

Volume 61 | Issue 4 | 2013

# Message

*the*  
**RIPPLE  
EFFECT**  
missions beyond the missionary



**IN THIS ISSUE:** Light to a Nation | A Tireless Search | A Time and a Place

Letter from the  
**PRESIDENT**



**A**t ABWE, we recognize we aren't the main players in God's plan — we are only some of the participants.

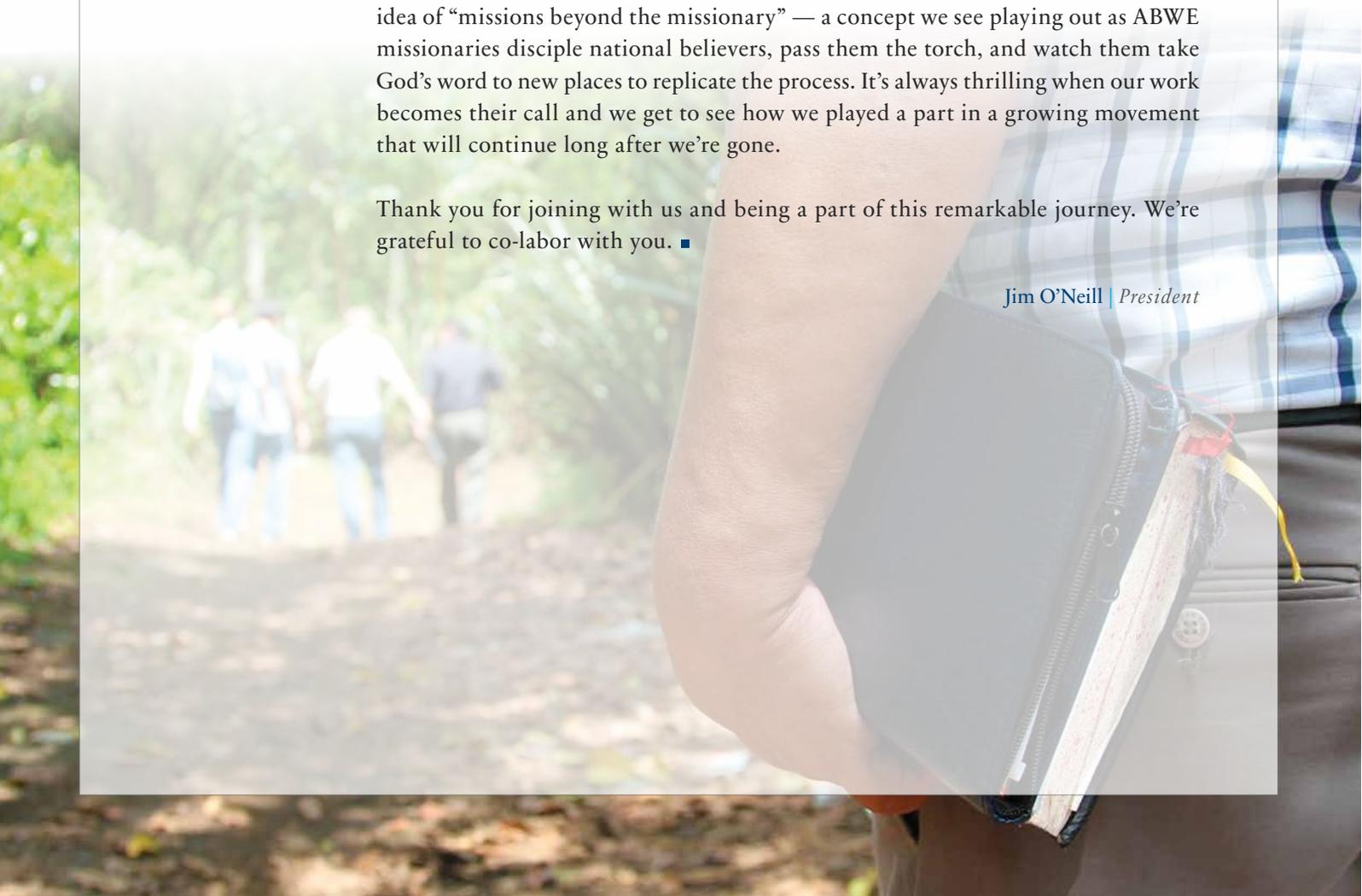
The beauty of this ministry mindset is that the end result of our work won't look American. Instead, it will be a diverse kaleidoscope of races and nationalities serving together to send more missionaries to, and from, all the countries of the world.

We are actually seeing this happen right now in Latin America, where the Church is growing at an incredible rate. In Nicaragua, pastors are receiving training and then going out to share what they've learned with their communities. One of our ministry centers has produced 35 new Nicaraguan pastors since 2006, and they have already planted 26 new churches. On the tiny island of St. Lucia, missionary Peter Morgan has planted three churches since he began ministering there seven years ago. In Colombia, a church that began 24 years ago has grown into 22 churches with 1,450 believers. These believers are now supporting their own missionaries and sending them around the globe.

It is exciting to see how these mission movements are rippling out beyond the leadership of North American missionaries. This issue of *Message* examines the idea of "missions beyond the missionary" — a concept we see playing out as ABWE missionaries disciple national believers, pass them the torch, and watch them take God's word to new places to replicate the process. It's always thrilling when our work becomes their call and we get to see how we played a part in a growing movement that will continue long after we're gone.

Thank you for joining with us and being a part of this remarkable journey. We're grateful to co-labor with you. ■

Jim O'Neill | *President*



# CONTENTS

volume 61 | Issue 4

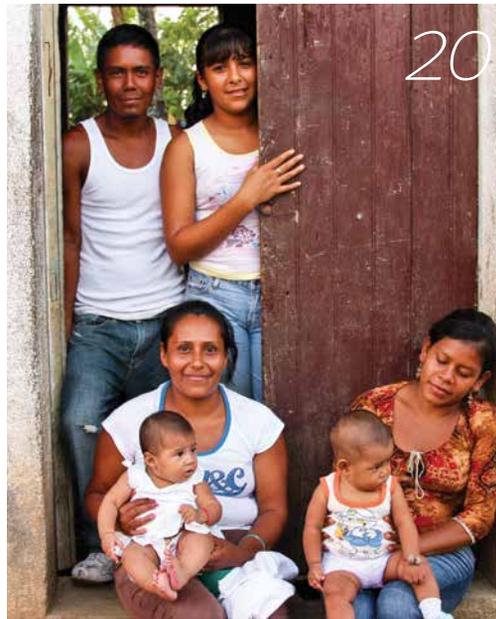
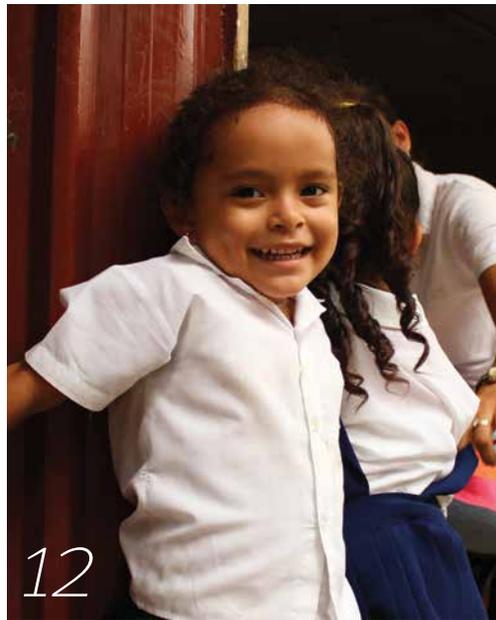
## FEATURES

### 12 Light to a Nation

Shining a light on Peter Morgan's unique journey and ministry in St. Lucia

### 20 The Ripple Effect

Exploring the growing impact of ABWE's Nicaragua Ministry Center



## IN EVERY ISSUE

### 2 Letter From the President

Discussing missions beyond the missionary

### 4 Connections

Sharing ministry snapshots from around the world

### 9 Legacies of Faithfulness

Honoring the wisdom and stories of lifelong missionaries

### 30 Visuals

Looking at charitable giving trends in North America

### 32 Fieldnotes

Sharing a pastor's tireless search for two strangers

### 34 Focal Point

Redefining the word "camp"

### 35 Spotlight

Viewing the landscapes of Toledo



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#### WHO IS THE ASSOCIATION OF BAPTISTS FOR WORLDWIDE 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 BRYAN SHATTACK (Icarus Image)

UNITED STATES

## Bringing Restoration

Did you know that ABWE has missionaries who work in under-reached areas right here in North America?

Recently, an ABWE couple opened the doors to Restored Church in the spiritually-impooverished city of Wilkes-Barre, Pa., where less than three percent of the population is evangelical and 25 percent live below the poverty line. Missionaries Dan and Joy Nichols hosted a grand opening service in September to celebrate the occasion. They'd been working towards it for nearly three years and hoped for 150-200 attendees. But God had something bigger planned.

"Our hosts simply stopped counting after more than 400 people came to hear, see, and hopefully respond to the gospel," said Dan.

The blessings started even before the service did. One woman came an hour early with tears in her eyes. She said she was filled with despair that she couldn't shake, and Joy was able to tell her about the hope she could find in Jesus. In another part of the church, small groups of people gathered before the service to pray for the church and its leaders.

"The event created a real stir, and the local media came asking what we're all about," said Dan. "We told them: Jesus."

# 30%-35%

or about 90-100 million Americans would describe themselves as evangelical. In Canada, 7% or about 2.6 million people describe themselves as evangelical.

Source: Institute for the Study of American Evangelicals  
Operation World 2010



**LEARNMORE** about serving opportunities in North America at [www.abwe.org/serve](http://www.abwe.org/serve)



© PHOTO BY MICAÏL DE KLERK

PHOTO: Missionary kid Morgan Wolf looks out over Hout Bay in Cape Town, South Africa

Missionaries are always talking about replication. In missions terms, it’s the idea that leaders go out and create a Christ-following community of believers. Then, those believers form a church that trains up other leaders, and those leaders are sent out to create more communities of believers who do the same. Missionaries Tom and Nancy Wolf know this concept well through their work in South Africa, as well as in their own home. They’ve given each of their children a heart for missions, and this year, their daughter Tara and her husband Wade became ABWE missionaries.

**LEARN MORE** about becoming a missionary at [www.abwe.org/serve](http://www.abwe.org/serve)

CHILE

**Training Up God’s Children**

When asked to describe Santiago Christian Academy (SCA), its students, teachers, and staff say the same thing: it’s a family.

Founded in 1968, SCA provides children with a Christ-centered education from pre-kindergarten through 12<sup>th</sup> grade. Throughout the school’s history, many things have changed — staff, students, and leadership — but the one thing that has remained constant is its passion for the word of God. Classes are taught by Christian teachers, textbooks are carefully selected to ensure they match biblical truths, and every morning begins with prayer.

“We immediately sensed the warmth, felt the kindness, and caught the contagious enthusiasm of the SCA family,” said Glenna Zeak, an educator who visited the campus earlier this year with her daughter, Amber.

