

Volume 61 | Issue 3

Message

A Quarterly Publication of ABWE

WALKING BY FAITH

{MEET ABWE'S NEWEST MISSIONARIES}



IN THIS ISSUE: | The-Guy-Next-to-the-Guy Principle | Is It Me You're Looking For?

EDITORIAL



Fall is a time of transition. The weather is getting cooler. The leaves are beginning to change colors. Kids are going back to school. And for 82 of our missionaries, it means entering a new chapter of their lives.

At this year's Missionary Enrichment Conference, we introduced 60 new missionaries — our largest class in six years. I was amazed to hear the powerful stories of those who are willing to leave their friends, family, and, sometimes, modern creature comforts to serve people they've never met. Many are trading successful careers as doctors, nurses, pastors, teachers and contractors to live in unfamiliar countries with unfamiliar languages. Each one has a thousand reasons why it would be easier to stay, but instead, they are bravely answering their higher calling to go.

Along with celebrating the new appointees who are looking forward to getting started, we also presented 22 missionaries with our Bomm Award, which honors those who have served with ABWE for at least 35 years. These longtime missionaries shared lessons that could only come from years of trials, and fruit that could only come from a lifetime of faithful service. They carry that wisdom with them as they move into new seasons of service.

The Missionary Enrichment Conference brought ABWE missionaries from all over the world together to honor these people and encourage each other in their ministries. It was amazing to see their camaraderie and hear about the life-changing work they do every day. As a new face at ABWE, I felt blessed to meet the people who are the heart of this organization, and I'm excited to share their stories in this issue. They are truly people who are walking by faith and not by sight. ■

Ingela Hartman | *Message Editor*

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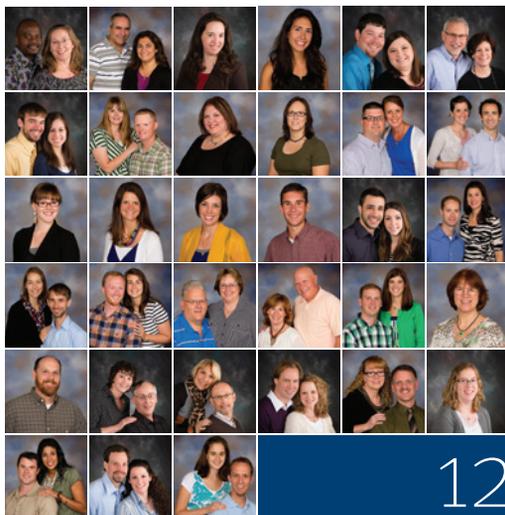
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WHO IS THE ASSOCIATION OF BAPTISTS FOR WORLD EVANGELISM (ABWE)?

ABWE was founded in 1927 as an independent Baptist mission. The objectives of ABWE are to establish indigenous Baptist churches and to train national pastors and leaders. About 1,000 missionaries serve with ABWE to advance God's work in 60 countries around the world by sharing the story of hope, building communities of faith and serving the world with love. CPC Agreement #1469436.

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CONNECTIONS

Ministry Snapshots from Around the World



© PHOTOS BY ERIN WESTON

TOGO

Love Thy Neighbor

Several months ago, a Fulani tribesman's cattle grazed through a neighboring Ngangam tribesman's field, destroying his crop. This is an incredible offense in this farming society, and the Ngangam people retaliated by attacking the Fulani village and burning their homes to the ground.

With just the clothes on their backs, the Fulani fled 15 miles to the city of Mango, where they set up makeshift camps. For weeks, more than 400 refugees lived in a camp behind the construction site of ABWE's newest medical and ministry center, the Hospital of Hope. ABWE missionaries quickly mobilized to help the Fulani people, bringing care packages, medicine, food, and fabric for new clothes.

"It was heartbreaking to see these people in tents, knowing that many of them have lost everything," said a local missionary. "But what an opportunity we had to show them the love of Christ."

Once the violence subsided, several missionaries, along with a short-term American work team, went to

the Fulani village to repair several homes that had been damaged in the attack. The missionaries' outreach to the Fulani helped make inroads and build relationships with people who are normally very shy and distrusting of strangers.

"The beauty of this whole refugee camp experience is that we can see how it opened the doors for us to befriend the Fulani people," said missionaries Nate and Erin Weston. "Already when we see them in the market or around town, they wave and smile at us." ■

 To learn more about the Hospital of Hope project in Mango, go to www.hospitalofhopemango.org.

So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.

Romans 10:17

PAPUA NEW GUINEA

Planting Seeds in Good Soil

Charlie Tumbiago is living proof that the right tools go a long way. He studied at the Goroka Baptist Bible College in Papua New Guinea, where a missionary taught him how to use ABWE's Good Soil Evangelism and Discipleship materials to share the gospel. Good Soil provides training and visual tools to help people connect with, and clearly understand, the Bible.

With his Good Soil materials in hand, Charlie went to a local market and started talking with people. Many said they had never heard the Bible presented so clearly, and a local pastor invited Charlie to speak at his church. That Sunday, members of the church sat for almost two hours as Charlie shared the story of hope. When Charlie finished, 13 people came to know Jesus Christ as their Savior, including the pastor. ■



© PHOTO BY JAY YORK

 To learn more about Good Soil Evangelism and Discipleship training and resources, go to www.goodsoil.com.

Upcoming Course Dates

Register at www.goodsoil.com

Course	Dates	Location
Moving Beyond Lecture	October 21-22, 2013	ABWE Training Center
Good Soil Evangelism & Discipleship Basic	October 23-24, 2013	ABWE Training Center
Trainer Certification	October 25, 2013	ABWE Training Center
Good Soil Evangelism & Discipleship Basic	November 1-2, 2013	Grace Baptist Church, Bowie, MD
The Roots of Faith - Old Testament	June 16-20, 2014	ABWE Training Center
The Roots of Faith - New Testament	June 23-27, 2014	ABWE Training Center



SOUTH ASIA

A Fall To Grace

At 12 years old, Nand had few joys in his life other than climbing trees and playing his tiny wooden flute. But everything changed the day the young orphan's foot slipped from the tree branch he was climbing. Nand's small body slammed into the hard ground, fracturing his spine and leaving him unable to walk. Nand cried and writhed on the ground until a compassionate passerby picked him up and carried him to ABWE's hospital several miles away.

The diagnosis was grim, but the hospital's skilled surgeons and doctors never gave up hope. They performed surgery on Nand's spine and initiated a rigorous physical therapy regimen.

While his body was slowly responding to the therapy, Nand's heart was responding to something else: love. Throughout his recovery, doctors and nurses shared the love and story of Jesus Christ with Nand. Suddenly, a boy who had no home and no family realized he had a Father and more brothers and sisters than he could have ever imagined.

"With all of the discouraging news, it would be easy to quit," said an ABWE missionary nurse. "It would be easy to say, 'the work is too great and the laborers are too few.' But I stay because there are other young men and women who will have tragic accidents that could become the biggest blessings they have ever known."

Recently, Nand was baptized, and he now lives at the ABWE hospital. Though he still walks with a walker and has yet to regain full control of his body, his hands have recovered quickly. You can often hear the music coming from his flute, long before you see Nand's smiling face. ■

UKRAINE

Life-Changing Work

In August, Romania team missionaries Chris and Mihaela Guess traveled to Ukraine to help run two week-long camps and saw 36 people give their lives to Christ. The first week was for local kids in junior high, and on the last day of chapel, 14 came forward with decisions for Jesus. The second week was for local high schoolers, and 22 came forward. ■

 To learn more about the Guess family's amazing work in Eastern Europe, go to www.teamguess.com.



THE BALKANS

Begging for the Truth

The Roma people are one of the largest and most destitute minority groups in Central Europe. Many of them resort to begging as a means of survival, and Edona was no different. One day, she approached missionary Thomas* and his friend Gjon, while they were sitting at an outdoor café. Though they had no money to give her, they felt for Edona and her struggle.

Over the next few months, the pair visited with Edona and her family several times. During one visit, Thomas and Gjon felt God telling them it was time to share the gospel.

“We asked, ‘Has anyone ever told you about God? They said, ‘No.’ So we sat there and talked with them for a little while,” Thomas said.

When the family fully understood what Thomas was saying, they told him that they wanted God’s salvation.



“We knelt down and prayed right there. It was amazing. You can’t even imagine,” he said.

