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GREAT
COMMISSION
CHURCHES

CHRISTIANITY IN

action

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CHANGING LIVES



DANCING FOR HEARTS

By Chris Phillips

Columbus, Ohio churches dance for hearts...in more ways than one!

Inspired by an article in *Focus on the Family* magazine, the Columbus area churches held their first Father-Daughter Dance in 1996. A father-daughter dance is an outreach to the hearts of daughters. Nearly 100 fathers and daughters attended that first dance.

Linworth Road Church hosted the dance for the next few years. The dance grew in size and moved locations until it ended up at New Song Community Church in Reynoldsburg, Ohio, where it's been held for the last several years.

Last year, New Song's pastor, Chris Phillips, and his daughter, Rie, decided to reach hearts even beyond their own families and communities. In keeping with the Great Commission, they decided to support GCC missionaries in India. During the dance, slide shows of India played in a room decorated to simulate Indian culture. The night culminated with a Skype video conference with missionaries to raise awareness and funding for India missions. The dance sparked hearts to pray for the lost of India, and raised more than \$1000 to help purchase over 2000 Bibles in their native language.

The next Father-Daughter Dance is scheduled for March of 2011 with plans to dance for the hearts of Europe! If you would like more information about Dancing for Hearts, contact Pastor Chris Phillips at pastorc@inewsong.com.

REACHING THE NEXT GENERATION

By Barbara Wilson



Since our oldest son, Luke, began high school in 1999, my husband, Berk, and I have hosted a Bible study for high schoolers every Monday night.

We were blessed to have home-schooled our six sons, but as they moved to public high school, we knew the spiritual support would be minimal. We decided to support our children by hosting a Bible study for them and their friends. Every Monday night, we invited students to our home for supper and a Bible study. We had wonderful times talking about everything from salvation and baptism, to dating relationships and sex. Many of the college students in our church were also involved in the study and became mentors to some of the students.

In September 2008 when the mother of one of our students passed away, Berk and I knew that God wanted us to take him into our home. When Chris moved in, he was not saved, so we spent the next year loving him and giving him spiritual and life direction. He attended Faithwalkers with us in December of 2008, and at Faithwalkers 2009, he gave his life to the Lord.

We are so thankful for the opportunity to work with this generation coming after us that will be carrying the torch of Jesus Christ and salvation to their generation and beyond.

Barbara attends Grace Community Church of Cary-North Carolina State University: www.graceforstate.org.

MISSION USA

NEW CHURCH PLANTS

AWAKEN CHURCH: COLUMBUS, OHIO

By Chris Old

In September of 2010, the long-awaited day came for Awaken Church in downtown Columbus, Ohio to open its doors to the community for the first time.

This church plant, which came from Linworth Road Church (LRC) in Columbus, Ohio, has been in the works for 10 years, and we are blessed to see where the Lord has brought us. The relationships within Awaken began to form with a group of teenagers in the youth ministry at Linworth. Many of these teens remained at LRC during college, and later, began meeting as the core group for the church plant in the fall of 2009.

The church is located in an area just north of downtown called the Short North. This area is very socio-economically, racially, and spiritually diverse. It is a central hub for Columbus' hip art scene and night life, and yet is so very spiritually void.

Our calling comes from Isaiah 61:1,4. This area of Columbus has been neglected by the church and we want to rebuild those ancient ruins. We pray that we can impact not only those who are spiritually poor, but physically poor as well.

We have been amazed and humbled to see God's financial provision for us. He



has provided homes for team members, along with friendships with neighbors, schools, and other local churches. We are excited to be a part of reaching an area that the church has lost influence in, and we pray that we can establish more branch campuses in surrounding areas in the future through our collaborative vision to reach the city.

Check out Awaken Church at www.awakencolumbus.com.

CANDLEWOOD'S CAMPUS MINISTRY: THE ROCK, UNO

By Rebecca Whitney

Seven years ago, a few courageous, passionate, and willing students of Candlewood Church decided to join with their pastors and see what God would do if they put Him at the forefront of their dreams.

The students had a heart for the University of Nebraska at Omaha (UNO) campus. They knew they had to start somewhere, so they decided to start on their knees. They gave the Lord their dreams and desires for campus. They also asked the Lord for guidance and blessings and to use them as tools for the advancement of His Kingdom.

For those few students, their work was cut out for them, but they were not

going to be intimidated. They wanted to remain humble before the Lord, and in return, God blessed them with steady growth. The first official meeting was a bible study at the campus library over a noon-hour break in between classes. Over the year, more students joined their bible study and they became recognized on campus as The Rock.

The Rock's main mission on campus is to be the face of Christ and His love through service. On a weekly basis they have prayer meetings, Bible studies, outreach activities, and The Rock service. They have also invited Tom Short to preach on campus and Steele Croswhite to perform outreach concerts. The Rock also aims to support school spirit by attending UNO sponsored events such as campus races, fundraisers, sporting events, and service projects.



The Rock at an outreach event.

Those few students saw the small beginnings of what would eventually become a thriving culture with the love of Christ. Now, seven years later, about 120 students stream into the doors of the music hall on Wednesday nights. God heard those prayers years ago and has been graciously blessing since then with men and women who want to commit their lives to Christ and His Gospel.

Check out Candlewood Church: www.candlewoodcc.org.