**LEARN MORE** about Glenna and Amber’s visit to Santiago Christian Academy at [www.abwe.org/news/training-up-gods-children-in-chile](http://www.abwe.org/news/training-up-gods-children-in-chile)



# CONNECTIONS

Ministry Snapshots from Around the World

STATS

## Countries' Happiness Rankings

-  1. Denmark
-  2. Norway
-  3. Switzerland
-  4. Netherlands
-  5. Sweden
-  6. Canada
-  17. United States
-  151. Tanzania
-  152. Rwanda
-  153. Burundi
-  154. Central African Republic
-  155. Benin
-  156. Togo

**LEARN MORE** about supporting the Hospital of Hope at [www.hospitalofhopemango.org](http://www.hospitalofhopemango.org)

TOGO

## The Unhappiest Place on Earth

Recently, the United Nations released the results of a study they conducted to determine the happiest countries in the world. Among the happiest were Canada and Scandinavian countries. The United States came in 17th. But what country ranked the absolute last in their report? A small, impoverished country in West Africa, called Togo.

Of the 156 countries studied, Togo was the unhappiest place to live in the world. It's not surprising with only four doctors for every 100,000 people, which results in poor healthcare, highly infectious diseases, high fetal-infant and maternal death rates, and shorter life expectancies. These factors, coupled with poverty and hunger, help explain why happiness and hope feel foreign to the people of Togo.

Thankfully, we know there is hope, and ABWE has been sharing it in Togo for the last 40 years. Currently, ABWE is building the Hospital of Hope, a medical ministry center in Northern Togo, that will be a light in the darkness for this region of the world. The hospital's construction began in 2009, and thanks to generous donors, it is on track to open in early 2015.



© PHOTO BY ROLAND PUGH

THE GAMBIA

**Giving the Gospel to The Gambia**

Thousands of people across The Gambia are now hearing the word of God on the radio. ABWE missionaries have purchased radio airtime to broadcast chronological Bible lessons in the local Wolof language each week. The program can be heard in 80 percent of the country and is already sparking interest.

Recently, a young man from a prominent Wolof family came to missionary Deb Newsome’s house to welcome her back from the United States. As is common for the culture, he discussed many things before getting to the real reason he had come. He finally said, “I have been listening to your radio program, and I have a question: Why was it that Jesus died?” Deb proceeded to tell him about Christ’s payment for sin on the cross, beginning with Adam and Eve.

Thankfully, this man is not the only one asking questions. The radio program is opening doors for the gospel in other hearts.



© PHOTO BY THERESA STENOIEN

**LEARN MORE** about how God is working in The Gambia at [www.abwe.org/serve/countries/the-gambia](http://www.abwe.org/serve/countries/the-gambia)

MIDDLE EAST

**From Despair to Hope**



© THINKSTOCK PHOTOS

Several months ago, Syria’s devastating civil war forced Gharam\* to flee her homeland. Terrified and isolated, the widowed mother of five began hiding in an abandoned house

across the Syrian border. Her fear soon gave way to despair, when local religious and government leaders told her they could not help her family.

In her suffering, Gharam marveled at the ABWE missionaries and local Christians who aided hundreds of refugee families at a nearby church. Gharam was raised to believe Christians were bad people and that

no self-respecting person should ever set foot in a church. For her, the Bible was a forbidden book.

Yet every day, she saw these followers of Jesus bring food, portable stoves, toiletries, mattresses, blankets and Arabic Bibles to families in desperate need — families just like hers.

Her desperation pushed her to overcome her distrust and ask the Christian aid workers for help. To her astonishment, they immediately responded by giving her much needed supplies. More importantly, they brought compassion, understanding, and the story of salvation.

“It was this loving care that brought Gharam out of her depression and despair, allowing her to hope for a better future,” said one ABWE missionary. “She is amazed at how her beliefs are changing, now that she has been able to meet Christians for herself. She laughs with delight when she tells us she is reading the Bible and learning about the Lord!”

*\*Name has been changed for security reasons.*

**LEARN MORE** about how you can help Syrian refugee families at [www.abwe.org/give/projects/help-syrian-refugee-children](http://www.abwe.org/give/projects/help-syrian-refugee-children)

PERU

## Ministry on Wheels

Jon and Angela Stone have taken their ministry on the road. Since 2005, the Stones have been holding periodic mobile medical clinics to help with the serious lack of quality medical care in the shantytowns around Lima. They provide free medicine and checkups with a doctor, ophthalmologist, dentist, or other specialists. And they also provide a chance to hear to the gospel.

The medical clinics are always scheduled in coordination with area churches so the pastor and church members can be involved. The clinics give the local churches new contacts and a better presence in the community as people see them bringing in this desperately needed service.

“We have found the mobile clinics to be a wonderful opportunity to share Christ with a receptive audience,” said Jon Stone. “When you meet someone’s physical needs, they are usually willing to hear about their spiritual need.”

Initially, clinics only occurred when teams of medical personnel from North America visited, but the Stones have

a growing number of Peruvian medical professionals involved in the ministry. They now hold many clinics using only local volunteers.

Recently, a Christian businessman in Lima got involved and donated a box truck to the ministry. He paid to have it completely overhauled and outfitted with an examining table, a full dental chair and a pharmacy.

While dentists still set up extra makeshift stations for cleanings or other services because of the quantity and demand, they now have a clean, fully-equipped environment for filling cavities. Recently, the Stones finished a week of mobile clinics with a medical team from North America and their new truck. In six days, they saw 500 patients and 68 people accepted Christ as their Savior.



© PHOTO BY CALEB SUKO

UKRAINE

## Walking Into a New Day

In the early morning light, 13 young Ukrainians headed to the shore of the Black Sea in the city of Odessa. Donning white from head to toe, they stood at the water’s edge, surrounded by friends, family and church members. That

morning marked a new day for each of these young men and women as they took the first step in committing their lives to following Jesus. After several hymns and a short sermon, they waded into the water where they were baptized by missionary Caleb Suko and two other pastors.

“I don’t think there is any task more exciting than baptizing a person whose heart and life has been completely changed by the Holy Spirit,” said Caleb.

After the baptism, the newly baptized believers took part in their first communion. Then Caleb delivered a sermon, telling these new followers that they not only need to be disciples, but also to make disciples.

**LEARN MORE** about how the Suko family is creating a ripple effect for the gospel in Ukraine at [www.sukofamily.org](http://www.sukofamily.org)

# Legacies of FAITHFULNESS

Honoring 35 Years of Ministry



**Sue Hahn**

Candidate Class: 1977

Country Served In: Japan



“I would encourage those considering missions to find God’s will and follow Him one step at a time. He will work out all the details as we follow.”

Sue did not profess her faith in Christ until she was 19, but her first act of ministry took place the same day with the conversion of her younger brother. It was a clear indication of things to come, and personal evangelism remains one of the strengths of Sue’s missionary career.

After graduating with a degree in elementary education, Sue attended a missionary conference and felt called to minister to the Japanese people. Two years later, Sue boarded a plane for Japan.

In her missionary career, Sue has contributed directly to the start of three ABWE church plants, while simultaneously assisting sister Japanese churches in evangelism and discipleship. Sue has faithfully

ministered through English classes, camps, children’s clubs, and women’s Bible studies, and she is still spreading the gospel in Japan today.

#### Ministry Shaping Story:

“While I was in language school and lived in Tokyo, I went to visit a Japanese woman. We had great Christian fellowship and connected as believers. But before I left her home that day, she mentioned that she regularly placed food for her ancestors on the Buddhist altar in her home. I felt blindsided. The discussion we just shared didn’t match up with the fact that this woman, at least outwardly, worshiped her ancestors. This incident introduced me to the struggle that Japanese believers have in standing

individually as a Christian in a group culture.”

#### Favorite Memory from the Field:

“When I was teaching one of my students English, she was extremely honest during the Bible portion of the lessons. Before she was saved, she asked many questions, and I was amazed at how God brought things together in a new way so that I could answer her. When she gave her testimony before her baptism, she mentioned the terrible discouragement she experienced after her husband’s friend died suddenly in a natural disaster. She had tried to witness to him but he hadn’t listened. She was tempted to believe God was unfair, but she said that when she looked at Jesus’ cross, her questions dissolved.”

# Legacies of FAITHFULNESS

Honoring 35 Years of Ministry



## Steve & JoAnn Carter

**Candidate Class:** 1978

**Countries Served In:** Togo,  
England and the United States

JoAnn and Steve both felt the call to missions at a young age, and after marrying in 1973, they yielded to God's call. They arrived in Togo in 1982 and played a major role in starting a Baptist church in the capital city. The church grew and is responsible for starting at least 10 other churches throughout the country.

Despite the progress they made in their first term, a health problem forced them to transfer to England and then to Kingman, Arizona, where the Carters dove into a church-strengthening ministry. Steve led the church in remodeling the facilities and preaching, while JoAnn helped to attract and keep visitors with creative programs and warm hospitality. The church grew and graduated to self-support in 1999, installing a full-time pastor.



News of their good work spread, and they were asked to help start the Sonoran Desert Baptist Church in Tucson. They faithfully served there for nine years until the Lord called them to the Mountain Shadows Baptist Church in Colorado where they have worked for the past two years.

### **Favorite Memory from the Field:**

"When we started a church in our yard in Togo, I had the great blessing to disciple my interpreter, Kofi, but JoAnn developed a severe breathing problem and couldn't continue to live in Togo's coastal climate. For several years we wondered whether going to Togo had been a mistake.

Then, 11 years after our disappointing departure, I was invited back to Togo where I got to spend a Sunday with Kofi and his family at the church where he pastored. There were nearly 300 people there, and I learned that Kofi was esteemed among

the Togolese and American missionaries for his leadership and teaching skills. He introduced me that day as his Paul and as the one who had trained him in the word of God and spiritual disciplines."

### **Ministry Shaping Story:**

"Shortly after we arrived, I felt that something was keeping me from fully bonding with the Togolese men. I had already observed that Togolese men usually stood very close to one another when talking and that friends would frequently hold hands as they walked down the street. These practices were contrary to my own American culture and made me uncomfortable. Then it came to me: acceptance and bonding was demonstrated, in part, by standing close and holding hands! With God's help, I began to go against my cultural taboos in order to demonstrate my love for the Togolese people."



## Ron & Kathleen Weber

**Candidate Class:** 1973

**Country Served In:** Brazil

During Ron's junior year of college, the Lord burdened his heart to work in Brazil. Kathleen was raised in a missionary family in Brazil so she had first-hand knowledge of the shortage of missionary workers in the field. When she returned to the United States to attend college, she met Ron. The couple was married in 1972 with their sights set on the mission field.

Three months after arriving in Brazil, Ron struggled through his first Portuguese sermon, but when he was done, a man stood and said he wanted to be saved. That was just the start of many great things to come. Ron and Kathleen have worked tirelessly as church planters for the last 35 years, and during that time, they have planted 10 churches. Each church is now completely self-supporting with a Brazilian pastor, and 37 people from those churches are now serving as pastors, missionaries, and pastor's wives.