Since then, Thomas and Gjon have returned several times and delivered children’s Bibles and a New Testament to Edona and her family. ■

**Name has been changed for security reasons.*



TOGO

Fishing for Men

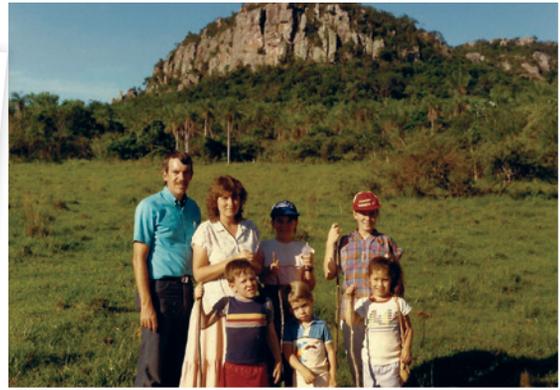
The Kpalimé aquaponics training center at ABWE’s Village of Light is now open. Beyond training, the center will provide a sustainable food source for the Village of Light — a ministry and school for blind children.

An aquaponics system is like a greenhouse that recycles water. The system uses aquaculture (the growing and harvesting of fish) and hydroponics (plants grown on top of the water) in a closed system to grow food. The idea is that fish waste supplies nutrients to plants growing above the tank. The plants use the waste as food and filter the water so it can be recirculated back to the fish. The Kpalimé center is the first of several planned aquaponics projects in Togo, each serving as a tool to help support the local church ministries and reach people with the gospel. The second system is slated to be built later this year. ■

 To learn more about Mark and Renee Gage’s work with establishing the aquaponics ministry in Togo, go to www.gage.abwe.org.

Legacies of Faithfulness

Each year, ABWE honors missionaries who have served for 35 years or more with the Edward and Marian Bomm Award. This year 22 missionaries received a Bomm Award for their lifetime of service. Throughout their years on the field, these missionaries have made countless memories and gained priceless wisdom. This new section of Message is dedicated to highlighting their achievements and sharing their remarkable stories.



Paul & Marla Fields

Candidate Class: 1977

Field of Service: Paraguay

As the son of missionaries in Zambia, Paul grew up seeing the need on the mission field first-hand. He met Marla at Tennessee Temple University where they graduated with bachelor's degrees, and Paul went on to seminary for a master's in religious education. Paul and Marla were married in 1972 and began their ministry at Grace Baptist Church in Chattanooga, Tenn. until they felt the Lord directing them to the mission field.

In 1977, Paul and Marla were appointed as ABWE missionaries to the newly opened field of

Paraguay. For the past 33 years, Paul and Marla have worked in a variety of regions planting churches and training pastors. They developed the Baptist Pastors' Training Center to help teach pastors who didn't have easy access to the capital city for training. Paul and Marla continue to work in Paraguay today, conducting church-planting ministries and leadership development.

Favorite Memory from the Field:

"My most beautiful memory as a missionary is the privilege that God has given me to live and work alongside my soulmate of 41 years. The greatest joy we have experienced as missionaries was seeing God's hand on our three children. Each one trusted Christ

as their personal Savior, and I had the joy of baptizing them. I also officiated their marriage ceremonies, as we welcomed their spouses into our family.

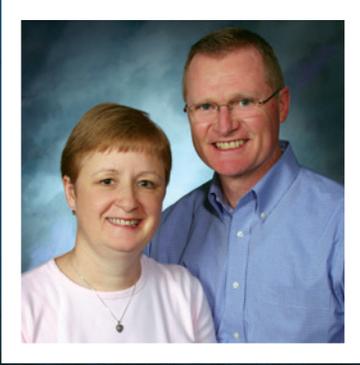
While our biological family has moved on, God has graciously provided many spiritual children, brothers and sisters, and now grandchildren among the Paraguayan people."

Advice to Anyone Considering Missions:

"Language acquisition will largely determine your ability to minister effectively in a foreign culture. Be sure to go to a reputable language school. Above all, learn the 'heart language' of your people group and keep learning as long as you live."

Allan & Robin Cuthbert

Candidate Class: 1978
Field of Service: Brazil



Allan and Robin came from missionary families; Robin was raised in Pakistan, and Al was raised in Brazil. They met while attending Grand Rapids Baptist College and were married in 1976. After Al completed seminary training, they felt called to join their family's legacy on the mission field.

In 1980, they left for São Paulo, Brazil where they served for 16 years in church planting and theological education. Al pastored two Brazilian churches and planted the Horto do Ypê Baptist Church, which started as a Bible study. The couple transitioned that church to a national pastor and created a pastoral internship program that produced all of the current pastors at its six daughter churches. The church has grown into a congregation of more than 500 people.

For the past 15 years, Al has been teaching and working in theological education with ABWE. He helped found the Horizon International Schools in Michigan,

which partners with national theological schools throughout the world to provide online ministry training. The Cuthberts continue to serve at Horizon today and lead a weekly Bible study for the Portuguese-speaking community in Grand Rapids.

Most Impactful Moment in your Ministry:

“Just before Christmas, a Brazilian pastor and I were preparing for a dinner at the church. We were up on the roof of the church gathering large sheets of plywood to use as tables. The wood had been placed there to protect the roof from falling debris from a nearby construction site. Suddenly, the asbestos roof tiles shattered and we crashed 20 feet to the concrete floor of the auditorium below. I landed on my back and my Brazilian colleague fell face first. He lost his front teeth and broke both elbows and knees. I shattered my

left elbow, received a compression fracture to my lower spine, and tore all the cartilage from my left foot. We were hospitalized for a week with multiple surgeries, but we were both grateful to be alive.

During that time, God challenged our church leaders to step up to the plate. We had already been training them for many ministry tasks, but this was the moment that released them to serve in a significant way. Both the growth of the church, as well as its vision for starting six other churches, were rocketed forward from this event.”

Advice to Anyone Considering Missions:

“We would encourage new missionaries to enter the long-term joy of this ministry. Investing into the future of the church through the training of national leaders is the best way to expand a ministry to the next generation.”



Annette Williams

Candidate Class: 1976
Field of Service: Togo



Annette arrived in Togo in 1978 to serve as a nurse. While she already knew French, she struggled to learn the local language, Ewe. Annette believed there was a better way and began developing an innovative language program that is still used by missionaries today.

Annette also assisted in developing plans for opening the Karolyn Kempton Memorial Hospital in Togo. When the hospital opened, she helped train the staff, integrating biblical principles into their daily routines. She currently serves as the hospital's director.

In her "spare" time, Annette taught at the Kpalimé Bible Institute and worked in women's and children's ministries. She was also instrumental in launching ABWE's International Healthcare Ministries (IHM), the division of the organization that oversees ABWE's medical ministries around the world.

Ministry Shaping Story:

"In 1997, we started a program to train Togolese nursing students. We needed qualified Togolese nurses at our hospital ministry, but had been unable to find many who met our standards. A lot was riding on this new training program, and it was exciting to see two years of preparation come to fruition. By the time I returned to the Togo hospital in 2000, I was working alongside the nurses I helped train. It was incredible to see Togolese Christian nurses caring for patients physically and spiritually. Since then, three classes of students have graduated and 20 more are in training. Many of these nurses will serve as staff at our newest hospital, set to open in late 2014 in the city of Mango."

Advice to Anyone Considering Missions:

"Stay flexible and follow the direction that God shows you. If we just have an idea of what we want to do, we can miss what God has planned, which is always better."

Favorite Memory from the Field:

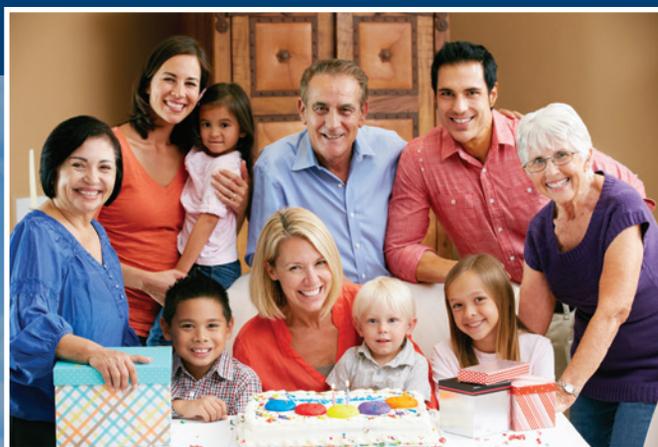
"There was an eight-year-old girl with burns all over her body. As I cared for her, I had the opportunity to tell her about Jesus. It was one of those times when I sensed the Holy Spirit helping cross the language and cultural barriers so that this little girl could come to faith in Christ. She passed into eternity just two days later, but I look forward to seeing her in heaven."



ANSWERING YOUR CALL

Is as Simple as a Few Words.

A bequest to ABWE in your will is a simple and easy way to answer your calling — and it won't affect your current income. All it takes is a few words in your will.



