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CHRISTIANITY IN ACTION

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CHANGING LIVES



GRAMMY CAMP

By Lynda Bledsoe

My husband, Mike, and I have five granddaughters. Three of them live thirty minutes away and two live two hours away. We rarely have the five of them together at one time. I was

listening to a couple on Christian radio one evening when they discussed the value of grandparents in their grandchildren's lives. The couple described "Grammy Camp."

I went to work to figure out how I could make this happen for us. We have now had "Grammy Camp" the last three summers. Our activities consist of swimming, basketball, baking, crafts, pedicures, and a talent show. The past two years, we visited the assisted living facility where my mother lived that turned out to be an encouragement for my mom (Nana), the residents, and our girls. We have candlelight breakfast in P.J.'s with vintage hats. One of the girls will share from "Jesus Calling" and lead a discussion of how we all could use that truth in our lives that day. We decided to give an award at the end of each camp for the most "Christ-like Spirit." With five girls (now 8, 10, 11, 13 & 15), there will always be drama but it was amazing how the focus on Scripture and its application made such a huge difference in attitudes. Each night, we pile onto one bed for another time of Scripture, prayer, and reflection on the day.

On the last day, we have bingo with prizes of snacks and gifts from which to choose. We have a special meal and then Papa serves his homemade banana nut ice cream.

The reality is that I plan for a month and cook for a week before they come, and clean for a week after they leave. It's worth it! We are grateful their parents allow and encourage us to be part of their children's lives. Our ultimate prayer is to see them have a lifelong love relationship with Jesus!



INTERNATIONAL STUDENT MINISTRY

By Jim & Diane

*Celebrating the Chinese New Year with
our church's international fellowship.*

I was forever changed my freshman year at the University of Nebraska through the outreach of a GC church plant that summer.

Later I attended a GC conference and again God changed me as the teachers taught on the Great Commission: reaching the world for Christ. My wife, Diane, lived the first seven years of her life in the mission fields of Congo, but never understood the gospel until GC Christians shared with her during her freshman year at Kansas State. Now we can't stop thinking about those who have no Christian witness and praying for direction about how to build bridges of friendship that others can walk over and find Christ.

For the last twenty-seven years our church has extended the love of Christ to hundreds of international students and many lives have been changed by Jesus Christ. Today, many of those former students are serving the Lord in the U.S. and in many countries around the world. We have led short-term missions to a number of these countries, and we labor with many of these friends in their countries.

This summer my family will take a team to East Asia for a long-term stay. We will join two former international students, two Americans from our church, and an American family that has been pioneering this work for years. Our prayer is that we might present Christ to 40,000 university students in a twin-city area of nineteen million people, most of whom have not met a Christian.

The Bridge Builders ISM & Missions Conference has been used by God to inspire faith and practically equip people to build bridges to the one million international students and fifty million first-generation immigrants here in the U.S. and the hundreds of unreached people groups in every nation. Find out more about the 2016 conference at gcbridgebuilder.com.

MISSION USA

SEMINOLE CHRISTIAN LIFE

By Lee Gordon

Seminole Christian Life was planted in 2008. A team of 10 people moved from the church at the University of Florida to start a church at Florida State University in Tallahassee. After getting past the initial shock of moving from one rival school to another, a community of students began to gather – focused on growing in a personal relationship with Christ and sharing His story with others.

One way we engage new students during the semester is through intentional prayer walks. We walk in pairs around campus asking students if we can pray for them. Then, we share a portion of our testimony and ask if we can share an illustration that explains the

theme of the Bible – who God is, who man is, the issue between us, and God's solution. Often, they are up for listening. So we share and invite them to receive the gift God is offering them in His Son, Jesus. Then we offer to explore further who this Jesus Christ is and what it means to be a disciple.

We are on a hunt to find students who are sensitive to the gospel. As we find them, we individually teach a few key commands Christ has given us. After meeting with individuals for a few weeks, we invite several of them to meet together to encourage and build each other up as they grow and share with their friends what God has done for them.