### Advice to New Missionaries:

“Start each day saying ‘good morning’ to God and asking for His strength and direction. It is important to remember that our interruptions are God’s appointments.”

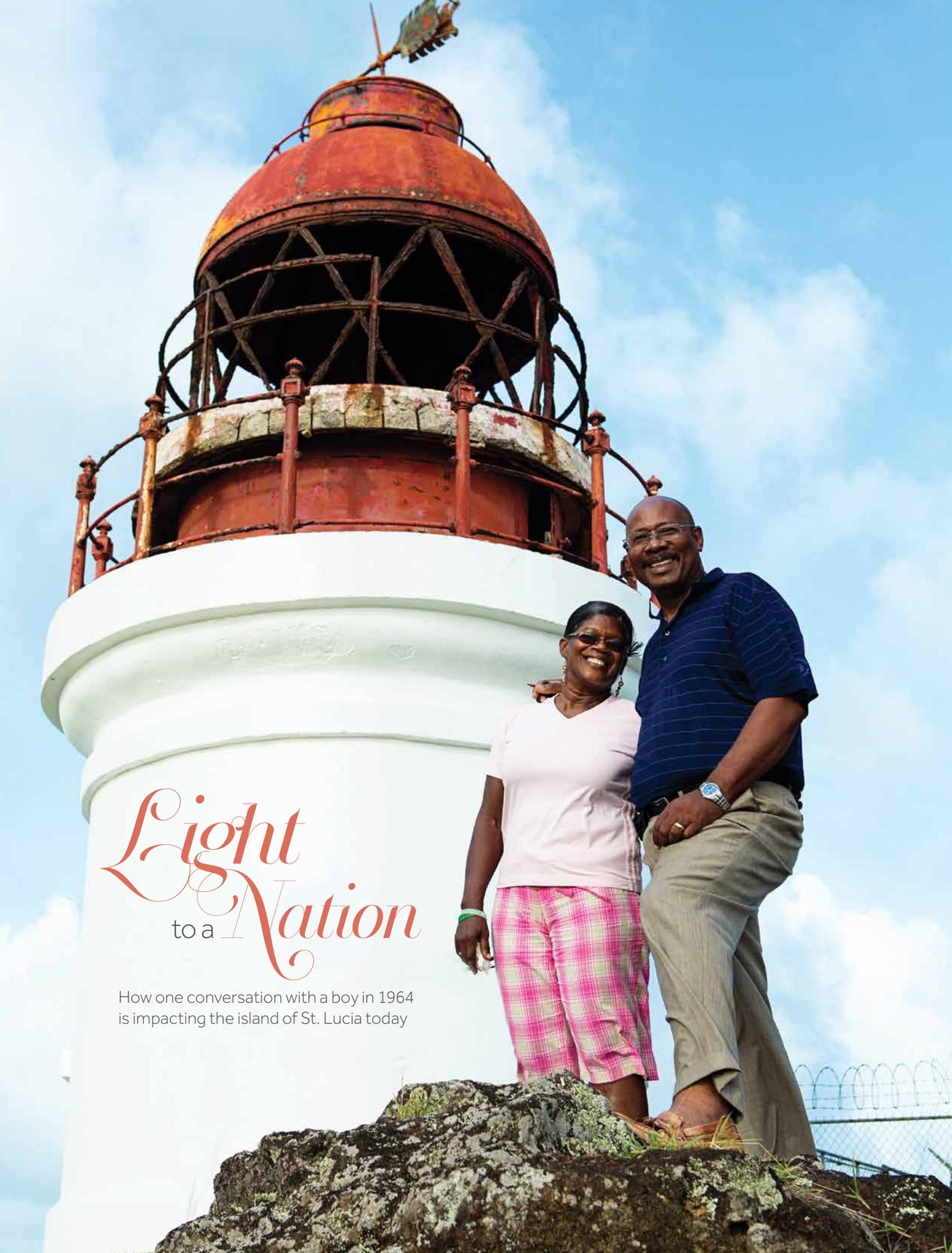
### Favorite Memory from the Field:

“When I turned 65, one of our churches hosted a service to honor us before we returned to the United States. They called it a “Culto de Ação de Graças” — which means a “Service of Giving Thanks.” More than 400 people came from three churches. Church representatives thanked us for the part we had in sharing the gospel and planting churches. Looking at the smiling faces of those we led to the Lord and disciplined, we praised God for the time we had to serve in Brazil and for the fruit God gave us.”

### Ministry Shaping Story:

“After being in Brazil for just a few months, Ron met a man named Marconi in a supermarket. Since Ron still couldn't speak much Portuguese, he could only give Marconi a tract. Little did we realize how God would use that tract. Shortly after that first encounter, Marconi came to our house, and Kathleen led him to Christ. God uses His word whether in a tract, witnessing individually, or preaching.”





*Light*  
to a *Nation*

How one conversation with a boy in 1964  
is impacting the island of St. Lucia today



Peter broke into a smile as soon as he saw Jerry. It had been more than 41 years, but Peter recognized his face immediately and they embraced like old friends.

Peter was born and raised on the tiny island nation of St. Lucia in a village near Ciceron. Most people know the island for its white sandy beaches surrounded by an endless expanse of blue water and some of the world's most luxurious resorts. But Peter's childhood was far from luxurious.

Peter was one of 18 children, and his father worked as a laborer to put food on his family's table. He picked up work fishing, planting crops and doing whatever it took to keep a roof over their heads.

"My parents were very, very hard workers," said Peter. "But during the weekend, they spent a lot of the time drinking, and whenever they did, there was a lot of fighting. Home was never a pleasant place to be, especially on the weekends."

Peter had no reason to hope for anything different until a wedding turned his world upside down.

When Peter was 12, a Baptist missionary couple shared the gospel with his father's cousin who was living with his common-law wife. This was a normal practice in St. Lucian culture, which discourages the commitment of marriage, but the missionaries encouraged Peter's cousin to further his faith by getting married. He obeyed and invited his close friends and family,

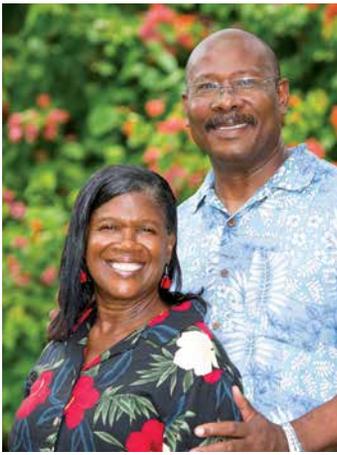
including Peter's father, to the wedding. That was the first time Peter's father ever heard the gospel.

He listened intently as the missionary explained that people were lost in sin and needed to repent. The sermon shook him to the core, and he realized he needed to change the way he was living. The following Sunday he went to church, and when he got home, he said that he was saved. Peter was skeptical at first, but the transformation was evident.

"I remember very distinctly that God had changed him," says Peter. "Smoking, getting drunk, beating up on my mother — these things didn't happen anymore."

Peter's father began a new life as an excited believer. Every week, he took his entire family several miles to church. Eventually, he opened up their overcrowded, two-bedroom house for two Baptist missionaries to start a church. This gave birth to the Deliverance Baptist Church, Upper Ciceron's first evangelical church.

That same year, Peter's father also sent him and his siblings to a vacation Bible school run by the same missionaries who had performed his uncle's wedding. The missionaries were assisted by a young American couple that Peter had never seen before, Jerry and Madolin Smith. On the last day of camp, Jerry started talking with



Peter (top with his wife Bibiana) grew up in a violent, overcrowded two-bedroom house, similar to the one shown below. However, after finding Jesus, his father changed his ways and opened their tiny home to start a church. That same year, his father sent 12-year-old Peter to a Bible camp where he met Jerry Smith (above with his wife Madolin). In one afternoon, Jerry led Peter to the Lord and changed his life forever.

12-year-old Peter. He asked, “If you were to die today, would you be sure you’d go to heaven?” Peter said he honestly didn’t know, but he wanted to. Upon hearing that, Jerry took the Bible and taught Peter how he could know for sure.

In that one encounter, Jerry changed the trajectory of Peter’s life.

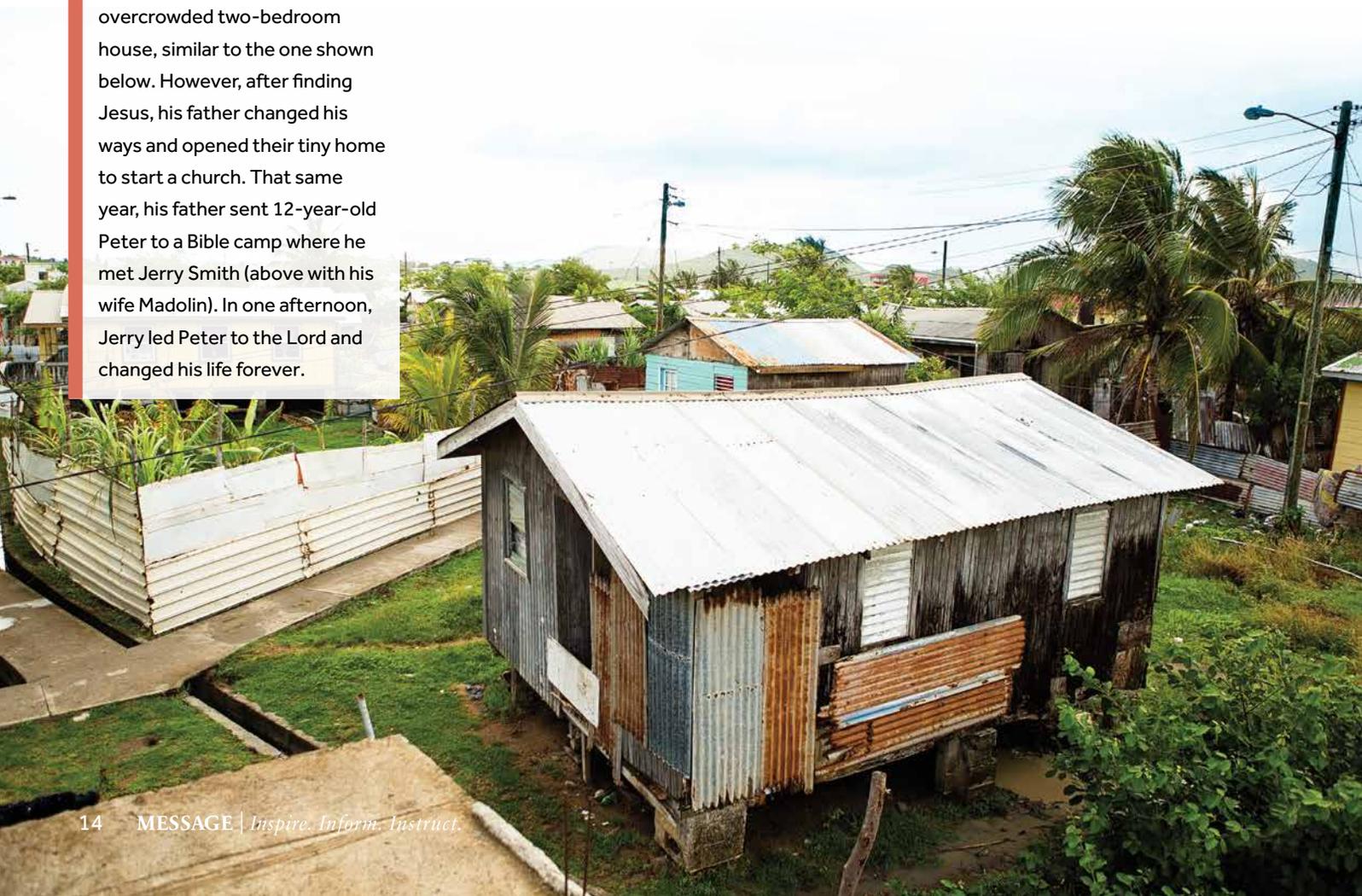
Six years after being saved, Peter attended Bible school on the windward island of St. Vincent, and after graduating with a three-year degree, he spent five years pastoring at the church where his father was saved. During that time, he met and married his wife Bibiana, but kept feeling drawn to pursue more education. Peter believed he needed more tools to accomplish the great things the Lord was asking him to

do. He was considering schools in the U.S. when he came in contact with a board member of Cedarville University, a Christian school located in Ohio. That man helped Peter get connected with the college, and soon Peter received an acceptance letter.

