

*But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you,
and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and
Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth.*
-Acts 1:8



international edition

christianity in ACTION

October 2012

GCC International Report

Letters from John & Jack



Our Strategy:

The Acts 1:8 Local Church

by John Hopler, GCC Director

Recently I came across a quote that stirred my heart: "It does not take a perfect church to introduce a man to the perfect Christ" (Richard Woodsome). In the same way that God saves us "just as we are," so too God works through us "just as we are" to reach people for Christ.

As a movement of churches we are committed to a strategy based on Acts 1:8: "*You will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you shall be My witnesses, both in Jerusalem, and all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth.*" The Holy Spirit is given to all believers in Jesus Christ--men and women, young and old, rich and poor. And He is given to enable us to testify about Jesus Christ, His death and His resurrection throughout the world.

So what is the strategy? Simply this: Ordinary people like you and I sharing the gospel of Jesus Christ. As one GCC church states it, we are to "Just Sow It!" Empowered by the Holy Spirit we are to tell others about Christ...and then leave the results up to God. "Just sow it....and let God grow it!"

As followers of Christ who desire the gospel to spread to every nation, let's all dedicate ourselves to bringing the life-giving message to the whole world.....so that every tongue, tribe, people and nation may glorify the Name above all Names, Jesus Christ.



European Influence

A Letter from Jack

by Jack Stockdale

Jack and Joan Stockdale are Christians who "stepped out of the boat" out of love for their Savior. Our prayer is that through the "United for Europe" campaign that God will raise up more people like the Stockdales who will reach Europeans for Jesus Christ. Here is their testimony:

An old Polish proverb says, "If you want to make God laugh, tell Him your plans." Proverbs 16:9 says, "*The mind of man plans his way, but the Lord directs His steps.*"

Joan and I moved to Poland in 2002 with the noble goal of planting a church. Our vision was that many more churches would be birthed from that first church and as a result, many people would be reached with the gospel. About half way through our ten years of ministry there we realized that, though our overall vision pleased the heart of God, the way it was to unfold would not be ours but His.

After several ministry failures, Joan and I finally recognized that God had sent us to Poland not only to lead a handful of people to Christ--about 20 in ten years--but to respond to the pleas of Polish couples. Many were already being used by God to lead effective ministries but desperately desired the kind of help we were equipped to give them in the all-important areas of marriage and parenting.

In the wonderful teaching and mentoring Joan and I received over the years combined with the "school of hard knocks" which marriage and parenting naturally provide, God had prepared us to play a vital role in the lives of three key, young Polish leaders. They in turn are affecting thousands of Poles with the gospel in a much shorter time than it would have taken if things had gone "our way."

Great Commission Europe

GCC is Uniting with GCE to Start Churches In

Albania

Population: 3.2 million

Religions: Muslim (62%)
Christian (30%)



Albania has undergone major changes in the last few years. It is now in a very critical stage of transition and is in desperate need of Christian workers. The Torino, Italy church (il rifugio) has a number of Albanians, and among them are several who have expressed an interest in returning to help strengthen and build the struggling church in Albania.

Romania

Population: 21.2 million

Religions: Christian (96.9%)
[Evangelicals 5.4%]
Non-religious (2.4%)



A brother from the GCC church in Salt Lake City, Utah, has a burden for Romania and senses that God may want him to move there. Also, a missionary couple in Kansas City is beginning a new church in Romania.

Latvia

Population: 2.24 million

Religions: Christian (60%)
[Evangelicals 7%]
Non-religious (38%)
Muslim (0.4%)



In the spring of 2010, Timmy Powers (Kiev, Ukraine) made a connection with Andris Dekants, and they quickly formed a strong friendship. During the summer, Andris spent two weeks in Ukraine laboring with the Kiev team and the relationship with him further developed. Steve Nelson and Timmy both contact him on a regular basis, with Timmy more specifically coaching him in ministry.

France

Population: 62.6 million

Religions: Christian (61%)
[Evangelicals 1%]
Non-religions (26%)
Muslim (10%)



The most strategic starting point for us in reaching France seems to be Grenoble. Even though other parts of the country are even more unreached, God has given us an open door in this city.