Lee, Luke, Lee Gordon, Stephen, Caleb, and Matthew are a team at SCL.

We are training students to train other students to build their relationship with God and share the Gospel. We are praying that Seminole Christian Life will be a solid sending church that will plant churches all over the world.

SOUTH LA CHRISTIAN LIFE

By Greg Christman

South LA Christian Life (it's not flashy, but it is descriptive) is a diverse group of believers in our Lord Jesus Christ - who are desperate to walk by faith, not by sight in a context that is increasingly complex (Oh Los Angeles! Our big, diverse city!), and increasingly worldly (the drive for power, fame, and success is seemingly palpable).

We meet on campus at the University of Southern California with hopes of moving off campus to serve the community in greater ways. We have a strong family culture, and feel a bit like an "outpost" with members from China, India, Brazil, Central America, Kenya, and many states.

We have "thrown faith" in a variety of avenues in

order to "sow seeds": a toy-drive partnering with Hope IBF in Hollywood; serving in the community through our resident teacher/missionary Shalom Sanchez, who trains and discipless high schoolers. We have seen Chinese and Iranians come to faith and be baptized. I regularly meet with two graduate and PhD students at USC. One is Indian from the lowest caste, the other a Muslim convert from northern Iran. We see the world very differently and have lively conversations. I often end our meetings by saying, "If nothing else happens today, know that you helped bring world peace at this table!"

We have been studying through and meditating on the book of John: seeing we are part of God's plan (even friends of the Master!) and striving to be fruitful for His



Kingdom in a place that is very 'worldly' (John 15:19). I've been thrilled by the fruitfulness of His ambassadors!

We have a spring break mission trip to Phoenix and a summer leadership training planned. We're believing the Lord for big things: new believers, disciples, small groups, and even church plants! Our outpost is a crossroads of the world, and it excites our hearts to be walking by faith with the goal of becoming a sustainable and multiplying body of believers.

I N T E R N A T I O N A L

GOSPEL OPPORTUNITIES IN THE DR

By Peter Swanson

After my second summer of missions through LINC (<http://summerlinc.net>) I felt God calling me to pursue long-term missions in the Dominican Republic (DR). It was a process over several years while Thomas Lemus, Hershel Martindale, and I dreamed, planned, and prayed for a team.

In May 2015, I finally moved to the DR to do college ministry in Santo Domingo. It has been an incredible (and not always easy) journey of adapting to another culture. God has humbled me so much through the process because I have had to depend on His grace every day.

Although statistics say that the DR is 98% Christian, my experience has been only 1 out of 10 Dominicans understand the

true gospel of Christ. There are many false gospels of works and prosperity. Because the people already believe the authority of the Bible, sharing about faith in Christ is very easy. However in such a disorganized culture our greatest challenge has been raising up leaders to take responsibility for their own people.

This past January I started teaching electrical engineering in a university called APEC. In this country professors have lots of freedom of speech and so I plan to share my testimony and short Bible passages in the class.

The vision is to invest myself into Dominicans who will continue this work even after I am gone. Recently I have been focusing on two guys named Emmanuel and Frey. They both



Peter (right) and the students he disciples.

were already living a life of evangelism and passion for God's word before I met them. I hope to impart vision and a framework for them to build the Dominican Church.

The mission work here in the DR hasn't always been easy (or materially comfortable), but I wouldn't trade the opportunity to impact the students' lives and grow in my walk with God for any amount of money or comfort. God is so good!

FINISHING THE TASK

By Robbie McAlister

In the Great Commission Jesus gave the command to "make disciples of all the nations" (Matthew 28:19). The word "nations" refers to ethnic groups, not just geopolitical nation states like the USA or China. An ethnic group is a self-identified distinct group of people that share a common language, culture, and history.