TAKE THE FIRST STEP

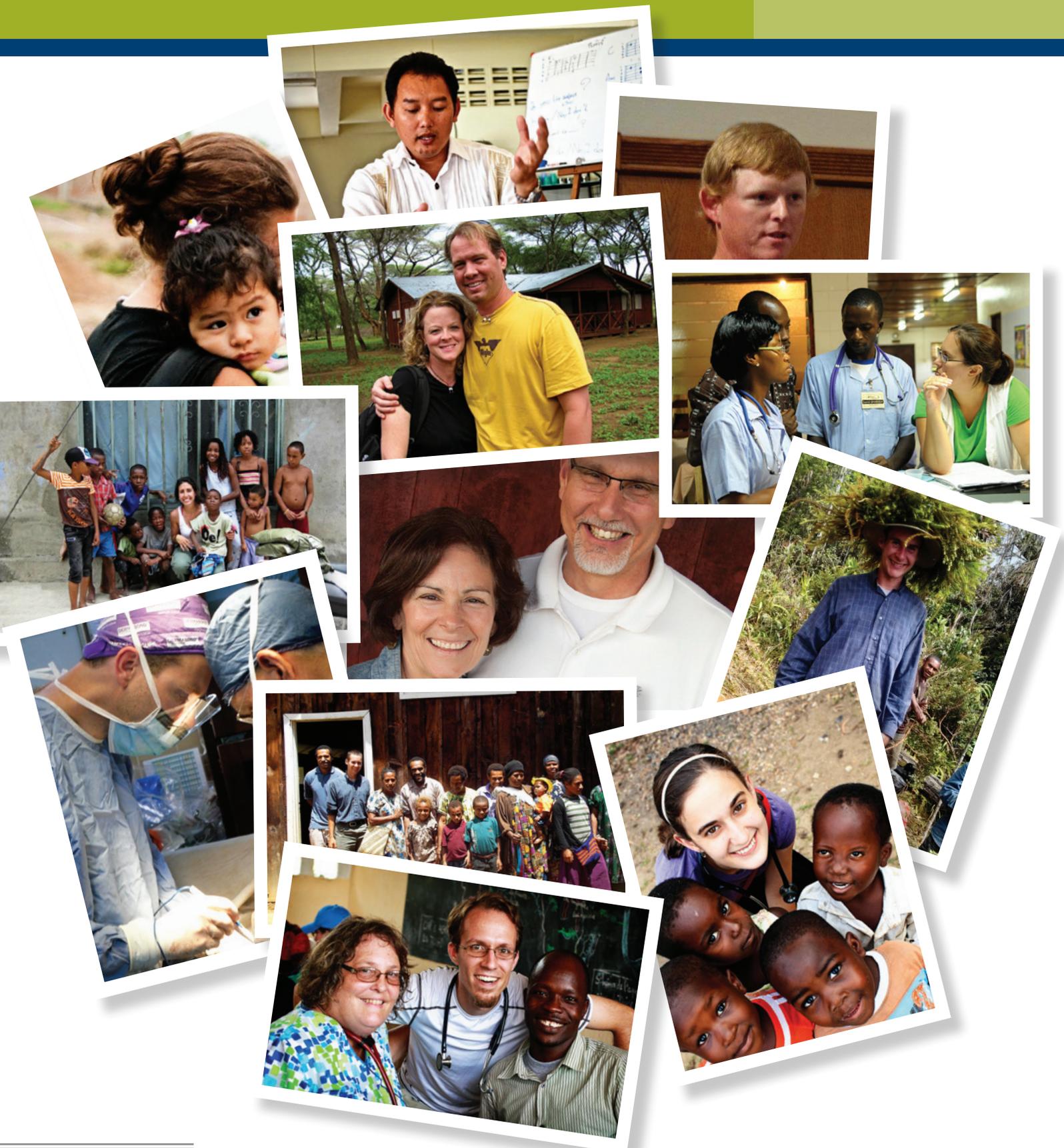
Contact Kevin Kurtz, *Director of Planned Giving*, for your **FREE Will Planning Guide** to learn how to help ABWE touch more lives with the gospel while ensuring your family's future will be protected.

800.921.2293 | Kevin.Kurtz@abwe.org

 In Canada, contact:

David Green, Planned Giving Representative
877.690.1009 | plannedgiving@abwecanada.org

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WALKING BY FAITH

{MEET THIS YEAR'S NEWEST MISSIONARIES}

With 60 new missionaries, this year's class is our largest in recent years. Through many trials and obstacles, each has learned to walk by faith and is now taking the next step on their journey by answering God's call to the mission field.



TOGO: HONORÉ AND KIM AFOLABI

Calvary Baptist Church in Landsdale, PA

Honoré was born in Togo, West Africa and raised in a Muslim home in a tight-knit Muslim community. Honoré would have continued in this tradition, but his father's decision to leave Islam completely changed the direction of Honoré's life.

Breaking from his customs, friends and family, Honoré's father left in search of answers about the afterlife that his religion couldn't provide. He took his family to church, and after visiting one that only taught the Old Testament, Honoré's family eventually connected with a church where they heard the full transforming message of the gospel. His family got involved in the church, and Honoré started helping with youth ministry and other ministries.

One Saturday night, Honoré was preparing a sermon about having a personal relationship with Christ for the next day's children's service, and he started thinking about what that meant in his own life. He questioned how he was living, and as he tossed and turned that night, he remembered a friend telling him about what he needed to do to be truly saved.

"That morning I got on my knees, and I asked Jesus Christ to be my Lord and Savior," said Honoré. "And from that day, I knew I was saved and that I would go to heaven."

After he prayed, Honoré went back to church. He preached that same message to the children and 35 kids responded. "From that moment, I knew there was something unique about Christianity that I didn't have in the Islam religion, and I wanted to share it with people." Since then, Honoré has led many people to Christ including his family, siblings, and mother.

In 1996, Honoré continued his faith journey by coming to the United States to do ministry and attend Pillsbury Bible Baptist College in Minnesota. After graduating, he went on to attend seminary in Landsdale, Pa. where he met his wife, Kim. Honoré and Kim, along with their three children, are eager to serve the Lord and spread the teachings of the gospel in Honoré's home country of Togo.

AFRICA





TANZANIA: ANTHONY AND AMANDA BOWMAN

Grace Baptist Church in Mason, OH

Anthony and Amanda were blessed to grow up in Christian homes and made professions of faith at a young age. However, as they got older, they both became uncertain about their salvation. Anthony realized he had been putting his trust in the sinner’s prayer and not in Jesus Christ. Similarly, Amanda lay awake one night and felt God say, “In the end, it’s just going to be me and you.” Amanda and Anthony began developing a personal relationship with Christ and their faith blossomed.

After they were married, the couple attended a missions conference at their church. They heard about two teams who had already left for the field, and then the pastor challenged the congregation, “What if there was another family to join this team?” Anthony heard the message loud and clear, and after that, “God just started moving. Everything, from newspaper articles to what we saw on our computers and television, had something to do with Africa.” Through much prayer, God has made the Bowman’s path clear to serve Him in Africa.



TOGO: SUSANNA CLUTTS

Murdale Baptist Church in Carbondale, IL | www.facebook.com/Susanna4Togo

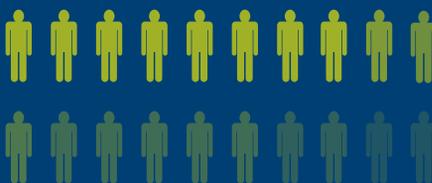
The daughter of missionary parents, Susanna decided at a young age that she did not want to follow her parents’ career path. Despite her resolve, God began working in her heart, and everything changed when she learned about martyred missionary Jim Elliot’s life and ministry. She was challenged by his famous quote, “He is no fool who gives what he cannot keep to gain that which he cannot lose.” Susanna realized she needed to be open to missions.

take a short-term mission trip to Togo. It was there that God began to direct her steps towards full-time missions. Several trips later, the girl who was convinced she would never become a missionary is now being led to serve as a medical missionary in Togo.

After much prayer and Bible study, Susanna gave her life and her plans over to the Lord. She then met an ABWE representative who persuaded her to

“I love the people. I love the country. I love using medicine to minister to people physically, as well as spiritually,” Susanna says. “God obviously has a sense of humor.”

The American career missionary workforce is shrinking. In 1986, there were 69,000 American career missionaries. In 2010 that was down to 45,000, almost a 30% reduction in 20 years.



MISSIONS FACTS

Source: Joshuaproject.net



TOGO: KELLY FABER

Sojourn Church in Louisville, KY | www.kfabertogo.blogspot.com

Kelly always had a deep appreciation for Christ's sacrifice for her sins. As she got older and continued to hear missionaries give their testimonies, a strong desire started to grow within her to become one, too.

"I wanted to have a story like that," Kelly said. "It meant God did something through me."

Sadly, Kelly's blossoming relationship with Jesus became empty and legalistic during her high school years. She struggled when many of her Christian friends moved away, but her love for God was rekindled during a missions trip in college.

