

Volume 61 | Issue 2

# Message

Association of Baptists for World Evangelism



## When the Kingdom of God Needs A New Roof

How ABWE's Project Office builds up the body  
of Christ through its construction ministry.

**IN THIS ISSUE:** | Asia Biblical Theological Seminary | Extravagant Love

# EDITORIAL



I once met a man who built an \$80,000 closet for a wealthy family. Standing in the hot sun, rumbling construction equipment kicked up red, West African dust, as Ted Weinberg recalled how that expensive closet grabbed his attention and pointed him toward long-term missions.

“God used the closet to emphasize the futility of [my work], especially when I could be using my skills to serve Him,” Ted told me. So, Ted reframed his purpose and decided that construction work was going to be his full-time ministry and construction sites would be his mission field.

Instead of building fancy closets, Ted has spent the past 16 years helping oversee ABWE’s building endeavors — including a hospital and ministry center that, when completed in late 2014, will provide life-saving medical care and life-changing ministries to the sick and hurting.

Many of the missionaries serving with ABWE’s Project Office have similar stories of a refocused purpose, giving up lucrative careers as engineers, skilled tradesmen and architects to build physical structures for an eternal Kingdom, instead.

Working on more than 70 projects in 23 countries, the project office is just one of many ways people with specific gifts and talents — outside of those considered to be traditional ministries — can serve with ABWE. This issue of *Message* gives an overview of some of the major building projects underway around the world and the impact they will have for future ministry. From hospitals in Africa, to plane hangars in the Amazon jungle, to schools in war-torn regions, our project office stays busy helping missionaries navigate building codes, purchase land, and handle the intricacies of managing local contractors — so that ministries can continue to thrive and grow.

Check out “**When the Kingdom of God Needs A New Roof**” (p. 20) to learn more about these projects and specific ways you could get involved.

I hope you enjoy this latest issue of *Message* and as always, we welcome your feedback on how we can improve in telling God’s stories from the mission field. ■

Leah D. Pickard | ABWE Director of Communications

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#### WHO IS ABWE?

ABWE (Association of Baptists for World Evangelism) 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 to share the story of hope, build communities of faith and serve the world with love. CPC Agreement #1469436.

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# CONNECTIONS

Your guidebook to global missions

## 30 Days of Prayer FOR THE MUSLIM WORLD

July 9 - August 7, 2013

CALLING CHRISTIANS TO PRAY WITH FAITH HOPE AND LOVE

WORLD WIDE

### Praying through Ramadan

ABWE is embarking on an adventure of prayer — and we're inviting you to join us.

From July 9 to August 7, nearly 1,000 of our missionaries and staff will be participating in 30 Days of Prayer for the Muslim World. This initiative coincides with the Islamic holy month of Ramadan, a time when many Muslims are fasting each day from sunrise to sunset and are more deeply aware of spiritual matters. The 30 Days of Prayer campaign is a heartfelt plea that the nearly 1.6 billion members of Islam would come to know Jesus Christ as their Savior. Join us as we pray for Muslims to understand the love God has for them, and His desire to make them new creations through the transforming power of Christ. ■

## GLOBAL PRAYER INITIATIVE

\*The 30 Days of Prayer Initiative is not an official ABWE ministry partner.

For more information  
or to download the 30  
Days of Prayer booklet for \$3,  
visit [www.30-days.net/order](http://www.30-days.net/order)

*We live by faith, not by sight. – 2 Corinthians 5:7*

TOGO

## Fousseni's Legacy

In the city of Kpalime, Togo, missionary Joan Schmitz remembers the life of a blind man named Fousseni with tears of joy.

Fousseni passed away unexpectedly in March, but his legacy lives on as a testimony to how the Lord can change even the hardest of souls.

Having lost his sight as a young man, Fousseni began attending the Village of Light, ABWE's school and ministry to the blind in Togo, West Africa. At the time, he was a staunch Muslim, and utterly hostile to the gospel.

"It was interesting to observe his anger against God and our faith," remembers Joan. "But one could see the Holy Spirit slowly chipping away at Fousseni."

It was during a heated discussion with the school's chaplain, Mr. Woaku, that the Holy Spirit convicted Fousseni about his sin and his need for salvation. From that point, Fousseni became a devoted lover and follower of Jesus Christ.

Fousseni remained strong in his newfound faith, even after his Muslim father disowned him. He finished the Village of Light's small business program and began making liquid soap, which he sold in nearby towns. He frequently encouraged the school's other small business students that they, too, could earn a living.

"He loved to come to my front steps after school and talk about life and our spiritual walk," Joan remembers fondly. "It was such a joy to see him grow in Christ."

However, it was not until she visited Fousseni's mother several days after he passed away that Joan learned the depths of Fousseni's transformation. Fousseni's mother, who was a Christian, said that once her son made the decision to follow Christ he quickly began sharing his testimony in her village.



© PHOTOS BY JEFF RAYMOND

She was so proud of his vibrant witness, as he constantly took time to share the gospel with his neighbors and relatives.

"I'm sad, but encouraged to know that the Village of Light was part of Fousseni's spiritual growth," Joan said. "I'm glad to know my brother in Christ gave his all to the Lord during his time on earth." ■



TOGO

## Us Verses Them

“One of our objectives as a missionary team is to become a part of the community, and to try and avoid the “Us versus Them” trap. It isn’t always easy, since we come with a message that is very exclusive. Jesus made this clear when He said, “I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life. No one comes to the Father but by Me.” The people to whom we minister are also very exclusive. So it was interesting when several people from our team visited the Muslim school on a prayer walk. Someone engaged a school guard in conversation while others prayed. The guard expressed his appreciation for the hospital we are building in their community, and assured the visiting missionaries that the local muslims pray for us every Friday in their religious services.” ■

– Tim Neufeld, *ABWE missionary to Togo*

### Middle East | Israel

1

More Jews have embraced Jesus as Messiah in the past 45 years than in all the years between 100 AD and 1967.

### East Asia | South Korea

2

Once considered impossible to access, South Korea has experienced dramatic church growth in the last century. South Korea is now more than 30 percent Christian, with more than 3,000 churches in the capital of Seoul alone. Several of these churches have more than 1-million members.

