy, his “true child in the faith.” (1 Tim 1:2)¹ While the reader sees the tender affection with which Paul addresses his younger co-worker, the reader also senses Paul’s singular focus on an important task. This task is so important that he mentions it several times throughout both 1 and 2 Timothy. A dynamic summary, however, is found in 2 Timothy 2:2, “And what you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses entrust to faithful men who will be able to teach others also.” Sensing that he soon would be with the Lord, Paul impresses upon Timothy once again the need to teach others what he had been taught by the Apostle. Several vital lessons for us are packed into these few words.


First, the apostle records that he has been faithful to teach the truths of the Bible, repeatedly and publically. This gospel that he received as a revelation from Jesus Christ (Gal. 1:11-12) and all that it entailed had been faithfully and fully explicated and propounded. In fact, so complete was his work that Paul could say of himself, “I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith.” (2 Tim 4:7) Question: are we committed to the full and faithful proclamation of the Word of God? Do we take the time and concerted effort to delve into the bottomless depths of God’s written revelation to us, mastering what we can, so that we then can accurately expound it? Whether our place of exposition is the home or the pulpit; whether we teach hundreds or a handful; whether we are speaking to family and friends or members of a local church; when we speak about the message of the Bible is it indeed God’s message or might it be more our own unexamined ideas and thin reflections? Paul’s teaching was such that he could say that he had kept the faith; he had contended for “the faith that was once delivered to the saints.” (Jude 3) The Apostle noted that this teaching comprised “sound words” and is a “good deposit entrusted to you.” (2 Tim 1:13-14) Can we say the same about our teaching?

Secondly, the apostle challenged Timothy to pass on this priceless message to other faithful ones. Paul wanted Timothy to transmit this message to those who are trustworthy! This was not the continuation of an *apostolic office*, but both the faithful continuation and geographic expansion of an *apostolic witness*.² Timothy was to look for men who would ensure the integrity of the gospel message. He was not told to hand over control to those who would be part of an institutional structure, but to find men of good character.³ Question: are we on the lookout for those to whom we can entrust the teaching of the gospel and all that it entails? Do

we set aside time to invest in particular people with the thought of their fidelity to the gospel message?

Thirdly, Paul not only had a concern for the present time, the time of his writing to Timothy, but he had a concern for the expansion and continuation of the witness in the future. Accordingly, the apostle wanted Timothy to pass-on the message not just to any of the faithful; he gives Timothy a command to entrust this precious message to those who have the ability to teach others as

well. Question: as we choose those to whom we will entrust the message, are we making certain these ones can communicate the message to others? Without its continual, faithful propagation, the message of the gospel – the truths of God’s Word – become a distant memory or a pale imitation.

Faithful to the message; faithful listeners; faithful propagators of this message. May we be part of this most central of tasks. 

**“I have fought
the good fight,
I have finished
the race, I have
kept the faith.”**

2 Timothy 4:7

¹ Scripture quotations are from *The Holy Bible, English Standard Version®* (ESV®), copyright © 2001 by Crossway, a publishing ministry of Good News Publishers. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

² I. Howard Marshall, *The Pastoral Epistles*, International Critical Commentary (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1999), 726-727.

³ William D. Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, vol. 46 of *Word Biblical Commentary* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2000), 504.

CHURCH

and

MISSIONS

GO TOGETHER

by Mark Mattix

One of the modules we teach in the Facultad Bíblica in Camiri, Bolivia where we are missionaries is “church/missions.” We refuse to separate the two. Every normal, healthy church is a missionary church. And conversely, every missionary is connected to a sending church and is involved in planting and growing churches. According to the inspired history, that is the dynamo God designed for reaching the world. Barnabas and Saul were chosen and sent by the Holy Spirit and the church in Antioch recognized and released them, (Acts 13:2-3). They established churches with elders when “they returned to Lystra, Iconium and Antioch,” (Acts. 14:21). Again, Paul and Silas were “commended by the brothers to the grace of the Lord,” (Acts 15:40). Then “the brothers at Lystra and Iconium spoke well of” Timothy (Acts 16:2) and he went with Paul as an apprentice missionary. There are lots of other methods out there today but this is our vision and ideal: churches send out missionaries who plant churches who send out missionaries, on and on, to the end of the world and until Christ comes to take his church to be with Him in glory. *This is our way of doing missions.*

Over the years a number of missionaries from Missions (with a capital M) here in Bolivia have asked us (missionaries commended from brethren assemblies) how “we do missions.” It’s surprising how many envy this way of operating and sincerely marvel at the demonstration of simple New Testament principles in action. Several, as a result, have actually parted ways with their Missions, returned to North America, and then come back to the field commended to the grace of God by their home churches, looking to the Lord alone for support and

placing themselves under the immediate guidance of the Holy Spirit to do God’s work. The way we do missions is affecting the evangelical world.

Starting with the Trains...