At the age of 29, Peter uprooted his family and left his island home in search of knowledge that he could bring back to make better disciples of his fellow St. Lucians.

### A Man on a Mission

“As soon as I arrived in the United States in 1981, every church I went to and every state I visited, I would ask folks if they knew of a Jerry Smith,” said Peter. “All I knew was his name.”



“I wanted him to know that even if it was just *one little kid* coming to Christ, it was worth it.”

People connected Peter with various Jerry Smiths, but it was never the right one. He called mission agencies that worked in St. Lucia, but they were all dead ends.

“I wanted to find out who he was because I wanted to tell him what the Lord had been doing in my life since I was 12. Sometimes we have people coming over to do mission work and they seem to be discouraged if there are only one or two people who come to know Christ. But I wanted him to know that even if it was just one little kid coming to Christ, it was worth it.”

As he continued searching for Jerry, Peter soaked up the word of God at Cedarville University. After graduating, he went on to get his master's degree from Dallas Theological Seminary in 1986 and then his doctorate from the University of North Texas in 1996.

“I wasn't just learning about the Bible. I was learning how to study the Bible,” Peter said. “Before that, I felt like I was leading Bible studies blindly.”

After finishing his degrees, he used his education to teach in Dallas, Dayton, Cedarville, and then in Largo, Florida. It was while teaching in Florida that Peter finally got a solid lead in his search for Jerry Smith.

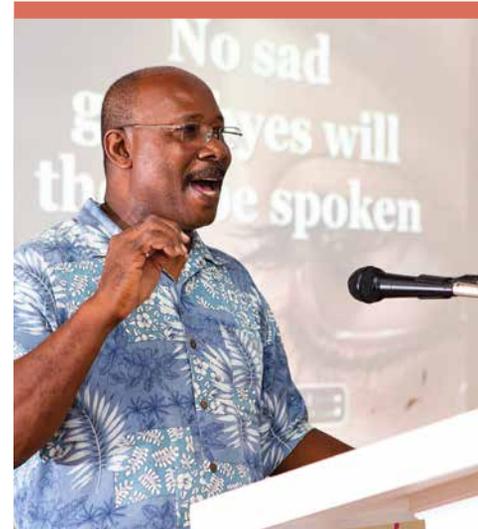
In 2005, Peter and Bibiana went to visit a retired missionary living in Florida. As he had done a hundred times

before, Peter asked the missionary if she remembered a man named Jerry Smith who served in St. Lucia. To Peter's surprise, she did — and she had his phone number.

“The first thing Peter said to me was, ‘Do you know how many Jerry Smiths there are in the United States? I've been looking 22 years for the Jerry Smith that led me to Christ when I was 12 years old in Ciceron,’” said Jerry Smith.

Since Peter and Jerry had last met, Jerry had become an established pastor, trading in his dream of being an international missionary after discovering his skill and passion for revitalizing communities of believers. Jerry had planted one church and restored eight others throughout the United States, but when he received Peter's phone call, Jerry was pastoring at the First Baptist Church of Bremen in Indiana — the same church that had sent him and his wife to St. Lucia 41 years earlier. Jerry immediately invited Peter and Bibiana to Indiana for the weekend.

Jerry and Madolin met while attending Baptist Bible College in Johnson City, N.Y. and got married in 1964. After a brief honeymoon, they received an opportunity to go to St. Lucia for a 10-week missionary apprenticeship program. During that time, they taught and preached at various places around the island.



Since returning to St. Lucia, Peter and Bibiana have planted three thriving churches and continue to reach new communities each year through their various ministries.



Perdite Amadee (below) sensed a great need for God in her life and prayed for someone to come help her and her village. When the Morgans arrived in Bruce Ville, she got saved and is now a leader for the children in her community.



St. Lucia is a major tourist destination, but the island is plagued by poverty and crime. Peter's newest church plant is located in Lower Ciceron, a desperately impoverished and dangerous community of squatters not far from sandy beaches and lavish resorts.

“One place we taught was a vacation Bible school in Ciceron and among those who received Christ was that 12-year-old Peter Morgan,” said Jerry. “Of course, we didn’t know who he was, and we didn’t understand all the implications at that time.”

When Peter and Bibiana arrived in Indiana, Jerry and Madolin welcomed them into their home and their family. Jerry’s hair had faded from the brown of his youth to a light salt-and-pepper, but his piercing blue eyes remained the same. Together, they reminisced over photos and souvenirs that Jerry and Madolin had gathered throughout their 10 weeks in St. Lucia, and Peter was finally able to tell Jerry how the afternoon they spent together changed his life.

“I wanted him to know the effort that he put in, the time he had spent and the resources he had used were not in vain,” said Peter.

That Sunday, Peter preached at Jerry's church in Bremen and told their story.

“We rejoiced in all that God had done in their lives and all that God had provided for them,” said Jerry. “The church was just elated to hear about the butterfly effect and how the work we did so many years ago was continuing on.”

### Homecoming

While most missionaries are called to go, Peter Morgan was called to go home.

After reconnecting with Jerry, Peter felt it was time to share what he had learned with the people of St. Lucia. Though he struggled at first to find the right missions agency, he finally discovered ABWE and headed home.

Twenty-five years after they left, Peter and Bibiana returned to St. Lucia and began looking for a place to start their ministry. While many things had changed, Peter felt the same passion to bring new hope to the disadvantaged communities that are often hidden by the tourism industry.

Although the island's beautiful landscape, tropical climate and exotic wildlife attracts more than 350,000 visitors each year, many of the island's residents suffer in desperate economic and spiritual conditions. Nearly a fifth of the island's population lacks gainful employment and nearly 60 percent of residents lack education beyond primary school. These conditions have caused gang violence to rise, and many to fall victim to drugs, alcohol, and promiscuity.

"In most cases, tourists come to St. Lucia and taxi drivers have very select places to take them. They don't ever see the deprived areas or the disparity that exists," said Peter. "There is an emerging middle class, but there is major segment of the population that lives in squalid conditions. When you go up north you will see huge homes, but if you go to the south, you will see abject poverty."

Immediately, Peter and Bibiana felt led to the southern part of St. Lucia because there was so much need and so few churches. They set out to bring light to this region and began working to establish a Bible club in the village of Bruce Ville, which has the second highest crime rate in the country.

When they went to the village to hand out fliers for their Bible club, the first person they met was a woman named Perdite Amadee.

"She wasn't a Christian, but she said she'd been praying for God to send someone to help with their young boys and girls," said Peter.

She asked for the stack of fliers in Peter's hand and said she'd give them to the kids and their parents. When Peter and his wife arrived the next day, 76 children were waiting for them.

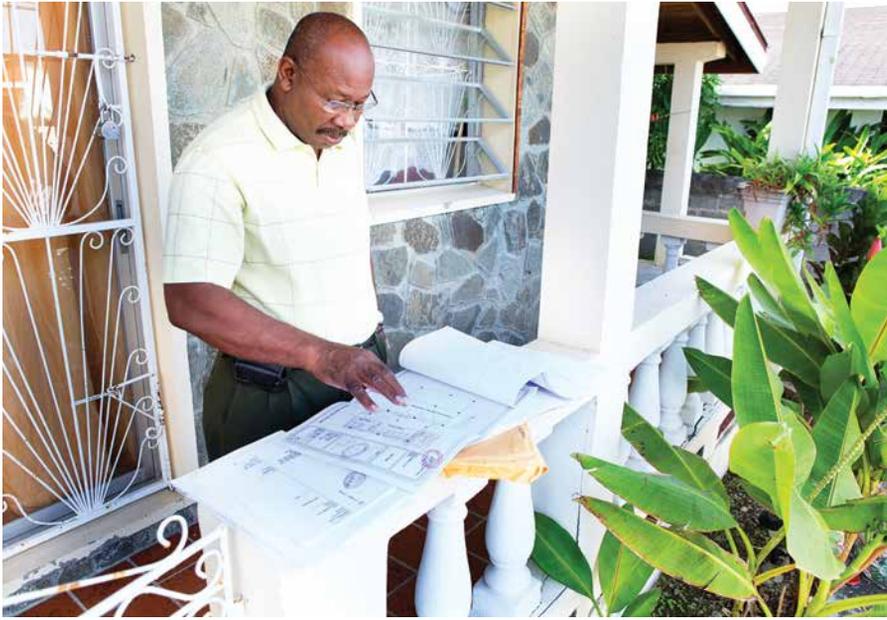
Perdite was the first convert of that area and has taken over that Bible study.

"She marshals the children to church every Sunday," Peter said. "She goes to their homes and brings a whole bunch. She's like the pied piper of the children."

Since 2006, Peter and Bibiana have planted vibrant and thriving churches in the troubled cities of Dugard and Vieux Fort. Currently, Peter and Bibiana are focused on growing and establishing their third church plant in Lower Ciceron, a crime-ridden community of squatters.

"She wasn't a Christian, but she said she'd been *praying* for God to send someone to *help* with their young boys and girls."





All of the Morgans' churches are called Community Baptist because they want everyone to have access to a church in their own neighborhood. They are currently focused on establishing their third church in a crime-ridden community of squatters in Lower Ciceron.

Squatting has become a growing phenomenon in St. Lucia and poses many problems for the government and the residents of these makeshift communities. Nearly one-third of the Lower Ciceron's population consists of squatters who were relocated in 1986 from a community living on abandoned government land in the capital city of Castries. In an effort to reclaim the land for new office buildings, the government forcibly moved these families to another piece of government property two miles away in Lower Ciceron.

Today, this community is plagued by one of the highest rates of dangerous crime and poverty on the island. But the Morgans are bringing hope and change to this outcast community through the Lower Ciceron Community Baptist Church. This church was first held in community buildings, but its rapid growth has demanded a facility of its own. Recently, the Morgans raised enough money to purchase a plot of land, and they are now focused on raising funds to construct a building.