### Africa | Sub-Saharan Africa

3

There are an estimated 20,000 new African believers every day. While only three percent Christian in 1900, Africa is now more than 50 percent Christian in some countries. The church in Africa is growing four times faster than the continent’s general population.



### MISSION FACTS | The Challenge

- 9,425 people groups are considered reached with the gospel, totaling about 59 percent of the world’s population.
- Of the world’s roughly 16,587 total people groups, 7,162 of them, or more than 2.8 billion people are identified as unreached.
- 6,119 people groups, or 85 percent, of all unreached people groups are in the 10/40 Window, the geographic area spanning latitudes 10 degrees and 40 degrees north of the equator and covering the Middle East, North Africa, and Central and Southeast Asia.
- Until recently, becoming a Christian in Afghanistan meant a possible death sentence. Now, missionaries in Kabul are reporting an unprecedented openness to Christianity. Pray for the new believers.

\* Source: [joshuaproject.net](http://joshuaproject.net)

UKRAINE

**Free Indeed**

The pressure Natasha\* faced during Ukrainian medical school was crushing. But it was the horrible burden she felt from her past decisions that became truly unbearable.

Fearing pregnancy would be too difficult to handle during school, Natasha had several abortions in her early twenties. Although she eventually became a Christian, the burden of guilt from her past overwhelmed her. Her marriage crumbled and fell apart and her relationships with her two children deteriorated.

In desperation, Natasha began attending the a Bible study offered by the pro-life organization “Choose Life,” which was started by ABWE missionaries Miriam Wheeler and Holly Friesen. Led by Ukrainian women who have been disciples by Miriam, “Forgiven and Set Free” offers God’s gracious healing to women sturggling with guilt or trauma caused by their abortions. After weeks of studying Biblical principles, Natasha fully grasped the magnitude of God’s amazing love and forgiveness. In one beautiful



moment, Natasha recognized that Jesus’ sacrifice on the cross was powerful enough to truly remove all of her guilt and pain.

Natasha wept as she prayed in front of the group, thanking God for His indescribable gift. Miriam reports that when she was finished, the group saw a radiant joy wash over Natasha’s face, the likes of which they had never seen before. Truly, God has set Natasha free! ■

*\*name changed for privacy*



JAPAN

**Reaching the Deaf in Cambodia**

In March, missionary Natalie Beck took a group of deaf teenagers and young adults on a mission trip from Japan to Cambodia. Accompanied by their pastor, the group sought to encourage local teammates and Cambodian partners, and share the gospel with whomever the Lord put in their path.

While the team made valuable contacts with those already ministering in Cambodia, they were touched by the deep need to reach the deaf around the world with the gospel.

Best of all, when the team returned home to Japan, two students shared the Good News with a high school friend who prayed to receive Jesus Christ as her Savior! ■



## NICARAGUA

### Love One Another

Carmen Heffner's heart sank when she learned one of the girls at the Bible study she was leading had a bad day at school, and would not be coming to Bible study because of it. Her young heart broken, the girl stayed home, feeling sorry for herself.

Carmen continued with the planned study. Using glasses of water, Carmen taught the girls only God will fill their emotional cups; they cannot depend on anyone else for what only the Father can give. She compared those who fill up with the love of God through His word and prayer with those who look for love, acceptance and affirmation from others.

The girls grasped the lesson and took it upon themselves to gather the visual aids and walk to their friend's house, where they taught her what they learned. After the lesson, they each went around the room and told their friend how much they loved her.

"My heart was bursting with joy at seeing these precious girls understanding their need for Christ's love, and then applying that to their friend's life," says Carmen. "It was so beautiful!" ■



## CHILE

### Baptized into Christ's Family

Missionaries Pedro and Stephanie Garcia enjoyed a church-wide effort to celebrate the baptisms of five church members in March. We celebrate those who chose to follow in Jesus' footsteps into the water. ■



## HARRISBURG HEADQUARTERS

### 50 Years of Service

Fran Weddle arrived in Peru with ABWE in 1961 to work with missionary kids. After 33 years of service she retired from the mission field. But that didn't stop Fran from being a part of ministry. For the past 17 years she has faithfully worked as a volunteer at the mission headquarters. Recently the ABWE staff was able to celebrate her servant heart and honor her for 50 years of service.

When asked to give a few words, Fran chose her favorite: "He who calls you is faithful; he will surely do it."

-1 Thessalonians 5:24 ■

CZECH REPUBLIC

**Letting Their Light Shine**

The parents of children attending Steve and Cari Wendel’s Kid’s English Club ministry know something is different about these ABWE missionaries. Just recently, one of the mothers told the Wendels, “You have something special inside of you that Czech people need.” Please pray that the gospel’s light may continue to brightly shine in the lives of these students and their parents. ■

PAPUA NEW GUINEA

**Touching Lives Through Medicine**

Missionaries to Papua New Guinea since 1990, Bill and Lori Smith returned to their very first church plant for a medical outreach ministry this spring. In one day of ministry Lori attended to 178 patients. Since then, the church has been full every Sunday, and adults have been making salvation decisions nearly every week. ■

CAMBODIA

**The Language of Laughter**

Although he is still learning the challenging Khmer language, missionary Todd Janes managed to laugh and enjoy his time with a neighbor he affectionately called “Yiey,” which means “grandmother.”

“She was talking, and I was listening. Although I didn’t know what she was saying, somehow we were both having a good time,” Todd said. “I began thinking, ‘Won’t it be nice when we can finally have a conversation in Khmae?’”

Pray for missionaries like Todd and his wife, Jennifer, who face the challenge of learning a new language and culture when they get to the mission field. ■

**[STATS]**



MISSION FACTS | **New Found Faith**

**A Pew Research Center analysis on religion and public life in the US found people who have switched faiths, or joined a faith after being unaffiliated with a religion, are slightly more religious than those who have remained in their childhood faith. The study measured the importance of religion in their lives, frequency with which they attend religious services and other measures of religious commitment.**

Slightly more than two-thirds of converts (69 percent) say religion is very important to them, compared with 62 percent of non-converts.

Half of converts (51 percent) attend worship services at least once a week, compared with 44 percent of non-converts.