Gene and Loraine Train arrived in Bolivia in 1952 to help certain EUSA (Evangelical Union of South America) missionaries. They were never accepted for membership in the mission but the Lord lead them to do gospel outreach by horseback, then start a local assembly in Camiri, and in 1956 to found the Christian School. I guess you would say they were independents back then.

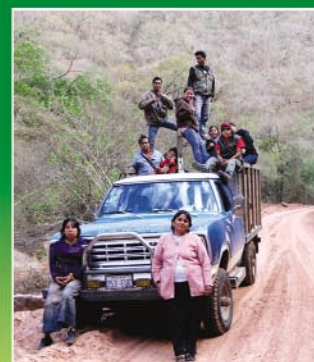
Gene had studied at Wheaton Bible College and then at Dallas Seminary. Loraine studied at Seattle Pacific College to be a teacher. Gene was pastoring a church in Seattle when he became friends with Sumner Osborne. They discussed church truth and Gene was intrigued because at seminary it had been an area of special interest for him. He lamented that the simple New Testament model had been replaced with human machinery of denominations, titles, missions and all that, but accepted it as a necessity of modern life. Sumner insisted that the simple model still works and invited him to visit an assembly that was meeting in a store front in downtown Seattle. Gene was convinced, especially with the breaking of bread; so much so that he didn’t renew his contract



Village kids' club in streambed.



Eli and Raquel's wedding – Bible school students from 2007 and 2008 who are now serving the Lord in San Juan.



The farm's do-everything truck gets us there.

with the church and he ended up on the streets selling encyclopedias door-to-door.

The Lord blessed the Trains' labors in Camiri; the school was a booming success and the assembly grew as well. They met assembly missionaries from Australia—Ned and Flora Meharg—in Villamontes, Bolivia, a few hours south towards Argentina. The two churches began to host alternate conferences during Easter and in September and began to support one another. The Trains then came in contact with Frank and Blanquita Haggerty (*Missionary Prayer Handbook Day 21*) and discovered a kindred spirit. Frank was a self-taught man, with little formal schooling and no Bible training outside of the "meetings." But Gene respected him for his great gift. Conversely, Frank often declared Gene to be the best theologian among all the missionaries in Bolivia—there was healthy mutual respect between Frank and Gene. Sumner and June Osborne had returned from missionary service in Belgium and Hong Kong and were meeting at Northgate Bible Chapel. Through Frank's intercession Gene and Loraine were reintroduced to the Brethren in Seattle, WA and on his recommendation they received commendation in 1968. The Trains had served the Lord in Bolivia for 18 years but at that point they ceased being independents. They had identified themselves with the Brethren in Bolivia but it was an added blessing to receive commendation and the spiritual backing of a home church.

My Experience

I met Frank Haggerty at a missionary meeting at Des Moines Gospel Chapel, (Des Moines, WA) when I was 15-years-old. We began to correspond and the Haggertys invited me to come and visit them in Bolivia. I studied Spanish in high school with a clear intention of visiting South America. While at Emmaus Bible College in Oak Park, I fellowshiped at the Avondale meeting in order to practice Spanish.

When Dr. Harlow was visiting I took the opportunity to

ask him about training for missionary work. He started to give me his standard reply, something about getting all the training you can. But he suddenly stopped; then he started again. Maybe he knew something about my background and my folks' experience in Alaska. I think I already had told him I was planning on visiting the Haggertys. Then Dr. Harlow very deliberately said to me that the time is short and we need to be up and be doing the Lord's work getting out the gospel.

That was quite a few years ago in 1969. The time is short and we can confidently assert that the end is closer now than when we believed. Certainly closer than when I set out for Bolivia for that first visit 42 years ago. I know the Lord leads different people different ways [in their education] but I am thankful for the experience I had, first with Frank Haggerty and then for many years yoked with Gene Train. It was an apprenticeship I wouldn't trade for any degree in missiology.

There are Missions specialized in leadership training, in reaching tribes, in translating Scriptures, in reaching university students, in reaching prisoners, in relief projects, in community development projects and in many other areas. Lots of specialization! But praise the Lord that assembly missionaries have been doing all these things for a long time. They have been doing these things in connection with healthy local churches! Working within the New Testament model renders results that are more integrated and sustainable.

What Goes on in Camiri

I helped Eugene and Loraine Train (*Missionary Prayer Handbook Day 21*) in the Christian school for over 30 years. That work continues—now for over 55 years—with dedicated nationals and also someone like Andrés Segovia. Andrés is a very special case being a Mexican who graduated from

Emmaus Bible College as a school teacher and then received commendation by an assembly there in Dubuque, IA. Besides teaching in the school, Andrés ministers the Word regularly in the local church and he is continually discipling young fellows in his home. Also, Gabriel and Kari Meiers, (*Missionary Prayer Handbook Day 30*), both Emmaus-trained educators, have been involved and we are hoping they will see their way clear to come back to Bolivia permanently.

Another important aspect of Gene and Loraine Train's ministry was outreach to every possible corner of this part of Bolivia, on horseback and later by Jeep.



Children hearing the Good News for the first time.



Camp dining hall and Bible school classroom.



Some of these adolescents received Christ that day.