INTERNATIONAL

A HEART FOR TAIWAN

By David

After serving in a community church and reaching out to international students at nearby colleges, Pastor Doug invited me to join him for one of his Asia mission trips in 2002.

After contacts fell through in China, we decided to re-visit Taichung, Taiwan, where my wife and I had previously lived and taught English from 1994-1996. That trip changed everything. God opened a door for us to serve with Taichung Grace church.

After raising financial support, our family returned to Taichung to serve with Grace church and look for opportunities to infuse the Great Commission DNA among young adults and university students. God did much more than we had planned or expected. Grace church has since asked me to oversee their Sunday afternoon English (bilingual) gathering.

During the last six years, it has become a church within a church by creating Grace International Church. It has grown to about 100 people and is composed of 10 families and around 40 young adults between the ages of 20-40 years. We're encouraged by what we've seen develop: four small groups, an emerging team of 10 Taiwanese leaders, significant growth in short-term mission initiatives, and people coming to Christ every month.

Please pray for us that God would raise up local leaders and help us plant another bilingual work in Taiwan in the next 2-3 years.



The team in Taiwan.

MISSION TO MONTERREY, MEXICO

By Kurt Jurgensmeier

In 2004, our church decided to be more involved in foreign missions. However, we wanted something that our young families could participate in as well. We didn't like the idea of sending a dad off for a week away from his kids, but rather, we hoped to develop something that a dad could do with his children.

This is why Mexico intrigued us. You could drive there from Iowa and take the whole family on a short-term mission trip. At the time, there were no Great Commission churches in Mexico and we didn't know how we could see this happen. So, we began to pray for Mexico.

A short time later, we heard that Sergio Handal was leaving his position as a founding pastor of a large church in

Honduras to lead a small mission team to Monterrey, Mexico. We believed that this was an answer to our prayers. Since then, we have sent several teams to minister in Monterrey, including young children who were a great blessing to the Honduran missionaries.

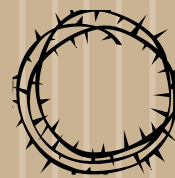
Unfortunately, we do not know what the future holds. Border crossings were often adventurous, but with the amplified violence in Mexico, there seems to be an increased possibility of them being dangerous. We continue to monitor the situation and financially support the growing Monterrey church.



Sergio Handal and family with the New Life pastors at the 2010 Pastors Conference.

This last year, we brought Sergio and his wife, Loyda, to the Pastors Conference, which was a great treat for all of us.

Kurt is a pastor at New Life Community Church: www.newlifecr.com.



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NEW TESTAMENT CHRISTIANITY IN ACTION TODAY

INSIDE GCC

PUBLICATIONS

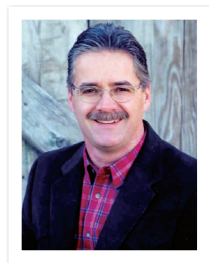
FAITHWALKERS DEVOTIONAL



The Faithwalkers Journal is the daily devotion written by Great Commission pastors and widely read throughout Great Commission churches. This little booklet is perfect for keeping at your

desk, in a purse or backpack, or next to your bed. The Faithwalkers Journal is also available online.

If you would like to start receiving the (free) daily emails of these devotionals, or you would like to purchase the booklets, log on to:
www.gccweb.org/media-resources/publications.



MEET A GCC PASTOR

THIS EDITION: RICK WHITNEY

Rick and Neva now live in Manhattan, Kansas and are part of Vintage Faith Church, which is reaching

out to Kansas State University, the local community and neighboring Fort Riley. Rick and Neva have raised their seven children, who are now involved in Great Commission churches in Utah, Colorado, Nebraska, Texas and Kansas. Rick works at the regional and national level within GCC and also writes a little bit. His web site for dads is www.gcnwdads.com.

Verse: Joshua 1:5&7: "Just as I have been with Moses, I will be with you; I will not fail you or forsake you...Only be strong and very courageous."

Advice: "We are involved in a great thing, Christian—the advancement of His church. If you are a long-time laborer—press on! Be stouthearted. Don't faint or grow weary in well-doing, for in due time our Lord promises incredible reward."

And if you are newer to this movement of churches, but you want great purpose for your life—join us! Following the Lord and doing His will, will link you heart-to-heart and shoulder-to-shoulder with men and women involved in the greatest mission on the earth.

Speaking for every small group leader, every house church leader, every deacon and every pastor—"If you give your life for the advancement of our Lord's Kingdom—you won't regret it."

CHANGED LIVES—CHANGED FAMILIES

JOHN HOPLER - DIRECTOR, GREAT COMMISSION CHURCHES



Several years ago, Great Commission Churches published the Core Values booklet, which described the Biblical beliefs, core values, and common practices of our movement.

In that booklet, we wrote:

"Our practice is to encourage families to be 'on mission,' actively involved in evangelism, discipleship and church planting."

We have seen this truth that God does a special work in families that are actively serving Jesus Christ together to advance the gospel.

You may have noticed in this GCC newsletter that we featured a number of families "on mission" together. We did so because we believe that one key to fulfilling God's purposes on this earth is to strengthen families to be "Great Commission focused." And over the next year, we believe that God is calling us to make this a major priority in our church association.

So, here is my challenge. Fathers and mothers and sons and daughters: Join together to worship Jesus Christ, to love each other and to lay your lives down to advance the gospel. And do this as a family. As you do, your family will certainly experience the amazing abundant life that Jesus Christ promises.



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