More than eight-in-ten converts (82 percent) believe in God with absolute certainty, compared with 77 percent of non-converts.

Source: pewforum.org



TOGO

## Tell us the Truth

Anna Chubb continues her work with the Fulani people and wrote that the latest innovation to hit Togo is the micro-SD card, which allows people to play audio files from their cell phones. This makes it possible to put gospel recordings in the myriad of local languages on phones, and Anna has been doing this for people interested in learning about God. She received a call that two Fulani women would be coming by her house to get their audio files on the SD cards that Anna had given them. When they arrived, Anna asked, “Why did you want me to put those files on your card?”

The women replied, “Because we want to learn the Word of God and we have confidence that you are going to tell us the truth.”

“It is good to hear God’s Word in your own language. But just hearing it is not enough. If you make food and you leave it sitting in the pot and you don’t eat it, it does not give you good health. If you only listen and you do not meditate on the meaning of these words from God for your life, it will not help you,” Anna said.

“We want to understand these words and tell everyone in our family about them,” the women told her.

The women also heard that ABWE missionaries had an evangelistic film about Jesus in their language and they did not want to leave until they had watched some of it. After they watched for a while missionaries took the opportunity to tell them, “In the time of Jesus, you see that people did not like Him and they didn’t want to hear His words. Even today there are many people who do not like Jesus and they do not want to hear about His teachings. We are very happy that you want to learn about Him and to study God’s Word, but you must know that perhaps not all of your family and friends will accept this. Maybe you will suffer. Jesus said that the road of truth which leads to God is a narrow way and a hard way and not many people find it.”



© PHOTOS BY JEFF RAYMOND

Amazingly the women replied, “We don’t care if anyone else follows us or if we suffer. We want to hear more about this message.”

There is an open door for the gospel in Northern Togo. Let us pray that God will do a mighty work throughout Northern Togo, and beyond. ■

# [FROM THE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT]

Harrisburg, PA

HEADQUARTERS, HARRISBURG PA

## ABWE MINISTRIES INC. ANNOUNCES NEW PRESIDENT



After an extensive 2-year search, Dr. D. "Jim" O'Neill, a leader of leaders with a heart for the mission field has been named the new president of ABWE Ministries.

Dr. O'Neill is the President and Founder of the Center for Global Mission out of Chattanooga, Tenn., which equips emerging leaders to make a global impact for Jesus Christ. Previously, Dr. O'Neill spent more than two years at Tennessee Temple University serving as executive vice president and interim president, nine years serving as president of CrossWorld missions agency, and five years leading the academic missiology program at Liberty University. He and his wife, Sterling, also served 13 years in Asia as church planters.

"I am pleased that a person of Dr. O'Neill's stature will step in to serve as president of ABWE Ministries. Our prayers are with him and Sterling as he undertakes this vital role of leadership," says Dr. Alan Cockrell, who has served as ABWE's executive administrator since 2011.

Dr. O'Neill has two degrees in missiology, a doctorate from Western Seminary and a master's from Grace Theological Seminary. He received his bachelor's degree from Liberty University. He is the author of "Teaming Up With God: How God Invades Pagan Culture," published by Harcourt and Brace in 1997.

On June 20, 2013, the board of ABWE Ministries unanimously approved Dr. O'Neill's appointment as mission president, determining that his heart for the gospel and professional/ministry experience in leadership development, cross-cultural church planting, urban and student ministry, and missions in limited-access countries makes him uniquely

qualified to lead ABWE into a new era of worldwide evangelism, disciple-making and church planting.

Dr. and Mrs. O'Neill will be introduced at the ABWE Board meetings and the Missionary Enrichment Conference, in Washington, D.C. Additionally, an official installation service will be held this September.

"Through all of my ministry experiences, the common thread has been a love for assisting younger leaders in their preparation for God's Kingdom assignment," Dr. O'Neill says. "We are commanded to make disciples of all nations. I am thrilled to play a role in ABWE's rich 86-year history of training up leaders who desire to take the hope of Jesus to the ends of the earth."

"Additionally, I am deeply humbled, and incredibly excited to partner with ABWE's more than 900 missionaries as they endeavor to share the story of hope, build communities of faith and serve the world with love."

Dr. O'Neill also hopes to deepen relationships with the mission's thousands of partner churches and donors, as ABWE continues providing vital services and training to help expedite their Great Commission ministries.

"Dr. O'Neill is uniquely qualified to lead ABWE," says Larry Green, Chairman of ABWE's Board of Directors. "He is not only an experienced leader, he has a passion for developing the next generation of global leaders. He has served with his wife in the mission field, trained missionaries and mentored church leaders from around the world. We're excited about what the future will bring under his leadership."

David Smith, president of ABWE Canada agrees. "ABWE Canada celebrates the appointment of Dr. Jim O'Neill as the new President of ABWE Ministries, and we look forward to continuing our strategic partnership for the glory of God."

The O'Neills have been married 32 years. They have four adult children, ranging in age from 20 to 29. ■



# 'Asianifying' the Church

Adapting the Western approach to teaching theology in the East.

By Jim Blumenstock, with Paul Luce and Leah D. Pickard

“The first class I taught for the Asia Biblical Theological Seminary (ABTS) was in Iloilo, Philippines, in 2001. I was relatively new to graduate-level teaching: a young man of 26-years-old, fresh out of seminary, and most certainly an idealist. I had carefully planned my lessons but I was still incredibly nervous. *Do I really have enough material to talk for 40 hours? Will the students listen to a 26-year-old professor? Should I be doing this at all?* While these questions were definitely relevant, the first day revealed that I should have been asking an entirely different question.”

*“Am I ready to teach in Asia?”*

Twelve years later, Jim Blumenstock continues to recall his first days at ABTS from its headquarters in Chiang Mai, Thailand. “The topic was angelology. This was the easiest topic for me to prepare since there was so little written on it: just 18 pages in our textbook. Based on my notes, I figured the lectures and discussion would last one hour; maybe two max. Much to my surprise, the discussion spanned two full days. What I thought was pretty straightforward quickly became extremely complicated when the students started asking questions.”

The student’s questions were overwhelming. “I was utterly ill-prepared. I stumbled around, grasping for answers, but realized that my training was woefully insufficient in this area. Clearly, I hadn’t given enough thought to these passages, and obviously they had.”