Bible School students use their gifts in the country.



Day outing with the Bible school students.

Even today we can hardly find a place where Gene didn't take the gospel before us at one time or another during his long missionary career.

At this point in time, Gene is over 90-years-old. He suffers from impairment in his hearing, his mobility and his mind, so he rarely leaves the house anymore. Loraine is also affected in her hearing and her mind but she is happy to do what she can to take care of Gene. We owe them a lot and the local Christians count it a privilege to look in on them and to have them physically present still.

We learned from them; from their Bible teaching and from their example in village work. And so did the believers here. The Camiri assembly is constantly deploying teams to minister at rural Bible conferences or do gospel outreach in towns, villages and ranches. There is hardly a week that goes by without one or two or even three different groups on the road. The local church supports two full-time families in the Lord's work: one in the Andean valleys to the west of here and the other in the big cattle country, thorn bush prairies, to the southeast.


Our principle involvement now is in the Facultad Bíblica Camiri (www.fbcamiri.org). This is a one-year Bible study and discipleship program now in its 10th year. It is a satisfaction to serve young people from all corners of Bolivia and also from neighboring countries. The low cost of living here makes it affordable for students from Argentina and Brazil. So far we haven't pursued accreditation; we aren't even registered with the Ministry of Education. But our graduates are serving the Lord on college campuses, in local churches and in new works. Some are even teaching "religion" in schools on the merit of their Facultad Bíblica diploma! Most of those who come are fresh out of high school but there are always some with college training, some in the middle of college, and some older.

The Model Works

Just last week I had the privilege of taking a young couple to their place of service among tribal Guaranies. Rodrigo

Venuti came to Bolivia from Brazil to study in the Bible school in Camiri. Here he met Mabel, from Cochabamba. They were married at the end of the year and then enrolled in New Tribes Mission's cross-cultural training course. Now they have been commended by Rodrigo's home assembly in Matogrosso, Brazil and have gone to build a house in a village beyond the end of the road. For the present they will be living with Félix and Zoila Avendaño in the last, lonely, one-horse town of Igüembe. Félix and Zoila were commended from a rural, Guaraní-speaking assembly, fruit of Gene and Loraine Trains' outreach.

Another couple who took the Bible school training, Elí and Raquel Antelo, have gone to live in a remote canyon where he has taken contract to manage a ranch. Nearby is a town where drunkenness is rife. They chose to go live there for the sake of the gospel. There are a number of others who have gone out from Camiri who are serving the Lord in the country, in the cities, inside and outside of Bolivia.

So, the work the early missionaries did has been well established. We came to help in the early '70's. Later we developed Christian camping and in 2002 started the Bible school. Now there is a great variety of ministries in connection with this local assembly, including the Christian School and a wide radius of outreach in different stages of growth. Workers have gone out and have planted churches and some of those churches now have their own outreaches. Camiri has become a center for training people from all over the country and even neighboring countries. Here our Bible school students are exposed to a healthy assembly and a contagious missionary vision. Maybe not every church can be an Antioch or a Camiri but I think this is the way it's supposed to work. This is *our way of doing missions*. 



Mark & Carol Mattix were commended to the Lord's work in Bolivia in 1973 by Hope Bible Fellowship in Seattle, Washington.

Modern Missionary Pioneers in Papua New Guinea

by Dan Anderson



The exciting story of Brethren work in Papua New Guinea (PNG) began in 1951-1952 with the arrival of assembly-commended missionaries from Australia, the U.S. and New Zealand. Among these first pioneers were Gerald and Betty Wunsch of Grand Rapids, Michigan. The first Brethren missionaries decided to work together, forming a mission body, CMML,* in 1953. Out of that beginning more than 400 local assemblies have sprung up. Much of what has been written over the years tells the story of missionaries to PNG from other countries. But there is another side of the story. Papua New Guinea pioneers themselves have taken up the challenge of carrying forward the mission of God in the largest island nation in the South Pacific, and God is producing lasting results through their efforts.

This is a story involving thousands of fearless and faithful Christian men and women. While most church planting has been in rural areas, pioneer workers are establishing churches in towns and cities in PNG too. In this article we sample just two of these mission pioneers that we have had the privilege to know and partner with in the Sepik and Highlands regions of the country. They illustrate a few of the varied dimensions of the challenge of modern missionary work in this country of over six million people. Many other workers' stories remain to be told.

Suren and Yipoki Nungunedi Bible Teachers

Suren was born in 1945 as World War II came to an end. His mountain village, Marakumba, nestles in a deep valley of the Torricelli ranges, far to the north of the mighty Sepik River. No Protestant missionary had ever set foot there, although German Roman Catholic missionaries had been based in Aitape on the coast for some 50 years. But Aitape was more than 30 miles of mountainous jungle track to the northwest of Suren's village. Poken, Suren's father, died before he was born. His mother Wangumei then married



Nungunedi, who adopted Suren. Sadly, when Suren was about 11, Wangumei died and he was cared for by his maternal grandmother, Alken. Not a year later, 12-year-old Suren left his home and took the three-day walk to Sissano Catholic Mission where he enrolled in the school. He stayed there for three years.