"We call all of our church's Community Baptist because we want the people to have the church right in their community," said Peter.

Peter and Bibiana tirelessly work to show Christ's love in these destitute neighborhoods. Along with their three church plants, the Morgans host Bible studies, youth camps, marriage seminars and women's retreats. They are also reaching people by offering abuse counseling, English lessons, music classes, and a soccer ministry.

"We have so many exciting opportunities coming our way and new doors seem to be opening every day, but it's hard for us to keep up," said Peter. "We're so thankful for all the help we've received, and we continue to pray for more."

#### The Good Books

Those prayers are often answered in very practical ways.

Knowing how hard he worked to obtain substantial theological training, Peter dreamed of starting a Bible school for pastors on the island. He knew it would take resources, and when he moved back to St. Lucia, Peter packed and shipped a large container of his belongings, including 58 boxes of books for the school. However, when he went to pick up his things at the port, he discovered that everything was there — except for his books.

Peter was heartbroken. So when Jerry Smith called to ask how he could be praying for him, Peter naturally mentioned his lost library. After hearing the story, Jerry let out a small chuckle.

"It just so happened that I was planning to retire, and I had just been telling Madolin that I needed to do something with my library," Jerry said.

Without a second thought, Jerry donated his complete personal library of more than 2,200 volumes to Peter and his ministry. He even raised the necessary \$3,000 to ship it to St. Lucia.

“We sent it over there last year, and wouldn’t you know it, the number of boxes we sent came to 58 exactly,” said Jerry. “He was so grateful. I can’t think of any better person I could have given my library to.”

Jerry and Peter are proof that one moment can change a life. And that life can go on to change thousands.

“Out of the First Baptist Church of Bremen, I got saved at a roller rink when I was 16, went to Bible college, met my wife, got married, and went to St. Lucia,” said Jerry. “And now a man

is planting churches in St. Lucia and the gospel is spreading. All because we obeyed the Lord and shared Christ’s love with a 12-year-old kid.” ■

Jerry and Peter are proof that *one moment* can change one life. And that life can go on to *change thousands*.

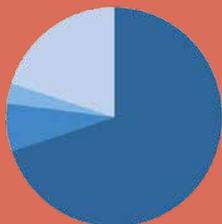
## St. Lucia at a Glance

**Year Founded:** 1979

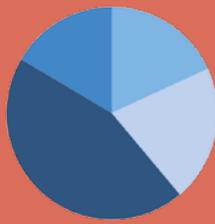
**Official Language:** English but 95% of the population speaks Creole French

**Population:** 174,000

**Poverty Level:** 20% of households earn less than \$160 per month



Religion



Employment

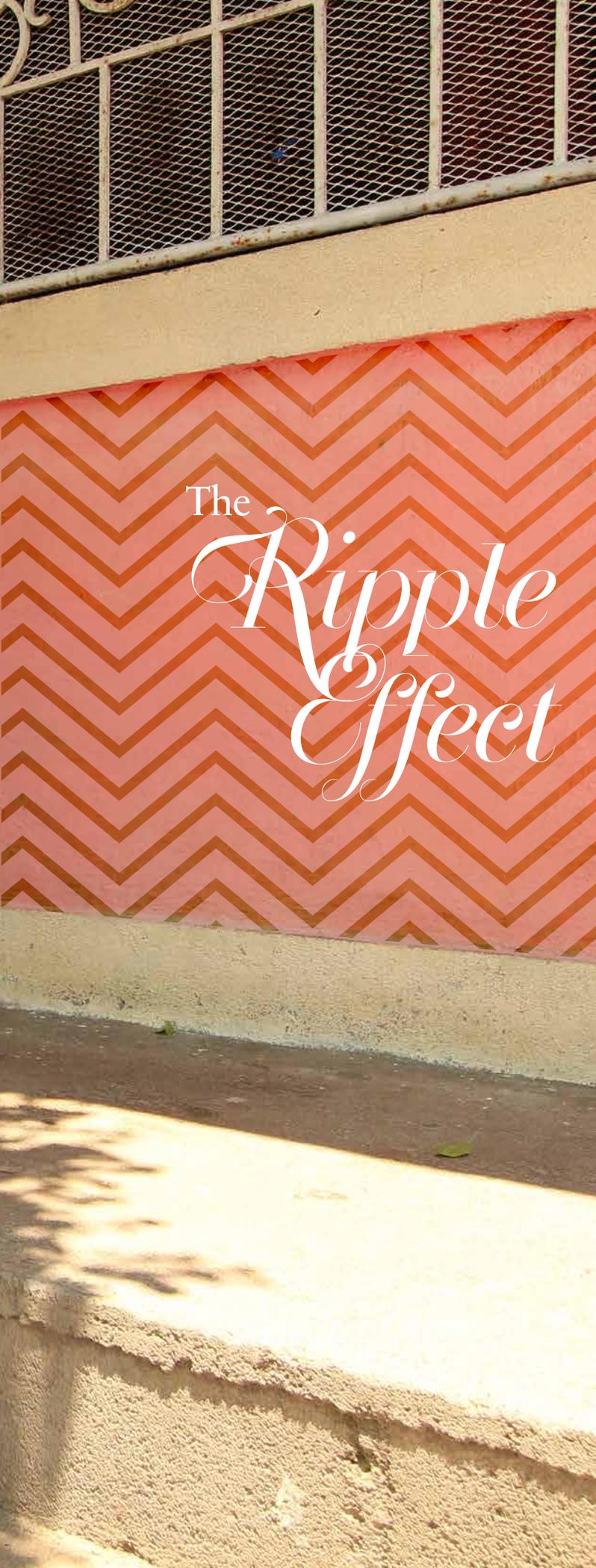
- Roman Catholic - 70%
- Protestant - 7%
- Anglican - 3%
- Other - 20%

- Tourism- 54%
- Industry - 25%
- Agriculture- 22%
- Unemployed - 20%

Originally called Iouanalao or “Land of the Iguanas,” the eastern Caribbean island of St. Lucia is now a blend of the diverse cultures of its various inhabitants throughout history. Home to the native Arawak and Carib people, European explorers came to St. Lucia in the 15<sup>th</sup> century hoping to establish colonies and trading outposts. The French were the first to succeed in 1643, but were quickly overthrown by the British in 1663. This was the start of a 150-year tug-of-war that made the island a bargaining chip for various treaties between the two empires.

Overcoming the struggle between the French and British, as well as the institution of slavery, the tiny island nation finally established self-government with the adoption of a constitution in 1924. However, the island remained a dependent of the United Kingdom until it gained independence in 1979.





# The *Ripple Effect*

By Ingela Hartman | Photos by Jay York

**Bismarck wears an easy smile with his crisp grey button-down shirt and jeans. On his left hand is a thin gold wedding ring, marking 13 years of marriage. On his right hand, near the crook of his pointer finger and thumb, is a small, barely-visible tattoo, marking the gang life he once led.**

While the ink-black letters “V.L.” have greyed over the years, the tattoo remains a permanent reminder that some things in life can be forgiven, long before they are forgotten.

The son of parents who were too young, Bismarck Flores was raised by his aunt and uncle. Despite their best efforts to be his family and put him on the right track, the rejection of not being with his parents plagued Bismarck. He started looking for acceptance elsewhere and quickly found it in a local gang at the age of 14.

“I began to fight with other gangs, steal, drink and smoke,” recalled Bismarck. “Many times my life was in danger. Other gangs would threaten to kill me and shoot at me.”

Eventually, Bismarck got married and tried to settle down, but his past choices came with consequences that were hard to escape. One day, gang members came to his house and tried to kill him with a machete while his frightened pregnant wife hid in the house. Bismarck realized that he needed to make a change.

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With nowhere else to turn, Bismarck turned to God. It was the start of a beautiful story of redemption with ripple effects that would impact hundreds of lives.

“When I gave my life to Jesus, everything changed. I forgave my parents and I had no more hatred towards them. I didn’t have any more problems with my enemies either. But the most important thing that happened was that the Lord gave me eternal life,” Bismarck said.

As Bismarck turned his life around and became the father he had always wanted growing up, his faith and his desire to share the freedom he found grew. Bismarck turned to his pastor and was connected with ABWE’s Institute for Church Planters (ICP), a two-year program that teaches, trains and mentors Nicaraguan leaders to start new churches.

The ICP opened in 2006 at ABWE’s Nicaragua Ministry Center. ICP students come to the ministry center for three days every month for two years to take classes on evangelism, discipleship and spiritual growth. Along with providing sound education, the center also provides students with lodging and meals during the three-day intensive seminars to ensure the training is accessible to all Nicaraguans.

As the second poorest country in Latin America, Nicaragua is still struggling to overcome the effects of severe dictatorships, long civil wars, and the devastating damage from Hurricane Mitch. The 1998 category-5 hurricane killed thousands, made 20 percent of the population instantly homeless,

and caused billions of dollars worth of damage. Today, nearly 76 percent of Nicaraguans live on less than \$2 a day.

“The ICP training and tools I received were invaluable, especially because they involve an economic cost that most people, like me, could not otherwise afford,” Bismarck said.

ICP students receive training on a wide range of topics from Biblical principles of leadership to vision-casting to the mechanics of starting a new church. Rather than creating an exact copy of the

mother church, the training focuses on building new churches that take an area’s culture, economy and geography into consideration.

As students attend the ICP, they begin praying for direction for their future ministry site. Once they find the community that God has laid on their heart, they put their education into action by surveying the area.

After graduating in 2008 from the

ICP, Bismarck felt called to start a church in the community of Altos de Motastepe, a new middle-class neighborhood with about 700 homes outside the capital city of Managua. Using the skills he learned at the center, Bismarck got to know the area and eventually formed a small Bible study. He and his family continued building relationships in the community, and slowly, that Bible study grew into two. Then, two grew into five.

“We walk with these men for two years and help them with their church plants, and then we back off and let them do it more independently,” said Steve Robinson, ABWE missionary and ICP mentor. “A

**“When I gave my life to Jesus, everything changed. I forgave my parents and I had no more hatred towards them. I didn’t have any more problems with my enemies either. But the most important thing that happened was that the Lord gave me eternal life.”**

lot of people think that they can't do it if we don't help them, but we're trying to teach them that they have the same God we have. And He can use them the same way He uses us."