© ALL PHOTOS BY TOM KILPATRICK



*In addition to serving as Dean of the Asia Biblical Theological Seminary, Jim Blumenstock is also a professor.*

### East Meets West

In the years that followed that exchange, ABTS leadership set out to refine how theology was taught, aiming to become an “East meets West seminary,” says Jim, who now serves as the school’s dean. “While we want to become more Asian in how we think and what we teach, we also want to keep the good parts of a Western-style of education. We want to communicate both ideas and stories; philosophies and examples; doctrines and illustrations.”

This re-evaluation of what it means to be a North American seminary in Asia meant looking at how to best prepare Asian believers for ministry. At ABTS, theological education is no longer a set of lesson plans confined to a classroom. It is a holistic challenge for students to take their book knowledge and translate it into a real-world ministry that will impact their culture.

How does ABTS do this?

“First, we listen,” says Jim. “Unfortunately, this is not something theologians are very good at. We tend to think we have all the answers. But it is so important to listen to our Asian brothers and sisters about how God is moving among churches in Asia and what problems they are facing. Secondly, we commit to learn from one another, no matter

our culture or location. Finally, we look for places we need to change — whether that means adapting our curriculum, shifting our teaching methods or reevaluating our strategies.”

### Theology in Action

For ABTS graduate, Dan Formento, nothing exemplified this philosophy of ministry more than an encounter with an angry teenager named Kenneth.

In 2001, Dan walked away from a potential engineering job to become a pastor in the Philippines. After meeting Kenneth at church, Dan took him to a local fast-food restaurant to talk. As the teen opened up, the young pastor was suddenly peppered with angry questions. Kenneth’s father had abandoned him, leaving a gaping hole he had filled with rage and rebellion. Dan knew Kenneth’s pain all too well. His own father had left his mother and four siblings when Dan was only a toddler. Although he



# ABTS at a Glance

**Year Founded:** 1982

**Regional Office:** Chiang Mai, Thailand

**Seminar Site Locations:**

Bangkok, Thailand; Delhi, India; Cagayan de Oro, Manila, Iloilo, and Baguio, Philippines; Yangon, Myanmar; Singapore and Goroka, Papua New Guinea

**Degrees Offered:**

In-Ministry Master of Religious Education  
Master of Arts in Interdisciplinary Studies in Bible, Theology and Ministry

accepted Christ at an early age, Dan also struggled to forgive his father.

Kenneth connected with Dan over this shared experience, and as Dan developed a mentoring relationship, Kenneth began to work through his own pain.

One day, Dan was able to share how he met his father as an adult and forgave him. That act of profound love amazed Dan's father and he became a Christian that same day.

As Dan shared his testimony, Kenneth's heart was awakened to a deeper understanding of the gospel. For Dan, the exchange brought the ABTS philosophy of ministry to life. Until this point, he had seen youth ministry as a stepping-stone. Suddenly, he realized he was uniquely equipped to minister to the young people he came in contact with.

"Every time I learned something from ABTS, the first audience I shared it with was my young people," he says. "I saw amazing growth in their understanding of the Bible."

**FACULTY**

**Professors:** 4

**Adjunct Faculty:** 21

**STUDENTS**

**Average Age:** 41.5

**Places of Origin:**

Australia, Cambodia, China, Hong Kong, India, Japan, Myanmar, New Zealand, Pakistan, Philippines, Singapore, South Asia, South Korea, Thailand, US, Vietnam

**How They Serve:**

Administration, Associate Pastor, Bible College Teacher, Camping Ministry, Chaplain, Christian Educator, Evangelist, Lay Leader, Leadership Trainer, Literature Ministry, Missionary, Pastor, Professors, Sports Ministry, Youth Ministry

**IN 2012**

**Completion Rate:** 84%

- 145 students attended
- 223 course enrollments plus 27 audits representing 17 countries
- 28 graduates from 8 countries
- 11 graduates in the first commencement in Papua New Guinea – *ABTS is the first graduate-level theological program in the country*
- First ABTS resident courses were taught in India
- 39 new applications received
- \$41,000 raised for ABTS scholarships to assist Asians in poorer economies

**SINCE 1982**

**Total Graduates:** 306 – from 23 countries



*Students at the ABTS go on to serve as pastors, teachers, and Christian leaders in their home countries.*

Dan learned from ABTS that his theological education wasn't of much use if it stayed locked in "the ivory tower" of higher education — it needed relevance in the real world.

### **The Resurrection of a Ministry**

Before ABTS, Pastor Jhun Cairo was convinced he was a failure.

At 21-years-old, Jhun became the senior pastor of a church after being the associate pastor for just six months. He served nine grueling years believing that, as head pastor, the success of his church depended solely on him.

"It was so hard," Jhun remembers. "You come to the point where you just feel so tired."

Unable to keep up with the pressure, Jhun resigned.

He engaged in a period of intense self-evaluation and concluded that he had failed.

But God wasn't finished with him yet.

"I thank the Lord because he is the God of second chances," Jhun says. "Through his Word, I realized I had the wrong motivations when I started out in ministry." Jhun was trying to do everything himself and had come up lacking.

God led him to Ephesians 4:12: "And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints

for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ."

This renewed perspective helped Jhun use his God-given gifts to help equip others in ministry so that he didn't have to carry the burden alone. What had been his area of greatest failure was about to become a great success.

### **Outreach Explosion**

Recharged and ready for ministry, Jhun knew he needed to get back into ABTS, where he had briefly studied before his resignation. However, tuition was an issue. Nearly 84 percent of the seminary's students come from poor families in rural areas. While each course costs \$465, substantial donations to a scholarship fund allow ABTS leadership to grant scholarships that reduce the price in the Philippines down to just \$60 per course. Still, this reduced portion can still be a hardship for students, who often seek further funding assistance from their sending churches, ministry partners and families.

“ ABTS takes the best of the Eastern world and the best of the Western world and teaches students to apply God’s truth within a global context .”

Fortunately for Jhun, a member of his former congregation recognized his newfound zeal and agreed to fund his education at ABTS.

“We can never underestimate what the Lord can do when we delight in Him!” Jhun exclaims.