"I was a lonely, near-naked lad away from home," Suren said. "I had a strip of mosquito netting for a loin cloth, in which I worked, sat and slept. I owned nothing and had no one to look after me. In 1960 the door opened for missionaries from New Zealand to come and to live in my village. They started church services, a school and a clinic. Their first message was about the love of God, from John 3:16. The message of God's love and the need to believe in Him to have eternal life shot straight to my heart. I gave my life to God on March 6, 1962."

In 1965, one week after Suren married Yipoki, he asked her if she was willing to go to Bible School with him. She agreed but, as it turned out, Suren went to the Christian Leaders' Training College (CLTC) first in 1967 and Yipoki joined him a year later. They graduated in 1970.

Almost immediately Suren took up the challenge of missions by accepting the responsibility of ministry to the Yuna people, replacing pioneer missionaries at Kelabo in the Southern Highlands. Climate, language and culture were all

so different for Suren and his family, being Sepiks. They were cultural aliens to the vigorous and more war-like highland tribes, but they felt the call of God and ministered effectively for four years.

In 1975, Suren again heard God's call to return to the Sepik and help staff Yimbrasi Bible School, a ministry of training young men and women in Bible teaching and practical church leadership. During Suren and Yipoki's years at Yimbrasi, Janet and I worked together with them in leadership of the Bible School. Later Suren and his family moved again, to Wewak, and became involved in urban pastoral ministry, first at the evangelical Wewak Christian Fellowship, and later at the fledgling Brethren fellowship at Yawasoro, five miles out of town.

Now in retirement, Suren has a vision to strengthen the next generation of leaders and youth to ensure that God's work continues after he has gone on. In 2008, he revisited the Southern Highlands churches where he was the first Brethren national missionary. He conducted a pastors' course and visited churches, encouraging elders and sharing God's Word. A couple of years ago, Suren and I shared in the teaching of a course in pastoral ministry for church leaders from assemblies in his own area.

Monica Ibanda
Bible School Principal



One of those next generation leaders in the Southern Highlands Province that we have the privilege of knowing and partnering with over the past several years is Monica. Monica is a daughter of Ibanda and his wife Yae. Ibanda was one of the first men to go to Bible school and study in the Huli language from his home area in the Koroba valley. Ibanda became a full-time pastoral worker in several of the 27 Brethren churches in the area, but today is an elder at his home assembly, Ada.

Monica suffered an attack of polio as a child and, while she survived, she grew up with a walking impediment. However, this did not daunt her and she completed elementary school in 1985. Because her parents could not afford the boarding fees at Koroba High School, Monica walked several miles every day to attend. "Going back and forth to school was not easy for me and I did not do well in my school examinations," she said.

"When I completed grade 10 in 1989, the Lord challenged me to follow Him," Monica said. "I was baptized on December 24, 1989. For the next four years I helped my home church at Guala with their Sunday school program and pre-school for small children. The women's fellowship asked me to help them as their secretary too."

"In July 1994 we had the first Christian Brethren Women's Convention at Anguganak in the Sepik. A lecturer from CLTC came as guest speaker and spoke on *Women Arise!* She challenged us about knowing God before serving Him. At that moment I prayed, 'Lord, I want to serve You, but where will I go to know more of Yourself?' After the convention was over and I returned home, my heart was still praying about knowing God. Then, in January 1995, we received application forms from Hanna Baea, a German missionary serving at Anguganak Women's Bible School, inviting any interested single ladies to come and study there. My friend Evelyn Alendo and I were accepted and we were the first highlands girls to go to the Sepik to Bible School. We knew it was a call from the Lord."

"For two six-month sessions (July-December 1995-1996) we went to Bible school at Anguganak, returning to Koroba for our ministries in Sunday school, religious instruction in schools and Women's Fellowship. The Lord had a plan for both of us to go to CLTC, where we studied for the next four years (1998-2001) for a diploma in Theology, including a year of internship. The Lord has been good to me and I praise Him for His leading."

After graduating from CLTC, Monica returned to Anguganak, joining the staff of the Women's Bible School. However, she realized that many young women from the highlands could not go to Anguganak because of the high cost of airfares every six months. So, in 2004, the church leaders asked Monica to return to the highlands to start a Highlands Women's Bible School at Arou. Arou is in a different language area (Yuna) from Monica's own *tok ples* (language) of Huli, so there were new challenges for her. Monica was invited to be the principal, but, in addition, the elders asked her to coordinate Sunday school work in the 11 local assemblies and assist in Theological Education by extension studies.

Because of the remoteness of these highlands valleys, Monica walks everywhere. She is frequently asked to be a speaker at youth conferences and women's meetings. In



PAPUA NEW GUINEA

January 2008 she was one of the speakers at a Highlands youth conference at Guala, two days walking from Arou. Later she walked over the mountains for Sunday school training at Auwi, another highlands Brethren center.