"I decided, 'I want to be in a relationship with You. This isn't about rules to follow,'" Kelly said.

Already on the path to becoming a physician, Kelly decided to follow the Lord's call on her life to Togo. She spent the past year serving in the country with Samaritan's Purse. Now, Kelly is looking forward to serving at ABWE's newest medical ministry, the Hospital of Hope in the city of Mango, Togo.

"Christ takes the messiest of lives and makes them whole again.

He takes away our shame. That's the gospel that I've experienced, and that's what I want to share with others."



TANZANIA: JOSEPH AND BRITTANY JAMES

Grace Baptist Church in Mason, OH

The son of missionaries, Joseph is continuing his family's legacy. As a child, he was deeply impacted by seeing the hand of God keep his family safe during their time in the turbulent country of Cuba. However, when his family was forced to move back to the States after being discovered as missionaries, Joseph's faith stalled. He became comfortable in "just being a good kid" until he prayed, "God, I don't know what You want to do with me, but You have all of me." After that, missions became a strong call in his life.

Brittany grew up in a pastor's home and saw the authenticity of her parents' faith. She got her first taste of missions when she was a teenager and her family went on a trip to East Asia and the Philippines. While there, she met several missionaries and saw the movement of the underground church.

"I left thinking, 'I'll give missionaries my money and my sympathy, but I never want to become one,'" said Brittany.

However, God started working in Brittany's heart after that trip. The next year at a youth camp she was flooded with an overwhelming desire to do missions. Immediately, she knew she was being called to Africa.

Joseph and Brittany are excited to start sharing the gospel and using Brittany's nursing degree to reach Tanzanians.

"Christ takes the messiest of lives and makes them whole again. He takes away our shame," Brittany said. "That's the gospel that I've experienced, and that's what I want to share with others."

“He also impressed upon my heart that accepting Him as my Savior didn’t mean I was going to be able to live a life that was free of struggle and trial, but that He would guide my steps and be with me wherever He directed me.”



TOGO: BRYCE AND NATASHA NATTIER

University Baptist Church in Beavercreek, OH

Natasha realized what it truly means to follow Jesus during her high school and college years. Through a lot of time in prayer and studying the Bible, she saw how radical Christ’s life was. That’s when she finally understood that is the same kind of life God is calling us to live.

“He also impressed upon my heart that accepting Him as my Savior didn’t mean I was going to be able to live a life that was free of struggle and trial, but that He would guide my steps and be with me wherever He directed me,” Natasha said.

While Natasha knew God would lead her, she struggled to find her ministry niche. Only in looking back can she now see God’s guiding hand. She became a nurse practitioner and married Bryce, an Air Force general surgeon with a call to missions. As the couple pursued their call to the field, they were drawn to minister to Muslims through ABWE’s Hospital of Hope in Togo.

“While He still continues to show us the bigger picture, this journey we are on has already been really amazing,” said Natasha.



EAST AFRICA: GILES AND JENNIFER SIGLER

Calvary Baptist Church in Beaumont, TX

During a Sunday night service, Jennifer felt the Holy Spirit tell her, “You need to go to East Africa.” Jennifer slipped her husband a note that said, “We need to go to East Africa.” Giles snickered and stuck it in his pocket.

The seed of East Africa had been planted a few days earlier when four couples from their church invited Giles and her to join them on a trip to the region. Jennifer vehemently declined, giving them a list of reasons, “I don’t have a passport. I’ve never been out of the country. I’m not leaving my children.”

After the service, Jennifer and Giles discussed her note. Although Giles wasn’t excited about going, he wanted to say that he’d been on a mission trip and thought this trip might be a way to check it off his bucket list. They went, and Giles and Jennifer led a

leadership training. And something else happened that they weren’t expecting. They fell in love with the local people.

“We came home changed,” said Giles.

Over time, they felt more and more strongly that they were supposed to minister to the Toposa people in East Africa. They went on several more short-term mission trips, including medical missions where Jennifer used her skills as a nurse practitioner. Finally, they felt sure of their calling and began working towards becoming full-time missionaries. Despite many obstacles, God led them to ABWE.

“God didn’t open a small door for us. He opened a garage door,” said Giles. “We are looking forward to getting out on the mission field and showing Christ’s love to the Toposa people.”



TOGO: TOM AND MELISSA KENDALL

Canyon Springs Baptist Church in Las Vegas, NV | www.kendallsintogo.blogspot.com

Tom was 16 years old when his parents decided to move their family of nine to Togo and serve in medical missions for two months at an ABWE hospital. Tom got the rare opportunity to witness the real work of medical missions, and it inspired him to become a doctor so he could also serve.

“For the first time, I got to see missionaries in action. I saw them loving people, showing Christ’s love, and preaching the gospel,” Tom said. “It showed me when people are face-to-face with their own mortality, how to not only take care of them physically, but also minister to them spiritually.”

Melissa was also exposed to the mission field at a young age as the daughter of missionaries in Togo. She was always open to the call of missions, but when she married Tom, she knew that she was committing to a life of service.

After Tom graduated from medical school and entered the U.S. Air Force to become a general surgeon, Tom and Melissa were stationed in Las Vegas. While there, God used the couple to help establish Canyon Springs Baptist Church, where they have ministered for the past four years.

“It’s so comforting to look back at our past and see how God has directed each step,” Melissa said. “He’s used all of these events to place us on this path to medical missions with ABWE.”



SOUTH AFRICA: WADE AND TARA MCCOMAS

Grace Baptist Church in Cedarville, OH | www.teammccomas.com

When Tara was 14, her parents picked up their lives to become ABWE church planters in Cape Town, South Africa. Tara loved living in South Africa and enjoyed her parents’ ministry, but she was unsure if she was cut out for missions.

Upon her return to the United States to study at Cedarville University, Tara struggled with readjusting to American life. She strayed from her relationship with God and found herself making life choices that deeply hurt her and her family. Tara felt she had to get away from her temptations, so she left college and returned to South Africa. It was here that God brought amazing healing to Tara and her family. After some time, she returned to school filled with a passionate desire to serve God.

Tara met Wade at her church and was drawn to his heart for missions — which stemmed from an encounter with an ABWE missionary.

“I remember thinking, ‘That is a real man. I want to do that,’” Wade said.

Shortly after they were married, Wade and Tara moved to Cape Town and worked with a non-profit organization doing orphan care. They fell in love with the people of South Africa.

“It’s not just that I want to do this. It’s that I can’t imagine doing anything but this,” Tara said.

Total People Groups in the World:

16,782

Unreached People Groups:

7,266

47%

MISSIONS FACTS

Source: JoshuaProject.net



TOGO: STEPHEN AND LISA WREESMAN

Hope Bible Church in Columbia, MD

Stephen and Lisa’s relationship started with missions, and it continues to be about missions. They met while attending The Master’s College and had their first date after a meeting for pre-med majors who were interested in missionary service. Not only did that meeting lead to a marriage, it also led to a calling. It was the first time the couple heard about ABWE’s hospital in Mango, Togo.

Although they went on other missions trips, they kept feeling pulled back to Togo. When they finally

made it to the city of Mango, they felt God affirm their path.

“God kept putting the Fulani people on our hearts,” said Stephen.

As a family doctor and a pediatric nurse, Stephen and Lisa are excited to help the local people both physically and spiritually.

“In medical missions, there can be a lot of incomplete and inadequate motives. Compassion is good one, but it’s inadequate,” said Lisa. “God’s glory is really what makes us do what we do.”



TOGO: KEN AND SELENA THOMSON

West Highland Baptist Church in Hamilton, ON

Ken grew up in a secular family. He was skeptical and resistant to religion, but during his college years, God started working on his heart. Slowly, his walls started weakening, and then one day, Ken received a phone call that rocked him. His grandmother, who had been like a second mother to him, had suddenly passed away.

“I did not see it coming. News like that makes you reevaluate your stance on life and your morality,” said Ken. “Three months later, I was married, and six months later, I became a disciple of Christ.”

Together, Ken and Selena grew their faith, and after a few years, Ken heard his call to missions during a sermon.

“I heard the word ‘Go,’” said Ken.

Despite several obstacles and dead-ends that strengthened their faith, Ken and Selena are staying faithful to God’s call.



ADVICE FROM FIELD VETERANS



“Be yourself. Know your gifts and talents. God made you uniquely fit for the job He has given you; don’t pattern your ministry after someone else. There is no lack of meaningful ministries in which to be involved. Prayerfully determine where you can best invest your time.”

- Renny and Kenneth Snare, Candidate Class 1978

“Be enthusiastic with the direction the Lord is leading! Learn everything about your future country. Your enthusiasm will be contagious. We raised our support in nine months, partly due to our enthusiasm for Paraguay.”