Moldova

Population: 3.6 million

Religions: Christian (73.4%)
[Evangelicals 3.7%]
Non-religions (21.56%)



Two years ago, Stas Boronets (Chisinau, Moldova) discovered the Simple Church Europe website, and he contacted Timmy Powers to ask for help in reaching his country with the gospel. Currently, Stas has regular coaching appointments with Timmy, he attends events held in Ukraine, and Timmy has conducted conferences for them in Moldova. Stas and his team have been involved in training leaders and planting churches in several cities over the past two years.

Sweden

Population: 9.3 million

Religions: Christian (57.2%)
[Evangelicals 7%]
Non-religions (38%)
Muslim (0.4%)



For the past two years, Riverbend Church, Columbia, SC, has had a strategic partnership with two national church groups in Luleå (rhymes with "Julio"), Sweden. We have sent several short-term trips, one from Rock Berlin (Germany), for evangelism and training and have assisted them with a church planting conference.

Please send inquiries to:

U4E14@gceweb.org

For more information, please visit:

www.gceweb.org

Dominican Republic

This past summer pastor Berk Wilson, along with his wife Barbara and the Great Commission Southeast LINC team, spent time in the Dominican Republic witnessing and training new disciples from the young church plant in Santo Domingo. Many people who were ministered to are from the largest university in the country, with over 100,000 students. UASD is a public university where students and professors are open to spiritual discussions, so finding someone to talk to is not a challenge. Many students, both believers and non-believers, know English and are willing to help translate.



"La Vid" (The Vine) is the new church plant (taken from John 15, "I am the vine, you are the branches."). La Vid meets on campus on Tuesdays and Fridays in the home of one of the members. Before the end of the LINC project, scripture from Acts 2:41-47 was shared with these new disciples and they were encouraged to take on more spiritual responsibilities.

It is encouraging to know that God is using La Vid to reach this university with the gospel. A few previous year's LINC team members paved the way for this year's team by arriving in the DR a month early. Of that group three of them have verbalized their desire to return on a more permanent basis (as soon as a team is formed and funds are raised). It is evident that God desires workers in Santo Domingo.

Please pray that God would raise up and financially provide for a team from the US to serve whole heartedly. May God allow La Vid to shine a light to the university and influence many others.

Latin America

God gave Moses, Elisha, Nehemiah, Ezra, the 12 apostles and the 70 disciples a specific calling to be part of His plan of restoration of humanity. Through the apostle Paul, God sent young Timothy to reach out to the lost, to teach the new believers, and to establish them in their faith. In the 1970's, God gave a similar calling to the young GCLA leaders; to live the Great Commission throughout the Spanish speaking population. To this day, the believers of GCLA churches are steadfastly living out that calling with passion and devotion.

Today GCLA's mission remains the same. As GCLA prepares to plant new churches in new cities and countries, a new generation of young church leaders prepares to follow God's calling with great fervor and unwavering determination. These emerging leaders are named the Spartans. GCLA's leadership, in conjunction with U.S. partners, will create mission opportunities for the Spartans to grow in character, ministry skills, and knowledge. As in the ancient biblical times, God's Spirit will work mightily through these emerging leaders to fulfill his plan of redemption.

Find out more about the Spartans program at www.greatcommissionla.com/spartans.

Phillippines

By Mike Bergen

This year, the team of 11 Philippine Great Commission churches continued to take shape, both in discipleship and financial responsibility. As of this past summer, 15 church leaders (most pictured here) have been trained and are practicing the fifteen Basic Commitments developed by Herschel Martindale. These 15 church leaders are now training 34 more leaders to do the same. Some are the third generation of trained disciples. The team envisions more multiplication of trained disciples through reproducing house churches.



As the national pastors work to develop and multiply disciples in the Philippines, the desire is to reach other countries and cities of Asia where there are no churches at all. These Philippine churches are committed to working with GCC until there is a church in every Asian village!

East Asia and India

Asia Update

By Ching Yu Wang



At the 2012 Asia Interface, the SALT (Strategic Asia Leadership Team) shared this vision: "We exist to catalyze, connect and coach GCC and other partners to the world of Asia in missions, in healthy leadership and in church planting." And, by the hand of God, this is happening!