Christian leadership as a single woman in a male-dominated society is not easy for Monica. She gets discouraged by opposition and criticism from others. Sometimes, leaders seem to have no vision or plan for the work to grow. Costs are high and she really has to trust God for daily and ministry needs. Physically, too, the challenge is great.

She writes, "To see young people and small children knowing Christ and walking with Him is a joy to me. Seeing the graduates from the Highlands Women's Bible School serving the Lord makes me even more happy, for I know that my work has not been wasted. Some new seeds are growing up."

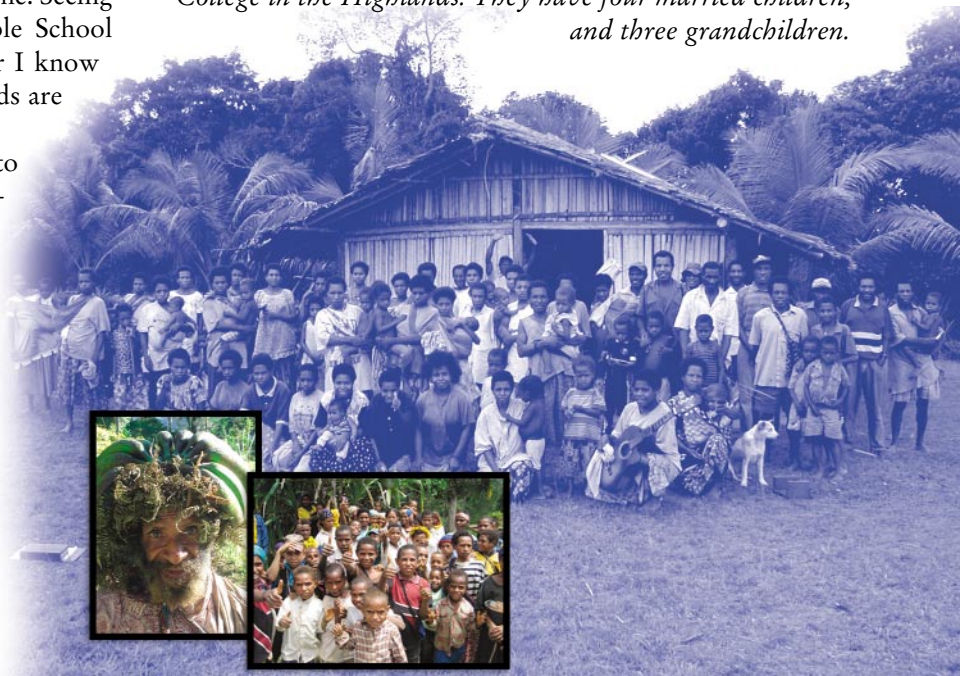
Recently, we were in the Southern Highlands to teach several courses including one for church leaders on the topic of mentoring. Monica attended that course and afterwards, shared with us the challenge that she received to focus on the training of young women who will be able to take over her responsibilities of leadership in the years to come.

*In more recent years the work was handed over to Papua New Guinean Christian leaders who formed the Christian Brethren Churches of

Papua New Guinea, Inc. Overseas Brethren missionaries now work under this umbrella. E-mail: cbcpng@online.net.pg 🐾



Dan and Janet Anderson were commended by Emmaus Bible Chapel, St. Louis, Missouri in 1980 to serve in Papua New Guinea. They were involved in evangelism, discipling, and leadership training in the lowlands of Papua New Guinea until 2005. They are currently teaching and mentoring students at Christian Leaders' Training College in the Highlands. They have four married children, and three grandchildren.



Page 6: (background) Highlands baptism; **(foreground, L-R)** A Papua New Guinea child; Bible School girls in front of dormitory; A Highlands chapel; Highlands men at a funeral. **Page 7:** Elderly lady. **Page 8: (background)** Students in front of a Sepik Bible School classroom; **(foreground, L-R)** Highlands elder; Papua New Guinea children; Girls Bible School students, graduates and Highlands ladies.

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Home with the Lord

Phyllis Madelaine Dibble

April 17, 1924 – June 19, 2011 • Missionary to Nigeria

Condensing the life of a busy lady to one page is almost impossible, but hopefully this will help some who prayed for my parents for years to see some of the work she was involved in.

My mother was born in Sherbrooke, Quebec. At 14, she accepted the Lord as her Savior largely through the teaching of David and Eleanor Long.

After high school, mum trained as a nurse, knowing that the Lord might one day call her to the mission field. She met Spencer Dibble one summer when they both worked at camp. An interest was sparked, and she went to Toronto where he was a third-year student at Emmaus Bible School and she took the first year studies. Dad had grown up on the mission field in Nigeria and felt the Lord calling him back. When he proposed to mum, he made it very clear that the life they shared would not be easy, but they would joyfully serve the Lord together. Married in 1950, they were commended from several assemblies in the Buffalo area and one in Quebec. In 1955, with three small children, they sailed to Nigeria.

One of the first things mum did was learn the Igala language by walking to the village daily, where the women and children were happy to teach her. When she mastered Igala well enough, she taught Sunday school classes, took ladies' meetings and taught sewing classes.