- Paul and Patty Collier, Candidate Class 1976

EAST ASIA: RYAN AND KRISTEN*

Kossuth Street Baptist Church in Lafayette, IN

As a teenager, Ryan had a conversation with a young boy that shaped the direction of his life. While on a missions trip to Philadelphia, Ryan pulled a 10-year-old boy aside with the goal of teaching him the gospel. Ryan made a long presentation, and when he was done, the boy rejected it. Ryan was taken aback, so he tried again. Again, the boy rejected it, saying, “I’ve heard this before and I don’t want that.” The experience stuck with Ryan and bothered him for years, but rather than being discouraged, he kept reading and exploring his faith. Slowly, he understood that God is the one who saves people, and it was his job to be obedient.

**THAILAND: DANIEL AND KATIE LAMB**Whittier Hills Baptist Church in Whittier, CA | www.lambsinthailand.com

Daniel grew up in a Christian home, but became cynical of the church after he saw members of his congregation fail to live the gospel. Fortunately, he made a strong connection with his youth pastor, who also became an ABWE missionary. That relationship had a tremendous impact on Daniel’s life for Christ.

While Katie grew up with an intense desire to go to church, it was not until the seventh grade that she got the opportunity. When she finally heard the full gospel, Katie desperately wanted more. She soaked up all she could through studying the Bible and learning from her youth pastors.

During her senior year of high school, Katie attended a Christian camp where she learned of the awful fate of those who never hear the gospel.

“I thought, ‘How do I not go and tell them? How is that not my responsibility?’” said Katie. “It was obvious that I needed to do something.”

Soon after, Katie enrolled at Biola University in California as an intercultural studies major. During

Ryan and Kristen met at church in middle school and have matured their faith and their relationship over the years. They both studied at Purdue University where they encountered different cultures and developed a love for missions and ministry. One day, Ryan came across the verse that compelled them to explore overseas ministry to unreached populations: “For what had not been told them they shall see, And what they had not heard they shall consider” (Isaiah 52:15). Ryan and Kristen are committed to serving where the Lord calls them.

**Information withheld for security reasons.*

ASIA



PAPUA NEW GUINEA: TIMOTHY HAWES

Temple Bible Church in Elizabethtown, PA | www.disciplingpng.com

As a young boy, Timothy developed an interest in business and dreamed of financially supporting missionaries throughout the world. But God had different plans.

During high school, Timothy began to sense the Lord calling him to Bible college. He obeyed, and after graduating, Timothy found himself pursuing a seminary degree in missionary linguistics that he believed he would use as a pastor in the United States.

However, upon graduation, he still needed to complete his linguistics internship. Every door kept closing for Timothy until a short-term missions trip to Papua New Guinea surfaced. Timothy took it, and when he returned to the States, his heart was fully set on missions. Shortly after his first trip, he went back to Papua New Guinea where he discovered his calling. Timothy will be involved in church planting, Bible translation, and agricultural development through ABWE's Goroka Baptist Bible College.

EAST ASIA: MARK AND CHRISTINA*

CrossRoads Baptist Church in North Richland Hills, TX

Mark and Christina's journey to the mission field taught them the virtue of patience and waiting for God's timing. In high school, a youth pastor challenged Christina with the idea of being a pastor's wife in full-time ministry. She clearly remembered the Lord tugging at her heart, saying, "That is you, Chrissy." But Christina had other plans.

"I said, 'Oh no. That is not me,'" she said. "Later, when I met and married Mark, he had not yet surrendered to ministry, and I said, 'Haha, God! I told you I was not going into ministry.'"

But within two years, Mark felt the call to ministry, and soon he began to feel led into missions. Despite her reluctance, Christina agreed to pray and be open to where God led them.

They pursued the mission field, but one week from the couple's departure date, the door abruptly shut. They took a step back and felt God was telling them to wait. They faithfully served in local ministry until all signs seemed to be pointing them back to the field. The couple approached ABWE and soon found door after door opening to them.

"I feel really, really good about it," Christina said. "I feel like it is finally our time."

**Information withheld for security reasons.*



PAPUA NEW GUINEA: PHIL AND JAN SMITH

Bethesda Baptist Church in Brownsburg, IN | www.philandjansmithpng.com

High school sweethearts Phil and Jan both grew up in Christian homes, and Phil's earliest childhood memories are of being in the church.

"If the doors were open, we were there," Phil said.

As a couple, they put their faith at the center of their lives and got more involved in their church. One day, they joined a discipleship group that lit a fire in them.

"As our knowledge of the Lord grew, our love for Him grew more and more," said Jan.

Jan became burdened with a heart for missions, and she tested the waters on short-term missions trips to Northern Ireland and Brazil. Slowly, Phil and Jan's path to full-time missions became clear.

"When I put God's will ahead my own, that's when He gave me the desires of my heart," said Jan.



SOUTH ASIA: RAGAN STORY

Cedar Grove Baptist Church in Waverly, TN

Shortly after starting at Liberty University, God moved in Ragan's life. She was sitting in church listening to the announcements when she felt God telling her to go on the short-term missions trip she had been putting off and change her major to missions. Amazed and a little confused, she obeyed.

A few months later, she went on the trip, and God gave her a heart for the world. Last summer, she went on a six-week missions trip to South Asia, and she knew that's where she was meant to be and what she wanted to do with her life.

"I'm so excited about what God has in store," Ragan said.

MISSIONS FACTS

COUNTRIES WITH THE MOST UNREACHED PEOPLE GROUPS*

1. India	2,222
2. Pakistan	448
3. China	427
4. Bangladesh	372
5. Nepal	355
6. Indonesia	200
7. Sudan	138
8. Laos	134
9. Iran	93
10. Russia/Thailand	76/each

* According to missionfrontiers.org, a people group is a significantly large sociological, ethno-linguistic grouping of individuals who perceive themselves to have a common affinity with one another.

Source: Center for the Study of Global Christianity at Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary



THAILAND: TIM AND LAURA COMPTON

Alpine Baptist Church in Comstock Park, MI

When Laura gave her life to Christ after several years of self-centered living, she made a promise to never say "no" to Jesus again. That promise was severely tested after a short-term mission trip to Thailand when Laura found herself unwilling to make the emotional sacrifices missionaries must sometimes make. Through the book *Radical: Taking Back Your Faith from the American Dream*, God began to reveal to Laura that she was caught up in obtaining social status for her children. Laura found herself surrendering once more, and soon a passion for missions began burning in her heart.

However, she knew her husband Tim wasn't on board with her vision. A banker by profession, Tim was convinced he lacked the skills to be a missionary. But after several conversations with missionaries and short-term mission trips to Thailand, Tim felt God telling him, "Just say yes, and I will use you." Laura was overjoyed by his change of heart, and after a month of prayer, the couple committed to taking the next step on their journey to serve in Thailand.

"Just say yes, and I will use you."



NORTH AMERICA: BRENNAN AND KATHLEEN COUGHLIN

Fellowship Community Church in Mt. Laurel, NJ

As a young girl, Kathleen decided she either wanted to be a missionary or a teacher. While attending Clemson University, her faith grew tremendously through her involvement with Campus Crusade for Christ. But after graduation, opportunities for full-time ministry overseas didn't pan out, so Kathleen went to her back-up plan and took a job as a teacher. She also enrolled in seminary, where she met her husband Brennan.

Brennan felt a strong desire to preach the gospel to unbelievers and was astonished to learn that

nearly 4,000 churches close each year in the United States, while only 1,500 new churches are started. Challenged by the testimonies of great missionaries from the past, Brennan felt God calling him and Kathleen to the North American mission field.

"The missionaries' testimonies made me think of how valuable the gospel is," Brennan said. "It made me think of the beauty of laying your life down for the glory of God."



NORTH AMERICA: STEVEN AND KIMBERLY PELTON

First Baptist Church Whitney Point in Whitney Point, NY

Throughout his life, Steven has struggled again and again with surrendering. He put God in the passenger seat as he worked tirelessly to build a name for himself as a successful contractor.

"I wanted to be somebody," said Steven.

But God had other plans. A few bad clients put Steven deep in the red, and he knew that he was being asked to put God in the driver's seat of his life. He finally did and went back to school full time, relying on God to provide for his family. Despite many obstacles, Steven and Kim have remained faithful and are now

following their call to the mission field.



NORTH AMERICA: JOY NICHOLS

Summit Baptist Bible Church in South Abington Township, PA | www.credoindeum.com

Joy trusted the Lord at an early age, but she struggled with growing up in a dysfunctional Christian family. She began to question God. She wondered why He gave her the family He did, but she clung to the hope that someday He would use her experiences and challenges. And He did.

Impassioned by the support she received from her youth group leader growing up, Joy began working with the youth in her church.

"I loved working with the teenagers and investing in them," Joy said.