Beginning in the mid-20th century there has been a concerted effort to define these groups around the world so that disciple-making efforts could be more strategic. There are still several hundred ethnic groups of over 10,000 people that have no known believers, no churches, and no one targeting them for disciple-making initiatives.

In GCC churches, we believe that all people matter to God regardless of geography. However, we are becoming more aware that while everyone is equally valuable to God not everyone has equal access to the gospel. Therefore, we are taking a stronger initiative to focus on unreached, unengaged people groups.

This past December I attended a conference in California called Finishing the Task, which Saddleback Church hosted (where pastor and author Rick Warren teaches). On behalf of GCC, I identified some unreached, unengaged people groups that are living in Europe. GCC churches in the Southeast region have already begun working with Great Commission Europe and other partners in Sweden to develop a strategy to engage these people with the gospel.



Robbie (left) with Rick Warren at the 2015 Finishing the Task conference.

Please join with us in praying for this new initiative. We still have a lot to learn, but with how God has led us the last 45 years as a movement this is not really a leap of faith for us... it is just the next step! I pray and trust that we will courageously take it!

INSIDE GCC

EMPOWERED

2016 PASTORS CONFERENCE

Join us in Des Moines, Iowa, from June 13-15, 2016, for the annual GCC Pastors Conference. This year we will focus on the gifts in Ephesians 4:11. We hope that you will leave empowered with the gifts that God has given you to be more effective in fulfilling the Great Commission of Jesus Christ.

For more details visit:

www.gccpastorsconference.org

MEET A GCC PASTOR

THIS EDITION:

Seth Broadhurst

Seth grew up attending church and put his trust in Jesus Christ while at a youth retreat during Jr. High. However, for the next eight years he ignored the Holy Spirit's voice in his life. He moved to West Virginia in August of 1999 to work toward a graduate degree in athletic training from WVU. On January 3, 2000 he repented of his wandering and worldliness, began to trust God at His Word, and started walking in step with the Holy Spirit.

During graduate school he fell in love with the Lord and with his wife, Stacy. They met at WVU Bible Studies and were married on June 2, 2001 in Morgantown. Seth began interning at Chestnut Ridge Church (CRC) in August of the same year. Seth and Stacy now have three children: Ella (12), Grant (10), and Jared (7).

In September of 2004, Seth and Stacy led



a team from CRC to begin a new work in Fairmont, WV. South Ridge Church has now been serving the city of Fairmont for 11 years with hopes to start a second campus in Bridgeport, WV early next year.

One of Seth's favorite verses is Galatians 2:20, *"I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me."* This verse reminds Seth to abide in Christ, remain gospel-centered and encouraging others to do the same.

RAISING UP FOLLOWERS OF CHRIST

JOHN HOPLER - DIRECTOR, GREAT COMMISSION CHURCHES



"Even as the Father has sent Me on a mission for which I am still responsible, I also am sending you," John 20:21 (Wuest Translation).

Jesus Christ was sent on a mission to seek and to save those who are lost. After He died on the cross and rose again from the dead, He sent His disciples on the same mission. The above verse communicates a wonderful truth – that Jesus Christ still takes responsibility for the mission on which His disciples were sent.

Today Jesus continues to send out missionaries to fulfill the mission for which He is still responsible. As this issue shows, GCC church members are responding to the

Lord's call to seek and to save those who are lost. Some are reaching out in U.S. communities. Others are serving on college campuses. Still others are focusing on unreached people groups in countries that have not heard of Jesus Christ. And one member even runs a "Granny Camp" to reach her granddaughters for Christ!

In all these varied situations, Jesus sent out workers to do a mission for which He is still responsible.

So, join today with your church to be part of the greatest mission in the world – the Great Commission of Jesus Christ. Seek God to find out the specific role He has for you. Whatever it is, you can be sure that Jesus Christ will take responsibility to bless you and your ministry every step of the way.



NAE | National Association of
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