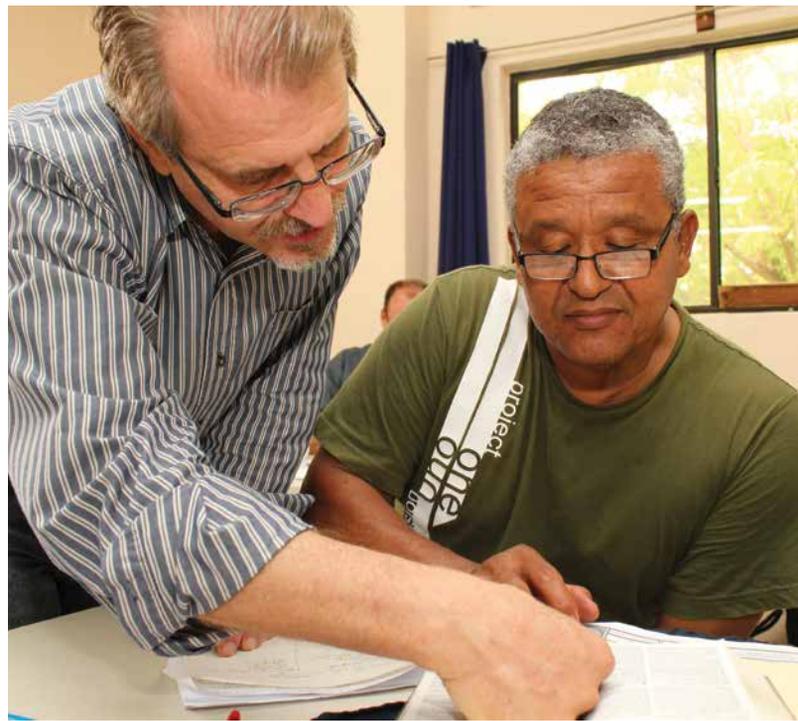
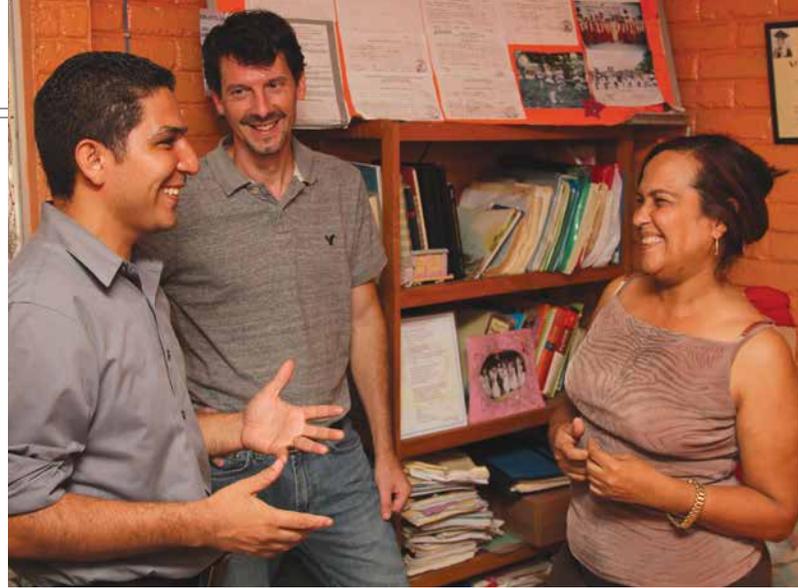
In seven years, the ICP has trained 35 graduates who have started 26 church plants in communities across the country, including Bismarck's now blossoming church plant. The progress Bismarck has made and the impact he is making in this fledgling community is even more impressive in light of where he came from. Once a young man surrounded by gangs and violence, Bismarck is now a leader and teacher at the ICP and was recently promised a piece of land in the community to build his church.

"We have not done it. God has done it," Steve said of Bismarck's success. "And there are dozens of other stories like this."

### Breaking the Cycle

When ICP graduate Victor Morales noticed the rising presence and influence of youth gangs near his church, he started a gang outreach ministry to help steer young men away from this dangerous lifestyle. What he didn't realize was that in doing so, he was putting his own life in danger.

Using his ICP training, Victor helped 13 gang members leave their pasts behind and start a new relationship with the Lord. These men became active members of the church, and Victor's influence on their lives was undeniable. Local gangs took note, and feeling threatened, they issued a contract for Victor's murder.



Bismarck (top left) with Richard Woughter (top middle) visit with a community member. Missionary Mark Henzler (middle left) teaches and mentors an ICP student. Victor Morales (bottom) finds respite at the Nicaragua Ministry Center.

**V**ictor was unaware of the threat on his life, until a gang member stormed into the church yelling. Unsure of what he wanted, Victor took the man aside to talk. The man told Victor he had a sick daughter and that he desperately needed money to pay for her medical care. A local gang had offered him a large sum of money to kill certain troublemakers who were disrupting their business. Victor was on the list.

The man pulled out a crumpled wad of cash — \$1,000 that proved he had already murdered at least one other man. Then he pulled a loaded gun from his coat.

Victor took a step back while keeping his eyes on the smooth metal in the man's hand. He felt paralyzed until he noticed that the gunman's hand was shaking. Victor raised his eyes to meet the man's gaze and saw the turmoil on his face. Suddenly, with the gun in one hand and the wad of money in the other, the man fell to the ground in tears. He confessed that this was the third time he had come to the church to kill Victor. As tears streamed down his face, Victor stepped towards him, put his hand on his shoulder and prayed over him. All the while, the man kept asking, "Please tell me why I can't kill you. Please just tell me why."

### **Building a Safe Haven**

Victor and Bismarck are proof of the real impact the Nicaragua Ministry Center is having. But the center isn't just sending church planters out into communities; it is also inviting communities in.

The vision for the center began in the aftermath of Hurricane Mitch in 1998 when ABWE missionaries came to the country on a disaster relief trip. They discovered that many national pastors were struggling to build churches that communicated the gospel outside of their own walls.

"Because of their rocky history, Nicaraguans have a difficult time trusting one another," said Steve Robinson.

After gaining independence from Spain in 1821, Nicaraguans were plagued by long stretches of political unrest, violence, and fiscal crisis. In the 1900s, they endured the harsh dictatorship of the Somoza family for more than 40 years, which led to a 20-year-long revolution. When the rival Sandinista National Liberation Front finally ousted the Somozas in 1978, the Sandinistas' subsequent effort to govern Nicaragua birthed even greater conflict. Their rule resulted in one of the most gruesome periods of unrest in the country's history as various rebel groups known as "Contras" rose up against them.

Although the bloody Contra War ended in 1989 and the Sandinistas were defeated in a democratic election in 1990, the Nicaraguan people continue to bear the scars of a tumultuous history and the baggage of mistrust. To reach these hurting people, missionaries realized that they needed to build a place that would help break down these walls and raise up new leaders.

### **An Untamed Land**

When ABWE missionary Richard Woughter first viewed the property for the proposed Nicaragua Ministry Center in 2003, the land was wild and unruly. It was a 162-acre mess of tall weeds and bristles that sat along Lake Managua in the shadow of a dormant cone-shaped volcano. Richard had listened to missionaries Bev and Larry Smith passionately share their vision for the center, and as he stood in the middle of the thick brush, he could finally see how God could use this untamed plot. He could hear people laughing and having fun. He saw classrooms full of students receiving Bible training.

"On that day, I remember thinking about how Caleb claimed his mountain for God, and I wanted to do the same," said Richard. "So I claimed that

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**All the while, the man kept asking,  
"Please tell me why I can't kill  
you. Please just tell me why."**

# Nicaragua

at a Glance

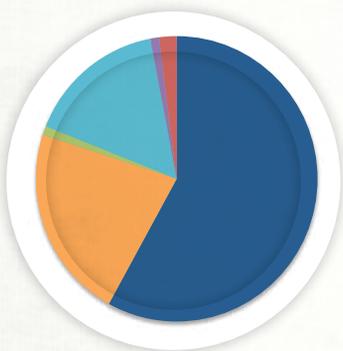


**Year Founded:** 1838

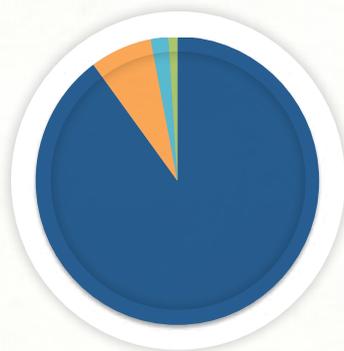
**Government:** Democratic Republic

**Population:** 6,071,045

**Poverty Level:** 50% are below the poverty line



**Religion**



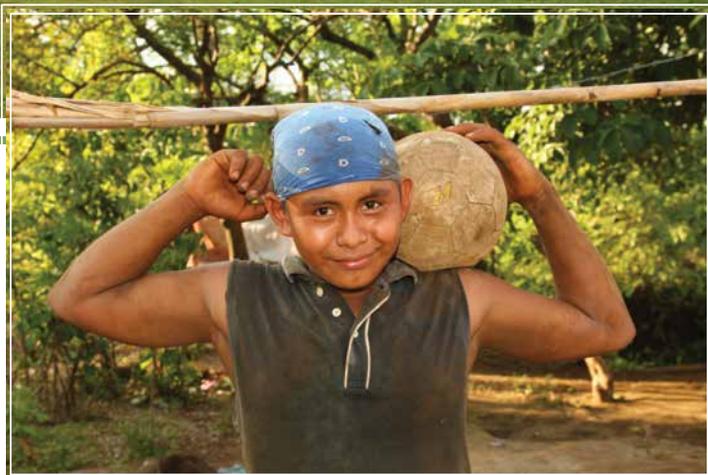
**Languages**

- Roman Catholic - 58%
- Evangelical - 22%
- Irreligious - 16%
- Other - 2%
- Jehovah's Witness - 1%
- Moravian - 1%

- Spanish - 89%
- Indigenous - 7%
- Creole English - 2%
- English - 1%

Bordering Honduras to the north and Costa Rica to the south, Nicaragua is the largest country in Central America. It was originally inhabited by several indigenous peoples before Spaniards arrived in the 15th century. Although the diseases they brought killed much of the indigenous population, intermarriage between Spaniards, natives and runaway slaves created new ethnic groups, including the Mestizos and Miskitos.

In 1821, Nicaragua achieved independence from Spain, but has since endured long periods of political unrest, dictatorship, fiscal crisis, and natural disasters. During the last 20 years, it has celebrated peaceful elections, economic growth and political stability, but Nicaragua is still struggling to overcome a tumultuous history and its ranking as the second poorest country in Latin America.



piece of ground for God’s glory, and from that moment on, I have never doubted that God would take it and use it.”

Motivated by the dream of seeing Nicaraguans filling the space and hearing the gospel, missionaries got to work. They built a road, cabins, a kitchen and a dining hall, and in 2004, they officially opened the center’s doors, bringing their vision and hard work to life.

“We now have grass lawns, a pool, a rancho, cabins, a seminary building, and a kitchen. But more importantly, we have thousands of people who have heard God’s word here,” said Richard.

Along with being the home of the ICP, the center also serves as a site for a variety of evangelistic outreach, leadership training and theological education. Under the direction of missionary Bruce Edgar, it hosts youth camps, leadership retreats, medical ministries, and short-term mission teams from North America who come to minister all around Nicaragua. Additionally, Nicaraguan pastors and church planters often invite their communities to the center to play, learn and connect. The center has created a safe haven where Nicaraguans can let their guard down and learn about God while surrounded by the natural beauty of His creation.

