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GREAT  
COMMISSION  
CHURCHES

CHRISTIANITY IN

# action

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[www.gccweb.org](http://www.gccweb.org)

## CHANGING LIVES



### BLACKSBURG ABLAZE

By Tony Pierson

For years, we have taught that strong families and intergenerational ministry are “core values” for

our church, and for our family specifically. For many GCC families that has meant that their children have stayed in the area and gone to a local university. Given how far we lived from a major university that was not going to work for our family. So, when my sons began to go off to college, we started praying that the Lord would have us all move together to where they were attending. Last year, we believe the Lord released us from our work in New Jersey to move to Blacksburg, VA (VA Tech) where both of our boys are now attending school. In Blacksburg, we have started a church plant and a new alternative energy company together. When your 21 and 18 year old sons want “your continued involvement in their life,” that is a huge blessing. When they want that involvement to include planting a church together, I believe you move heaven and earth to make that happen (all we had to move was our house and belongings). God has blessed our move tremendously. We have met a lot of other Christian leaders in the area and we were able to get a unique house just 2 miles from the campus. We are turning our basement into a college “ministry house” complete with living suites, kitchen and a hang out area. Mostly, we are thrilled to be doing ministry as a family even though our kids “went away to college.”



### ORPHAN WORLD RELIEF

By: Doug Riggle

Orphans have been a passion of mine ever since I learned I was adopted. In 1998, during my

first mission trip to Kiev, Ukraine, the Lord solidified my simple desire to make a difference in the lives of orphans, turning that desire into a burning passion. James refers to this as “pure and undefiled religion” (James 1:27). In the world today there are between 147 and 210 million orphans. Orphan World Relief was started to provide financial aid for the millions of orphaned children and at-risk children in areas of the world where little, if any, social infrastructure exists. Our current and future efforts include: financial support (which helps orphanages meet their basic needs), increasing self-sufficiency (which helps orphanages become more a part of their local community and less dependent on donations, aid or assistance), agricultural development where possible, (which allows for local, independent food production to supplement nutritional needs and providing a source of income for excess produce), and creating a centralized resource for orphanages (which will provide needed information for expansion, development, and nutritional guidelines partner together). Currently, we are working with five orphanages, all with unique efforts, in five different countries: India, Bolivia, Honduras, Russia, and Ukraine.

We build momentum for change through relationships. By partnering with people like you – other like-minded organizations and groups – we place a high value on working together towards a common goal: relief for orphans and at-risk children. No one is too young or too old to make a difference.

Check us out online: [www.OrphanWorldRelief.org](http://www.OrphanWorldRelief.org) and make an impact in the lives of God’s little ones.

# MISSION USA

## NEW CHURCH PLANTS

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### SOUTH RIDGE CHURCH: FAIRMONT, WEST VIRGINIA

By Seth Broadhurst

*Seven years ago, when we started South Ridge Church in Fairmont, West Virginia, we knew that we wanted to be a church that was actively involved in our community for the sake of the gospel. Our community is an old coal-mining town and we felt that we had to work to win people's trust before influencing them in other ways. Our slogan at the time was, "Here to Serve."*

We didn't exactly know what would and wouldn't be effective, so we did a lot of experimenting in the early days. We gave away hot chocolate at the city's annual Christmas parade and the East-West high

school rival football game. We went door to door in the fall and gave away 9-volt batteries and reminded folks to check their fire alarms when they changed their clocks. We served the athletic director of both high schools, and we even adopted a highway for a couple of years.

Our largest kindness outreach endeavor has been a neighborhood block party called Party in the Park. Party in the Park is held every year at a park surrounded by low income housing. The crime rate in our city is highest near this park and most of the community pays little attention to the neighborhood. We serve this part of our community regularly. Now the city has taken



notice and has included South Ridge Church as partners on a grant project to improve the park and serve the people in the neighborhood. We saw our first spiritual fruit from Party in the Park two years ago when a woman returned to church at SRC after 20 years of being "unchurched." She has been with us ever since!

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### THE ROCK CHURCH : SALT LAKE CITY, UTAH

By Josh Whitney

*The Rock Church opened its doors in downtown Salt Lake City, Utah in the fall of 2003. The downtown church plant was the brainchild of pastors Bill Young and Steve McInroy, and a team of amazing servants. The Rock has grown from a core of dozens to hundreds of people worshipping on a Saturday night service. Steele Crosswhite and Josh Whitney were recognized as pastors in the fall of 2006.*

The Rock utilizes the "one church, many locations" model. This involves the four pastors rotating teaching responsibilities between the three different Rock locations in Utah. This past year, the Rock church did a topical study of Proverbs, a family and marriage series, and an

outreach series called "Sex, Drugs and Rock and Roll." Music is obviously a big part of the Rock. At last count, there were 15 bands. A highlight of the year was the acoustic worship night/live CD recording, lead by Steele Crosswhite. Crosswhite described the Rock Music's mission statement this way: "We have been put on the earth to touch the world for God through music and to be a part of the best bands in the world known for loving Jesus Christ. The Rock Music is rooted in the local church, where we see it as our vision to Love God, Bless the Saints, and Win the lost." The Rock strives to be mission minded. Members participated in missions trips to Honduras and Europe (including stops in Germany, Poland, and Italy). These mission trips worked closely with GCLA and GCE churches. Also, 80 participated



in our "Mission to the City" here in our own backyard. Multiple days of service and outreach around our red warehouse were a highlight of the year for many. We have been using the house church model for the last three years for our midweek meetings. The community and the leadership development that has occurred over the last three years have been very encouraging. Learn more at <http://experiencetherock.com/>