My mother always said the Lord had called her as a wife, a mother and a missionary and she joyfully embraced these responsibilities. As a wife, she was a great support and help to dad. Most weekends dad would travel to the surrounding villages to preach and to encourage the believers. Often mum would pack up everything needed (camp cots, mosquito nets, drinking water, toilet paper, etc.) and we would all live in the village while dad preached. Once we asked dad if he could think of anything negative about mum, he said, "Well she refused to hold live chickens that were given to her, and she did get me out of bed awfully early!"

As a mother of four, mum made her children feel important to her. She encouraged our interests, whether it was sewing, preserving dead snakes, playing soccer or delivering

babies at the maternity hospital at 12-years-old. She also homeschooled us the years there were no missionaries on the station to do it. Years later she supervised her grandchildren's schooling when the Wheelers (*Tom & Lois, Missionary Prayer Handbook Day 3*) joined them. We remember with gratefulness that our parents stuck to their convictions that we were theirs to raise and they did not give in to our pleas to send us to boarding school! They were united and consistent in their devotion to God and their family. Not only was she our mother, but as "Iye" (mother in Igala), her love and encouragement was shared with thousands of believers.

As a missionary, mum was active in many areas. In the beginning, as a nurse, she worked a lot in the O.R. and in the local clinics, and every other Saturday she would dispense medicine at a leper clinic. As she got busier in other areas, she phased herself out of the medical work, but the Bible school students always knew they could come to her kitchen window with their aches and pains and she would treat them from home. At Bible school she taught subjects like hygiene, map reading, handwriting, arithmetic and grammar in Igala. Recognizing problems in the Christians' homes, mum initiated a yearly ladies' conference using the course "The Woman Who Pleases God" as a basis for studying. Those conferences continue still with other gifted teachers. When boys' and girls' camps started, mum was always busy with the organizing and sharing ideas/supplies for crafts and games. Although she was slowing down, it was only last year that she gave up recording Bible school students' marks. She continued to mark Bible courses and issue the certificates. Mum's gift of hospitality was evident in the large number of people who constantly came to share problems, ask advice or simply visit. She also saw the value of literature and kept a stock of books and tracts in her house for selling and distribution.

Mum will be missed greatly by dad, her four children, their spouses, 16 grandchildren and four great grandchildren but we are thankful for the example she set for us of a life wholly lived for her Lord. 🌸

Susan Crowe (Dibble)

Photo: Sunday school seminar in Nigeria (2010)



OPEN DOORS FOR THE GOSPEL IN PARAGUAY

by Dawn Monzon

We recently heard a saying: “Every heart without Christ is a mission field, and every heart with Christ is a missionary.” It got us to thinking of the fact that we all come into contact with people every day. Are we attune to which kind of heart they have? Are we sensitive enough to the Holy Spirit to notice doors that He opens for us to share the gospel? Christ commands us in Matthew 28:19-20: “Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.” The command is “go;” it doesn’t specify a time nor a place. When God called us to minister here in Paraguay (for Dawn 21 years ago, and for Juan over 22 years ago), we never imagined the unique opportunities that God would open in unexpected places for us to share of His love and to encourage fellow believers in various occupations to stand firm.

Paraguay is still a predominately Catholic country. However, with the economic and political unrest, many are looking for real answers and peace that they have not found in “religion.” Drugs, alcohol and promiscuity are big problems here now as well. In fact, research here shows that more alcohol is consumed per day than milk. One of the unexpected places that God has opened up is in the public schools here. In fact, we have had schools call us! In addition, school directors call their friends who are directors at other schools

to tell them about our presentation. We have

complete freedom to clearly share the gospel, which we present as the only answer to the issues facing youth today. We have had several instances where we have been able to talk to some of the students afterwards, and their stories verify the struggles they face and questions they have. They have prayed with us to receive Christ and thanked us for caring enough to come and share.

Recently, Juan traveled to a town 100 km away. The mayor’s brother is a believer, and asked us to please come. In the past six months, five students in the school there have committed suicide and several others have attempted to take their lives. Juan left at 5:30 in the morning. Schools here have three sessions: 7 a.m.-11 a.m., 1 p.m.-5 p.m., and 6 p.m.-10 p.m. At the beginning of the year, students register for the session that best fits their schedule as many work to help their family. The day started with some of the students asking Juan to pray for them. By the end of the day, 500 students had heard the gospel. Please pray for these students that they will get into the local church for discipleship and growth.

Another area that God has unexpectedly opened the doors to share the gospel is within the military. Several times we have had doors opened wide to go share the gospel in military schools and on their “bases” with cadets. Furthermore, we have been asked to go sing and share the gospel at military cadet graduations, always with several of the cadets responding.

A third unexpected place where we’ve been able to share the gospel is at the police academy. The police here are not highly respected due to corruption and several instances of police being involved in various crimes throughout Paraguay. We have been to the police academy many times to share during one of their classes as well as during their graduation ceremonies!