From the newly forged Great Commission Churches Association made up of eight churches in the Philippines, we have established a micro-loan opportunity in assisting these churches to become a support to a long term GC mission team. With this opportunity, one plan is to assist a church plant team forming in Taiwan to establish a GC church in Taichung. This will be a great outlet for building partnerships throughout this country, in hopes that many locations will be ready to receive mission teams with the goal of spreading the gospel. God is working in the hearts of laborers, to reach the unreached with the glorious gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. Next year, there will be two vision trip opportunities for church leaders to get a taste of God's heart for Asia.

For more information please visit, www.e3leadershipgroup.net.

India Update

In 2012 the concentration has been on leading people to Christ, training them to be "trainers of trainers" (T4T), and then multiplying these T4T groups with the goal of developing house churches. Short-term teams from the U.S. and Europe have been very helpful and a blessing to all. God has created a culture of evangelizing and discipling zeal among each group.

The current teams in India are leading 140 groups and new churches. Now the focus is to start more second, third, and fourth generations groups by inspiring and training the new believers to launch their own groups. The present 15 full time indigenous workers have goals of leading 20 groups each, and some of them are nearly there.

The movement is expanding through massive evangelism in many forms including street preaching, gospel film showing, literature distribution, audio Bible listening groups, telling Bible stories to children, and training every new believer to share their testimony and the gospel.

Although many great things are happening, there is still opposition, threats, and persecution. Please pray for courage for the teams and the new believers, that they will keep "holding forth the Word of life."

International Student Ministry

ISM Update

By Jim Wiebelhaus

In 2012, International Student Ministry (ISM) encouraged and helped equip churches start and/ or grow an effective outreach and discipleship to international students. One highlight was the One Life to Invest, International Student Ministry Conference in Loveland, CO. Sixty-seven people from twelve churches and seven states participated. There is already much enthusiasm for another conference in 2013.

2012 was a year of seeing a few more churches make significant investments in their own local "International Student Ministry." Ching Yu Wang and his family moved to Fort Collins, CO in 2011. United with Pat Sokoll and Aaron Ritter, they have fostered greater emphasis on ISM in the Summit View Church. Guang and Mindy Song, Gary and Dawn Harris and Craig McClanahan continue to build a larger and stronger ISM team at Stonebrook Community Church in Ames, IA. Marc Holtey and Tim Grunditz with the encouragement of their pastor, Mark Darling, have led their house church into high gear to love and serve international students in Minneapolis. In Lincoln, Moh Yin Chang is helping five households to host Discovery Bible studies for international students in their home. All four churches have seen international students come to Christ in 2012.

Current and former international students are playing a greater role in International Student ministries and short-term mission trips around the world. "Therefore beseech the Lord of the Harvest for more workers for the harvest" (Matthew 9:38).

GCC Affiliate Churches

Great Commission Churches is affiliated with churches in the following regions. If you would like more information about these churches, log on to: www.gccweb.org/great-commission-association/international-church-directory.

ASIA

Bangkok, Thailand
Hong Kong, China
Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia
Nepal
Singapore, Republic of
Singapore
Manila, Philippines

INDIA

Due to the sensitive nature of Christian Ministry in this region of the world, contact information is withheld for our Indian churches.

AUSTRALIA

EUROPE

GERMANY

Berlin
Dortmund
Dusseldorf
Koln

ITALY

Turin
Milan

NETHERLANDS

Amsterdam

POLAND

Poznan

SPAIN

Madrid
Pamplona

UKRAINE

Kiev

LATIN AMERICA

COSTA RICA

San Jose
Guapiles

DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

EL SALVADOR

San Salvador
La Libertad

GUATEMALA

Guatemala City

HONDURAS

Choluteca
Comayagua
Danli
El Progreso
La Ceiba
La Entrada Copán

Olanchito

Puerto Cortes
San Pedro Sula
Siguatepeque
Tegucigalpa

MEXICO

Monterrey

NICARAGUA

Managua

PANAMA

Panama City

USA

Miami, FL
Plainfield, NJ

VENEZUELA

Valencia