# INTERNATIONAL



## BUILDING SYNERGISTIC INTERNATIONAL PARTNERSHIPS

By Robbie McAllister

*As part of our Acts 1:8 strategy at Riverbend, we desire to glorify God by building international partnerships that will lead to planting Great Commission churches to the ends of the earth. In 2008, we did an exploratory trip to Sweden set up by one of our missionaries, serving with United World Mission, and networked with two key national church leaders who had a heart for reaching the unreached.*

We settled on working in the far northern city of Lulea for several reasons. The churches we connected with have a heart to reach the unreached in the entire Barents region, which includes all of northern Scandinavia and northern Russia's, Kola Peninsula. There is a technical university in Lulea, with very little active Christian ministries, that has over 5000 students, and we had

experience in training leaders on college campuses. Finally, the Holy Spirit has knitted our hearts together with several key Christian leaders in the city and we simply believed God would do something special.

After three years we have made multiple short term trips to Lulea. Both adults and students, some of whom were parents with their children, traveled and spoke in conferences there, participated in evangelistic outreaches in several cities, hosted leaders and students from Sweden in Columbia, SC and through our Southeast Regional Leadership Training ministry called LINC, trained 8 key student leaders from Lulea.

The results have been very encouraging. People have come to faith in Christ, a strong student organization has started at Lulea Technical University, our church has become more committed to the



Pastors David and Samuel are two of the Swedish leaders that Riverbend has partnered with to reach college students with the gospel of Jesus Christ in Northern Sweden.

Great Commission locally, regionally and globally, and our hearts have become linked for life with a number of precious folks from the northern realms of Scandinavia. Going forward our desire is to connect our Swedish partners with Great Commission Europe and hopefully forge even a stronger bond with our Great Commission family.

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## MEXICO: A LAND OF OPPORTUNITIES

By Sergio Handal

*It may sound a little strange to say but, Mexico is a land of opportunity. The media is full of bad news about the war that the cartels produce in this country. However, many people are coming to know God because of fear and anxiety in their hearts. It is a land of opportunity for the gospel and we have no doubt that every hardship happens so that doors may be opened for the Great Commission.*

After serving as a pastor in Great Commission Church in Tegucigalpa for 20 years, my family decided to move. Along with Pastor Oscar Gutierrez, and three more families, we moved to Monterrey to plant a church in Northern Mexico. The process of moving was hard but also very rewarding. The hardships came

from being jobless and needing to raise support in order to survive financially.

Now God has opened many doors. However, it continues to be an area where our faith is tested.

Our congregation is mainly composed of many families and young adults between the ages of 20-40 years old. We have 14 small groups, and 28 small group leaders and assistants (most of them Mexican). We are encouraged by what we've seen develop: a great atmosphere of growth and love, significant growth in short-term mission initiatives, and people coming to Christ every month.

We encourage you to pray for our church, for our leaders and pastors, and for the wisdom we need to lead this



congregation in a city of 4.5 million, that desperately needs hope from above. Please continue to send down mission teams, and to support us through your regular donations and gifts (through GCLA and through the web at [mtychurch.com](http://mtychurch.com)).

For more information, contact sergio.handal@igcla.com.

[www.mtychurch.com](http://www.mtychurch.com)

[www.grancomision.org.mx](http://www.grancomision.org.mx)

# INSIDE GCC

## CHURCH PLANTER'S ROUNDTABLE

**APRIL 27-28**  
**DES MOINES, IOWA**

Jesus Christ is building His church. And He works through men who step out in faith to plant new churches in their cities, state, nation and the world. Is God stirring your heart to possibly lead a church planting team in the next 1-5 years? If so, the Great Commission Churches Church Planters Roundtable is for you! This year we will be meeting in Des Moines, Iowa at Walnut Creek Community Church.



## MEET A GCC PASTOR

**THIS EDITION: BILL YOUNG**

Bill and his wife Mary just recently celebrated their 22nd wedding anniversary. Bill got saved in a GCC church in Ames Iowa in 1981. A week after getting married, Bill and Mary moved to Fort Collins, CO to help replant a church there. He got recognized as an elder in 1991 and moved to plant a church in Loveland Co in 1995. The Young's then moved their family to Utah to plant a church in 1999 and have planted a total of three churches in Utah. God has been very faithful in the life of Bill and his family.

Verse: Romans 8:28: "And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose." NIV



(from left to right): Joseph (17), Bill, Timothy (10), Mary, Jonathan (12) & Stephen (16)

Verse: Jeremiah 29:11: "For I know the plans I have for you," declares the LORD, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future." NIV

Advice: Always live for something greater than yourself.

## CHANGED LIVES

**JOHN HOPLER - DIRECTOR, GREAT COMMISSION CHURCHES**



*As a movement of churches, our heart is to reach the next generation for Jesus Christ. How is this to be done?*

The answer: God works through many different ways to bring the gospel of Christ to young people. On the front page of this newsletter are two examples.

The first is a father who moved his family so that they could work together to reach out to

college students. The other is a single man who formed an organization designed to minister to orphans throughout the world. Praise God for both of these men who are proclaiming Jesus Christ to the next generation!

Did you know that your church has a "2020 Next Generation Plan" to reach young people for Jesus Christ? Whether working through families or working in a ministry that reaches young people separated from their families, you have an opportunity to team with your church to have an eternal impact on the next generation.

So join in with your church in its 2020 plan to reach young people for Christ. And let's all work together as Great Commission churches so that the next generation will live for the glory of God. "To Him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen." Ephesians 3:21



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