Slowly, Joy felt God calling her to full-time ministry, and then she met her husband Dan, an ABWE missionary to North America. Together, Joy and Dan are planting a church in Wilkes-Barre, Pa.

"I felt God really wanted us to serve in ministry together," she said.



NORTH AMERICA



TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO: SCOTT AND LAURALIE BROCK

Bible Baptist Church in Shiremanstown, PA

Lauralie was raised in a pastor's home where the Christian life was modeled on a daily basis. When her father passed away just before candidate class, her family was flooded with cards. Each card reiterated the amazing impact her father had and reminded Lauralie and Scott how God uses people to change lives.

"I can't wait to look back and say, 'Look what God did,'" Lauralie said.

Since committing to the field of Trinidad and Tobago, Lauralie and Scott have been injected with a passion and excitement for the work ahead of them.

"Coming to candidate class was like going to Disney World for the first time," said Scott.

Scott and Lauralie are eager to share that excitement and passion as they minister and share the gospel.



COLOMBIA: MARISSA DICKEY

Montana Avenue Baptist Church in Caldwell, ID | www.marissadickey.com

Marissa grew up hearing missionaries' stories and wondering how God would use her life. But it wasn't until she experienced the pain of two siblings rejecting God that she felt a heavy burden to serve in missions. The question of where she should go was quickly answered on a short-term mission trip

to Colombia where God captured Marissa's heart for the Colombian people.

"I had made a commitment that whatever God called me to do, I was going to do it with my whole life," Marissa said. "God was calling out to me. He was saying, 'You can give your life to this, and I will be with you.'"



CHILE: ANGELA CLOUSER

Milford Bible College in Milford, PA

Angela grew up knowing the ins-and-outs of Christianity, but it wasn't until she heard a speaker talk about heaven and hell that she truly accepted Christ's salvation.

"I felt so free I thought I was going to float up to the ceiling," she said.

Soon after, Angela felt God placing a desire in her heart to be a teacher. Although she worked as a substitute teacher for six years in the public school system, opportunities for full-time employment never

materialized. Confused and frustrated, Angela finally hit rock bottom and realized she was working on her plans and not God's plans.

It was then that she learned about an opportunity, through an ABWE missionary, to teach at a Christian school in Chile.

"I went there, and I fell completely head-over-heels in love with the country, the people, and the ministry," Angela said. "God is doing amazing things at that school, and my heart is to get back there."

SOUTH AMERICA



"God is doing amazing things at that school, and my heart is to get back there."



“We were singing hymns in Spanish, and of course, we didn’t know the hymns, but we recognized the melody. And it struck me that these are God’s people. God’s love is for all people, not just the people in my own home church, or in my town, or my country.”



CHILE: MATTHEW AND JESSICA WENGER

Twin Valley Bible Chapel in Narvon, PA

Matt grew up in a pastor’s home learning about morality and religion, but not really understanding their true meaning.

“I came up with a list of do’s and don’ts,” Matt said. “I thought as long as I did the do’s and didn’t do any of the don’ts, then I was a good Christian.”

This legalistic mindset led him to rebel during his sophomore year at Baptist Bible College, and he began drifting further and further from the Lord. Providentially, a friend intervened and helped him realize that Christianity isn’t about a list of rules; it’s about a relationship with God.

Shortly after Matt came back to God, he met and married Jessica. Over the years, their faith has deepened as they served side-by-side at several churches, with Matt as the pastor and Jessica aiding in women’s ministry. The couple felt content in their ministry until a missions trip to Chile led them to a new calling.

“We were singing hymns in Spanish, and of course, we didn’t know the hymns, but we recognized the melody,” said Jessica. “And it struck me that these are God’s people. God’s love is for all people, not just the people in my own home church, or in my town, or my country.”



ECUADOR: SHANE AND LACIE CAMPBELL

Calvary Baptist Church in St. Charles, IA

Growing up in a dysfunctional home with two alcoholic parents, all Lacie knew of Jesus was that He was God’s Son, His birthday was on Christmas, and if she was a good person, she would go to heaven. Thankfully, a Christian couple moved next door when Lacie was a teenager and taught her about having a personal relationship with God. She accepted Jesus as her Savior but struggled with her faith when her neighbors moved away.

God used the birth of her daughter as a wakeup call. Lacie realized her need for God and found herself running back to His open arms. Soon after,

Lacie met Shane, who had been recently baptized and was on fire for the Lord.

As the couple began serving in their local church, they found their desire for God growing with every ministry they undertook. When a series of missionaries spoke at their church one summer, both Shane and Lacie felt the call to take their dedication to the next level.

“It’s amazing how God works and brings people together,” Shane said. “We’re two kids who grew up in not the greatest places, but He uses different people from different backgrounds to do great things for Him.”



PERU: JOY EARL

Calvary Baptist Church in Chattanooga, TN

Joy struggled with her faith growing up. She often drifted from God, but as she got older, she began to sense the Lord calling her to youth ministry. She attempted to strengthen her faith through a short-term mission trip to Peru. Instead, the trip stirred up resentment towards the materialism found in American culture.

Five years later, God finally got Joy's attention during a short-term mission trip to Hungary. God started tapping into emotions that she had kept hidden for years.

"At first, I didn't know what He was doing," Joy remembers. "But He was turning this very unemotional girl, into someone that was very, very emotional."

As she continued to pray and seek guidance from pastors and missionaries, Joy was stunned to feel the Lord calling her back to Peru. After another survey trip to the country, the Lord made it abundantly clear that Peru was where He wanted her.

"I'm seeing how the Lord cared and how He moved," Joy said. "And now I need to be obedient to that."



SPAIN: KENNETH AND CAROLYN MUCKLE

Northgate Church in Pittsburgh, PA

Carolyn Muckle grew up afraid and insecure in a home with an alcoholic mother. When a new girl in her high school invited her to a weekend Young Life retreat, Carolyn jumped at the chance to get away. That weekend she discovered that Jesus offered the security and relationship she so desperately longed for. Carolyn accepted Christ the first night of the retreat, and she remained very engaged with her faith throughout high school.

While her walk slipped in college, she worked hard to reconnect with the church after graduating. Carolyn became involved with a young adult group where Ken was the youth pastor.

Growing up, Ken's religion was baseball. When he realized he was not talented enough to make it to the major leagues, he was brokenhearted and began searching for new meaning in his life. He finally found it one night during a campus ministry meeting at his college, and he gave his life to Jesus. He got involved with Campus Crusade for Christ, and he realized he wanted to spend the rest of his life leading people to the Lord.

Ken and Carolyn's role in ministry brought them into contact with many missionaries, and they began to see the joy in serving on the field. The couple prayed that the Lord would use them, and He has. Ken and Carolyn have spent the past 16 years as church planting missionaries to Spain. Now they plan to continue that work with ABWE.

EUROPE



ADVICE FROM FIELD VETERANS

"Keep focused. So many people, circumstances, culture, problems, and the devil seek to destroy all that you do or want to do. When we first trust Christ, we have a zeal and desire for God and His word. Never lose that. Never get over what God has done for you and that He has given you the privilege of giving His gospel to another nation."

- Jon and Kathy Griffin, Candidate Class 1978



GERMANY: DOUG AND KATHY McCLAIN

Harvest Baptist Church in Wapakoneta, OH | www.mcclain.abwe.org

Doug was just 19 years old when his father passed away. After that, Doug's life started on a downward spiral that only stopped when a college friend shared the gospel with him. He accepted Christ and found an insatiable appetite for spiritual growth. He started studying the word and attending Campus Crusade for Christ, where he met Kathy.

Kathy came to know the Lord at a young age, but struggled with her faith until she got involved with Campus Crusade her freshman year of college. After her sophomore year, she went to Germany to study the language and saw the country's need for Christ firsthand.

"When I was there, I attended churches and I noticed the same death I felt when I was struggling. These people had the head knowledge, but they did not have it in their hearts," Kathy said. "This is where God impressed upon me, for the first time, that there was a need for the gospel in Germany."

Kathy returned to the States, graduated college and married Doug, but she never forgot her time in Germany. After several years of raising a family, God used the time Doug was unemployed to focus their sights on missions. Then, a visit from two ABWE German missionaries at their church solidified Doug and Kathy's call to serve in Germany.

"When I was there, I attended churches and I noticed the same death I felt when I was struggling. These people had the head knowledge, but they did not have it in their hearts," Kathy said. "This is where God impressed upon me, for the first time, that there was a need for the gospel in Germany."



FRANCE: JOEL AND JENNIFER RINDERKNECHT

Warsaw Bible Church in Warsaw, IN

Joel, a French native, was raised in a liberal Protestant home. Growing up he never had any interest in religious matters and believed that religion was "just a boring approach to try to get people to live more ethically." That was until his mom started attending a Bible study led by Jennifer's father, a local missionary. Through his mother's study, Joel began to see that the Bible was living and active. He finally understood that Christ died for him, and he put his faith in Him.