Now a pastor in the Philippines, Jhun is transforming the lessons he has learned at ABTS into sermons for his congregation. He recalls how a series of sermons on reaching the lost ignited the church of 100 believers with a newfound excitement for the gospel.

“It’s very exciting to see how many people have been saved and how the members of the church are evangelizing and praying for their communities and families,” Jhun says.

Jhun has also helped many of the church’s men develop as leaders to work alongside him in the ministry. Several men now lead evangelistic outreaches to neighboring towns.

“I’ve learned about being humble before God and to allow the Holy Spirit to do His part in my life and my ministry,” Jhun says.

#### A Vision for the Future

With more than 300 graduates representing 23 Asian countries, Dan and Jhun are by no means the only pastors benefiting from ABTS.

As the church in Asia continues to expand, Jim believes the seminary’s “East Meets West” vision will help strengthen the body of Christ.

“In many respects, the Asian church of today closely resembles the early church during the first four centuries A.D.,” Jim explains. “Christianity has to compete with

Buddhism, Hinduism, Islam, communism and atheism. Because of this, the Christian church is trying to understand its identity within communities and cultures that have had very little history with the gospel.”

And while the church in Asia is growing rapidly, it is very young and immature.

“Some countries, like the Philippines, have great depth in their Christian leadership. But other countries, like China, can’t keep up with the growth,” he says. “We desperately need to provide a solid Biblical foundation to prepare church leaders to lead their growing congregations in this pluralistic setting.”

But as long as Christianity is viewed as a Western religion, it will have a hard time taking root in Asia.

“What church leaders need in this setting is a solid grounding in God’s Word. However, they need a solid grounding that is thoroughly Asian. (continued)



"They need to demonstrate to people that Christianity is not a foreign and Western religion. They need to be faithful to the Christian tradition, but also realize that tradition must become incarnate if it is to be understood and accepted — if Christianity wears a Western face, it will not take root in Asia. So the deepening of the Asian church necessitates an 'Asianifying' of the Asian church," Jim says.

The East Meets West vision of ABTS will enable Asian church leaders to develop a unique identity for the body of Christ in Asia. It will empower the Asian church to stand on its own two feet, while remaining faithful to the gospel — and sharing its unique perspectives with the rest of the world.

"It demonstrates that the West has as much to learn from Asian believers as they have from us," Jim says. "In the end, both sides are enriched as we all pilgrim together, awaiting the fullness of God's Kingdom." ■

 To support the ABTS scholarship fund, visit [www.abwe.org/give/projects/abts-scholarships](http://www.abwe.org/give/projects/abts-scholarships)

 In Canada, call 877.690.1009



ABTS historical photo

## ABTS History

Asia Biblical Theological Seminary was opened in 1982 to train new pastors of church plants. Missionaries from the Philippine Association of Baptists for World Evangelism (PABWE) reached out to ABWE, Dr. John Lillis, then with Baptist Mid-Mission, and Cornerstone University's Grand Rapids Theological Seminary. PABWE missionaries realized that people who were training new pastors and church planters needed a master's level education to prepare them for this task. Within a year, Lillis brought the seminary's accredited In-Ministry Master of Religious Education degree to the Philippines, and ABTS was born.

Courses are now taught by a combination of Grand Rapids Theological Seminary professors, qualified American and Asian adjunct professors, and residential ABWE missionaries, along with missionaries from other organizations.

The seminary offers fully accredited masters degrees including In-Ministry Master of Religious Education and a Masters of Arts in Interdisciplinary Studies in Bible, Theology and Ministry.



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# When the Kingdom of God Needs A New Roof

How ABWE's Project Office builds up the body  
of Christ through its construction ministry.



Compiled by Paul Luce and Leah D. Pickard



**From remote mountain villages to sprawling shoreline cities,** ABWE's commitment to share the gospel takes our missionaries to the far reaches of the earth. Whether they are growing food for the hungry using aquaponics, caring for the sick at our Christ-centered hospitals or preparing new pastors at our seminaries, ABWE is one mission with a thousand ministries. Wherever we go and whatever we do, our focus is the same — to share the story of hope, build communities of faith and serve the world with love.

ABWE's Project Office oversees more than 70 construction and expansion projects for some of our "thousand" ministries, putting a literal roof over their head or foundation under their feet — and always helping them to build the kingdom of God here on earth — one hammer swing at a time.

### **AIDS MINISTRY: CALVARY CARE HOME**

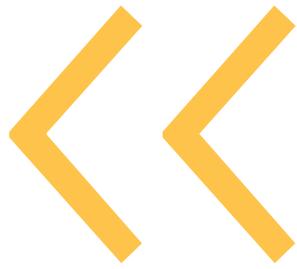
Richards Bay, South Africa

“What really burdened (my husband) Kyle and I were those who are dying silently, who had never had an opportunity to hear the gospel. That is where the excitement comes in hospice ministry. You can't wait to present the gospel. You know their time is limited.”

— Heather Farran, ABWE missionary to South Africa

Located in the epicenter of the African HIV/AIDS pandemic, Calvary Care Home provides 24-hour end-of-life care for HIV/AIDS patients. Many Calvary Care Center patients have been ostracized by their families and their communities. ABWE missionaries serve alongside qualified South African caregivers. Funds are being sought to purchase medical supplies, in addition to hiring and retaining caregivers.





## EDUCATION: KOSOVO LEADERSHIP ACADEMY AND MINISTRY CENTER

Mitrovica, Kosovo

“I’m convinced that with this project, God is doing something amazing throughout all Kosovo, then the Balkans, then throughout Eastern Europe. We serve an awesome God who does bigger things than we can ever imagine, and above and beyond whatever we can ask or think.”

— Nadine Hennesey, Kosovo Leadership Academy founder

Through the work of a non-profit entity, Global Neighbors\*, we plan to build a world-class school in a country where the toll of war is reflected in the people who remain — more than 50 percent of the population of Kosovo is under the age of 25. The Kosovo Leadership Academy and Ministry Center will use the platform of education to bring the reconciling love of Christ to a newly established nation struggling to heal the scars of a decade-long war. Final design plans are complete and workers are in the process of relocating to the country to staff the school when it opens.