Two years ago, David Frye, a senior pastor at Calvary Baptist Church in Raleigh, N.C., came with a team to serve at the center. During the team’s visit, a couple hundred young people were bused in from outside Managua for the day’s activities. Many came from poor barrios where they live in tin-roof houses with plastic walls, and many were not used to seeing grass.

When the youth arrived on campus, their faces lit up as they saw all the open space and fields. They rushed off their buses and began rolling down the hills, still wet with morning dew. “They didn’t care about getting dirty or wet, because they were experiencing something new,” said David Frye. As the children rolled to the bottom and got up, their grass-stained clothes clung to their bodies, but smiles clung to their faces.

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“We invite them to the ministry center, and when they come, they form relationships within that community because they have neutral ground to meet on,” Steve Robinson said.

Room To Grow

Just like Richard Woughter envisioned on his first trip to the property, churches and villages are requesting to use the center’s beautiful facilities, giving ABWE missionaries an opportunity to connect with pastors and communities throughout Nicaragua. Each year, nearly 12,000 people visit the center and word is spreading fast. Groups coming to the center are getting bigger and bigger.

“It’s exploding right now. We have missionaries that are called here. We have doctors, nurses, and pastoral missionaries coming. We have people coming who want to work with youth and teens. God is doing something here and we’re just trying to keep up with it all,” said Steve Robinson.

ABWE’s Nicaragua Ministry Center often hosts groups as large as 600 people, but the largest place to meet is a small pavilion that fits a maximum of 200 people. The pavilion is completely open to the elements on all sides, and during Nicaragua’s six-month wet season, strong winds and driving rain make the space unusable. As developing relationships and building togetherness is an integral part of the center’s mission, the Nicaragua team is currently raising \$275,000 to construct a place where groups of all sizes can meet under one roof to worship and deepen their faith together.

“Our calendar is full year-round and the waiting list is huge,” Richard said. “The spiritual impact the center is having on lives is changing the country of Nicaragua for the better.”

The center’s influence is irrefutable. It is changing the hearts of every person who comes through its doors, including a boy named Hector.

Hector Gonzales\* first came to the center at the age of 16 when his grandfather forced him to attend a youth camp. He did not come willingly. He had been a gang member since he was 12 and was facing trial for attempted murder.

The center’s influence is irrefutable. It is changing the hearts of every person who comes through its doors.

Hector spent his days at the camp wavering between blatant rebellion and indifference. Hector fought hard, but on his fifth day of camp, God got a hold of his heart. He finally heard what his counselors were saying and accepted Jesus as Savior.

Despite facing ridicule from other gang members, Hector returned to camp the following week a changed man.

{CONTINUED}



After attending the Institute of Church Planting (ICP), Pastor Luis Silva prayed for God to show him where to start a church. One day, he was asked to go pray for a sick young man in a place called La Concha. Immediately, he knew it was the place. With nothing but a willing heart, he started his church under the shade of an orange tree.

“We don’t tell them where they need to go. They tell us where they feel God is asking them to plant a church,” said Steve Robinson, an ICP mentor. “You wonder why anyone would start a church here. But sure enough, people come out from everywhere.”

In the first meeting, more than 100 kids and 70 adults came. Children sat on the ground and adults brought wood pieces to place on rocks. But they didn’t sit for long because they kept moving around the tree to stay out of the hot beating sun.

“We would begin church all facing the east and by the end of the service we’d be facing north,” said Luis, chuckling. “God is good, isn’t he?”





According to anthropologist Dennis Rogers, youth gangs began to appear in Nicaragua after the Contra War ended in 1990. They were mainly comprised of young people who had served in the military and wanted to relive the drama and violence of war. But above all, they wanted to recapture the social ranking that they found in military life. While today's gang members have never seen a battlefield, many still join gangs as a way of achieving social status.

"They are without work and without social respectability. They are also without any possibility of studying," said Dennis. "They themselves state that they don't have any future and that Nicaragua doesn't either."

But the Nicaragua Ministry Center is changing that. It is breaking down walls to give struggling young people, like Hector, the hope of a new future. It is building up disciples, like Bismarck and Victor, to become leaders. And it is sending those leaders out to build communities of the faith and light a fire for Christ among the Nicaraguan people. ■

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**LEARN MORE** about supporting the Nicaragua Ministry Center at [www.abwe.org/NMC](http://www.abwe.org/NMC)

Starting at 13, Margarita\* was sexually abused by her own father. She never told anyone because he threatened to kill her mother and her sisters if she did. Margarita's story is all too common. This abuse happens to 7 out of 10 children in the area of Nicaragua where she lives, and the violators are not punished. Pastor Luis Silva, a graduate and national leader of the Institute of Church Planting (ICP), works to educate the new generation about a better way through Jesus Christ.

Margarita suffered in silence for three years until she became pregnant. When her grandparents discovered the pregnancy and abuse, they brought Margarita to Luis for counseling.

"Honestly, I did not know what to do. I had only been in this ministry for one month so I looked for support from some more experienced pastors," said Luis. "I found it through ABWE's ICP, which helped prepare me for how to approach situations like this."

Without Luis' counseling, Margarita could have remained bitter and exposed her child into the same abuse she was subjected to. Instead, Margarita has been completely transformed by God. She has been baptized and recently married a young man from her church.

*\*Name has been changed for security reasons*

The  
Nicaragua Ministry Center

*More than 12,000 people*

Experiencing God   Hearing the Gospel   Sharing Jesus



**Breaking down walls. Building up leaders.**

This Christmas, every dollar you give\* will be matched – doubling your impact and helping the center do even more.

To give, simply return the enclosed envelope or go to [www.abwe.org/NMC](http://www.abwe.org/NMC)

\*first \$125,000 will be matched

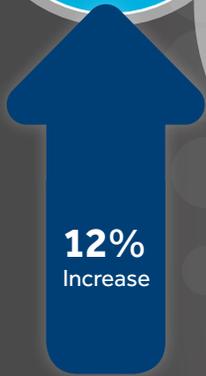
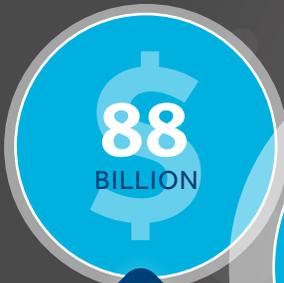
# VISUALS

## Charitable Giving in the United States

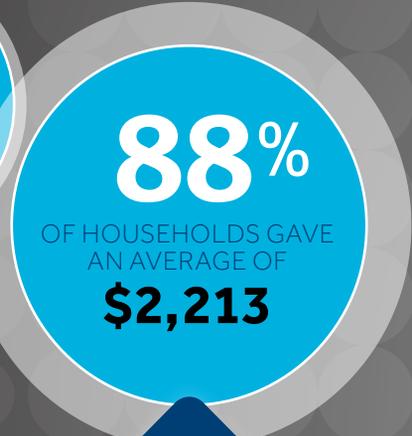
2012  
TOTAL GIVING

316  
BILLION

This is a \$79 billion increase in donations since 2003 - up from \$237 billion in 2011.



CORPORATIONS



INDIVIDUALS

6%

Corporations

7%

Bequests

15%

Foundations

71%

Individuals

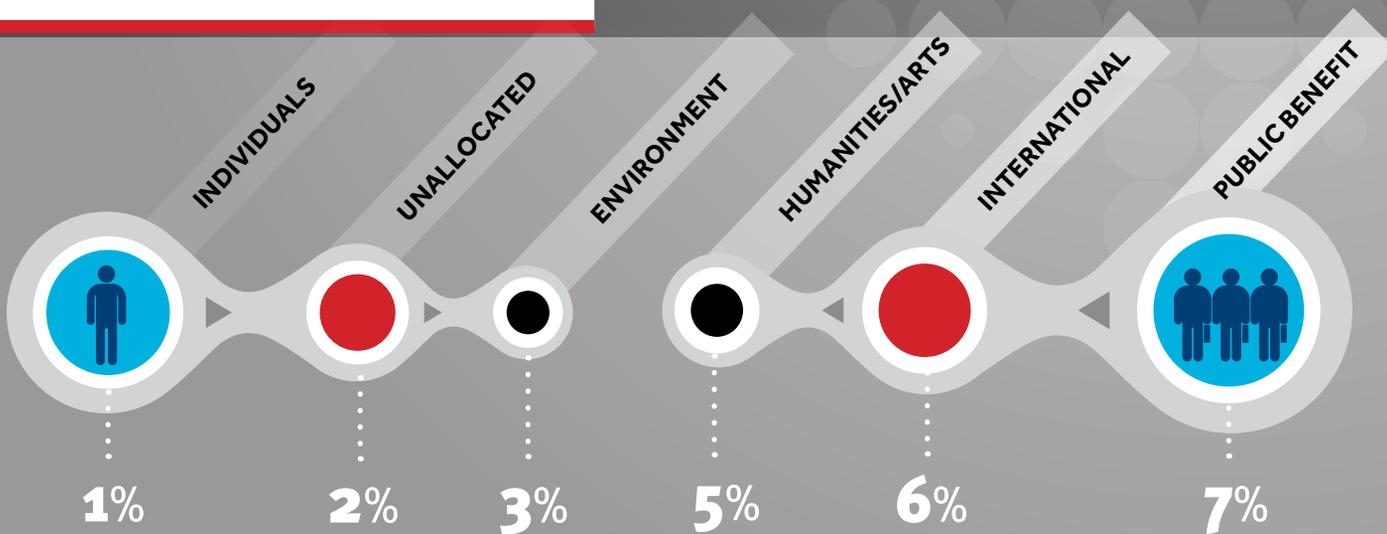
7%  
Decrease

BEQUESTS

5%  
Decrease

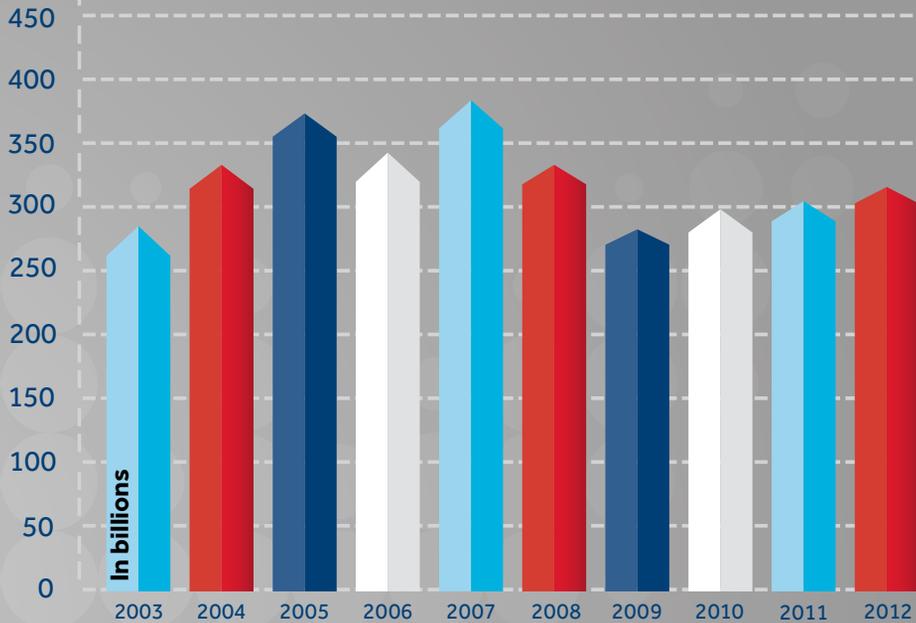
FOUNDATIONS

### 2012 | GIVING BY CAUSE



## TOTAL GIVING

2003-2012



8%

Decrease since  
2007

AT CURRENT RATES IT WILL  
**TAKE 6 YEARS**  
TO REACH 2007 LEVELS

HEALTHCARE



9%

FOUNDATIONS



10%

HUMAN SERVICES



13%

EDUCATION



13%

RELIGION



32%

## CANADIAN charitable giving trends

2011-2012  
TOTAL GIVING

8.5  
BILLION

Fewer Canadians are giving to charity, but those who are making donations are giving more - resulting in a 4% increase in donations.