"I was saved through a missionary. I'm your mission dollars at work," he said.

Growing up as a missionary kid in France, Jennifer had a very different childhood. The gospel

was a big part of her life, and when she was 16, her parents sent her to an evangelism camp. She was at a street meeting when she suddenly noticed how many people were listening to their songs and stories. In that moment, Jennifer knew that God wanted her to do missions.

Joel and Jennifer already have 19 years of ministry under their belt and are excited to see what God has for them next.

"Our thrill is to see more lives come to know Christ in France and see more lives transformed in the likeness of Christ," Joel said. "France is our culture, the French people are in our hearts, and Christ is our passion."

An average of 160,000 people a day hear the message of redemption in Christ for the first time. Every hour, over 1,600 people decide to follow Jesus Christ. In 1800, those who had never heard the gospel made up almost 75% of the population. Today, the percentage of those who have not heard is about 28% — a major move forward.

28%

Source: Joshuaproject.net

**PORTUGAL: AMANDA BLOOM**Calvary Baptist Church in Sun Prairie, WI | www.theyshallsee.abwe.org

Amanda was born deaf, but that didn't stop her from hearing the call.

Growing up, Amanda went to church and learned all the Bible stories. She knew "how to play Christian," but when her mother passed away when she was 13, Amanda began to question her salvation and the sincerity of her faith. After a year of struggling, she finally surrendered her life to

Christ. She committed to going wherever He would lead her and started to feel pulled toward missions.

While Amanda was in college, God began to make His plan known. Amanda attended a deaf conference and learned about the immense need for missionaries to reach the deaf around the world. Uniquely equipped, she went on a short-term mission trip to Colombia with ABWE and knew she was being called into full-time ministry.

**ITALY: BRIAN OPRE**

Grace Baptist Church in Wilmington, CA

Brian's mother took him to church every Sunday when he was growing up. He learned how to act like a Christian, but it was only a mask he wore on Sundays. His faith finally became sincere when he decided to attend a church with his college roommate. Brian's faith blossomed at his new church, and in 2001, he signed up for a short-term mission trip to Northern Ireland. Unexpectedly, the trip was redirected at the last minute, and Brian and the team headed to Albania.

"As it turned out, I fell in love with the country and the ministry," Brian said. "That's what got me thinking of long-term missions."

A yearlong internship in Johannesburg confirmed his desire to be a missionary, and Brian enrolled in seminary. After graduating this past spring, Brian discovered ABWE and knew it was the right fit for him.

"I just knew that missions is what God called me to do," Brian said.



ARABIC MINISTRIES: WALID AND RIMA*

Arabic Baptist Church in Ottawa, Canada

Born in the Middle East, Rima grew up a Maronite Catholic, worshipping saints and having little relationship with God. Fortunately, her eyes were opened to the true power of the gospel at her cousin's wedding when she was 14. While her father refused to attend the wedding because it was at a Baptist church and he viewed Baptists as a cult, Rima's uncle kindly invited to take any children who wanted to go. To her father's dismay, Rima came forward and asked to join him. There was a sermon at the wedding, and it was the first time Rima heard the gospel clearly. She had always thought that God was living somewhere she couldn't reach, but the sermon helped her understand that He was with her and cared for her.

She continued attending her family's church, but she always left feeling empty. It never quite quenched her thirst.

"I thought, 'maybe it's because I'm sitting in the back row. Next time I will try sitting in the front row and I will feel satisfied,'" said Rima. "I tried to fill this thirst I had in my heart in many ways, but nothing worked."

When she went to college, Rima began attending a Baptist church, but when her father found out, he made her leave college. She obeyed out of respect for her father, but Rima still wanted more of God. One day, she received an invitation to the same Baptist church where she had heard the gospel so

many years earlier. Rima desperately wanted to go, but she was hesitant to disobey or offend her father. She prayed and made a deal with God; she would go to the church, but if something stopped her on the way she would take it as a sign. Rima arrived safely at the church and gave her life to God.

Like Rima, Walid was born in the Middle East, and he was no stranger to tragedy. His family moved to the capital city after their house was destroyed, and then his brother was killed in the street. With so much exposure to the uncertainty of life in a war-torn country, Walid pondered life after death. He got the answer when his cousin from Australia risked her own life to come share the gospel with Walid and his family because she feared they may die never knowing Jesus. Soon after her visit, Walid visited a local Baptist church during a community outreach event, and he accepted Christ as his Savior.

Rima and Walid have dedicated their lives to serving God and reaching Arabic communities around the world.

** Some names and photos have been removed for security reasons. In addition to those featured in this issue, we also want to acknowledge that God has called a couple to work with an unreached people group in the Middle East, but they have not been listed to ensure their safety.*



ADVICE FROM FIELD VETERANS

"The keys to joy in following God's will truly are prayer and the word of God."

"Be sure of your calling. When the road gets tough, you need confidence you are exactly where God wants you."

"Keep on keeping on. Your heavenly Father holds your hand each step of the way."

- John and Yvonne Baab, Candidate Class 1977 and 1978

MISSIONS FACTS

Fifteen years ago, there were about 100 prayer networks around the world. Today, there are 4,000 networks involving an estimated 25,000,000 intercessors.

Source: JoshuaProject.net



OPEN: CARLA BLUMETTI

Jacksonville Chapel in Wayne, NJ

Living in Argentina, Carla and her family subscribed to Catholicism, the traditional religion of their culture. They had an empty faith until her family moved to Arizona and were introduced to a new kind of church. A friend from her brother's elementary school invited them to a Baptist church, and Carla's whole family began to understand that faith was more than a tradition.

Through the years and a move to New Jersey, Carla and her family remained heavily involved in

their church. Even so, Carla began to drift from the Lord.

"I feared the Lord, but I didn't live a Christian life," Carla said.

Then God intervened. Carla's church asked her to serve in the youth ministry, and God used that experience to focus her heart back on Him and show her the joy of serving. She went on various service trips with the youth and fell in love with missions. Nervous, but excited, she is following God's call to the field.



OPEN: SUSAN NOLL

Clear Lake Baptist Church in Lakeport, CA

Many veteran missionaries will tell you that a life of service is a marathon, not a sprint. Perseverance is critical, and Susan knows that better than anyone. She served as an ABWE missionary for 10 years, but she was called back to the States to serve God as a teacher in California.

After several new chapters and trials, Susan rediscovered her calling to serve in full-time

missions abroad. She was blessed to find a church that supported her, and she is excited to continue her work as a missionary teacher.

"When God calls you to do it, He enables you to do it," Susan said. "He has proven Himself over and over."

OPEN



2013 New Missionaries At a Glance

PERCENT OF TOTAL ABWE MISSIONARIES **BY FIELD**

EDUCATION

ASSOCIATES

7

BACHELORS

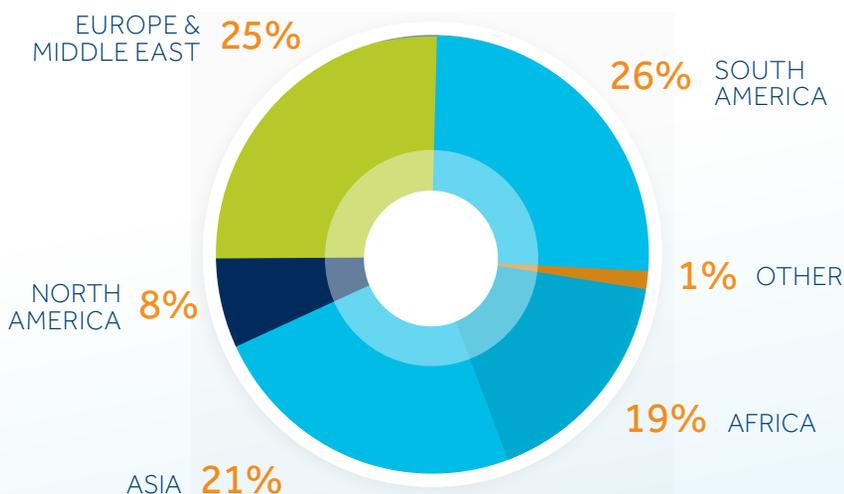
24

MASTERS

14

DOCTORATES

4

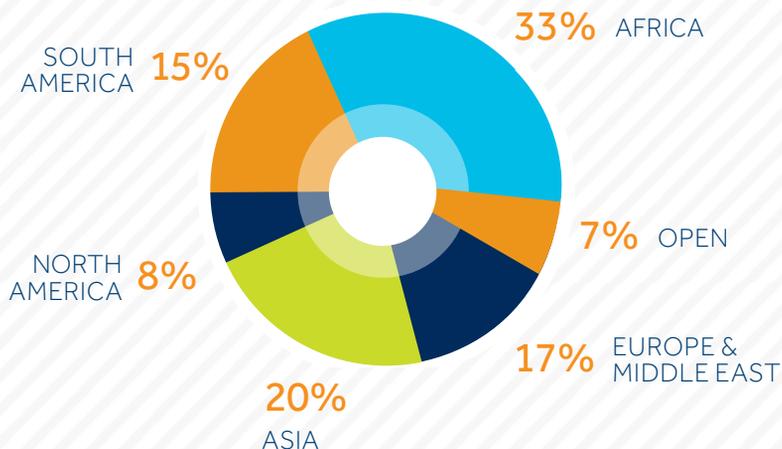


COUNTRIES

WHERE THEY ARE HEADED

- Chile
- Colombia
- East Africa
- East Asia
- Ecuador
- France
- Germany
- Italy
- North America
- Peru
- Papua New Guinea
- Portugal
- South Africa
- South Asia
- Spain
- Tanzania
- Thailand
- Togo
- Trinidad and Tobago