*\*Global Neighbors is a non-profit entity that exists to strengthen the social and moral ties of communities and families around the world, especially in developing nations in the areas of humanitarian aid, medical care, educational enrichment, economic development and cultural exchange.*



### For more information on how to give to these projects:

Donor Services  
800.901.2293 | [donorhelp@abwe.org](mailto:donorhelp@abwe.org)  
[www.abwe.org/give](http://www.abwe.org/give)



### **HUMANITARIAN RELIEF: SYRIAN RELIEF MINISTRY**

Middle East

“ Sometimes [the Syrians] will say, ‘You know we’re not Christians, right?’ Because they have no category for this kind of love we are showing them. And the Christians pause, and say, ‘Let us explain to you who this God is, who cares for you.’ When they hear this, the Syrian refugees are absolutely amazed.”

— Jack Shiflett, ABWE Regional Administrator

Since a civil war began in Syria in 2011, an ABWE has partnered with local Christians to share the love of Christ with Syrian refugees who have fled to neighboring countries. To date, our donors have given more than \$70,000, which has been used to provide housing, food, clothing and Arabic Bibles to these refugees. Relief teams are also holding children’s ministries and Bible studies. The team hopes that these outreaches will be the foundation for starting a small school or church in this region.

### **CHURCH PLANTING: LOWER CICERON COMMUNITY BAPTIST CHURCH**

Lower Ciceron, St. Lucia

“ Back in 2006, my wife, Bibiana, and I passed out fliers to the community inviting local children to a Bible club. We passed a woman who said, ‘I have been praying that God would send someone to teach the children!’ Two weeks later, we had 64 boys who came to the club. Since then, this ministry has continued to grow.”

— Peter Morgan, ABWE missionary to St. Lucia

Lower Ciceron Community Baptist Church on the tropical island of St. Lucia is ministering to a community trapped in poverty, addiction and sin. The church currently meets in a rented facility, but its’ thriving youth ministry and vibrant community outreach efforts are bringing in more people than the building can hold. To meet the growing need, the church has purchased land to build a church and ministry facility.





### **CAMP MINISTRY: NICARAGUA MINISTRY CENTER**

Managua, Nicaragua

“The Nicarargua Ministry Center gives us a place where we can build relationships with pastors, and teach them about evangelism for churches, and our big push is church planting. We have the pastors come in for a week, once per month, for a two-year period. After they’re taught, they go to the field to apply what they’ve learned.”

— Steve Robinson, ABWE missionary to Nicaragua

The ABWE Ministry Center in Nicaragua serves as a training facility for church planters, and offers local churches a place to host retreats, camps and short-term mission teams. Each year the center ministers to more than 1,000 children. Plans are underway to build a multipurpose facility that will allow for larger groups and ministry throughout the year — even during the country’s rainy season.

### **CHRISTIAN PUBLISHING: SOW AND HARVEST MEDIA SOCIETY**

Sydney, Australia

“The pen is still mightier than the sword — which is why the Australia-based Sow and Harvest Media Society is essential in ABWE’s quest to reach Australia and beyond for Christ. Gospel booklets, discipleship tools, and even a Pidgin hymnal are among the first projects completed — with familiar cultural language and idioms.

— Steve Mayo, ABWE Asia Pacific Regional Administrator

Started by ABWE missionaries in Australia, the Sow and Harvest Media Society is a Baptist publishing company whose materials have aided church-planting, evangelism and discipleship ministries across the continent. In an effort to begin reaching into Asia, the company is expanding its operations center. An office unit with ample space in a Sydney suburb is ready to be purchased for Sow and Harvest Media Society’s publishing headquarters, and will be used in conjunction with other ABWE Australia ministries.



**AVIATION MINISTRY: AVIATION MINISTRY HANGAR**

Santo Antônio do Içá, Brazil

“What can take six hours by boat is going to take 40 minutes by plane. We have groups of believers asking, ‘When are you going to come up here?’ So, this plane is really going to facilitate travel to spread the gospel.”

— Lloyd Peace, ABWE missionary to Brazil



With no roads connecting villages in the dense rainforest, missionaries must take to the waterways or the sky to bring the gospel to the people of the Amazon. Our team has already purchased an amphibious, fuel-efficient plane to take a missionary doctor into the dense jungle to conduct medical outreaches, evangelism and discipleship among indigenous people groups. Construction on a much-needed airplane hangar for the aircraft will begin in September.

**RADIO MINISTRY: HOPE RADIO**

Mango, Togo

“If we have a quality radio program for people to listen to, they will listen to it. God’s word can be given out over the airways to the people of Togo, because people want to listen to something. And we believe that it’s God’s word that they need to hear.”

— Ron Washer, ABWE Director for Africa



With over 1.3 million unsaved listeners within its broadcast range, ABWE’s Hope Radio Ministry has an unprecedented opportunity to share the Good News in the predominantly Muslim nations of West Africa. A partner ministry with Bible Basics International, Hope Radio will work hand-in-hand with ABWE’s Hospital of Hope, assisting in evangelism and discipleship in the region.

**THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION: BAPTIST THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY**

Lima, Peru

“The vision for the seminary is to offer university-level training for ministry leaders ... there is an increased expectation and need for ministry leaders to be well-trained. We want to serve the Peruvian church with a high standard of academic excellence, as we believe God is preparing Peru to be a force for missions in the world.”

— Jonathan Stone, ABWE missionary to Peru

Founded in 1984, Baptist Theological Seminary provides college-level ministry training for Peruvian church leaders. Serving between 80-100 students per semester, the seminary is slowly outgrowing one of the building it shares with another organization. ABWE missionaries are selling a camp property to fund the purchase of a building in downtown Lima, where they seek to expand the campus and increase enrollment to 250. They also plan to launch a Christian liberal arts university from the new campus.



# VISUALS

## The **ABWE** Project Office

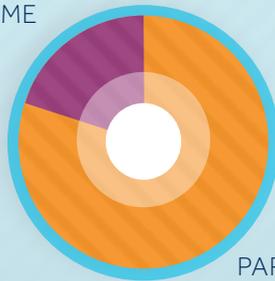
### ESTABLISHED: 1992

The ABWE Project Office oversees the construction of our ministry projects around the world. Project office architects, engineers, construction managers and workers provide invaluable expertise to ensure ABWE's ministry projects are constructed safely and efficiently — all for the glory of God.