The most unusual location that God has opened doors to the gospel was in the room where Congress meets. Paraguay celebrated its 200th birthday in May of this year. Paraguay was the deciding vote for Israel to be recognized as a nation, and God’s blessing has been seen in

Paraguay’s history. Several evangelicals organized a time to pray for Paraguay. Pastors, missionaries and several of the top leaders were invited. Juan and the group that travels with him for campaigns were invited to be involved



through singing. It was truly an encouraging time of prayer, worship and a time where the gospel was shared.

A few months ago, a fellow brother in the Lord, who is an agriculturalist, contacted Juan. There are a few evangelical churches out where he lives, but they have become cold. He has become tired of what has become just a “religion” and desires to see a real zeal for the Lord burn bright again. He has invited us quite a few times to share the gospel using a sketch board (a visual aid to the gospel), and we have seen the Lord working in hearts and praise Him for it!

Many places that have become “common” to us now include parks, soccer fields, Indian villages and many small towns throughout Paraguay. God is the one who brings the people, whether it be a large crowd or a small handful, and each experience brings unexpected responses. In a recent campaign, the mayor of the city was present. He was one of the many hearts that God prepared to respond to the gospel.

Dawn has been working in a Christian missionary school for 15 years now. The Lord has allowed her to share and minister to missionary children as well as to students from all over the world! A few of her past students have been led by the Lord to go into education on the mission field. In addition, the Lord has opened and is opening several doors and opportunities for Dawn to impact fellow Christian teachers who teach in national and international Christian schools through speaking at conferences and teacher training seminars with the Association of Christian Schools International (ACSI).

Additionally, Dawn has also been involved in participating in the accreditation of an international Christian school in Argentina and has also been appointed to chair an accreditation team for a national Christian school here in Paraguay. She has been asked by ACSI to be a part of the first National Accreditation Commission. Any accreditations of national schools in Central and South America will go before this commission for approval. It is a blessing to see the growth of national Christian schools! Another door that God has opened for Dawn is the chance to not only reach teachers, but also parents and others that work with children. Two opportunities that are coming up are to present a workshop with parents in a Christian school a few hours outside of Asuncion, and another one with Child Evangelism Fellowship.

We praise the Lord for how He has so clearly opened the

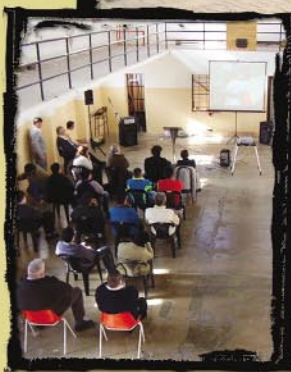
doors, for those whose hearts He has softened towards the gospel, for continued open doors in several areas, for the years He has provided and blessed, and for those who have been an active part in what God is doing here through both prayer and financial support! We pray that by sharing how God is working here that you will be encouraged to stand firm and continue to press faithfully on for His honor and glory! ☞



Dawn was commended from Believer's Assembly in Dayton, OH in 1990, and Juan in 1992 when they were married. They have been serving in Paraguay since then. They have four children.

Their oldest will be a senior in high school this year, and their youngest will be starting school.

Page 10 (clockwise from top): Soldiers hearing the gospel; Juan and his team with the mayor of a town – he accepted the Lord; Students responding to the gospel at the school where suicide has been an issue; One of many school campaigns. **Above (L-R from top):** Dawn giving a workshop at an International Christian Educator's conference in Ecuador; Sharing the gospel in a park in Argentina; An evangelistic campaign in a jail; Jr. high students at Asuncion Christian Academy for our celebration of Paraguay's Bicentennial. One of our daughters, Jessica, is in the front row, third from the left; Singing for the time of prayer where Congress meets.



Mission *From* Eastern Europe

Slovakia to East Africa



by Allan Bussard

We are missionaries to Eastern Europe....what are we doing involved with kids from African slums?

When we started working as missionaries, Central and Eastern Europe was locked in communism. Our ministry had to be clandestine, and we focussed on individual training of church youth leaders, hopefully staying under the radar of the communist secret police.

In the last 20 years, we have seen dramatic changes in our place of ministry. Slovakia, where we have lived and ministered for the last 20 years, is now a prosperous and democratic country, with a functioning market economy, a member of NATO, the EU and the Euro zone.

About six years ago, the Lord began to give us a burden to help the churches in Slovakia to build a missions program. Under the long period of oppression of the churches under communism, it was not possible for churches to engage in missions. They could not get information about foreign missions, send money, or even travel outside the country. They were focussed on their own survival.

As a result, when communism collapsed in 1989, the church had survived, but there was no missions program at all. In fact, when our church asked me to speak on missions just two years ago, I was told by some older members after the sermon that it was the first message on missions they had heard since before World War II!

For the first 15 years of our ministry in Slovakia, we were focused on a ministry of evangelism, discipleship and leadership training. But about six years ago the Lord opened a door for us to begin work in East Africa as well. Caulene accompanied me on some visits to work on different projects there, but as her burden is for children, she naturally wanted to see some projects in Kenya that worked with needy children.