23%

OF HOUSEHOLDS GAVE  
AN AVERAGE OF

**\$1,413**

13.3 MILLION  
OR ALMOST 50%  
VOLUNTEERED  
THEIR TIME

Source: www.fraserinstitute.org

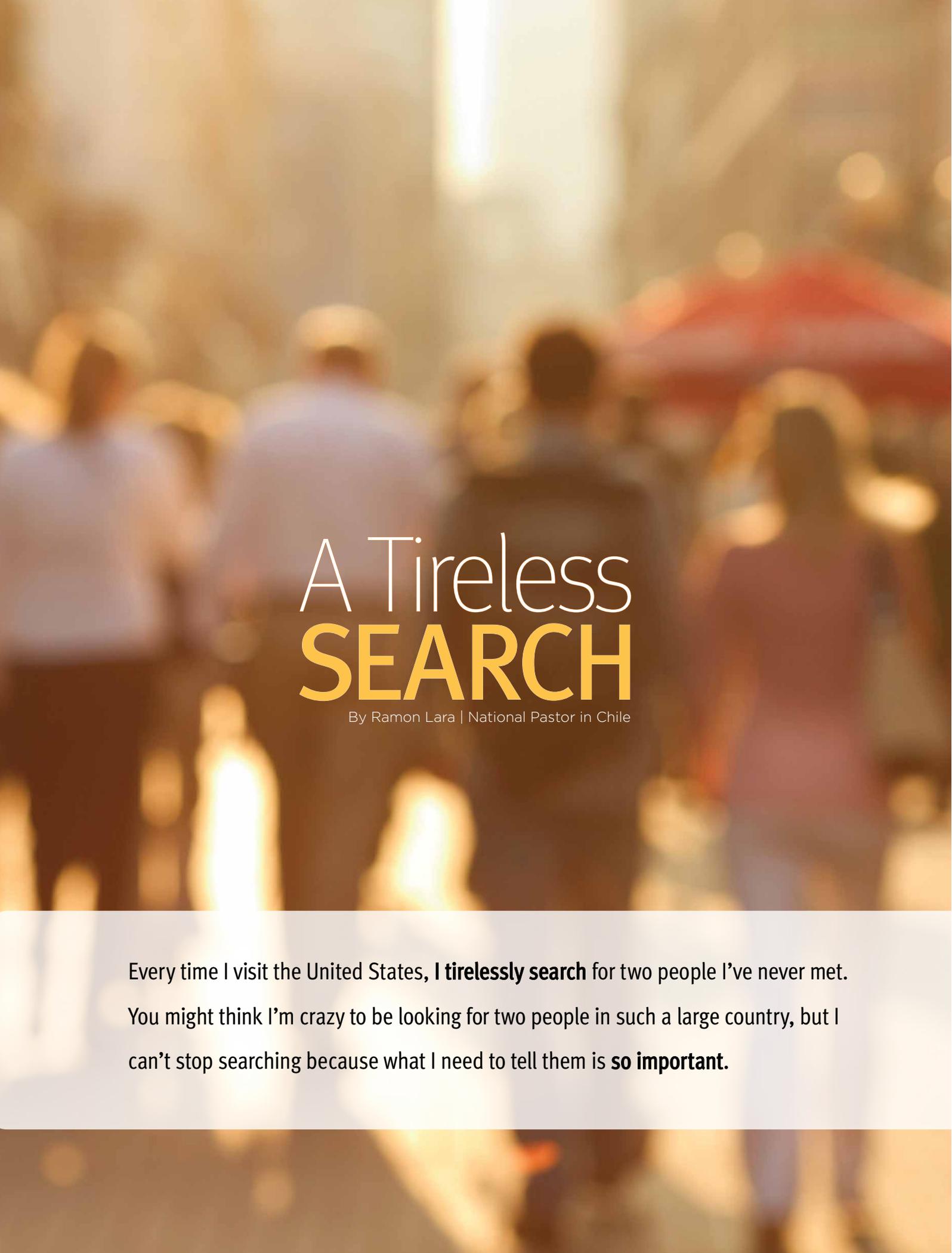
USA

2011-2012

64.3 million volunteered  
15.2 billion hours  
worth an estimated value of  
**\$296.2 billion.**

Top 4 volunteer causes:

- religious - 34.4%
- educational - 26.6%
- social service - 14.2%
- health - 8.2%



# A Tireless SEARCH

By Ramon Lara | National Pastor in Chile

Every time I visit the United States, I **tirelessly search** for two people I've never met. You might think I'm crazy to be looking for two people in such a large country, but I can't stop searching because what I need to tell them is **so important**.

I was born in Santiago, Chile, and accepted Christ at a missionary-run vacation Bible school when I was nine. When I was 12, I attended an ABWE camp for the first time, and at 15, I confirmed my faith in the waters of baptism. That same year I enrolled in the Chilean Air Force. It was a radical change to go from the ABWE camp on Saturday to a military base on Monday. But I held firmly to my faith. I took night classes at ABWE's Baptist Bible Institute and attended church, where I eventually met my wife.

After several years and much prayer, the Lord gave my family a deep desire to start a new church in a community south of Santiago called El Bosque. When I went to tell my commander, he said, "I know why you are coming to me, Ramon. You want to retire." I nodded. Then he asked, "Which airline are you going to work for?"

I told him that my family and I were going to start a church.

"Why would you give up a steady paycheck and health insurance?" he asked me, incredulously.

I didn't quite know how to explain it to him in that moment. But I do now. I loved working for the Air Force and enjoyed having financial stability, but I love the Lord unconditionally and I wanted to obey Him.

The commander shook his head in disapproval, but he signed the document granting my retirement after 21 years of service.

After a one-year internship with a local ABWE missionary who was starting a church, my family and I began to make our dream in El Bosque come true. It was a rocky start. Our church began in a small room in a rented house with 15 borrowed chairs. My first pulpit was a Coca-Cola table from a nearby restaurant.

On our first Sunday, after inviting all our neighbors, my wife and children sat surrounded by empty chairs. I was very disappointed and was beginning to doubt when my son said, "Dad, we

could all spread out so that it looks like we are a lot of people." His sweet words hit me hard, and I said, "Today is the day. Let's start this church." So we prayed, and slowly, a few timid children, teens, and even one adult showed up for the service. By the end, all 15 seats were occupied.

Eight years later, we have nearly 200 people attending. And it all began with a missionary who told me about Christ when I was a child. For this reason, I continue to search the United States for the generous person who faithfully supported that missionary and allowed them to bring me the good news. I want to meet this person and thank them for their offering. I need them to know that their donation was sufficient. It was enough to change my life. This person could be your brother, your mother or your father. It could be your grandfather or grandmother. I don't know who supported this missionary month after month or how much they gave. Perhaps, at times, it was only a few dollars. But what I do know is that it was enough to help save my soul. I am the fruit of their financial offering.

The second person I'm searching for is someone who believes that Christ is able to save even more people in Chile. Do you believe that? Then, you are the person I am looking for.

Maybe someday someone like me will come to thank you for the role you played in their spiritual journey. And maybe you'll never get to meet those who you've impacted most, but rest assured that one day, when we are all together in the presence of the Lord, all our efforts for the Kingdom will be recognized. ■

 **LEARN MORE** about how to serve as a missionary at [www.abwe.org/serve](http://www.abwe.org/serve)



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## A Time and a Place

By Bob and Lynn Trout

When you hear the word “camp,” what comes to mind? Many think of tents and nights under the stars, while others think of bunk beds and cabins stuffed with rambunctious kids. But for me, camp was that one or two weeks a year in my youth when I met with God. It was time away from the fast pace and pressures of life. At camp, I was able to slow down and focus on God.

During my wife’s and my ministry in Bogotá, Colombia, God led our team to build a camp and ministry center to give others the same opportunity to slow down and find God. We prayed for the means, and God made His involvement so clear through the generous gifts we received. Money for the camp came from all over and from the most unexpected places. One generous donor gave \$175,000, while a little girl from Michigan sent us 75 cents as her contribution to the project. Another young girl from a supporting church handed us a thick envelope with \$160 inside. Her pastor told us that it was birthday money she had been saving because she “wanted to give it to God.”

And God’s provision didn’t stop there. He also gave us workers. All kinds of people donated their time toward the project — builders, painters, families, youth, fathers and sons. More than 900 people from 27 different churches came to help us make the camp a reality.

Looking back, we can clearly see that God built the ministry center and camp in Bogotá, and now, it is a cherished safe haven for many. We’ve seen its amazing impact on every person who stepped on its grounds. I remember one girl who admitted that she was contemplating suicide because of

her terrible family situation. But instead of death, I saw her find Christ at that camp and choose His eternal life. Another time, one of our Colombian pastors brought a group of orphans who had never been out of the city to the camp. That experience helped them discover a world beyond the one they knew. They laughed, played and enjoyed nature, but most importantly, they heard about the Father who loves them and made this world.

Through our ministry in Bogotá and beyond, we have seen how camps and ministry centers have an amazing impact for the gospel. They are vital places where families, youth, and leaders can come together to find fellowship, explore their faith and learn more about our remarkable God. The word camp may conjure different things for different people, but we know that for many it represents a special time in their lives when they had a life-changing encounter with Christ. ■



Bob and Lynne Trout have been with ABWE for 47 years. They served as missionaries in Bogotá, Colombia for 33 years, spending the final nine years as regional administrator for Spanish-speaking South America. Bob now serves as the director of missionary care.

# SPOTLIGHT



© PHOTO BY LARRY PARKS

## Black & White

*ABWE missionaries are working beside Spanish believers to help the people of Toledo transition from the darkness of religious confusion to the light. They are helping show that God's word is still and will always be relevant. Right now, God is assembling a team of people who want to serve creatively through church mobilization, English lessons, sports, counseling, literature, leadership training, outdoor evangelism, and other ministries in this area of Spain. These efforts, combined with prayer, are helping to bring clarity about God and His word to the region.*



Larry & Jane Parks are missionaries working in Toledo, Spain, who just celebrated 40 years with ABWE.

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