### PERSONNEL:

**22** Full-Time  
(individuals/couples)  
**146** Part-Time  
In 2012  
(individuals/couples)

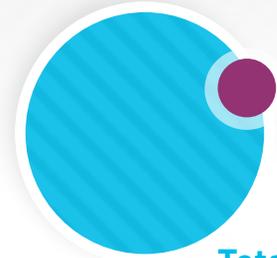
FULL-TIME



PART-TIME/  
VOLUNTEERS



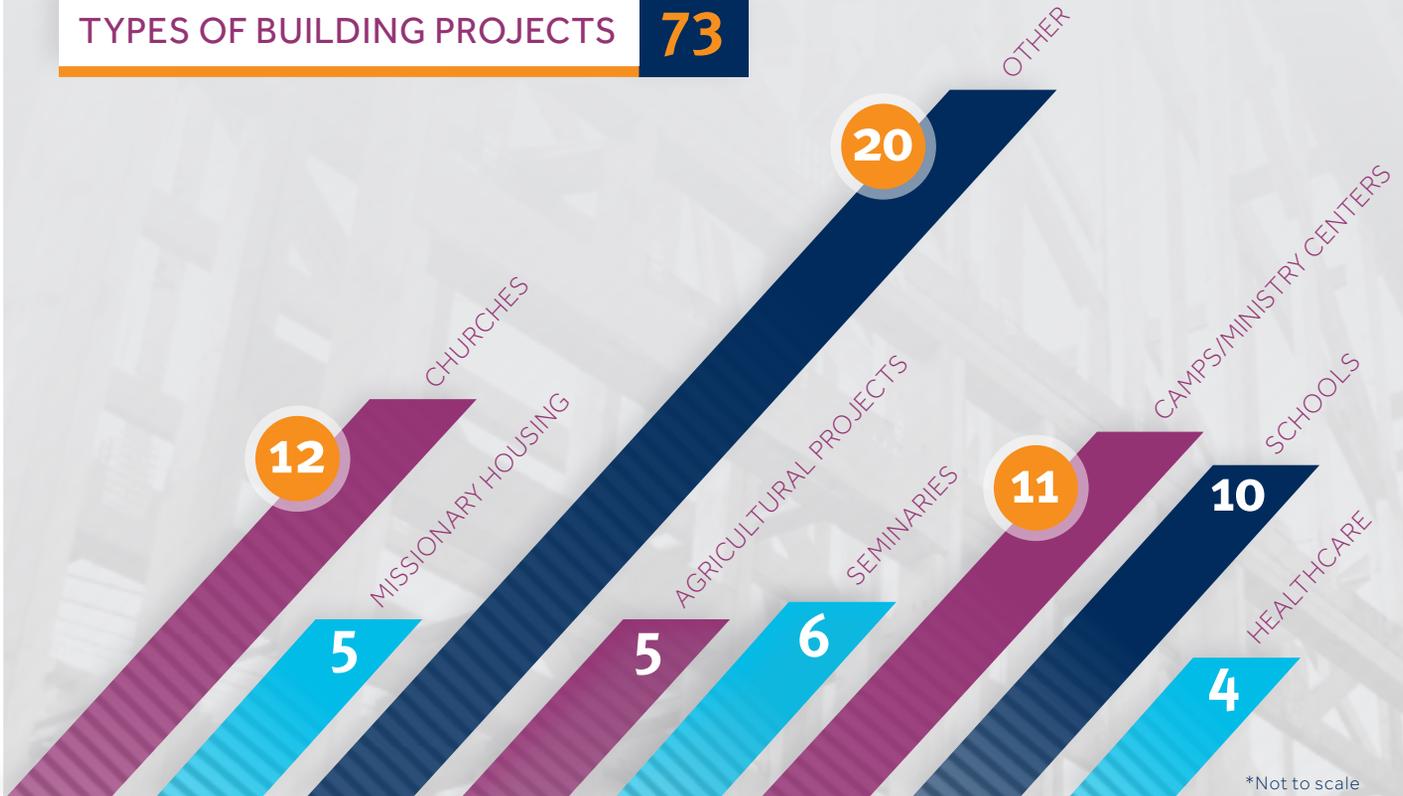
### COST OF PROJECTS:



**Average:**  
\$507,773

**Total:**  
\$37,067,500

### TYPES OF BUILDING PROJECTS **73**



\*Not to scale

## COUNTRIES WITH CURRENT PROJECTS

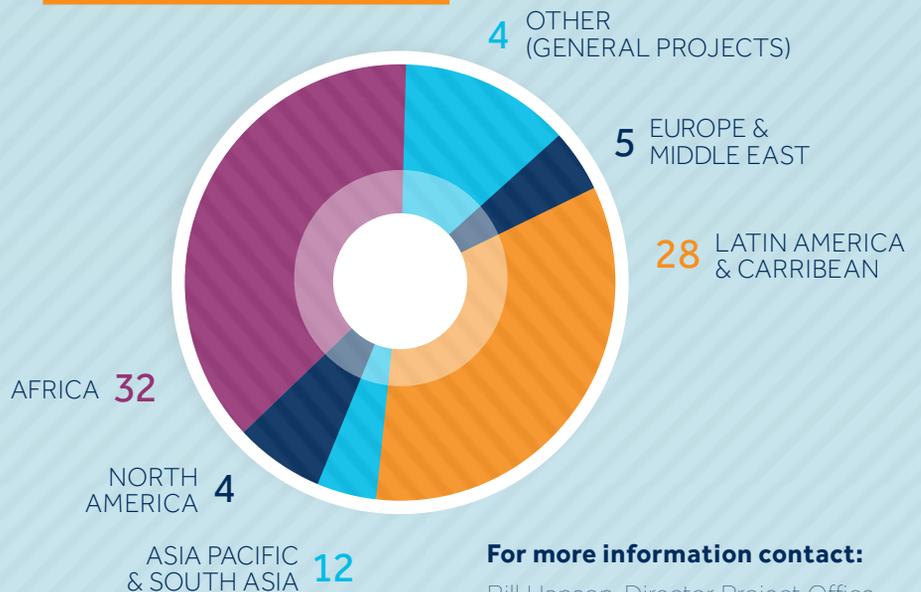
23



### TYPES OF MINISTRIES INCLUDED IN THE "OTHER" CATEGORY:

- Radio Station
- Property Management
- Property Acquisition
- Remodeling
- Maintenance
- Compassion Relief Projects

## PROJECTS BY REGION



### For more information contact:

Bill Hanson, Director Project Office  
 717.901.6911 | billh@abwe.org  
[abwe.org/serve/construction-projects](http://abwe.org/serve/construction-projects)

# Extravagant LOVE



I consider myself to be somewhat of an *expert* on the topic of extravagant *love*.