In 2006 we began a sponsorship program in our church for needy children from the Nairobi slums. Slovak families are assigned a child to correspond with, and provide 20 per month to help provide food, health care, school fees and hygiene needs. More than 140 Slovak families have signed up for the program. The program is called "Malaika" which means "angel" in Swahili.

Malaika now works to provide support for more than 160 children in four programs in Kenya and Ethiopia. We work through African Christian organizations that provide the direct care for the children. They provide care and education, and also help the children come to Christ and grow in their faith. Most children are orphans or from situations where their families (often single mothers with AIDS) cannot afford to care for their child.

We are privileged to be able to travel occasionally to meet

with our African partners and the children


they care for. When Caulene travels, she spends time with the children and staff individually, helping to mentor them. At the same time, I am involved in working with the project managers on finances and strategies for development and growth.

One family from our church has "adopted" five African children, one for each of their own children. The Slovak children have decided to do without pocket money so that they can send donations to their "brothers and sisters" in Africa. This program can be life-changing for the children in Africa. Many who are sponsored are orphans or come from the street.

The mother of one girl who just joined our program died and her father abandoned the family. Connie has been cared for by her grandparents, but they could not afford to send her to school. The grandparents were planning to send her at age 12 to work as a housemaid, likely for the rest of her life. She joined our program in February, is back in school and is being provided with food, health care, clothing and a future beyond cleaning toilets for rich people!

But the Malaika program is transformational also for those Slovak families who are doing the sponsoring. Many families do it so that their children can learn to care, pray and support missions. They feel that the African children are part of their family and introduce Slovak adults, children and churches to the mission field in a personal and memorable way. These Slovak kids will grow up with an understanding of missions in a way their parents never could.

In addition to sponsorships, Slovak churches have sent several young people on short-term mission trips to work with the children's programs in Africa. These young Slovaks have returned transformed, with a heart for missions that spreads to their friends and churches.

We hope and pray that the Malaika program will help to raise up a new generation of missionaries and missions-minded churches in Slovakia. And we praise the Lord for the open door he has given us to help Slovak churches develop a missions program. You can get more information about this at www.malaika.sk. 



Allan and Caulene Bussard have worked as missionaries in Central and Eastern Europe since 1975. For the last 20 years they have lived in Bratislava, Slovakia, where they fellowship with the Brethren church. They are commended by University Chapel in Vancouver, BC.



Chile... a Land of Contrasts!

by Dennis Hanna

In the assemblies here in Los Angeles, Chile, one brother travels to Europe for his work—another brother walks behind his horse, which plows the field in front of him, while he plants one seed at a time.

One sister flies to Rome to get on a tour ship traveling to Israel for a two week holiday—another still uses an “outhouse” and has to carry water in and out of her house. She cooks her food and boils water over an open fire, and then bakes her bread in the ashes on her kitchen dirt floor.

Some Christians in the assembly here teach university students—others, which are in fellowship, have never learned how to read nor write. Los Angeles has a mall as modern as any in North America with some of the same stores and conveniences—yet the public washrooms at the cemetery provide neither soap nor towels and only newspaper instead of toilet paper.

A family traveling in a horse-drawn cart can be seen beside the newest 2011 model cars. There are more cell phones in Chile than people, yet many families do not have a car. With all these contrasts, the Lord has given us opportunities to share the gospel message with Chileans of all social brackets. “...Preach the gospel to every creature.” Mark 16:15

The Lord has used earthquakes, tsunamis, the 33 trapped miners, volcanic eruptions and accidents to speak loudly to the Chilean people during this past year. The gospel broadcast continues to be aired over a powerful radio station in Los Angeles each Lord’s Day. Last year we were encouraged to hear that one of the radio announcers professed to be saved. Also a young lady was saved during the tent

meetings in January and February. The first picture at the top shows the truck loaded and ready to go with our tent and all its equipment. The next two pictures show the outside and inside of the tent.

This year I have been asked to preach the gospel at five funerals, sometimes two or three times in the houses of the deceased, then again at the hall and again at the cemetery. We are praying that the many people that have heard the wonderful gospel message will respond to the Saviour’s call. The fourth and fifth pictures from the top were taken in the Peñaflor Hall during the funeral of a 33-year-old neighbour lady, who had professed to be saved. About 300 people were there and only seven that are in assembly fellowship, so we certainly could have used some help with the singing!

There is still work to be done on some of the houses that were damaged by the February 2010 earthquake. The families of the seven houses that have been built continue to faithfully attend all the meetings out in the country where we live (called Peñaflor). The last picture at the bottom is one of the finished houses. It has two rooms and a bathroom.

In January we were able to repair the hall in Los Angeles that was also damaged by the earthquake. Our trailer was used for all the meetings until the repairs to the hall were finished. Many thanks for all your prayers for us. ☺



Dennis and Gloria Hanna were commended to the Lord’s work in Chile in 1978 by Midland Gospel Chapel in Midland, ON.