2013 NEW MISSIONARY DEPARTURES **BY FIELD**



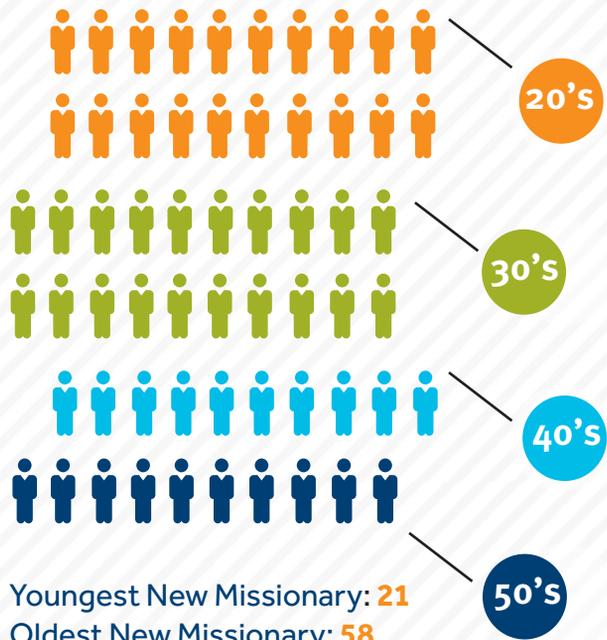
2013 NEW MISSIONARIES



NEW MISSIONARIES' PREVIOUS VOCATIONS:

- Administrative Assistant
- Baker
- Childcare Provider
- Construction
- Doctor
- Marketing Manager
- Missionary
- Nanny
- Nurse
- Pastor
- Social Worker
- Surgeon
- Systems Engineer
- Teacher

NEW MISSIONARY AGES



Youngest New Missionary: **21**
 Oldest New Missionary: **58**
 Average Age: **37**

TOTAL NEW MISSIONARIES

60

Individuals: **12**
 Couples: **24**

Increase from 2012 to 2013:

33%





the
Guy-Next-to-the-Guy
principle

Living in a Muslim community, we are reminded daily it is the month of Ramadan by a young boy who parades through the streets while banging on a drum at 3:15 a.m. His job is to wake everyone up so they can eat breakfast before they have to begin fasting at sunrise. This country is fairly technologically advanced — which means there are alarm clocks — but old traditions die hard.

It was during this time that a devout Muslim, whom I call Tuesday, invited me to play basketball with him and some of his friends. I call him Tuesday because his name sounds like the word for Tuesday. After the first game, we were sitting around talking when Tuesday asked me a question I've heard many times over the years.

“So, what do you think of our prophet?”

There are a variety of ways to answer this question. You can say that Muhammad is not a prophet and the Qur'an is bad. But obviously this approach is offensive and door-closing. Or, you could say that Muhammad is a prophet in the sense that he warned people of God's judgment. While this is inoffensive, it is also misleading.

I went with option three. Without answering the question directly, I explained to him that at the center of our faith is an event in history. This event was foretold and deemed necessary by the prophets and then by Jesus Christ. Then this event came to pass in the presence of hundreds of witnesses. And then the message of the event, that Jesus Christ died for our sins and rose from the dead, was shared all over the world.

After I explained this, I asked, “According to this, what should we think if someone (like Muhammad) comes and says that this event did not happen?”

Tuesday got the message, and we had a good conversation. Being devout, he brought up the typical Muslim arguments. But as we talked, his

two friends spoke up and said, “Tuesday, what you're saying doesn't make sense. This guy is making more sense!”

This is a good reminder of the Guy-Next-to-the-Guy Principle. This is the idea that you may be talking to someone who is outspoken or someone who doesn't seem to be listening or want to understand, but that guy has guys next to him. And those guys are listening to both sides.

You may never reach the ear of the guy you're talking to, but you may get the ear of the guy next to that guy.

I talked to one of Tuesday's friends for quite a while longer, and he said he wanted to visit church and get a copy of a New Testament.

This is the essence of the people we are trying to reach. Some are devout, but many are disenchanted with Islam, and most view Christianity and Islam as two different ways to the same God. To immediately say to someone, “Muhammad is not a prophet,” communicates that in the competition among various prophets our prophet is so good that we don't even count the other ones. By making the cross of Christ the issue, we try to cut through the “Whose prophet is better?” debate. And for those who are truly interested when we explain this, we open up the Old Testament and trace the necessity of Christ's sacrifice starting with Adam, Cain and Abel, Noah, David, Isaiah, and others.

The concept of someone else paying for their sins is definitely a stumbling block for many Muslims. But the Lord is certainly working here. ■



To learn more about how to minister to Muslims, visit www.abwe.org/muslimministry.

Hello? Is it me You're looking for?

By Jim O'Neill

At ABWE, we talk a lot about hearing and heeding God's call. But what exactly does that mean?

In simple terms, a call is a unique series of events and revelations that culminate in someone bowing to the Holy Spirit and offering up their life to go where God sends them and do what He commands.

This year 60 people shared how they received their call to serve as missionaries with ABWE. For some, the call came quietly. For others, it was like a deafening trumpet blast. Sometimes the call was received with gladness, and other times it sparked a spiritual wrestling match.

I found it striking that even though the circumstances to each person's call were unique, there was also a recurring theme: hearing it always took a listening ear and an obedient heart.

As the candidates shared their stories of getting the call, I was transported back to when my wife Sterling and I first considered giving our lives to missions many years ago. God was calling us to serve on a tiny island in the Philippines, but I wanted to go to New York City.

I remember telling God to look at the numbers. Why serve 1.5 million, when I could serve 15 million?

I tried for months to convince myself I was mishearing God. But He kept pointing us toward those 1.5 million people living in Bohol.

After nearly two years of struggling with the idea, I finally admitted that deep down I wanted to go to New York because I was afraid of all of the unknowns in Asia. After coming to that realization, we released our lives to the Lord and began preparing to minister in Bohol.

Today, I can see how it was God's kindness that allowed me to go through that struggle so many years ago. As the new president of ABWE, I know that experience, along with

many others, will help me serve God and our missionaries better.

That is the mystery of God — we get to co-labor with Him as he places us in situations that He continues to use into the future.

Sterling and I served for 13 years in the Philippines, but it was only after we left that we really saw evidence that the gospel had taken root. There were times I was disappointed in the timing of it all because deep down I wanted to get some of the credit. But ultimately, I've learned it's never about us. It's all about Jesus.

I also saw firsthand that the greatest thing about answering our call is that it gives us the opportunity to play a part in the movements of God.

Beyond Bohol, or New York City, we are told that there are about 1.5 billion people who have no church in their culture. Our vision is to share the gospel and develop future generations of Christ followers with a contagious passion to embrace God's call in their own lives.

That is the beautiful continuum of missions.

Whether reaching 1.5 million, 15 million or 1.5 billion, each of us play a role in God's mission. How is God calling you to be a part of it? ■



Dr. Jim O'Neill is ABWE's new president. He was formerly the president and founder of the Center for Global Mission in Chattanooga, TN.



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The Land of the **Unexpected**

Papua New Guinea is “the land of the unexpected.” It is a place where primitive brutality meets high-tech mobile phones. Where rugged bushland meets tender hearts. Where ABWE missionaries meet local pastors as equal partners in the work of multiplying churches and training leaders. By their courageous witness and by God’s intervening grace, the next generation of warriors will wield the sword of the Spirit instead of the arrows of “payback” revenge.



Steve and Sue Mayo serve ABWE teams in the Asia Pacific region, ranging from Japan in the north to Papua New Guinea and Australia in the south and Southeast Asia in the middle. They live in Sydney near their grown children and four grandchildren.

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