By **Lori Smith** | *ABWE Missionary*

I consider myself to be somewhat of an expert on the topic of extravagant love. I have learned that such overwhelming and all-inclusive love is free to receive — no strings attached — but is given with great sacrifice.

Recently, my husband Bill and I had the opportunity to extravagantly love the dear people in the community of our first church plant, Ufeto, Papua New Guinea, through a medical outreach clinic. We deeply love the believers there, as they are the first community that helped us grow from green, newbie missionaries to the old timers we are today.

Although doing an outreach in their community was wonderful, it was also difficult. That day we treated hundreds of sores and wounds — I examined and treated 178 people myself. We spent hundreds of dollars on thousands of pills and gallons of liquid medicine. But we touched lives.

During the day, I encountered a woman I met at a previous outreach day in Ufeto. I remembered that she had come with her young daughter and grandson. They were so worried: the little guy had massive diarrhea and, despite treatment at the hospital, it just would not stop. He was so weak and lethargic his mother and grandmother were afraid he would die.

I had treated him with some different medications that he had not been given yet. Then, I stopped and prayed that God to touch his little body, and help the medicine stop the diarrhea from literally draining the life from him.

Amazingly, this little boy was one of my first patients during this most recent outreach. He was in glowing health. His mother happily reported that soon after that treatment her son soon started eating and drinking like a cow.

When I treated the grandmother later that day, I briefly mentioned to her how thrilled I was that God had healed her grandson. She was totally shocked that I had remembered them. I told her that I had been praying for each of them since the previous outreach.

Tears ran down her face. She hugged me so tight I literally heard my ribs pop. As it turns out, earlier that morning she was the sole person to put her hand up for salvation at church. She had seen the God of love restore her grandson through the compassion of medical evangelism, and decided she wanted in!

Our bodies were truly spent by the end of the outreach clinic day, but the pastor of the Ufeto church reports that the church has been full every Sunday since then, and adults have been making salvation decisions nearly every week. Extravagant, life-changing love has great cost, but oh, the benefits are countless. ■



Lori Smith is an ABWE medical missionary serving in Papua New Guinea.

## When East meets West

By Jim Blumenstock

The class was Historical Theology Survey; the location was Bangkok, Thailand. I had taught this class several times already. I knew the material and loved to teach it. And yet, there I stood before a class of eight students, feeling perplexed and frustrated.

The students represented six nations, including Thailand, Vietnam, Cambodia, Myanmar, Bangladesh, and the Philippines; all countries with checkered pasts, and many still in the throes of oppression. On the previous day I had lectured on the persecution of the pre-Constantinian church. The class interaction was stimulating as students identified with the great heroes of the faith who had endured excruciating pain and gruesome executions for the sake of Christ. Students began sharing their own experiences of persecution: imprisonment in communist Vietnam, ridicule in Buddhist Thailand and oppression in Myanmar. So far the class was going well.

The next day was a different story. As I waxed eloquently on the finer points of Greek philosophy, political intrigue, and 4th-century theology, my students' faces went completely blank. I had lost them. But why? This is the material that I had loved to learn when I was in seminary. What was different here?

I discovered the answer, at least in part, was relevance.

Quite often, theological educators use the term “relevance” to refer to how education is applied in real world contexts. Students of God’s Word are to be doers, not just hearers.

But for missionaries, relevance takes on an added dimension. As missionaries enter foreign cultures, we begin to understand how deeply culture penetrates the core of our being. Our culture gives us the “recipes” for life: what is important, why the world is the way it is, how we fit in this world, and what God has to do with it. Everything we think and do — even how we read and apply God’s word — is based on these recipes.

This is why my class lecture fell on deaf ears. The Western “recipe” for teaching theology is largely theoretical: we

love ideas, philosophies, doctrines and arguments. However, the Eastern “recipe” for teaching theology is mostly practical: real-world illustrations, applications, stories and examples. Asians resonate with stories of persecution, but fail to understand the relevance of distinguishing Nestorianism from Eutychianism.

So which perspective is better?

The answer is both. And this is where the ministry of the Asia Biblical Theological Seminary (ABTS) comes in. For years, ABTS has been relevant in the first sense: relating the Bible to an Asian context. However, as a primarily North American institution, we have nearly always presented that content from a Western perspective. We have since learned that we need to take relevance to the next step: not just applying Truth, but communicating the absolute truth of God’s Word with a uniquely Asian twist.

Creating this kind of “East meets West” seminary is a dangerous business — it reveals inadequacies and confronts sinful hearts. My class in Bangkok is a prime example of this. But our God is greater.

We are so thankful that one day, God will bring His Kingdom to fulfillment, and a great multitude from every nation, tribe, people, and tongue will stand before the Lamb crying, “Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!” Until then, may ABTS be a foretaste of that coming Kingdom, proclaiming the greatness of our Lord with an Asian twist. ■



Jim Blumenstock is an ABWE missionary and Dean of the Asia Biblical Theological Seminary, where he also teaches.



## Reflecting on Thailand

*While the name Thailand means “Land of the Free”, in many ways the country remains bound by spirit-appeasement occult practices, Buddhist worldviews, drug use and human trafficking. Less than 1 percent of the 67 million people in this country are evangelical Christians. Currently ABWE has 18 missionaries serving in Thailand, with 11 more who have applied or been appointed to the field. We have been seeing youth and young adults respond to the gospel, especially through our campus, camp and English-class ministries.*



Kent Craig is the Area Director for Asia at ABWE.



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